

**Women Want Peace:
Ending conflict and
violence against women
in the two new provinces
of Papua New Guinea's
Highlands region.**

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DRAFT for discussion

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Women Want Peace: Ending conflict and violence against women in the two new provinces of Papua New Guinea's Highlands region.

Elizabeth Cox, 2017

This chapter examines violence against women in two recently established provinces in the Highlands region of Papua New Guinea. Both have a legacy of tribal conflict and wars, and high levels of violence against women. Hela province was born out of a local tribal competition, and the demand of the dominant tribe for electoral boundaries that would enable them to gain monopoly control of promised shares, royalties and other benefits from the exploitation of rich liquified natural gas (LNG) resources. Jiwaka was created to relieve population pressure and bring government presence, administration, goods and services closer to remote rural and agricultural communities. With the serious decline of the coffee industry, introduced to accelerate economic development in the last decade of Australian colonialism, Jiwaka's greatest productive resource is its fertile land, its proficient female farmers and proximity to local and national markets.

Hela Province, is 'resource-cursed', impacted by vast mining, oil and gas projects that have expanded over twenty-five-years, in a context of chronic under-development, lawlessness, frequent declarations of state of emergency and deployments of special mobile police forces and military to put down landowner unrest and protest. Delivery of basic goods and services is minimal, constantly disrupted, and women are subjected to a horrific combination of old, new extreme and mutated forms of violence.

The politicians and people of **Jiwaka Province** may consider themselves less fortunate because they have no known, exploitable natural resources and no immediate prospect of large-scale extractive industries. There is an agricultural province, with an ailing male-dominated coffee industry but a dynamic and diversifying women-led food production and trade that is the real cornerstone of the local economy.

The chapter explores the political economy of conflict and violence in two divergent development settings, analyzing the impact of men's development priorities and decisions on women's organization, productivity, opportunities and agency in local social and economic development. It explores the space afforded (or denied) to women to organize and to work with men to influence government and to challenge and change the subordinate status of women, the harmful customary and contemporary practices and the specific and mutating conflicts and weapons that Highlands men use to control, diminish and terrorise women.

War, violence and women in culture, governance and development

In 1975, newly independent Papua New Guinea (PNG) adopted a home-grown, constitution, well aligned with key human rights treaties and cognizant of political, economic and social crises in resource-rich African and South American states. Recognizing the potential for environmental destruction, loss of productive lands, neglect of a promising agricultural sector, landlessness, poverty and conflict, authors of the constitution urged restraint in natural resource exploitation and prioritisation people-centred development, enabling access to essential services and equality and participation across sex, class and challenging cultural and geographical divides (Report of the Constitutional Planning Committee, 1974).

Five years after independence, PNG's (then) non-government peak body for women voiced outrage over high levels of normalized spousal and sexual violence, committed with virtual impunity. They took groundbreaking, progressive steps towards law reform, conducting nationwide research, popular campaigns and advocating directly to parliament for legislation to protect women and girls from violence. But their law reform efforts were disregarded, blocked, and delayed by the development priorities and decisions of successive male-dominated parliaments over the ensuing decades. PNG's powerful men could not agree that violence against women is never acceptable.

Male dominated post-independence parliaments forged economy that ignored the traditional division of labour in which women play a critical, productive role, predominantly as farmers/gardeners, food producers and traders. Rendering women's economic contribution invisible and dismissing it as insignificant, served to lower the status of women, and deny them opportunities to fulfil the potential for local diversified economies, built on their agricultural knowledge and expertise. National and local governments' gender-blind pursuit of revenues has led to neglect of food production and enabled the desecration, exploitation and corruption of many public markets that. In the absence of other economic opportunities, this is the workplace of thousands

of women and the livelihood that supports families across the country. A succession of patriarchal governance and neoliberal development policies has ignored enduring tribal wars, the proliferation of guns, the reign of terror, lawlessness, escalating incidence of heinous physical and sexual crimes committed with impunity against women and girls, in Highlands societies.

It has taken PNG thirty years to legislate to protect women and girls from violence. Recent GBV law reform¹ is the result of long-term advocacy and action led by non-government women's rights organizations, rather than political will and state budgetary support. The State has failed to acknowledge or address a national crisis of gender-based violence and steadfastly refuses to accept that it is exacerbated by an economy now dependent on extractive industry revenues. Programs to operationalize and enforce GBV law and policies are almost exclusively donor-dependent, as state resources continue to be directed to securing the operations of mines and to finance political patronage.

The UN Committee on the elimination of all forms of discrimination against women (UNCEDAW), the UN Special Rapporteur on Violence Against Women (UNSRVAW) have urged the PNG government to accelerate and implement GBV law reform and deal with a resurgence of tribal fighting and sorcery-related killings. (PNG State report to UN CEDAW, 2010; NGO report to CEDAW, 2010; UNHRC 2011, 2013). But few PNG provinces have progressive women's organizations, familiar with and capable of leveraging the United Nations (UN) Human rights system to force the state to follow through on treaty obligations, and UN recommendations, to address the humanitarian crises emerging regions affected by a combination of aggressive multinational extractive industries (EI), enduring local conflict and endemic violence against women.

PNG now has twenty provinces, plus a National Capital District, (the seat of government) and a former province, now post-conflict Autonomous Region of Bougainville (AROB). Two 'new' provinces, Jiwaka and Hela, were established through declaration of new, electoral boundaries in 2012. They join five existing provinces to constitute the populous inland Highlands Region (see Fig. 1, below)

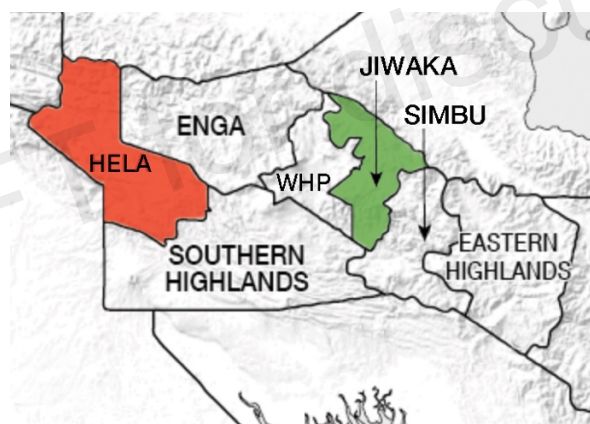


Fig.1 The seven provinces of the PNG Highlands region.

The Highlands Region is home to forty percent of the PNG's total population of eight million. Three of its seven provinces are heavily impacted by large-scale gold, oil or gas industries that government and investors frequently refer to as 'world class' – and the 'dynamic drivers' of PNG's economy. All of the Highlands provinces experience ongoing and destructive tribal conflict, the legacy of ancient and ritualized cycles of war and peace that were part of traditional politics and economies. The warring has not gone away, but these days battles are fought with high-powered weapons and grenades, and the motivation, intention and consequences are vastly different. Traditional rules of engagement have disappeared, and a generation of culturally dislocated youth have taken over. Women are targeted in ways not allowed in customary rules of engagement.

Late colonial impact, enduring patriarchy and accelerated social and economic development

In the 1930s, fifty years after the colonisation of PNG's coastal and island regions, gold prospectors and colonial-sponsored explorers undertook the first expeditions into the mountainous interior- now known as the Highlands Region. There they encountered large patriarchal and agricultural societies and complex cultures

built on cycles of war, peace, compensation and exchange². Australian colonial rule was eventually expanded into the Highlands region, several decades later, after the second world war (WWII)³.

In contrast, many people of PNG's coastal and Island regions, experienced nearly a century of colonial administration, heavy-handed law enforcement and Christian conversions. Over time this resulted in the adoption of introduced political, economic, cultural and religious systems, which brought about a progressive decline in violent conflict between tribes, belief in sorcery that justified murder and other traditional customs deemed harmful to women and girls.

The heavily populated Highlands region not only has a very different culture, but also a far shorter history of colonial-enforced administration, rule of law and social, political and administrative change. For barely two decades Highlanders were forced to stop tribal fights and to reconsider and change their violent control over women. Punitive measures were applied to law-breakers through 'native courts' presided over by Australian colonial officers. Australia's young male colonial officers were often ill-equipped to understand, intervene and adjudicate appropriately in cases of complex, traditional cycles of violent conflict. Up until the eve of independence in 1975, thousands of Highlands men, who persisted with tribal fighting were regularly imprisoned. The Highlands men who had to face the courts did not blindly conform to western values, norms and laws. Rather, they consciously strategized ways to avoid prison sentences or at least minimize the impact of imprisonment on their all-important, customary political and economic activities and obligations, linked to the ownership of land, control of women and transactions valuable pig and shell currency. (Reay, 2014)

Early anthropological studies of Highlands societies (1940s-1980s) spanning the tribes now living in Hela and Jiwaka provincial boundaries, describe gender norms and relations characterized by high levels of violent male control over women's fertility and productive labour. Powerful Highlands men were traditionally permitted many wives and flirtations. Men arranged the marriage of pubescent to men – who may have many wives and might be elderly – but who could offer high brideprice and strategic economic and political ties. Repeated resistance or attempted escapes by reluctant brides met with violence ostracism, stigmatisation and an unsettled life. Anthropology documents women who demonstrated agency in spite of the threat of banishment. (Reay, 2014, Wardlow, 2016: Harvey-Kelley, 1995). Women accused of adultery, imagined or actual, were punished with brutal beatings, marital rape and gang rape. Female suicide was not uncommon. (Read, 1965; Josephides, 1975; Reay 1959, 1966 and 2014, Strathern, 1972)

Delivering justice to females subjected to traditionally sanctioned child marriage, physical and sexual assault of wives, torture and murder of alleged mostly female sorcerers, and conflict and murder between co-wives, presented a significant cross-cultural challenge for young, inexperienced Australian male colonial officers. It was naïve to assume that new norms of peace, the rule of law, and gender equality before the law, enforced by colonial courts, could deter men from forcing marriage or sanctioning physical and sexual violence used to control women. (Read, 1965, Reay 2013, Harvey-Kelley 1995)

Violent tribal conflict, child marriages and polygamy, common across the Highlands region and cultures, were temporarily curbed, but they re-surfaced post-independence, due to weak policing and the replacement of colonial Courts with Village Courts, presided over by traditional male leaders. For the last four decades, PNG's emerging law and justice system has allowed complaints of adultery, serious physical violence committed against reluctant brides or runaway brides, and rape in and outside of marriage to be handled by poorly trained, poorly paid and barely supervised Village Court Magistrates with no formal education. Only in the last decade has gender bias in Village Courts been tackled, through advocacy for women advocates, magistrates, and gender and human rights training conducted by NGOs and donors.

Gender-based physical and sexual violence, gender discriminatory social sanctions and stigmatization continue to be used to control women and girls across PNG's Highlands region. Armed violence remains the normative response to resolving old and new conflicts. Tribal warriors who once used spears and bows and arrows, then home-made guns, now use military style assault weapons (Alpers, 2004; 2005) During tribal wars, victimization of women is heightened – perpetrated by warriors, venting spouses and opportunistic hosts to displaced families. Rape is still a weapon of war. Notions of polygamy are exaggerated and distorted, and displaced women are preyed upon, when war renders men dependent and impotent to defend their wives, sisters and daughters.

Bougainville war consolidates gender relations of power and catalyses country-wide resource exploration and exploitation

PNG's first large mine, was established by the departing Australian colonial government, in the Islands region, former province of Bougainville. Here was one of PNG's few predominantly matrilineal indigenous cultures - where women decide on land use and inheritance, but their male relatives acts as their proxies, in public negotiations. Bougainville Women's opposition and resistance to the introduction of mining was ignored by male administrators and planners, and an opportunistic local male elite, who all denied women's traditional agency and voice and manipulated the situation to pursue personal wealth and careers in the corporate world of global extractive industries.

By 1988, the mine was violently shut down by an armed uprising of young, male, militant second generation landowners, cutting a vital source of state revenue, and rapidly escalating into a protest against environmental damage, inadequate distribution of benefits and demand for secession. The state resorted to a succession of violent military responses, enlisting the support of the expelled Australian mining company, foreign mercenaries and the Australian Defence Force. All failed and a civil war raged on the island for 12 years (1988-2000). Women suffered a decade of displacement, thousands of preventable deaths, murders, rapes and other crimes of sexual violence perpetrated by state and non-state actors. Women human rights defenders organised to address, document and publicise the terrible gendered impact of war, and finally convinced the factions of youthful militia, many of them 'child soldiers', to disarm. But external peace mediators ignored women and male ex-combatants seized the opportunity to displace women's leadership in long, drawn out peace negotiations, securing amnesty for their war crimes and reserved seats in the future autonomous government, equivalent to the number of seats advocated for long overdue women's political representation. During the two post-conflict decades, the state paid for some token reconciliation processes, often putting cash in male hands, but there has been no justice or reparation for women.

The constitution of the now Autonomous Region of Bougainville (AROB), established in 2002, provides for a referendum on independence from PNG to be held in 2019. Local male leaders, some of whom originally opposed the mine, are now advocating its re-opening, insisting it is essential for a viable economy in a proposed newly independent island state. Since peace was restored, women have continued to produce food on the land and trade their produce for cash on the local markets. They secure family livelihoods in high risk context, where gender based violence is rarely punished and caches of deadly weapons, left over from the Bougainville war, could be easily re-mobilized. Bougainville women are saying no to mining and are, once again, at the forefront of protest against the mine.

The island of Bougainville has come full circle. The PNG state has learned few lessons learned about the way large-scale extractive industry-based economies disrupt gender norms, reinforce unequal gendered power relationships, negate matrilineal authority or women's user rights to customary lands, fuel conflict and create a gun culture that undermines women's central, productive role in the locally owned economy.⁴

Ever since the Bougainville crisis, the state has prioritized law reform that enabled, accelerated and expanded extractive industries, rather consolidating rule of law, and delivering on the human and social development promises of the Constitution. Extractive industries have promoted as the key driver of PNG's economic development – accelerated by a global grab for mineral, oil and gas exploration permits and licenses and generous tax incentives – all of which are linked to graft and corruption among local and national leaders keen to accrue personal wealth and power. Papua New Guinea now has many very large extractive industry plants, fly-in-fly out (FIFO) operations, staffed by large, highly mobile, predominantly male workforces, mostly in very remote and least developed parts of the country. These EI enclaves are surrounded by displaced, disenchanted villages, informal settlements of migrant traders and sex workers. The security of EI plant, are managed by global security contractors and local police whose sustenance, uniforms, weapons, housing and transport are subsidized by the EI corporations.

Despite four decades, and several 'boom decades' of extractive industry revenue flows⁵, and significant Australian government donor funded programs focused on governance, law and justice and ending gender-based violence, PNG remains severely under-developed, conflict prone and one of the most dangerous places in the world to be female. Most citizens still live in under-serviced rural areas, and rely on village (custom) courts to mediate community, family and spousal conflict and violence. Most parts of the country are still without roads, electricity and safe water supply. Rates of maternal and infant mortality, illiteracy, corruption and crimes of violence against women (VAW) are ranked among the highest and most extreme in the world.

Women and girls are both collateral damage and the outright losers in PNG's EI based economy. Women's rights to own, access and use land are not codified in law. Patriarchal norms assume only men are landowners, justifying exclusion of women from direct receipt of royalty and rent payments. Women are the last and least

paid in crude male-controlled distribution systems of cash payments. Extractive industry developers and World Bank 'Women in Mining' programs claim to support women's political and economic empowerment but their efforts are token, too little, too late, essentially welfare-oriented and based on an ill-informed notions family relationships and living arrangements (Wardlow, 2014) The giant EI corporates turn a blind eye to women excluded from the flow of cash benefits. They do not provide local women with information, education, understanding, voice and agency to effectively identify, articulate and advocate their priorities, needs and concerns in a context of environmental destruction, armed tribal conflict and the daily risk violent physical or sexual assault or murder.

Women's rights, including the right to be free from all forms of violence are not a priority concern for Local Governments in EI impacted areas. They receive substantial cash grants from developers, but have limited will, capacity and a dismal record in translating their share of extractive industry rents into gender responsive sustainable, inclusive and locally owned and led development.

Ignoring drug, alcohol, gun proliferation enables conflict and violence against women to escalate

Drug and alcohol abuse have proliferated, unchecked, for decades in PNG and are now endemic across many rural and urban communities. For thirty years, local marijuana and alcohol production and trade has been largely ignored by the State and normalised⁶. Marijuana addiction and related psychoses are linked to domestic terrorism, rapid escalation of minor incidents into serious tribal conflicts, and the gendered hate crime of barbaric sexualized torture and mob killings of women and girls accused of practicing sorcery. (Be'Soer, 2010)

Since the 1980s, cross-border drug-for-arms trafficking has fueled illicit trade in small arms and heavy weapons. Black-markets in high-powered weapons are operated by Asian loggers and fishing fleets, Australian drug dealers, Indonesian soldiers and some corrupt and complicit PNG police and military officers profiting from illicit cross-border arms trade. Since the 1990s the state has been aware of increasing individual ownership and tribal caches of lethal high-powered weapons, especially concentrated in the Highlands regions. (Alpers, 2004, 2005) Yet successive governments have ignored urgent recommendations for State action to disarm ordinary citizens, criminal youth and tribal warriors.

Forty percent of PNG's population live in the seven Highlands provinces. Most are terrorized by gun violence and worsening violent crime against women. Highlands tribal conflicts involve the use of lethal arms and cause terror, massive loss of property and economic resources, and direct and indirect loss of lives. Cycles of conflict are ignited by the smallest of incidents that involve ancient feuds, enmities, or more contemporary disputes over claims to EI-rents and benefits or disputed election results. Traditional conflict resolution can take up to ten years when peacemaking rests on demands for inflated, cash-based compensation payments. Thousands of productive members of Highlands farming communities may be internally displaced, their coffee plantations and small businesses destroyed and their access to large tracts of productive land denied. Women's gardening lands vital to subsistence, food security, and agricultural trade, can become fighting zones or no-go zones and virtual wastelands for up to a decade.

Tribal conflict destroys productive resources and assets and displaced villagers are constantly seeking refuge on the land of obliging neighbouring tribes. In Melanesian cultural context, Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) incur traditional debts with their hosts. IDPs' use of host tribes' shelter and productive use of land incurs indebtedness. Displaced men are humiliated, and desperate to return to their customary lands because they are unable protect their women from violence (BeSoer, 2008, Kini 2008) They focus on raising quick cash, buying weapons and local warlords and their private armies emerge as they prepare to fight back for their land. Members of warring tribes are forced to contribute 'war taxes' for illegal purchase of weapons. Men and boys are pressured to join fighting and women and girls are forced to surrender their incomes and savings to fund clan arsenals. Women are also frequently forced under duress into high-risk 'errands' like sourcing and smuggling ammunition. (Kilipi, L. 2010, personal communication) High-powered guns are also used in election campaigns, tribal fights and in intimate partner and family violence. The Highlands region also has its hired guns - dubbed 'Rambos' - mercenary 'hit men' who are contracted in tribal and political conflicts across the region.

The regular police serving EI affected populations are overwhelmed by the heightened security issues and new and inevitable local conflicts that emerge as people compete for benefits. Special mobile police units and military personnel, who are frequently deployed to protect extractive industry plants to quell tribal fights or prevent disruption of Highlands elections, constantly complain about their disadvantaged position, because

they are 'out-gunned' by the high-powered weaponry now commonly used by young warriors in the surrounding community. (Alpers, 2004, 2005, Main 2017)

The quest for peace and an end to violence against women: The case of two new Highlands Provinces

PNG's two newest provinces, established in 2012, pose critical development challenges, particularly in relation to progressing equal participation, opportunity, access and benefits for women and girls in line with PNG's constitution. Can these new and formative provincial and local governments, prioritise policies and budgets to end armed tribal conflict and gender-based violence? Can equality, peace and gender equitable development co-exist with an extractives-based economy?

The provincial 'capital / administrative centre of Hela province, is the tiny township Tari. It scattered rural population still live of the land, but have been heavily impacted by almost three decades of extractive industries. This has created pre-occupation with access to cash, and has increasingly heavily armed and lethal tribal conflict and crimes of violence committed against women in the private and public domain. Jiwaka Province, in the central Highlands, has no extractive industries, but straddles the Highlands Highway –the critical supply line to the gold mines and gas plants in the several remote Highlands provinces, including the new Hela province. The boundaries of the new Jiwaka province include the first areas of the Highlands to be colonized, post WWII, and the centre pre-independence coffee industry acceleration.

Hela History, culture and economy

Hela Province, is made up of three districts that were formally part of the Southern Highlands Province (SHP), where Australian colonial presence was established in early 1950s. Since the 1980s -1990s, the area has hosted massive exploitation of oil and gas fields. Local politics and administration have disrupted by instability, poor governance and tribal conflict. The 2002 Southern Highlands elections failed. In 2006, Mendi, the capital town of Southern Highlands, was brought to the brink with massive social unrest and violence to persons and property. A state of emergency was declared, and the army was brought in to restore order and oversee the 2007 elections. The 2012 elections were mired in unrest and following the 2017 elections, instability persists in Mendi town, once more hostage to hordes of armed, disgruntled voters.

Hela province (population 250,000, 2011 census) has three districts and eleven Local Level Governments (LLGs) in formation. Hela is home to the several ethnic groups, but the Huli people predominate. First contact reports, circa 1934, and early anthropological accounts of the Huli people,⁷ mention poor soils, food insecurity and societies in which men become 'prominent through ritual knowledge, and not the exchange of pigs' (wealth). Huli society was described as 'unsettled and conflictual nature' and warfare as endemic. The Huli, Duna and other major ethnic groups share common ancestry and mythology –a world view and prophecies include 'a strong sense of decline and deterioration of the earth and cultural decay into anarchy and immorality' (Allen and Frankel, 1991:93-99). Ethnic cooperation and commitment to ancient beliefs and cultural links, customs and ceremonies have been disrupted by the decisions of Huli to give land over to gold, and gas projects.⁸ The establishment of the new Hela province reflects the demand of Huli people, to exclusive access and control over the multiple promised benefits from the ExxonMobil PNG Liquefied Natural Gas (PNG LNG) project.

Hela province is one of the most resource-rich parts of the country, but among the poorest performing in social and economic development. Guns have altered community power dynamics and leadership, undermined State institutions, especially the police and courts. Guns are in high demand for personal security and political reasons. (Kopi, 2011: 1,2) Twenty percent of PNG's regular police are based in Hela at any one time and special mobile forces are frequently deployed to protect the mining projects and the enable conduct of democratic elections (2012, 2017). Violent conflict led to failed elections in 2002. Since August 2016, township of Tari has been in a state of lawless anarchy (Radio New Zealand, 2017). When, National Court judges, State Ministers and donor representatives visit Tari town, they are escorted by a 'close protection unit' of one or two Special Services Division (Mobile Squad) troopers carrying M16s. (Kopi, *ibid*). PNG's 2005 Small Arms Survey reported that all Huli men have a gun – mostly homemade, but that there were also 2,500 high powered weapons. Twelve years later, no one knows how many high-powered guns are in the possession of Huli men. With limited State presence and the inability of a small police unit to enforce of law and order, more and more people are buying arms to safeguard their lives and property. (Personal communication, Hela Policewoman, November 2017)

Empty promises from Exxon and the state foment new forms of war and violence

In 2009, Rex Tillerson, - then CEO of ExxonMobil and now the US Secretary of State - led negotiations for a joint venture partnership in PNG to extract, process and pipe natural gas to the coast, for shipment to China and Japan⁹. An agreement was struck between the PNG State, various levels of government and the landowners, and construction commenced in 2010. The State and Exxon promised to transform PNG's national economy - boosting GDP and export revenues, local employment and spin off contracts, royalties, social and economic infrastructure and services to the landowners. The US\$19 billion project imported a large, foreign skilled workforce and recruited national staff mostly in short-term unskilled and security roles. Construction of a massive 700km overland pipeline to southern ports, and the first of export shipments to China and Japan, were completed at record speed. But the landowners and impacted communities are up in arms over outstanding unpaid royalties. (Main, 2017.)

Shipments of LNG sourced in and piped out of Hela Province commenced in 2014. But almost four years later the royalty payments owed to landowners at gas source and along the pipeline remain unpaid, due to incomplete social mapping processes to identify genuine (male) landowners and eligible beneficiaries, and indecision about the best way to distribute those benefits.^{10 11}. The total amount owed to landowners is reaching billions, but PNG's bankrupt government seems unable to deliver. The enthusiasm and euphoria of locals has turned to violent protest and angry demands. Promises of sealed roads, schools and power supply remain unfulfilled. Workers' barracks have been looted and cash payments to local workers have boosted Huli men's acquisition of high-powered, military-style weapons smuggled across the border with Indonesia. (Main, 2017) or smuggled up into the Highlands from the caches built up during the Bougainville crisis (personal communication from Hela women's leaders, November 2017) No one should be surprised that men's anger and frustration now manifests in unprecedented armed attacks on whole communities, and on women and girls in particular.

ExxonMobil in a joint venture with locally incorporated company OilSearch Ltd.¹², have built a new mining township (Komo) at the centre of the gas operations, but its hospital and housing remain empty and unused and there are armed gangs fighting all around. Tari town, the provincial 'capital', has been plagued by years of conflict, social disruption and infrastructural damage, lacking the institutional development as well as human and financial resources required to maintain law and order and deliver basic services. The violence committed against women ranks among the worst in PNG, comparable to the world's worst of conflict-affected regions. (MSF, 2011; 2015; 2016) From 2015 to 2017, there have been many violent tribal conflicts in the Hela province, and many deaths. No one knows exactly how many.

Late in 2016 Tari town descended into a state of lawlessness with repeated drive-by shootings through Tari township, in a defiant display of weapons, forcing closure of banks, hospital, schools, the airstrip, prompting local businesses and public servants to consider leaving Tari for good. The State responded with deployment of 150 soldiers and 150 police from special mobile units. Their mandate was to disarm the local population, return Tari town to normal, to enable rebuilding of the local systems of law and justice, protect and prevent costly disruption of the PNG LNG operation and pave the way for the 2017 elections. A gun amnesty exercise was largely unsuccessful and the State is desperate for a strategy that will prevent disruption of the massive PNG LNG gas plant.

The state had forecast highly optimistic PNG LNG revenues (taxes and levies) and promised greater investment in infrastructure, agriculture, health and education. However, the exulted Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG) Project in the 'new' Hela province has thus far failed to deliver on many fronts. Four years after gas export shipments commenced, the lives of Hela women are directly and violently impacted by deep frustration, anger and physical aggression of landowning men. Landowners disappointment comes after many previous experiences of empty promises and from EI prospectors and developers. Hela men's fury is a significant contributing factor to the high incidence of new forms of warfare and horrific crimes of grievous bodily harm committed against by men against their female family members (MSF, 2016)

NGO interventions in Hela- more humanitarian than development focussed

Around 2005, OXFAM supported participatory research on violent conflict and gender-based violence against women in Tari (Hela). Respondents reported insecurity and violence pervading all aspects of daily life in Hela. Deadly armed conflict among men and the neglect of crimes of violence committed by men against women were occurring in a context of limited transport and communication and ongoing lack of basic goods and

services (Kopi et al 2011) The Village Court system was overwhelmed and dysfunctional, district court magisterial services were absent, police were limited by serious shortages in human and financial resources and the prison was neglected and not operating. Data collected at the hospital confirmed that physical trauma was the most common cause of hospitalization and death in Tari, and many survivors urgently required post-traumatic counselling. Men suffered traumatic injuries sustained in violent dispute resolution and ongoing tribal conflicts, while women's traumatic injuries resulted from husbands, fathers, brothers, and co-wives committing grievous bodily harm – most commonly stabbing and severing of limbs committed upon women. (Kopi, 2011; OXFAM, 2011, 2012)

OXFAM prompted Doctors Without Borders (MSF) to establish a presence in Tari Hospital. Their next eight years of service to the Huli people of the Southern Highlands, (now the new Hela Province) provided good local data, confirming the impact of violent tribal conflict and the extremely high levels and severity of physical sexual and family violence. (MSF, 2016). Government staff at the Tari Hospital were not equipped to cope with the high volume and extreme nature of injuries requiring medical and surgical emergencies, so MSF teams set up emergency surgical care, major and minor surgery, and a 30-bed inpatient facility. Up to a quarter of the 80-100 surgeries conducted monthly were for injuries caused by physical trauma- typically chopping bodies with axes and machetes. In 2009, MSF established a Family Support Centre¹³ in Tari hospital to treat the women and children who were frequently and seriously injured. Many female patients had been attacked with machetes, axes and knife wounds inflicted by someone in their family, (MSF,2016). There are no safe house or other support services available to survivors. The ongoing lack of security for MSF personnel at Tari hospital often resulted in threatened closure. MSF departed recently and the ExxonMobil joint venture partner, OilSearch has taken is now managing Tari hospital.

These days Tari and Hela are considered too dangerous for international NGOs to operate. International Red Cross (ICRC visit only once monthly or in emergency, basically to provide for local IDPs).

Can Hela women find their voice and mobilise their collective power.

In November 29, 2017, ten Hela women's leaders rallied together during the 2017 16 Days of Activism (ironically supported by EXXON Mobil). Concerned about the armed conflict that is taking strange new forms, creating havoc in peaceful communities and disrupting and threatening the lives of thousands of women, they have decided they must act. They took risks and travelled out across their province to collect stories and map conflict, its real causes and its horrific gendered consequences. Fresh stories from the field relate unprecedented executions, now frequently targeting women, generating a reign of terror and fear and mass internal displacement.

In response Hela's emerging women human rights defenders have very recently committed to forming a brand-new organization called 'Hela Women: Never Give Up! They intend making their demands to government for immediate intervention, protection and support.

This is their chilling verbal report:

Three quarters of Hela province is now affected by an unprecedented outbreak of tribal-based, guerilla-style youthful armed conflict. Men, bearing high powered weapons are roaming in groups across the countryside, conducting raids on unsuspecting villagers, and singling out people – men, women and children – purportedly for payback. The villages under attack and their unsuspecting residents may have no known connection to ongoing tribal fights but the armed attackers wil insist l on questioning them about their blood line, going back eight generations¹⁴ in an effort to establish kinship connections to the attackers 'enemies, and justify their killing.

One whole Local Level Government area, home to thousands of people, has become a 'no man's land'. Houses, gardens and basic infrastructure have been destroyed, health workers and teachers have fled and terror has spread and prompted the population to flee. Some children have reportedly been abandoned or drowned by desperate mothers who can't cope. Women and children with little or no belongings are fleeing and seeking shelter with communities where they are not known. Some are moved on after several days due to hosts fear and food shortage. Some are pressured to hand over a young girl bride, in order to secure access to productive land. Some are lured into a false sense of security, and build new gardens, only to be evicted and moved on before they can harvest. Babies are dying with nowhere to bury them. One mother reportedly carried a dead infant around in her bilum (traditional string bag) searching for a place to bury her child. Some parents, forced

to move on, are leaving their children behind with virtual strangers, as a 'seed' of their bloodline that should survive, in case the rest of the family dies.

Women being brutally targeted in an unprecedented and incomprehensible manner never seen before in this part of PNG. Traditional alders are being driven off their ancestral lands. Thousands of displaced people, mostly women and children, are the move. Many people have been killed, others are near dying from starvation and preventable deaths. The local police are rendered powerless for lack of resources, and can do nothing but observe the youth who are better armed and organized than them. The only evidence of state support with extra police and military is strictly for the purposes of securing LNG plant and production.

Translated and transcribed from a Skype call with the author, 11pm, November 27, 2017.

Jiwaka Province

Jiwaka is the second new province of the Highlands region, also established in 2012. It has a population of 350,000, across three districts and six Local Level governments. Unlike Hela, Jiwaka's origins are not linked to extractive industry prospects, or promised benefits. Rather, it is a proud agricultural province, comprised of districts that were previously within the boundaries of two neighbouring Highlands provinces. The areas that fall into Jiwaka's boundaries first came under colonial administration in the 1950s. Jiwaka has 'inherited' several large coffee plantations and factories still, but their future economic viability is not guaranteed. Christian churches became well-established during the colonial period and provide quality health and education services including effective HIV & AIDS prevention and response programs. One colonial town has declined while another remains a bustling commercial centre with many successful, local small businesses. But small businesses and public market infrastructure have been frequently disrupted and damaged by repeated tribal fights. The new administrative centre of Kurumul poised to be the capital of Jiwaka Province has been recently established along the Highlands Highway but its viability as a new and sustainable administrative township depend on the province's leadership and political will to bring an end to tribal fighting and gender based violence¹⁵. The ready availability of weapons and the male propensity to join in armed tribal fighting is a huge challenge to Jiwaka's future development.

Women's food crop production and seasonal coffee harvests are critical to the local economy. Women are the main food producers and traders, but 'landowner' men have taken control of the fresh food markets and use intimidation, extortion and verbal abuse to get 'quick money' from women vendors. Men still dominate the distribution of Jiwaka's fresh vegetable surpluses out to the contracted caterers at extractive industry sites and to the markets of PNG's larger towns and cities, but increasingly women are getting involved.

Jiwaka women building a movement for equality, development and peace.

Although women are a minority in elected and administrative leadership in Jiwaka, women leaders in civil society are actively engaged in forging foundational social and economic development of Jiwaka province. The strongest local women's NGO was established by a professional woman, experienced in gender in agricultural policy and programs across the Highlands region. She founded an NGO - formerly Rural Women's Development Association - to strengthen women's food crop production, marketing and independent control of their incomes. Local female farmers are core members, and most have direct experience of decades of tribal fighting. Many have lived for long periods as IDPs. due to protracted negotiations about cash compensation payments, demanded by the 'victors' before the 'losers' are permitted to return to their land. As they organized, Jiwaka's Internally displaced women shared experiences of vulnerability and victimization - harassment, abuse, rape and forced marriage perpetrated by men from their host community. In the past, IDP men in Jiwaka have tended to fight back and return to their own lands. Women are obliged contribute informal 'war taxes' for men's purchase of high-powered weapons. The women's NGO had established an informal savings and loans strategy to secure their savings against the constant demand to hand their hard-earned cash over to husbands for the purchase of guns and ammunition to support their tribe in local conflicts. A simple and informal savings club, backed by a solid women's organization enabled women to maintain control over their own incomes. With this new-found economic independence, women prioritized spending to pay for justice in village court cases, pursuing divorce from violent husbands, paying back brideprice to end men's control over their lives and bodies. Once these matters were dealt with, they turned their focus on meeting basic needs of their family, maintaining the health, welfare and supporting the educational aspirations of their children and pursuing their personal development aspirations.

In 2008, the organization was re-named 'Voice for Change' (VFC) reflecting 'conscious' intention to actively promote and protect women's rights and strengthen their individual women's agency and collective voice. VFC planned and strategized, its leaders fully cognizant of the national political economy and risky and complex context of violent conflict and extreme violence against women. VFC mapped and documented the impact of polygamy, multiple forms of violence against women, high mobility and long absences of men, moving up and down the highway, and in and out of the mining enclaves. They educated women, men and youth and actively advocated against inflated bride price payments, the impact of cashed-up landowners or mining employees engaging in alcohol binges, and visiting their province to purchase young brides.

VFC brought a gender analysis to the situation of women affected by old and new forms of armed tribal conflict. They have named and documented the gendered impact of tribal wars, the specific gendered experience of women IDPs and the power and potential of their organization when women (and some supportive men) stood up and identified themselves as Women's Human Rights Defenders (WHRDs). They have connected with worldwide movements of women working for peace, sent out action alerts and information to Asia and Pacific regional global networks for peace, received knowledge and training on global best practice and translated this into their own training, tools and strategies.

VFC has also built new knowledge on VAW in the context of armed conflict and the distorting cash flows of extractive industries¹⁶. They have built a movement of women conflict mediators, and GBV counsellors, fanning out into rural areas. Women facilitate early intervention and mediate negotiations to prevent full scale tribal fighting and to ensure compensation payments demanded in cases of family and sexual violence or to bring an end to war, are not prohibitively high, preventing peace and IDPs could return to their own land. VFC has carved out new space for women's public leadership and participation and is making a significant breakthrough in the hitherto exclusively male-managed conflicts of conflict of the past.

In 2012, when the new province of Jiwaka was declared, VFC scaled-up its efforts with a three-year project that mobilized the citizens of Jiwaka to develop a shared vision and commitment to build a new province free from violence, where equality, development and peace replace a build-up of guns and cycles of conflict that threatened threaten people, property and the development process in the new province. VFC has motivated leaders and citizens to develop and commit to community by-laws aligned with human rights standards and the PNG constitution and domestic laws to protect women and girls from violence.

As women of Jiwaka have become aware that the law is on their side, thousands of survivors of many different forms of violence have come forward, seeking justice and resolution. But they also need safe accommodation, trauma counselling, and long-term support. VFC was initially overwhelmed with this 'tsunami of survivors' seeking GBV services that are not yet properly established in their new province. VFC has focused on prevention, building capacity of a growing movement of women and men volunteers, supporting them to disseminate and implement PNG's recent GBV law and strategy. VFC plays a critical role in educating and supporting police, law and justice, local government, community development and health sector personnel, as well as the leaders and resource people of church and NGO organizations.

Gradually and incrementally, people are uniting to forge Jiwaka's new social contract built on a clear understanding of mutual obligations of state, the province, local government, civil society and citizens. Citizens' advocacy and cultivation of political will among provincial and local government leaders and priority budget allocations to support efforts to prevent tribal fighting and provide services to prevent and respond to gender based VAW are now key to the consolidation and sustainability of promising programs for change.

Finding a way forward for highlands women – visioning a highland province without war and violence.

The well-regarded constitution of newly independent Papua New Guinea was thoroughly compromised, barely a decade after independence. Since the 1980s, vast gold, oil and gas deposits have been exploited, especially in the remote under-developed Highlands Provinces – riding roughshod over communities disrupted by late colonialism, and a legacy of violent conflict resolution, tribal wars and violent and coercive control over the fertility and productive labour of women.

Multinational extractive industry corporations are driven by profit. Fierce competition between China and the USA to secure political friends, and influence in the Pacific region saw Exxon Mobil granted a license to operate the vast gas fields of PNG's Southern Highlands in 2010. Exxon propaganda promised a transformed economy, where locals would benefit from royalties and employment and taxes paid to government would finance a radical improvement in the delivery of basic goods and services across PNG. (Main, 2017) No money was

spared to accelerate construction of secure, high-tech plant and long-distance pipeline. The first exports commenced were shipped out more than four years ago, proclaiming a radical shift in PNG's political status in the Asia Pacific region from aid recipient to Pacific regional donor. The state borrowed heavily, mortgaging projected gas revenues, introducing policies of free health care and education that it has not been able to sustain.

PNG's extractive industries operate under generous investment conditions and tax incentives. They pay their rents but earn significant tax credits. They win local popularity for building roads, bridges, schools and health facilities in remote areas for which they are reimbursed by government. Yet they take no responsibility for the smooth, uninterrupted operation or essential maintenance of local infrastructure intended for the increased accessibility and effective delivery of basic services. In the context of conflict such infrastructure is destined to become a white elephant and liable to be burned down in protest (Main, 2017).

Gestures of corporate responsibility – even those proclaiming to promote gender equality and empower women, - are token. They do not support objective information and reflection on the kind of politics and policies that EI rents finance. They do not challenge the flow of royalties to powerful local men, who claim landowner rights but frequently, corruptly absconding without distributing benefits to their clan members or family.

Decades of boom extractive industry revenues have been squandered on populist policies resulting in catastrophic budget shortfalls that leave civil servants unpaid, police and courts lacking resources for continuous, consistent and decentralized operations. (Sawang, 2016, 2017, Howe, 2017) The PNG government has borrowed heavily, mortgaging projected extractive industry revenues and is currently facing a revenue crisis. A recent 100-day supplementary (rescue) budget, promised to discontinue the ever increasing multi-million kina grants made available to PNG's MPs¹⁷. But patronage politics is entrenched at national and local levels and an allocation of PGK1.1 billion to programs determined by male politicians will result in continued under-funding of core government services (Howes, 2017) and the low prioritization women's rights in development decisions.

Violence against women is frequent, extreme, repugnant and heightened significantly in the context of remoteness, under-development and the new kinds of instability, competition and protest that accompanies extractive industries. Young Highlands men, now grow up in a radically altered physical environment and new political and economic context and aspirations. With the false promises of great monetary and development benefits, flowing for the EIs young men tend to abandon gardening and wait for their royalties. When the material benefits do not materialize, disillusioned, under-employed, young men turn to illicit trade in marijuana, alcohol and high-powered weapons. Out of this scenario emerges new forms of war and violence against women, that turns inward on the local populations, who are afforded little or no protection or compassion by the state. National male politicians have been known to remark that people found in this situation, should be 'left to kill themselves' while their leaders decide how to divide up EI profits in ways that bolster their own personal wealth and power.

Unimpeded by extractive industries, the leadership and strategic contributions of Jiwaka's NGO, Voice for Change, are groundbreaking. Here women are informing, motivating and mobilizing men and women to work together to end violent conflict and all forms of discrimination and violence against women. VFC, its networks and movement, bring to the birth and growth of Jiwaka province, information and education and reflection on different development pathways and their gendered opportunities and consequences. Female and male citizens of Jiwaka are enthusiastically and optimistically committing to a new vision of a society free from the violent conflict and violent control of women.

VFC is building a movement, unprecedented across the Highlands region, and in sharp contrast to the confusion, chaos, conflict and criminality emerging around the much lauded PNG LNG project in Hela. As a force for change, VFC is demonstrating that PNG's constitutional framework, for reshaping the norms and behaviours and promoting human rights and gender equality is positive and possible. Unlike Hela, the citizens of Jiwaka have an opportunity to partner successfully with provincial and local government to build a firm foundation for diverse and sustainable agriculture-based economy and inclusive social services and development.

The guns have not gone away in Jiwaka, and the conflict has not stopped altogether, but a new conversation about the constitution and laws, gender equality, women's agency and the right to demand an end to war and gender based violence has begun. VFC has broken gender traditional gender barriers in the emerging province

of Jiwaka – permitting women to enter the hitherto patriarchal, and chauvinistic traditions of conflict mediation, peace negotiating, and planning future development. There are promising signs that they can turn the tide and gain new ground in sustaining peace and eliminating gender-based violence. With no immediate prospects for extractive industry projects, and the existence and efforts of women-led, rights based civil society, Jiwaka is able to move towards effective coordination of local GBV prevention and response organizations and services; implementing the domestic law and effectively localizing national strategy to end GBV.

Without extractive industries, Jiwaka's women have had the space to challenge men about traditional gendered divisions of labour, and gendered relations of power. They are now seriously challenging their men about the purpose and value of holding fast to a norms and values that enable tribal conflict and violent and coercive control of women. They are confronting men with the destructive consequences of endless cycles of domestic and inter-tribal violence, which will always undermine and negate any benefits accruing from any new development opportunities, including extractive industries. Jiwaka's growing movement for equality, development and peace is home grown, grounded in a sustainable agricultural economy and is a huge asset to building a viable province, with a strong social and economic foundation - an inclusive, agricultural-based economy and society striving to be free of arms, conflict and all forms of violence against women.

A final call for justice for and solidarity among Highlands women.

Jiwaka's political and administrative leadership – all male, has yet to fully recognize that a province built without extractive industries is possible and preferable. 'Blessed' with a strong home-grown, self-help progressive women's rights and rural development organization, that is sufficiently resourced to provide critical support to social and economic development in their new, transitional, slowly changing and developing province. Jiwaka benefits enormously that steadily and sensitively changes the traditional division of labour and the gendered relations of power. A women's NGO that promotes, revitalises and expands the agricultural economy, organizes and empowers the women farmers who drive it, giving them new knowledge, confidence and voice is a hugely valuable asset.

In contrast to Jiwaka's emerging new vision for development, influenced and guided by women working with all citizens and an under-resourced provincial government, the people of Hela are being sacrificed in the name of accelerated exploitation of oil and gas, to serve political interests and fulfil a fallacy of a transformative EI based economy. EI rents sustain a vicious cycle of patronage politics and the consequent failure of government infrastructure and services to deliver equitable basic infrastructure, goods and services to the people. The well-researched gendered division of labour and gendered relations of power, common across the Highlands region continue to be ignored or trampled in extractive industry project planning. EI corporates do not concern themselves with the negative gendered impact of gold mines, oil and gasfields on local gardens, forests and waterways. They do not acknowledge the harm caused by disruption of women's access to productive resources. They do not care how physical displacement and loss of local culture necessitated by EI industrial development is related resurging conflict and tribal wars, the emergence of a local Rambos/mercenaries, the growing gun culture and domestic terrorism.

Solidarity and support links between women in Jiwaka and Hela could be one way forward, and a potentially transformative initiative for provincial governments to support. Women in both provinces – in Jiwaka's established organization -Voice for Change, and in Hela's newly conceived movement: 'Hela Women: Never Give up' - have much to learn from each other in finding their voice and sharing their vision for equality, development and peace across the Highlands region.

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Endnotes

¹ A swathe of GBV law reform and new legislation was passed during the years 2003-14, updating colonial definitions of rape and child abuse and clarifying the duties of police, courts and hospitals. (Amendments to the Criminal Code, 2003, Repeal of the Sorcery Act, 2011, Family Protection Act, 2013, Lukautim Pikinini Act, 2014). New policies for the national roll out of specific units to receive survivors of GBV at hospitals and police stations are the result of pilot initiatives by NGOs, dating back fifteen years, realized through generous donor funding rather than state budgets.

² Settled agriculture emerged directly from a hunter-gatherer background, without external diffusion, in at least six regions of the world. These are, with approximate starting dates for pre-domestication cultivation in brackets in years BP (Before Present, AD 1950 by radiocarbon convention): the Fertile Crescent of the Middle East (11,000 BP); the middle and lower courses of the Yangzi and Yellow River basins of China (9000 BP); the New Guinea highlands (between 10,000 and 6500 BP); Mesoamerica (8000 BP); northern South America and the central Andes (8000 BP), with perhaps more than one origin region; and the Eastern Woodlands of the USA (4000) (Bellwood 2017)

³ During World War II (WW2) the New Guinea island was a key site of the Pacific war and ultimately the surrender of the Japanese army.

⁴ The former PNG 'province' of North Solomon (Bougainville) was granted autonomy as part of the peace agreement with the PNG government, following a decade-long civil war that grew, in large part out of the Bougainville Copper mining operations. The Autonomous Region is still recovering from widespread and unresolved trauma, disruption and decline in economic and social development. A referendum for full independence is scheduled to take place between in 2019 (Division XIV. Schedule 7 of the Constitution of the Autonomous Region of Bougainville 2004).

⁵ Over the four decades since independence, PNG has experienced a series of 'Resource Booms' where new projects and high commodity prices have dramatically increased GDP. The first boom resulted from oil and gas and projects in the Southern Highlands during the 1990s, but was short-lived as high-level corruption and financial mismanagement saw State and provincial government coffers emptied by corrupt leaders and their cronies. Following painful economic recovery, high gold and copper prices and expanding gas fields supported a second boom, 2002-2012. Despite GDP increases, yet again, extractive industry revenues failed to translate to equitable and inclusive development. The outreach, volume and quality of education services barely improved while the delivery of health care worsened over this decade. (Howes et al, 2014). State social development services went into serious decline in the 1990s and have barely functioned in most provinces in recent decades. Gender-based violence reached catastrophic levels and law reform was under-resourced, slow and 'out of synch' with PNG's global and constitutional commitments. Shocking revelations of police and security guards perpetrating violent rapes of women mining the tailings of the Porgera gold mines and the widespread resurgence of horrific, sorcery-related killings in the remote villages of the Highlands region have reverberated globally. (HRW, 2008; Alston, 2013)

⁶ The highlands drug trade commenced in the 1970s, when the greatest demand was from expatriate contract workers, consultants and volunteers

⁷ Allen quotes Glasse (1959, 66.) ...all Huli men were warriors. quick to provoke. fought among themselves frequently ...over personal insults, adultery, damage to gardens, theft of pigs, failure to meet compensation payments and homicide. Fighting frequently broke out during an argument for men were always armed with bows and arrows. Hulis fought large scale battles, with up to 500 men on each side. ... boldness and aggressiveness were admired and men gained influence through their performance on the battlefield.

⁸ Duna, the second largest ethnic group of Hela, allege the Huli, have forsaken both the regional ritual projects which they once strongly promoted and the ties which made such cooperative performances possible. Instead of being concerned to preserve the fertile substance of the earth's core, Duna see the Huli (in Hela Province) and the Ipili (in Porgera) as pillaging it. They regard the gold, oil and gas being extracted at Porgera, Mt Kare, Nogoli, Moran, Kutubu and Gobe as examples of this fertile substance, and insist that the Huli are wantonly consuming fertile substance which should be conserved to sustain them and the world. (Ballard C. 1994; 2000:213)

⁹ After a long absence from the community of international development partners in the Pacific and the PNG, the US reappeared as a donor around 2009/10. Former Secretary Clinton became highly visible promoting gender equality initiatives. During her travel, she made candid reference to the US race (with China) to secure control of the vast Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG) deposits in PNG Highlands

¹⁰ Colin Filer explains the intractable problem of landowner identification and an historical perspective on the current problems of unpaid landowner benefits in the HIDES and PNG LNG gas projects. Essentially the state is locked into a pragmatic 'patrol box method' made possible through amendments to colonial laws. The system assumes that selected landowner representatives will have a stake in maintaining stability around EI sites, but there is no guarantee of onward equitable distribution, to a larger group of landowners particularly by gender and age. <https://soundcloud.com/devpolicy/the-intractable-problem-of-landowner-identification-in-the-png-lng-project-a-historical-perspective>

¹¹ Michael Main is an ANU doctoral scholar who commenced fieldwork with affected Hela landowners in 2009, just prior to mine commencement, and followed up with seven months in the fieldwork in 2016.

¹² **Oil Search Limited** (ASX: OSH) is the largest oil and gas exploration and development company incorporated in Papua New Guinea, which operates all of Papua New Guinea's oilfields. Founded in 1929, it is now one of Papua New Guinea's largest companies, and in 2006 was responsible for 13% of Papua New Guinea's gross domestic product. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Oil_Search

¹³ Family Support Centres (FSC) are 'one stop shop' facilities established at hospitals to receive and treat victim/survivors of Gender-based violence against women. The first FSCs were established with the support of NGOs, and then by DFAT with the PNG Family and Sexual Violence Committee. Their protocols and services were further refined by MSF and captured in National Guidelines. The establishment of FSCs at all major hospitals is now national policy, and Hospital boards are mandated to allocate annual budget for their establishment and operations. There are now FSCs across PNG, most financed by Australian aid.

¹⁴ The youthful armed warriors are allegedly executing and arbitrarily, including unprecedented executions of women and children that violate traditional rules of engagement.

¹⁵ In 2015, a petty dispute caused by a drunken youth who habitually demanded money from Banz women market vendors, resulted in a violent assault causing his death. Within hours his tribe retaliated with an armed attack by burning down almost three hundred houses.

¹⁶ The medical consequences of heavy abuse of high THC content locally grown marijuana is contentious. However, young women leaders associated with the Jiwaka NGO, Voice for Change, have observed and conversed with local young men, and concluded that drugs increase the likelihood of young men being manipulated and mobilized to commit crimes against women. VFC has learnt that marijuana abuse predisposes alienated and deprived youth to do the dirty work of others –including mobilizing to carry out

torture and executions of women accused of practising sorcery. VFC dubs these lost youth the 'orphans of polygamy' - not knowing their father, raised by destitute mothers, not educated, and often ultimately abandoned by their mothers too.

¹⁷ What were once called MP's discretionary funds or development grants – regarded locally as slush funds with little accountability - are now packaged and camouflaged as Provincial or District Services Improvement program (PSIP and DSIP)

DRAFT for discussion

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