

# Equality and participation in public decision making in PNG

The experience of women candidates in the 2012 Election

# 2013



The experience of the 2012 Election for the National Parliament of PNG for women candidates, Political Parties and the media.

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Image on the front cover and images throughout the Report are from works by artist Marie Pietri.

*It is fair to say that women's input into nation-building has not always taken the more illustrious path of political and state representation; that has always been the domain of men.*

*But things could be changing; one can sense a slight but significant shift in the scales as PNG women are being seen as genuine leaders in their own right.*

*Perhaps, the people too are tired of the many empty promises of past members and want a change in every sense of the word.*

*What adds weight to the argument that the tide could be turning in the cause of greater and wider representation of women is that in this national election, beside the huge number of candidates that nominated, there were a good number of women putting their hands up as well.*

*The National Editorial*

August 6, 2012

## Introduction

When PNG gained Independence in 1975, its people through their Constitution, entrenched the right to full participation in every part of life in this country. The Constitution is a passionate call to action for the citizens of a newly independent state to create the kind of society they wish to share and to bequeath to their children.

The people promised that every citizen had the same rights, privileges, obligations and duties irrespective of gender. They also called upon governmental bodies, including the National Parliament, to be broadly representative of citizens from various areas of the country.

The promise has not been kept for PNG's women.

PNG's systems of family and community relationships often exclude women from leadership and decision making roles. Women's place in community relationships minimizes their opportunities to be put forward for public office or to obtain leadership roles which might groom them for qualification for public office.

Recognition has been growing in PNG, that cultural and systemic obstacles exist to impede women from participation in the National Parliament.<sup>1</sup>

A cursory examination of the numbers of women winning seats in national elections since 1975 demonstrates clearly that the electoral system has failed to provide real opportunities for women over the past thirty eight years and the signs of change

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<sup>1</sup> Tapo, J, "Equal Representation and Participation of Women in Decision-making Positions in Papua New Guinea: Some Dilemmas" in Sullivan, N (ed.), *Governance Challenges for PNG and the Pacific Islands* (Madang: DWU Press, 2004) at 165 and Garap, S, "Women caught in a 'Big man' Culture: Challenges for Future Democracy and Governance, in Sullivan, at 157

in this area indicate painfully slow progress toward equality of opportunity.<sup>2</sup>

The experience of the 2012 election campaign for the women candidates demonstrate again how women struggle to mount successful bids for a place in public leadership and decision making roles whether in villages, communities, cities or the National Parliament.

### What is in this Report?

This Report considers the first hand accounts of women who contested the 2012 election, a group of media representatives and a group of representatives of political parties.

The impediments to the participation and representation of women in public decision making roles in PNG are found across all parts of life in PNG. The Report makes findings and recommendations based on the data collected at the Election Diagnostic Workshop and, using that evidence base, acknowledges the need for a multifaceted response to a complex problem with multiple causes and manifestations.

It is suggested that UN Women, UNDP and other organizations and donors consider the Report and its findings and recommendations and coordinate implementation to jointly deliver a rolling program of multifaceted reform up to 2017 and beyond. An effective response to the egregious lack of representation and participation of women in the National Parliament of PNG must address the manifestation of the impediments to participation at multiple levels of community life in PNG.

*The concerns of women are the responsibility of all 111 members of parliament, not just women MPs. The burden should not now shift to women because there are three in parliament. These women representatives are there to represent their constituents which comprise both men and women. Male members of parliament, likewise, represent the interest of all constituents including women and marginalised groups.*

The National Editorial, Aug 8, 2012.

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<sup>2</sup> Twivey, T, "Women and the Constitution: 20 Years of Missed Opportunity" in Regan, T, Jessep, O and Kwa, EL (ed)., *Twenty Years of the Papua New Guinea Constitution* (Sydney: Law Book Co, 2001) 314 at 316

## Executive Summary

The Report considers the data under a number of different subject headings. The Women candidates; campaigning; voting and counting; gender and cultural issues; political parties and the media. The data collected in each subject area is summarized and findings and recommendations are made. The subject delineation helps to organize the material and the findings and recommendations, but overlaps are inevitable between some content across several subject areas.

It is suggested that UN Women, UNDP and donor partners consider the findings and recommendations and agree on a coordinated program to assist women's representation and participation by programs and interventions across a number of areas of life in PNG to maximize resources and ensure as comprehensive and effective a response as possible.

The broad findings are set out here, but can be found in more detail and with further explanation under the separate headings below.

- In general, the women were not well prepared for the election campaign in 2012. They made late decisions to run or to commence campaigning, did not have campaign plans, adequate campaign finance and were not particularly strategic in approaching either political parties or the media.
- For most women, the experience of standing as a candidate was the first experience of running for election or of governance. While a small number had either run in previous elections or had experience in a provincial assembly or LLG, many had no experience at all. There was little other relevant experience in board or committee membership or senior government or governance experience whether public or private sector.
- Women may need to see successful campaigns for a seat in National Parliament as a long term strategy which may include several attempts at running or seeking to gain experience at Local-level government or in other forms of public decision making to build profile, contacts and experience before running for National Parliament.
- Inadequate financing meant being unable to afford specialist advice, whether campaign advice, media advice, political advice or financial advice.
- Security of women candidates during campaigns is a real issue and is exacerbated by inadequate finance.
- Many women candidates were leaders of women's machinery organizations such as provincial women's councils and the like, but may have failed to recognise the need for a broader base of support than the women's movement.
- Women tended to focus campaigning on those most likely to vote for them, neglecting adult male voters who have a great deal of influence.
- Male and female community leaders, husbands and church leaders all play an important role in identifying, encouraging and nurturing emerging leadership talent in women. Programs may target and encourage such leaders to play their key role in identifying and nurturing emerging leadership talent.
- Numerous reports of bribery, corruption, lack of training of polling officials and violent intimidation of voters and candidates raises serious questions about the integrity of the election result in a number of electorates

- Few women candidates engaged the media effectively.
- Few women candidates employed an effective strategy to seek endorsement from political parties.
- Some political parties were unable to see women as potential leaders and effective politicians, citing community and cultural values as a justification.
- The community does not yet seem ready to accept women as credible leaders and lawmakers in the National Parliament.
- Bribery, corruption and violent intimidation of voters and candidates adversely affects everyone, but more harshly impacts on women voters and candidates.

### **Some possible areas of consideration for programming**

There are many findings and suggested program strategies under the separate headings in this Report. Some are put forward here under broader themes.

#### **Long term “grooming” women for leadership in public decision making**

Identify the kinds of experience which can better prepare women for a campaign for a national open or provincial seat and identify pathways to these experiences. May include community leadership positions, which are more accessible to women, board or committee memberships such as school or hospitals.

- Programs to encourage participation at ward, Local-level, and provincial level. School boards, hospital boards, governance experience and an introduction to a wider group of contacts.
- Consider provision of information identifying opportunities, mentoring, provision of training on opportunities to gain experience in public decision making.
- Working with women at customary or village level to improve opportunities for participation in public decision making. Work has been done in this area and opportunities exist to use tools to promote women in village level decision making.

#### **Election candidates “bilum”**

- A document aimed at women and their families where women are considering running as candidates for the National or Local-level seats. It is for all candidates, but in particular, will address many of the issues of first time women candidates.
- Start planning early and this means several years out from the election. Few women planned their candidature with sufficient time to adequately prepare. When some went to political parties seeking support with only weeks to go before the election, this caused disappointment and frustration on both sides.
- Financing an election campaign. Information about the average amount women had further 2012 election and what they calculate is actually needed. Also information on how much political parties may contribute and what political parties expect from candidates in terms of financial means for campaigns
- Planning an election campaign. Matters to be considered such as assistance, travelling around the electorate, policies, security for women candidates and other things relevant to planning an election campaign
- Approaching political parties and what political parties will expect.

- Media strategy for women candidates. How to approach the media, what the media look for in developing a story, press releases, radio spots, providing public comment, media events etc.

### **Women need to have a broader support base and appeal to a broader range of voters**

Women reported their leadership experiences as predominantly from women's groups or as advocates for women on community service organizations. Women also reported other women and youths as those most likely to vote for them and the population they targeted in campaigning. If women are to take their place as PNG leaders, they must become as interested in mining, budgeting, capital works, a sovereign wealth fund and the environment as they are in health, education and gender violence. They also need to engage adult male voters and campaign to persuade them that women can be credible leaders and members of Parliament and can advance their interests and not just those of women and children.

### **Addressing the problem of poor participation and representation at the system level**

Temporary special measures can recalibrate a system which has not achieved a percentage of women in National Parliament higher than 2.7%. High level PNG planning and policy documents such as the Alotau Accord, the Vision 2050 and the Medium Term Development Plan need to acknowledge the importance of the participation of women in every aspect of PNG life and to include clear strategies, goals and targets to achieve real reform.

### **Male community and church leaders have an important role**

The women candidates revealed that male community and church leaders played a big role in identifying leadership potential in women and encouraging them to run. Male champions and leaders should be targeted as talent finders alongside women's groups which are more usually considered sources of emerging women leaders.

### **Corruption in the election process**

The reports of the conduct of the 2012 election as told by the women candidates, political party officials and media representatives is disquieting in the extreme. Reports of corruption, bribery and violent intimidation of voters and candidates raises serious questions about the integrity of the result in some electorates. This Report containing the first hand accounts should be passed to the relevant authorities for their consideration alongside other election reports.

### **Media engagement**

UN Women to work with media organizations and identified interested media representatives to identify women candidates or profiles of women leaders to interest the media and build on public interest in women candidates, help women build media profiles and enable women to improve opportunities for media exposure.

### **Political parties**

There is work to be done to encourage political parties to consider seeking and nurturing talented women candidates for 2012 national elections. Women candidates also need coaching in how to more strategically approach political parties.

### **Social Marketing**

It was a constant theme in discussion about the 2012 election experience that the community was still largely unprepared to see women as credible leaders and credible politicians.

There is an important role for social marketing to target communities, political parties, churches, women's groups, families, and in particular male relatives and chiefs. Their support can encourage women to run, help their campaigns and give them the belief that they have the capacity to be leaders in PNG communities and then to be a national leader.

Women's groups are already very likely to understand this, so it is particularly important to target churches, male relatives, husbands and chiefs.

The role of young people is crucial. They promise the best chance of a new and different and more accepting view of women in politics and in leadership. Youths were reported as playing a role in many different aspects of the women's campaign experiences, as escorts, as campaign helpers and as inspiration for nomination and nomination support.

## **Conclusion**

The election diagnostic provides valuable information provided by a sample of women who contested the 2012 election and of political parties and media representatives. It sheds light on all facets of the experience; the campaigns run; levels of finance; time spent in preparation, networks relied upon; voter base; inspiration for running; sources of support and encouragement and responses from political parties and media experiences. These data provide an evidence base for planning for programming to support women in the 2017 election.

Findings and recommendations emphasize that the causes and manifestations of women's unacceptably low participation and representation in public decision making are found across all aspects of life in PNG and so the programs to address them must be similarly multifaceted.

Programs should address the broad categories of early grooming of potential leaders; preparation of the women themselves; male chiefs and church leaders to identify and support leadership potential in women, temporary special measures to recalibrate the system, advocacy for a better run election process, advocacy for gender mainstreaming in high level PNG planning and policy documents and specific programs for political parties and the media.

# The 2012 Election Diagnostic Workshop

## Introduction

Between 2009 and 2012, the Government made a number of efforts to improve the representation and participation of women in Parliament culminating in a successful change to the Constitution enabling the creation of reserve seats for women. The necessary legislative amendment to actually create those seats did not pass. There have been more recent indications to suggest that the Government has now put this proposed reform on hold pending further investigation of its practical implications.<sup>3</sup>

## PNG's three plans

The first of PNG's three linked plans presenting the Governments vision and policy direction for the next forty years is the Vision 2050. This document has been recently recognized as a continuing long term policy of the present Government in the Alotau Accord.

As its name suggests, Vision 2050 is a broad visionary document seeking to create a "smart, wise fair and happy society by 2050" and to give effect to the National Goals and Directive Principles. The Vision 2050 document does identify women's voice and participation as part of the strategy to achieve Vision 2050, yet only a few of the key outcomes actually contain specific targets and strategies to advance women, falling short of the comprehensive cross sectoral approach necessary to address barriers to women's participation in cultural, economic, social and legal spheres.

The Vision 2050 is to be given effect in the Development Strategic Plan 2012-2030 and the Medium Term Development Plan 2011-2015.

While gender issues are raised in each plan, there is an egregious failure across the three Plans to fully utilise the rich resource presented to the country by half its population and to set strategies to address the educational, cultural, economic and systemic barriers preventing their full participation. The Plans set goals which fall so short of what is needed to increase women's participation and political voice as to suggest either ignorance or deliberate neglect.

*Innumerable studies have demonstrated that gender equality is a precondition for sustainable growth and poverty reduction. Where women are empowered we observe better health and education outcomes for their children as well as a more sustainable use of natural resources. Where women are meaningfully integrated into the labour force we have seen impressive advances in social well-being.<sup>4</sup>*

## The Alotau Accord

The *Alotau Accord for a Government of Reconciliation and Hope*, accepted by the National Executive Committee (NEC), is a high level policy document for the new O'Neil Government. The Medium term Development Strategy will soon be reviewed to align to the Alotau accord and the five year

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<sup>3</sup> Reported in an article in the Post Courier, "Government includes Marginalised in New Policy" January 31, 2013

<sup>4</sup> UNIFEM and UNDP, Making the MDG's work better for Women, Implementing Gender responsive National Development Plans and Programs at [www.unifem.org.au/LiteratureRetrieve.aspx?ID=51972](http://www.unifem.org.au/LiteratureRetrieve.aspx?ID=51972) 2009. Accessed 24 July 2011

budget cycle. Under the heading “Gender, Youth, Churches and Sports” it does not put forward any plans to advance gender equality , focusing instead on sport, youth, age and disability.

Recent statements by the Public Services Minister on behalf of the Prime Minister suggest the Government policy of support for 22 reserve seats for women is presently on hold.<sup>5</sup>

Between 22 and 25 November 2012, a group of women who had contested the 2012 election, political party executives and media representatives attended an Election Diagnostic Workshop (the Workshop) at the invitation of UN Women and UNDP. The purpose was to examine their individual and collective experience and gather data to provide an evidence base for programs, projects and initiatives which could assist women considering contesting the 2017 election and to contribute to a broader understanding of the impediments and the opportunities women face in aspiring to enter politics and run for a seat in the National Parliament.

### **The 2012 Election**

In 2012, three women successfully contested the National election with two open members and one Governor returned. They are now three female voices in a National Parliament of 111 members. Over three million men are represented by 108 male Members of Parliament. Over three million women are represented by three female Members. Progress toward participation and representation of women in the National Parliament has been painfully slow and is currently at a historical high of 2.7% per cent lagging well behind a global average of around 20%.<sup>6</sup>

### **Methodology**

A questionnaire to collect data about the experience of the women, political party executives and media representatives were prepared under the guidance of Professor Betty Lovai from the University of Papua New Guinea (UPNG). At the Workshop, focus groups were also conducted with all participating groups to examine all aspects of the experience of running as a candidate in the election. Data was collected from both the questionnaires and focus groups by students and faculty from UPNG guided by Professor Lovai.

Of just over 120 women candidates in the 2012 election, 23 attended the Election Diagnostic Workshop and participated in the focus groups and answered the questionnaire. ?? politi

A questionnaire to collect data about the experience of political parties with women candidates in the 2012 elections was filled in by political party representatives attending the Workshop. Focus groups were also conducted with political party representatives. The Workshop also included representatives of media outlets who participated in the Workshop focus groups and completed the questionnaire.

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<sup>5</sup> Article in *Post Courier*, January 31, 2013.

<sup>6</sup> In a survey on global election results held in 2010, the world organization of parliaments puts the world average of women in parliament in all chambers at 19%, an alltime high. This result extends the trend of recent years of small but significant gains: there was an average of 13.1% in 2000, rising to 16.3% in 2005 and to 18.8% in 2009. See Juliette Elfick, *Women in Parliament; Small but Significant Gains*, in UN Special, at <http://www.unspecial.org/2011/03/women-in-parliament-small-but-significant-gains/> accessed 2 February 2013.

Sample sizes were small but data about lived experience of the election was collected both individually and via focus groups over a four day period resulting in rich data collected consistently with principles of qualitative data collection.<sup>7</sup>

### *Findings*

The Formal planning and overarching policy documents of the previous government and the present O'Neil Government do not mainstream gender issues and lack meaningful goals and targets to address the lack of representation and participation of women in public decision making.

The data collected at the Election Diagnostic Workshop supports findings and recommendations which can make a real difference to the chances of success for women candidates in future elections at all levels of government.

More research is needed to broaden and strengthen the available evidence base in a complex area which is affected by many parts of life in PNG.

### *Recommendation*

That advocacy is undertaken to include mainstreaming of gender issues with specific targets, including targets related to better participation and representation of women in public decision making in the upcoming review of the Medium Term Development Strategy foreshadowed in the Alotau Accord.

Further research into the following areas:

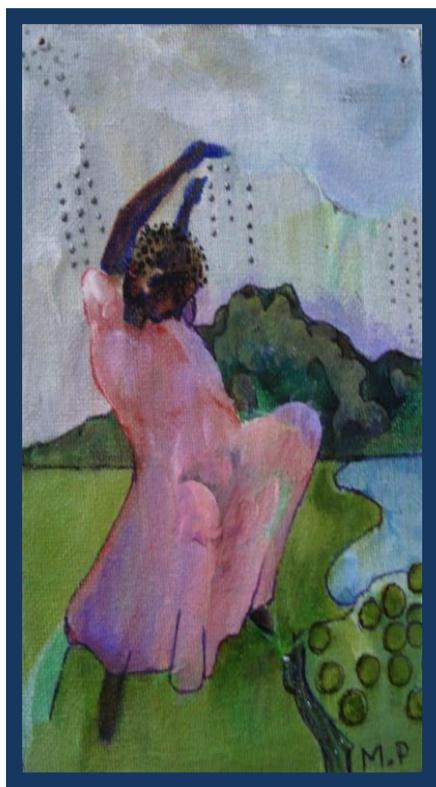
- Gather quantitative data on as many candidates in the 2012 election as possible, to examine reason for contesting, sources of electoral support, seat contested, where they are from, funds available, education level, previous electoral experience, political party affiliation and family support disaggregated by sex.
- Further qualitative data on experiences of male candidates in the 2012 election as a control group.
- Research among voters on who votes for women and why and who does not vote for women and why not disaggregated by sex.

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<sup>7</sup> Whilst there are no closely defined rules for sample size (Baum 2002; Patton 1990), sampling in qualitative research usually relies on small numbers with the aim of studying in depth and detail (Miles & Huberman 1994; Patton 1990). Seeking a richness of data about a particular phenomenon, the sample is derived purposefully rather than randomly (Reed et al. 1996; Mays & Pope 1995; Ezzy 2002).

From Tuckett, A. (2004). Qualitative research sampling-the very real complexities. *NurseResearcher*. 12(1): 47-61. [http://espace.uq.edu.au/eserv/UQ:114279/UQ\\_AV\\_114279.pdf](http://espace.uq.edu.au/eserv/UQ:114279/UQ_AV_114279.pdf) At accessed 3 Feb 2013.

## The women candidates



The women candidates were aged between 32 and 61 years with most in their 40's and 50's. Most were married and all were mothers. They came from Provinces and districts across PNG but there were few from the Highlands.

The women were generally not highly educated, but there were exceptions to this. Four had university degrees while eight had a certificate or diploma. One had completed grade 12 and 9 reported completing Grade 10 or lower.

### Employment

Most women reported having an occupation prior to election, but more than half reported a change in occupation after it. There is no information to indicate whether the change was positive or negative in the lives of the women who experienced occupational change, but it was a widely held experience and should be noted for women who might be considering running as candidates in 2017.

### Where did they come from?

Five women contested seats in Morobe, five in Central Province and NCD, three in Oro, two in Milne Bay, two in Madang, two in Gulf and one in Simbu, one from Eastern Highlands, one from Southern Highlands and one from the Autonomous Region of Bougainville.

Nineteen resided in the electorate contested and four did not. Many reported that they had been born there and most reported long residences of between 16 and 62 years. Two had resided in their electorates less than one year.

### Why did they choose to contest the election?

The women spoke of similar motivations to contest the election. They wanted to see better representation of women, better provision of basic services and reported a strong disappointment with the achievements of the male politicians. They saw little change in enforcement of laws and community attitudes about violence against women. Some also pointed to community disappointment with existing politicians. Some said they were approached to contest by community leaders. One woman in Buka was asked to run by a paramount chief.

They were worried by lack of services to women and children, particularly in health, education and basic infrastructure. Some saw changes in laws about land ownership and wanted to influence laws in that area, particularly as they affected women's customary ownership of land.

### **Who encouraged them to contest?**

Half of the women said the decision to contest was a personal decision, and nine said they were encouraged to contest by other women or by their community. A lesser number were encouraged by husband and family, local Chief or Church leader. Some women talked about seeing leadership potential within themselves and decided to run.

### **Who nominated the women candidates?**

Nominators of women candidates varied. The largest identified group was nominated by political parties. Male relatives were next followed by female friend. The largest group was “other” with 10 followed by political parties with 5. The role of political parties and families in the nomination payment of nomination fees of women candidates is important. These groups may be targets for further work to encourage and assist women to nominate and run in 2017.

### **Leadership experience**

Most women had a current or former leadership role in her community prior to becoming a candidate for the 2012 election. Only two had previous experience in a provincial or Local-level Government legislature. Six were members of their local provincial or district council of women.

Leadership roles undertaken by the women were predominantly in women’s groups or as women’s representative in advocacy groups. These roles undoubtedly give women valuable experience and contacts and are also areas where potential leaders may be noticed and encouraged. However, there was a lack of breadth of experience of leadership roles among the women candidates. Political parties constantly emphasized the importance of broad appeal to a successful candidate.

### **Kinship and community leadership opportunities and ties tend to exclude women**

Women reported being excluded from community decision making roles. Community relationships often make available opportunities to seek public office and then create obligations back to influential community members when public office is achieved. Women can be excluded from privilege in being put forward and in being favored for advancement by those already in power.

*Kinship ties in PNG determine all manner of relations between people, covering support networks, morality and land ownership. Binding obligations exist between close kinsfolk who share membership with a clan or a tribe. It is this system of obligations that often leads to nepotism and corruption in government systems. These links and associations often do result in increased opportunity for employment, contracts and nomination to lucrative company and government boards. Very often women, women’s policies and machineries become the unsuspecting victims of this nepotism and corruption.<sup>8</sup>*

### **Pre election training for women candidates in the 2012 election**

Seventeen women had attended training with six reporting that they had not. Such numbers make it hard to generalize or to draw inferences, but it is certainly not possible to draw an inference that women who did not attend training fared worse than those who did.

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<sup>8</sup> ADB, *Report-Technical Assistance to Papua New Guinea for preparing the Gender and Population Project* at [http://www.adb.org/Documents/TARs/PNG/r14\\_02.pdf](http://www.adb.org/Documents/TARs/PNG/r14_02.pdf) accessed 02 Feb 2013, page 24

A comparison of results between those who attended training and those who did not does not show electoral advantage for those who attended. Of the nine who attended no training at all, one achieved third in the ballot, one fifth and one eighth, four in the top 20 and two at 28 and 30 respectively. Of those who did attend training, one finished third, one fifth and one tenth, two in the top 20 and two over 35.

The effectiveness of training was not clear and this Report does not draw a conclusion that training was effective in preparing the women for the 2012 Election. In answering a question about things that assist women to get elected, it was mentioned by one respondent. Financial assistance and community preparedness to accept women leaders were the highest ranking responses with eleven and ten respectively. Other responses included the need for campaign materials, the need for advance planning and logistical matters such as transport. In focus group discussions, training was rarely mentioned. It is also interesting that while most women report having attended training, the outcomes were not manifest in well planned campaigns.

### **What was the candidate's previous electoral experience?**

Most women had no electoral experience with 14 contesting for the first time, three for the second time, and one contesting her fourth election.

### **Electoral success**

Three women were elected in the 2012 National Election. Of the women who participated in the Workshop, two finished third, but most finished well down the list of candidates after completion of the count. Only four finished in the top ten, and the rest of the group finished between 10 and 30 out of the candidates running in the contested seat.

The women's own views of their performance in the election were interesting. Nine responded positively with responses such as "good", successful, "excellent". Of those, six finished in the top ten with four in the top five, so those likely to rate themselves well were the more electorally successful.

### **Intentions to run in further elections**

Of the twenty three participants in the Workshop, four reported that they intended to contest upcoming LLG elections but seventeen said that would recontest the same seat in the 2017 elections.

### **Findings**

The most likely area for leadership grooming for women is women's groups such as provincial women's associations, women's community groups.

Women are quite likely to change employment after running an election campaign

Women's leadership groups should be supported to locate and foster early leadership talent via a diversion program or by providing material or access to training for such groups to assist them to identify and foster talent.

Women candidates need to find ways to broaden their leadership experience and their support base.

Target male leaders such as Chiefs, church leaders and clan leaders to identify leadership talent among women and seek ways to foster it within mainstream community leadership opportunities

Leadership grooming within the system is optimal. Courses and training play a useful role, but there is little substitute for the real experience of local level government leadership, board or committee membership, school board, hospital or provincial health authority , provincial government.

Women's groups, families, political parties Chiefs and church leaders all have a role in encouraging women to run for office

Women can also be encouraged to see leadership potential in themselves, but this has not necessarily been accompanied by an understanding of what is required to mount a successful campaign for a seat in the National Parliament

Given the lack of election experience of most candidates, seeking further experience in LLG elections and governance experience at LLG level could be an excellent preparation and training for a later campaign for a seat in the National Parliament. Noting that the UNDP intends to run training for women for LLG elections in 2013.

Women were primarily motivated by a group of issues generally considered to be "women's issues".

### *Recommendations*

Programs to target husbands, families, Chiefs, women's groups, political parties and Church leaders to identify talent amongst local women and encourage them to run for office and to support them during their campaigns.

Programs which seek to empower women and encourage them to see their own leadership potential and run for office are accompanied by practical information which informs potential candidates of what might be required to run and campaign for National Parliament and also outlines a range of options for embarking on a career in public life to suit a range of levels of ambition, levels of ability and levels of readiness and also helps groom leaders at all levels to participate at all levels and to move from one level to the next.

Programs need to encourage women to think more broadly about issues which are legitimate matters for them to seek to influence. Mining issues, land ownership, budgets and supplementary budgets, the role of Parliament vs. the Constitution, the establishment of a sovereign wealth fund, issues which should be considered in long and short term planning in PNG.

In considering the electorate for which to run, the women needed to consider:

- Consult family and clan members
- Their own profile, popularity and standing in the community
- What networks and other support might be utilized to assist in a campaign
- What are the characteristics of the electorate, demographic, population, needs, particular features such as mine, islands, health issues etc
- What are ethnic/tribal allegiances and what might this mean for voting patterns?
- Does the family support running? Absence of support can create great difficulty and personal stress for a woman running a campaign. It is not suggested that women without support should not run, but that an alternative means of personal support is available as the campaign will be demanding and stressful.

- Any affiliations with political parties, opportunities to join a party etc opportunities for financial support from a political party
- Work to establish a campaign team with a manager and some helpers whether paid/volunteer
- What safety and security issues might arise during campaigning and what is the strategy to address, i.e. a group to travel with the candidate etc
- Transport issues and costs, access to a truck, fuel, boat fuels etc. Accommodation while away from home.
- Finances for campaign, food, transport, travel, campaign materials, funds and allowances for campaign staff, media advertising, posters, radio spots, printing, incidentals such as loud hailer, clothes to present a neat professional appearance etc
- Awareness of the bribery issue which may affect voting outcomes
- Likelihood of contesting the election against those who have more experience, higher profile and better funding and better and higher level endorsement and support.

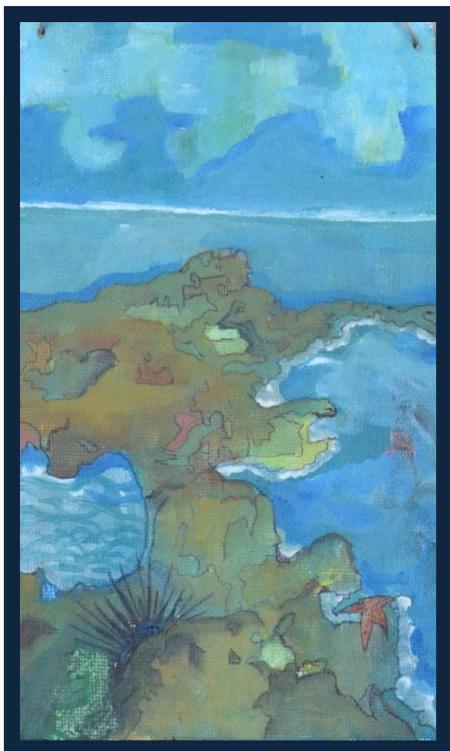
Programs to target women in business, public service, mining and any other walk of life in PNG to consider becoming a candidate and running for public office.

Programs to groom women for public decision making roles at all levels of the system with a view to both identifying leaders and providing experience to broaden the skills and develop the experience of potential leaders who might experience village level or Local-level leadership before embarking on a provincial or national campaign.

Development of candidates “campaign bilum” to provide practical information to assist women considering running for national or local-level Government about the kinds of things they will need to do to prepare. Examples include the need for an early decision to run, ensuring a broad support base, campaign planning, campaign financing, approaching a political party and strategies to effectively campaign with all sections of the community, not just those most likely to vote for the candidate.

Training does also need to address matters such as the system of government in PNG, role of government, governance, Parliamentary processes, Parliamentary ethics etc

## Campaigning



The women's campaigns were generally poorly run with insufficient understanding of what a campaign for a seat in National Parliament might require. Most made the decision and commenced campaigning too late, they generally had insufficient funds and inadequate campaign strategies.

Only three women participants reported having a campaign team. The rest predominantly relied on youths or family and friends as helping with their campaigns. Volunteer support was crucial and will always play an important part in a successful campaign, but most of the women were without any kind of professional or strategic advice based on experience in running a campaign for a seat in the National Parliament.

### **Who supported the women in their campaigns?**

The women reported that they were routinely accompanied on campaign travel by supporters from family, community groups, with women and youth groups mentioned most often, and church and local

supporters. Campaign assistance came from similar sources, with women most often citing assistance from family, community, tribal chiefs, church, family and friends, women and youths.

### **Campaign management and strategy**

Most women had campaign managers, but their effectiveness is in question. Twelve women thought the influence of their campaign manager was positive, but disturbingly, seven stated that their campaign managers had a negative influence on their campaign. One informed us that her campaign manager left without notice before the end of the campaign and another lost her campaign manager to another candidate during the campaign. This raises questions about the professionalism and suitability of those undertaking the role of campaign manager. The cost of professional campaign management was not accessible to most women candidates.

In reflecting on what might be needed for a 2017 campaign, most women gave a high priority to the importance of campaign assistance and a strategy.

### **Who voted for the women?**

The women themselves nominated women and youth as those most likely to vote for them. In questions on campaign strategy some women made it clear that they targeted women and youth in their campaigns and saw campaigning amongst those who were not their supported as a waste of resources.

## Campaign finances

The amount spent on the election contest varied widely. The lowest was K5,000 and the greatest reported was K300,000. Ten spent less than K20,000 and eight spent between K50,000 and K100,000.

The most heavily reported campaign expense was transport which was stated by nineteen respondents. This was followed by food, logistics and allowances. Three recorded expenditure on posters or campaign materials but it was disquieting to note that only one specifically recorded expenditure on a media campaign.

Women themselves were the biggest investors in their own campaigns together with friends and family. Only six reported fundraising activities which is concerning given that the women overwhelming nominated lack of funds as an issue in their campaigns. Only five reported receiving financial support from political parties and every one of those five women had multiple sources of campaign funds and did not rely only on the political party for campaign finance. Every political party official who participated in the Workshop emphasized the importance of women contributing some part of their campaign finances, with one official saying the division should be 75% from the candidate and 25% from the political party.

Their answers to questions about fundraising ahead of 2017 showed some change of approach where fundraising ahead of 2017 featured significantly. However, candidates still looked to their own fundraising efforts, with thirteen naming “do business” or other private money making activities and nine stating fundraising as a way of raising funds. In naming lessons learnt from the 2012 election experience, the strongest response was adequate funding with proper planning as the next.

## Findings

The women were facing a lack of community preparedness to see women as credible national leaders.

The women, with one or two exceptions, were not properly prepared for a campaign to win a seat in the National Parliament.

The most common shortcomings in the approach of the women to their campaigns were:

- The decision to contest was made or acted upon too late;
- The women candidates had insufficient funds to undertake a campaign and cover food travel, materials such as posters, loud hailers etc, media strategies and spots, payments and per diems for campaign staff;
- They did not have a broad strategy for targeting voters and tended to target those who were more likely to vote for them and left out the harder to win voters such as the men and the male leaders (those who have real influence in the community and whose endorsement might help a campaign);
- There was no effective campaign strategy or no strategy at all;
- Approaches to political parties were too late and not credible because they did not address the criteria most important to political parties in choosing a candidate;

- Their community influence and popularity was too narrowly concentrated among women's groups and youth. They needed to broaden their profile and appeal.
- For the women candidates and those supporting and encouraging them, there has been a tendency to neglect adult male voters with a likely detriment to the broad appeal and electoral success of the candidate.

### *Recommendations*

A recommendation is made above in the Report about a "campaign bilum" or written guide to assist women to understand what might be required in running a campaign for Local level or National level electorate. This manual should include a detailed module in campaign management aimed at both candidates and their managers. It would be a comprehensive and simply written guide aimed at basic levels of literacy for women and their supports when considering contesting an election in PNG, whether national, local or provincial. The issues for planning a campaign will be similar at all levels of government and in many cases, its advisable for a woman to begin at the lower level to groom herself for leadership and learn about governance, so a manual to cover all government levels is recommended. This will address the basic requirements of planning, financing, campaign strategy, political parties, building a broad public profile, covering a geographically difficult constituency etc. The manual needs to address approaching political parties for endorsement.

The women need early and realistic advice about what kinds of funds might be needed to run a campaign for a seat in the national Parliament. It might be helpful, in this context to outline three styles of campaign of increasing level of sophistication and cost including naming specific items on which funds might be spent depending on the nature and sophistication of the campaign which could be afforded.

- Paying campaign staff or paying out of pocket expenses for paid and volunteer staff
- Paying specialist advisors such as financial advisers, media advisers and political or campaign advisers;
- Food for campaign staff and for rallies and meetings during the campaign;
- Travel and accommodation;
- Hire of vehicles including cars, trucks and boats and fuel;
- Materials such as posters, loud hailer etc ;
- Hire of venues, meeting rooms etc as necessary;
- Payment of advertising in print media or radio spots; and
- Clothes to present a professional appearance.

Projects or activities which would help women and the community accept women better as leaders. This also includes temporary special measures which are mentioned separately below.

## Voting and counting

Discussions in the focus groups suggested a disturbing level of bribery, corruption and violent intimidation of voters and officials during the 2012 elections.

*The alert candidate will get at the people conducting the common roll update with money to ensure the names of people in his area are inflated and those in areas of opposing candidates are deflated.*

*He will have to follow his handy work all the way to the printing of the rolls to ensure that his false figures are confirmed in the common roll.*

*Then he will get at the senior election officials to ensure that the distribution of ballot papers is done selectively. This is a crucial area where there is a lot of corrupt activity taking place.*

The National

Editorial, June 15, 2012

They reported bribery of officials and police officers, and in particular reserve police. In some electorates, they alleged that voting was considered a formality as the winner had already been decided. Law and order and security problems were widespread. There were many issues with ballot boxes. These included late arrival, confusion as to use for both open and provincial electorates and “exhaustion of ballot boxes” which means voting more than once to finish all the ballot papers brought to the voting venue. Other reports said there was rushed counting of votes, bribery of officials, no identification for election officials and frequent suspension of counting. Insufficient training of voting officials was a common complaint.

Reports were consistent across many electorates and were agreed on by women, political parties and media representatives. The reports point to a serious level of corruption and violence which raises questions about the legitimacy of the outcomes in some electorates. If this small sample of all candidates who stood in the 2012 election is accurate across PNG, then it suggests and egregious distortion of a system where bribery, corruption and violent intimidation of voters is common

and either uncontrolled or condoned by those responsible for the integrity of the election and for maintaining public order. Such practices potentially distort outcomes in many electorates across PNG.

### The Common Roll

All were unhappy with the accuracy of the common roll. Complaints were made about the use of ghost names. In focus groups, issues with the common roll were mentioned repeatedly. It was clearly a cause of great frustration and many cited its inaccuracies as a serious impediment to their electoral changes. Some reported many eligible voters were not included on the roll.

### Polling officials

Reports about polling officials were almost universally negative. Over half of the respondents made negative comments on the behavior of polling officials. Some were confined to “not helpful, but most made very serious allegations about bribery and corruption. Comments such as “got bribes”, “lie a lot” and “already aligned with their candidate of choice” were common responses. This was further reinforced by similar stories and remarks in the focus groups. It was clear that there

was significant frustration and anger at the disadvantages routinely encountered by women in the process of vote counting. “bribery rife, money talks loudest” and “Heavily bribed, so cheated in counting”. Only two made positive comments that the polling officials were very good and helpful.

There were also many reports of violence and intimidation. Voters being stood over or simply transported or led to ballot box by candidate so they would vote for that candidate. Scrutineers were prevented from doing their job by security personnel who required them to move so far away from the vote counting that they could not scrutineer.

Gazetted voting schedules were not followed. Ballot boxes tampered with, similar handwriting on many ballot papers suggesting the same person had filled them in. Scrutineers were not sufficiently trained on the elimination process, so could be manipulated. Security threats and non payment of scrutineers led to suspension of voting in several areas, supporters of candidates holding themselves out to be security officials and threatening others during the counting process.

Political party officials agreed with the women’s account of the conduct of voting and counting. They spoke of intimidation, bribery, collusion between scrutineers and polling officials.

Illiteracy led to high informal votes and even manipulation by the educated (to advantage the candidates other than those preferred by the illiterate person)

### *Findings*

Reports of corruption, bribery, violent intimidation and interference with ballot papers were widespread amongst all participants including media and political party officials.

Voting was not secret

This raises questions about the legitimacy of outcomes in some electorates.

Bribery, corruption and violent intimidation impact all voters and candidates, but impact more harshly on women candidates and voters.

### *Recommendations*

A copy of this report should be sent to the relevant authorities charged with responsibility for the integrity of the electoral process and for maintaining law and order as counting is undertaken

## **Gender and cultural issues**

All participants agreed that gender and cultural impediments exist for women as candidates for the National Parliament. They differed somewhat as to the nature and effect of the impediments.

While many women reported support for women candidates arising from renewed interest in women’s participation and representation in the National Parliament, they also reported that politics continues to be viewed as a “mans game” only. Participants among the women candidates and from the political parties stated their belief that Chiefs make the final decision about his people’s choice for in the election for some communities. Others said theirs was a patrilineal society and had male leaders only.

While some reported a new interest in women candidates stemming from public discussion about reserve seats and women's participation and from disillusionment with some existing male politicians, many thought the new interest did not outweigh cultural and community obligations to vote as directed by the chief or for local male leaders. Others reported being treated with disrespect and even outright hostility as women candidates.

In focus groups, the women opined that rural people are misled into thinking that Parliament is for men, not women. Women thought more work was needed to be done to increase a broad community willingness to entertain the idea of women leaders and women politicians.

Women in urban electorates reported more strongly that people welcomed female candidates. The women picked up a community perception that men had not served them well as leaders and women may be a welcome alternative. Despite this, they also asked the question "If women are seen as good alternative candidates, why did the women not win?"

All participants thought that the strong presence of violence, intimidation and corruption reported by almost all Workshop participants in 2012 election disadvantaged women. While violence and intimidation affected all voters, women, in particular, suffer more from threats and intimidation during elections". "Previously women are forced to vote for candidates of chosen by their husband or Chief". "Most women are told by their husbands which candidate to vote".

Women showed considerable enthusiasm for separate polling booths for women with fifteen participants believing that these would assist "because they can exercise freedom of choice without being influenced". One respondent introduced a note of caution; "my area had separate booths, but that did not deter men from intimidating women".

### Temporary special measures

*Obstacles to educational and other opportunities which face women at present should be removed, and insofar as it is within the power of the Government to do so, the difficulties facing women who wish to involve themselves in the affairs of the nation should be reduced.*  
*Constitutional Planning Committee Report, 1974, Paragraph 22*

The women discussed the systemic obstacles to adequate participation and representation for women in National Parliament, provincial government and Local-level government. The use of temporary special measures was discussed, noting that their use is specifically enabled in the PNG Constitution.

The women were enthusiastic supporters of temporary special measures.

*The UN Women study, "Who Answers to Women: Gender and Accountability," suggests that special temporary measures are the way to attain these goals [of good governance and equal participation].*

*Party quotas to bring more women into party leadership have proven indispensable for ensuring not only that women's issues are on party platforms, but that there is a stronger pool of women candidates in electoral contests.<sup>9</sup>*

The discussion also included acknowledgment that there is benefit in pursuing leadership roles in Local-level Government or governance roles on public statutory boards. This experience can help “groom” women for leadership; providing valuable political and governance experience and contacts, expand their public profile and garner broader community recognition. These assets will greatly assist a woman seeking to launch a campaign for a seat in the National Parliament

### **Findings**

The system continues to throw impediments in every step along the way of women gaining experience in leadership in villages, communities, local level government, provinces and the national Parliament.

Women candidates and voters suffered from bribery, corruption and violent intimidation at booths across PNG.

The community discussion which took place as a result of the work to bring reform to the national Parliament via nominated seats and then reserve seats created community interest in the participation and representation of women which advantaged women in the 2012 election campaign.

The achievement of three women in the National Parliament is an historical high and shows progress, but progress remains painfully slow as three MP's comprise 2.7% with a global average of 20% and a Pacific average of 15%.

Temporary special measures are a way to recalibrate a system which is distorted in shutting out a section of the community which should have equal opportunity for participation and representation

The women were overwhelmingly in support of temporary special measures including 22 reserve seats, although it appears that the O'Neil Government has decided to put this reform on hold.

The current responsible Minister for Community Development, the Hon Loujoya Toni is on the public record as being opposed to the 22 reserve seats

There are a number of options for temporary special measures, other than reserve seats in the National Parliament.

### **Recommendations**

Support execution of temporary special measures at all levels of the system such as:

- quotas for women in political parties in winnable seats,
- a requirement for inclusion of more women in Provincial Assemblies,

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<sup>9</sup> Quoted in UN Women “Asia Pacific calls for Urgent Increase to Low Participation of Women in Politics” <http://www.unwomen.org/2013/02/asia-pacific-calls-for-urgent-increase-to-low-participation-of-women-in-politics/> accessed 3 Feb 2013.

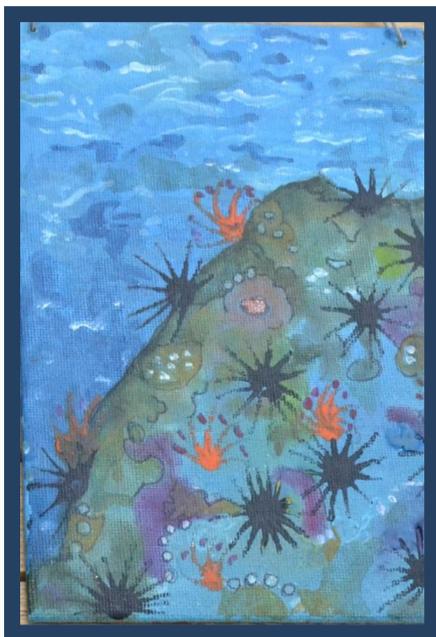
- a requirement of at least one in women the Joint Provincial Planning and Budget Priorities Committees of the Provinces, and Joint District Planning and Budget Priorities Committees at local-level Government; and
- quotas for women on statutory boards such as school boards, public hospital boards and provincial health authority boards.

Continue to press for 22 reserve seats as the Government has announced the initiative is “on hold while assessing the practical implications of the proposal in the light of other pressing electoral issues facing PNG”.<sup>10</sup>

Support recently announced Government request for submission to shift the Office of the Development of Women to the Prime Ministers Department under his Ministerial administration.

These measures be accompanied by social marketing to raise awareness of the potential advantage to all Papua New Guineas from diversity in leadership at all levels of public decision making.

## Political Parties



Political party support and endorsement was low among the group. Seven of the participants were endorsed by a political party, while sixteen did not have endorsement despite seventeen seeking endorsement. Eleven women ran as independent candidates.

In focus groups, the women expressed disappointment with political parties and their willingness to endorse candidates and to financially support them. “Lot of excuses and never supported me”, “no response to my profile which I submitted”, “did not explain to me why they did not support me”. Some had positive experiences and reported these: “very positive”. “The party was very happy to support me in media usage, posters, nomination fees and large banners”.

The women reported joining political parties to receive logistical support and because of an avowed belief in the policies of the party for which endorsement was sought. No candidate put forward the position that political parties may serve as a platform from which to launch leadership aspirations or consolidate power in Parliament. The answers

<sup>10</sup>Speech of Dr Puka Temu, public Services Minister, on behalf of the Prime Minister as reported in the *Post Courier*, 31 January 2013.

provided in the Workshop indicated that the women did not see themselves as part of the powerful leadership groups entering into agreements to gain power and further political aspirations in political parties.

Fifteen women reported being approached by a political party for endorsement which suggests that there is a more complex situation in relation to political parties. Despite the women reporting frustration with political parties and the parties themselves expressing reservations about the approach and expectations of the women, over half of the women received approaches from political parties.

By contrast political parties expressed disappointment and frustration with the women candidate's unrealistic expectations of what assistance might be provided by a political party. All political parties complained that women candidates were very late in approaching them for support. Women made approaches months or even weeks before the election. Parties said approaches should be made several years before an election. Some political parties will only endorse candidates who are members.

Political parties also thought the women candidates lacked understanding about what might be the criteria for political parties and what support might be realistically expected by endorsed candidates.

Women need to consider the breadth of their appeal and the data collected for this Report suggests that they did not. They found their appeal was to women and young people and to some extent, those with disabilities. There was no recorded effort to bridge the gap to appeal as a candidate to male voters. Two parties reported sending out members to gauge public opinion about candidates. Others did not respond to the question on gauging public opinion. There were nine respondents who varied in role. Three were presidents, three were Secretary's General, one council member, one treasurer and one Secretary/public officer. The policy priorities of the parties varied. The Triumph Heritage party had, as part of its platform, empowering women, ensuring women are elected. Four parties had a focus on rural livelihoods and agricultural development. Health and education were mentioned by three, and good governance by two. Only one mentioned commercial entrepreneurship. It would be interesting to do more work on the policy platforms of all political parties to help women better target those with which their own policy objectives align.

Political parties varied in their selection processes, but all reported a process which included screening, shortlisting or consideration by a party council, committee or executive.

### **Criteria for endorsement of candidates**

The most often repeated answers to what political parties look for in a candidate are as follows:

- good standing in the community ;
- popularity or public profile;
- "broad appeal" and "real winning chances"
- adequate resources;
- Previous electoral experience and success
- Time living in the area. Prefer not to have "tourist candidates" who live in POM and only travel to the electorate from time to time. This can be countered by significant time spent in the electorate

- How “winnable” is the electorate for that candidate? Does he/she have capacity to beat a current incumbent? Has that candidate contested before and done well?
- references from church groups, community leaders etc;
- Criteria may differ slightly depending on the electorate and the particular needs, local issues and voting patterns of that electorate
- tertiary education
- Christian values
- a candidate who has been participating in community activities, church activities, customary obligations, sports groups etc.
- Personality and an ability to make an impression and to draw and communicate effectively with a crowd is important.

The political parties who participated did report views which, if held across political parties in PNG will work against the endorsement of women. One Political party official stated that “Males dominate decision making, thus when a woman is endorsed in this male dominated society where males are traditionally preferred to lead, the male population will force a decision on their wives who to vote for, which will be the male candidate most times”. Another party official said their party did not support women candidates because it did not have enough money to fund women candidates.

Political parties did not report great use of social media. One reported having a facebook page and three reported monitoring media. Some did not respond to the question. Five of the parties were newly formed in 2012 and did not contest the 2007 election. Seven of the nine parties endorsed women candidates and none reported endorsing them for 2007, although only three of the parties answering were formed in 2007. Seven parties reported a willingness to increase women candidates in 2017, although several added caveats about participation in the party, and chances of winning.

Some political parties provided training to endorsed candidates on background and philosophy of the party in one case, and how to campaign effectively.

All political parties agreed they had some responsibility to foster and support women candidates. A view that would be supported by their willingness to attend the election Diagnostic Workshop. One also saw the State as having responsibility to foster women candidates, while two saw the women themselves as holding some responsibility. Two were opposed to reserve seats, and three supported them. In offering advice to women who wanted the endorsement of the party in 2017, they suggested joining the party and becoming familiar with party policies and philosophy, building a public profile and working with the party, gaining popularity, being of good character and accumulating adequate resources and demonstrating leadership in the chosen electorate.

### *Findings*

Most prominent politicians in PNG are members or leaders of political parties.

Political party membership is an important opportunity for potential and current leaders to consolidate their position and increase their opportunity to gain power.

The women were generally not successful in attracting political party support.

Some political parties are unwilling to contemplate women as potential leaders or potentially successful candidates, but blame this attitude on current cultural attitudes.

Women failed to approach political parties in a way likely to increase their chances of endorsement. They could have better managed their chances with political parties by doing the following:

- Approach a political party at least two years prior to an election
- Draft a profile which sets out education, any governance or political experience, campaign plan, current campaign finances, policy interests and alignments, some summary of community regard and community profile including groups which support and local leaders endorsements.
- Join a political party whose endorsement is sought
- Attend political rallies
- Accumulate their own resources to contribute to their campaigns
- Understand what political parties can do and better manage approaches and expectations.

### *Recommendations*

The “candidates bilum” for women in elections have a chapter on approaching political parties and include material on all aspects of preparing an approach well before it is made.

## **The Media and the 2012 Election**

### **What did the women candidates say?**



Six representatives of the media joined the Election Diagnostic Workshop and worked for a variety of media outlets including Post Courier, the National, FM100, NBC and Kundu2.

The Media participants agreed that the media shapes public opinion. It does this by writing or broadcasting on issues. The way the story is written or reported can lead the public to believe what the media outlet would like it to believe. This applies to both print and broadcast media although the two are slightly different. The media also responds to what people want to read or watch as that will see the newspaper or generate listeners or viewers.

Journalists are careful when presenting sensitive stories and adhere to journalistic ethics. Radio announcers are concerned for their security, so also take care. Editors make the final decision. Sometimes editors call the responsible journalist to verify the story. If a broadcast discussion becomes controversial, discussion may be halted. Research is done ahead of the discussion to ensure proper preparation.

All media outlets reported having regular meetings throughout the election period to ensure fairness in coverage, interesting angles and balance. In nominating three big stories from the election, all nominated three women elected or women candidates. They also nominated election related violence, problems with missing ballot boxes and common roll woes, ousting of veteran politicians in the election and a record number of political parties.

Other matters of interest on which stories might be written included pre election and post election issues, campaign stories, return of writs, counting, declaration of winning candidates and its aftermath.

Journalists reported that sometimes they receive direction about subject matter for a story and sometimes they seek out a story themselves. The decision about whether a story is printed or goes to air rests with subeditors, executive producers news producer and editor or director. A story which is potentially front page or could lead a news bulletin would have a human angle and be politically related, national interest, violence, money, corruption, children, national security or be unusual, controversial or have an interesting angle.

Participants in the Diagnostic Workshop in their Focus Group discussions and in responses to questionnaires said that journalistic ethics were adhered to in the main. Some instances of targeting politicians with negative stories by journalists with a grudge were cited and some efforts by politicians to “buy “ favor with lunches, dinners, hospitality etc, but generally few instances of this kind of behavior were reported by the group.

Journalists reported that in choosing stories, they were mostly responsive to events rather than having time to cover large features. Decisions about larger features are made sometimes by the journalist him or herself, sometimes in editorial meetings and sometimes the journalist pursues the story. Stories were written or aired about women in the elections. Participants reported that editors and producers were interested in election stories about women. “Angles” which might make a story more likely to feature included “women making a difference – beating the odds”, something extraordinary about the woman, voter support, winning margin, her determination, courage and success. Generally, journalists thought the public were interested in stories about women, although one expressed doubts that men supported women in Parliament. They did see public interest in stories about women candidates and as women unrepresented in Parliament.

Interesting characteristics of a story might include seat being contested, forerunners in public opinion, candidates with an existing profile, something additional to offer human interest, or an element of scandal. Focus groups acknowledged that bad news sells newspapers and negative stories are often featured by all media outlets.

*Journalists collect news, what goes on, the public consumes this information, so definitely the media shapes the public opinion  
(media participant)*

When asked whether their media organization had specific features or programs on women candidates, there were many positive responses. Respondents referred to shows covering women’s issues, interviews with women with experience in the National Parliament, well performing women being targeted for coverage, and the example of Delilah Gore was given.

The respondents noted that women did not interact well with the media and were lacked savvy in building contact with the media or advising various media outlets of upcoming events. The media representatives made the comment that the women should have approached them and made their contact details available. Media participants stated that when they have the contact details of the women candidates, they do keep in contact with them and seek to cover some of their stories during the campaign.

The participants in the Workshop would agree. The women were aware of the importance of the media to gaining exposure and broad publicity during their campaigns but few demonstrated practical understanding of how to achieve coverage or how to develop and media strategy. Most women did not comment on questions about how to use media initiatives to raise awareness and support for women's representation.

In answer to a question about how women can increase their media profile and generate an interesting story about themselves, suggestions included employing a PR specialist, involving media in their activities, being media friendly and possessing oratory skills and establishing a good relationship with the media. Media strategies suggested by respondents included:

- Have a media strategy with a budget
- Provide media outlets with contact details and keep media informed of campaign events of interest, ensuring plenty of notice
- If possible, have a PR to consistently liaise with the media on campaign activities
- Have realistic expectations of media coverage, i.e. understand that pieces are edited, don't always run immediately and may not be run at all depending on the decision of editors, producers etc.
- Putting forward strong and real stories
- Early campaigning start projects
- Engage in community activities
- Always comment on issues
- Identify journalists who show more interest in covering women candidates and supply them with information
- Engage media in campaign
- Participate on talkshows
- Align with relevant partners such as UN Women
- Demonstrate personal characteristics such as:
  - Be vocal
  - Be authentic
  - Be persistent in pursuing media coverage
- Monthly meeting with media
- Build media contacts and be media friendly
- Pay for airtime advertisement (and ensure payment is made when required)

The media representatives saw ongoing liaison with organizations such as UN Women of assistance in helping them better understand some of the broader issues on gender equality and systemic discrimination faced by the women. They also saw value in programs such as Lahara program run by

UPNG and saw benefit in sponsorships to relevant workshops in PNG and overseas. They also saw value in UN Women and UN AIDS gender and media forum group.

### *Findings*

The story told by journalists suggests that the media was a missed opportunity for many women or for the story of women candidates as a whole.

Journalists and the public did want to hear about women candidates and the issue of their under representation in Parliament.

### *Recommendations*

Women need to engage more effectively with the media and programs should target this need.

Specific media training may assist women to be more savvy in their media engagement.

A donor or agency might consider commissioning a person with journalistic and media skills to find good stories and help women prepare them to be offered to the media.

Agencies such as UN Women can help by continuing to liaise with media and provide contact, background and broad stories of women's representation

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**Report reviewed and endorsed.**

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Bukikun', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the left.

**Julie Bukikun  
Senior National Programme Specialist  
PNG CO**