

Social and Spiritual Development Strand  
Social Science

Unit 4: Contemporary Issues

## **Module 4.4: Women and Equity**



**Lecturer Support Material**

## Acknowledgements

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## Unit outline

<b>Unit 4</b>  <b>Contemporary Issues</b>	4.1	<b>Framework For Studying Issues</b> <b>(Core)</b>
	4.2	<b>Population Studies</b> <b>(Optional)</b>
	4.3	<b>Disaster Management</b> <b>(Optional)</b>
	4.4	<b>Women and Equity</b> <b>(Optional)</b>
	4.5	<b>Crime, Punishment and Justice</b> <b>(Optional)</b>

## Icons



Read or research



Write or summarise



Activity or discussion



Suggestion for lecturers

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# Module 4.4: Women and Equity

## Objectives

By the end of this module students will:

- Be more critically aware of social forces, such as sex-role stereotyping, that have an impact on their attitudes and actions
- Have knowledge about women's roles, expectations and treatment in PNG and around the world
- Recognise the need for social change to ensure women's rights and lives are valued in their own and the broader community
- Be able to assist women and girls in their families, college and other spheres of activity realise their full potential

## ***Teaching Module 4.4***

- It is important to read through the module first, to decide what materials you will use, and what tasks and activities you will set for the students. It is also important to see how this module fits within the complete unit. Use the programming hints in your Unit guide to help you incorporate this module into the study of Unit 4.
- The material is written as a resource for the teaching of this module.
- Do not expect students to work through the total module alone. There may be too much material and they will need assistance in determining the tasks required.
- Many of the activities have a number of questions to discuss and tasks to do. They are included to provide some ideas and stimulus, not necessarily to complete every part of each activity.
- The activities provide a focus for learning, and some may be suitable for developing into assessment tasks, but the activities are not written to be used as the assessment program.
- The Lecturer Support Material is the same as the Student Support Material, with additional notes included in the text boxes.
- Materials included as an appendix are included as additional information for lecturers. These may be photocopied for students where appropriate.
- Assessment tasks should be developed at unit level, recognising the development of knowledge, skills and attitudes across this module and others which make up the unit.

## Module 4.4: Content

### *Topic 1: Women and men in a time of change*



Equity and inequality are issues worldwide, and not just about gender.

This module, however, does focus on the lives of women and their concerns about equity – their roles, expectations and opportunities for development.

It is important that students do not get involved in disputes, especially during discussions about cultural practices. They should be encouraged to be open-minded and to support their views with evidence and examples.

Gender equity is a key issue for Papua New Guinea, especially as a developing nation. It is widely recognised that development is hindered by the failure to recognise the value of women's contribution to all aspects of society.

There are many articles and news items that can be used as resource material and students should be involved in collecting such items for their files and to support class discussion and other activities.

Additional support material has been provided in the form of readings and a case study. These can be photocopied for class use.

Inequality between women and men limits the potential of individuals, families, communities and nations. Ending gender discrimination is an urgent human rights and development priority. Girls and women the world over are denied access to education and health care. Millions are subjected to abuse and violence. Women's legal rights are not protected. Their medical concerns are given less attention than men's are. They are denied opportunities in the workplace and receive less pay than men for the same work.

Men, and societies, also pay a price. More equal power relations between men and women, combined with increased access to good reproductive health care, and would save the lives of hundreds of thousands of women, including many of those who die from pregnancy-related causes. If women had the power to make decisions about sexual activity and its consequences, they could avoid many of the 80 million unwanted pregnancies each year, 20 million unsafe abortions, some 500,000 maternal deaths (including 78,000 as a result of unsafe abortion), and many times that number of infections and injuries. They could also avoid many of the 333 million new sexually transmitted infections contracted each year. Adolescent girls are particularly vulnerable.

The equality of women and men is integral to development. It is also a human right. Governments must take the fundamental decisions. Donor countries have agreed to support these priorities, but donors in the 1990s have not met even half of the agreed resource targets in the area of population and reproductive health.

### *Counting the cost of inequality*

Women's economic activity is undercounted because it is often in the informal sector. Better accounting could encourage investment and promote productivity. A study in Kenya found that giving women farmers the same support as men could increase yields by more than 20 per cent. In Latin America, eliminating gender inequality in the labour market could increase women's wages by half and national output by a full 5 per cent.

Girls in poor households are more likely to die than boys before age 5, even though globally girls have a better chance of surviving childhood. Inadequate health care in poor populations has a greater impact on women than men; in particular, poor women are more likely than other women to die as a result of pregnancy. The costs of the death of a mother include her lost contribution to the family and its survival, and increased mortality for her children.

High rates of HIV/AIDS infection, due in part to gender inequality and a failure to invest in prevention, have taken a tremendous toll in many nations. In some countries it is estimated that the pandemic has reduced per capita GDP growth by 0.5 per cent annually. The impacts on the health system and on the poor are severe. In some of the most affected countries, infected persons occupy more than half the available hospital beds.

Denying education to girls slows social and economic development; investing in education pays off. The economic advances in some Asian countries from the 1960s through the 1980s hinged in part on smaller family sizes and increased investment in girls' education and health. Educated women with increased income invest more in their children's health and education.

The last several decades have seen greater attention and some progress towards the empowerment of women. There has also been a growing recognition of how the rules governing men's and women's opportunities, social endowments and behaviours affect prospects for accelerated development and justice. But social change is often difficult, particularly when the basic relations between men and women are involved. The changes in these relationships, and the systems of power and belief that support them, are no less sweeping than other changes already under way in urbanization, globalisation and governance. In the end, societies need their own solutions to provide a better life for both women and men, consistent with their cultures and conditions, grounded in a vision of justice and gender equality.

## **Social justice**

Social justice is based upon the ideal of equal opportunity. Everyone, no matter what race, cultural background, or sex they are, should have equal access to education and the opportunities to get a job. As well they should have the right to benefit from services such as health. Social injustice occurs when people do not have the same access to wealth, power, or social respect because of their personal or group characteristics. This can result in sub-groups within a society having different levels of social well-being. A variety of criteria (income, health, education, life expectancy, infant mortality, sanitation, water supply, crime rates, social order) can be used to measure social well-being.

Women and girls are half the world's population yet they do two thirds of the world's work; they earn one tenth of the world's income; they own less than one hundredth of the world's property. Women produce at least half of the world's food. For many women full

workloads are often combined with frequent pregnancy, childbirth and breastfeeding. In factories all over the world the mundane and repetitive assembly work is traditionally done by women, often in very unsafe conditions. In many countries women get no education. Two thirds of the people in the world who can't read or write are female. In many societies women are still regarded as the property of their husbands or fathers. In some rural areas women cannot say what their problems are or share their experiences - they are accustomed to keeping silent.

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### 4.4 Activity 1

*Discuss the following questions in small groups - Why are people unequal in terms of wealth, material possessions, political power and social prestige? Are such differences inevitable or unavoidable? Are they just or unjust?*

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## Gender roles

 The difference between sex and gender must be clearly understood by students. These concepts are also covered in PD - Module 1.4 and RE - Module 1.1, so students should have some appreciation of their meaning and significance.

Despite the tremendous changes of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, discrimination and violence against women and girls remain firmly rooted in cultures around the world. Passed down from one generation to the next, ideas about "real men" and "a woman's place" are instilled at an early age and are difficult to change.

Gender is about what it means to be a woman or a man. Gender is the socially constructed concept of masculinity and femininity. It refers not to biological differences but to social ones, such as differences in hairstyles, clothing, occupations, or culturally approved personal traits. The construction of gender identities is seen as dynamic, ongoing, changing and changeable.

In past societies it was highly functional for men and women to play different roles. The human infant needs care for a long period after birth and, as a result, the mother was tied closely to the home. She was the logical person to carry out domestic chores. The male, who is physically stronger and not periodically pregnant or suckling a child, was the logical person to take on the more physically demanding tasks of hunting for food and defending the family. The female thus became dependent on the male who assumed the dominant role. Over time these arrangements have become institutionalised and linked to biological differences.





*Responsible fatherhood can advance gender equality and improve the welfare of the family.*

How do people know what is expected of them as a male or female in society? Most theorists agree that sex-typed behaviour is learnt in the same way as any other type of behaviour, through a combination of reward and punishment, indoctrination, modelling on others. From the very beginning boys and girls are socialised differently. They are given different training, small jobs and expectations. When they act according to expectations they are praised, when they don't they are condemned or punished. Observations of others, particularly parents, and identification with their sex roles is important. Children and then adolescents learn what a mother, wife, father, or husband is through example and daily contacts. A boy brought up by a father who represents very traditional ideas of masculinity will develop quite different concepts from one brought up in a family where both parents work and share tasks.

Helping women and men to communicate about their family roles and responsibilities can strengthen families, protect reproductive health, and reduce gender inequality and gender-based violence. One study in the Philippines showed that domestic violence was least prevalent when the husband and wife communicated and shared responsibility for decisions.

Men's behaviour can change. In India, male health workers have motivated other men to take an interest in women's health and help with housework. In Mali, men's involvement in reproductive health has led to support for women's employment. And in Nicaragua, courses on gender and power have reduced gender-based violence and increased sexual responsibility.

## Gender Norms Can Prevent Safe Sex

In Brazil, boys learn that being sexually active is an important part of being a man. A "man" must be sexually active and financially secure. For most boys, becoming sexually active is easier than finding a job, so sexual conquests are one of the few ways they can assert their masculinity. Boys learn about male norms from other males. Friends, uncles, male neighbours, even fathers tease and encourage boys to become sexually active and refer to them as homosexuals if they do not. Girls in Brazil get a different message. A woman should be more fragile than a man, less aggressive and better able to control her sexuality. Before marriage she should not be sexually active or know about sexual matters. After marriage her husband will teach her whatever she needs to know. These gender norms lead to poor cooperation and communication around sex. Girls say they cannot suggest condom use or carry condoms for fear of being thought promiscuous. Boys say they cannot agree to abstain for fear of being thought weak. Girls risk disgrace if they seek information about sexuality or show an interest in it. Boys risk ridicule if they limit themselves to one partner.

From: *The State of the World Population 2000*

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### 4.4 Activity 2

*Read the article above carefully. To what extent do similar stereotypes occur in PNG? In other words – what type of behaviour do young men and women expect of each other? Are the expectations different in rural and urban communities? Why?*

*Do a survey of advertisements in newspapers/magazines or on EMTV List the advertisements that use male or female images to sell a product and describe the type of image used. Are the images relevant to the product? Are the images promoting gender stereotypes?*

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## Gender issues

Gender issues" are not the same as "women's issues": Understanding gender means understanding opportunities, constraints and the impact of change as they affect both women and men. It is increasingly understood that partnership between women and men is the basis for strong families and viable societies in a rapidly changing world. Gender inequality holds back the growth of individuals, the development of countries and the evolution of societies, to the disadvantage of both women and men.

## Discrimination and Poverty Go Hand in Hand

Gender inequality undermines development and prospects for reducing poverty, while economic growth and rising incomes reduce inequality, the World Bank reports. Studies show that societies where discrimination is greatest have more poverty, slower economic growth and a lower quality of life than societies with less discrimination. The effects are strongest in the poorest countries.

Ensuring that women and men enjoy the same rights and have equal access to education, jobs, property and credit, and fostering women's participation in public life reduces child mortality, improves public health, slows population growth and strengthens overall economic growth. This is true in all countries, but particularly in the poorest.

The ratio of girls' school attendance to that of boys is highest where both incomes and gender equality are relatively high. Countries where either incomes or equality are relatively low have lower girls' enrolment. Educating girls is one of the most effective ways to promote development.

As incomes rise, previously poor families increase their spending on children's education, health care and nutrition; girls generally benefit more than boys. Similarly, development that creates new job opportunities often benefits women more than men.

Gender inequality is also reduced by economic development that improves the infrastructure for water, energy and transportation. This cuts the time women have to spend fetching water, gathering cooking fuel and producing food for family consumption, giving them more time to earn additional income and participate in community affairs.

Economic growth by itself will not eliminate inequalities. Societies that promote women's rights and gender equality along with growth are more effective in reducing gender disparities than societies that focus on growth alone.

From: *The State of the World Population 2000*

Gender inequality is manifest in many aspects of social life, for instance, in household consumption; in work, both formal and informal; in access to and control over resources such as land and credit; in access to such services as training, education and health; physical mobility; violence; decision-making and so forth. Statistics show that poverty, illiteracy, limited or no access to basic services and control over resources, are life situations experienced mostly by women (UN, 1991).

Gender inequality results from 'male bias' operating at different levels of society. Male bias is the gendered nature of economic structures and processes, and also the gendered nature of political structures (such as state institutions, political parties, trade unions) and processes. Gender inequality and the relative powerlessness of women compared to men regardless of race, ethnicity, class, nationality and age is common throughout the world.

## Sexism

Language is often sexist: mankind, master craftsman, masterpiece, statesman, forefathers, manpower, God the father, God the son, etc. Advertising exploits the female body to sell its goods, suggesting that if you buy a certain product you have access to a woman's body. Pornography is one of the biggest growth industries in the Western world. Most workplaces are sexist - statistics show that women have the lesser-paid jobs, are subject to sexual harassment, and are less likely to reach the so-called 'top jobs'. The parliamentary system is sexist - over half the voting population are women and yet there are few women MPs. Churches are also sexist.

## Conventions and legislation

**i** The rights of women and children have long been the subject of debate and have been recognised as basic human rights. Most countries of the world, including Papua New Guinea, are signatories to various conventions that seek to improve the lives of women and children.

A copy of the preamble to the Constitution was supplied for Unit 2. Use this to illustrate to students that women are legally recognised as equal in status to men in PNG.

It would also be useful to examine other legislation such as the personal management Act, Industrial Relations Act (as amended), the Companies Act and the Employment Act for discriminatory provisions.

A series of human rights treaties, starting with the United Nations Charter and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, affirm the rights of girls and women. Forged over several decades by governments and influenced by the global women's movement, these agreements provide a legal foundation for ending gender discrimination and gender-based rights violations, and oblige governments to take action.

The 1979 *Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women* which has the force of international law, has now been ratified by 165 of the 188 member states of the United Nations. An Optional Protocol to the Convention was opened for signature in December 1999 and will enter into force with 10 ratifications. The Protocol will enable individuals and groups of women to submit discrimination complaints to the treaty monitoring body. It will also enable the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women to initiate inquiries into situations of grave or systematic violations of women's rights.

Health care and education for girls and women have been the subject of international agreements, notably those reached at a series of world conferences on women beginning in 1975, the World Conference on Education for All in 1990 and the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD) in 1994. A rapidly growing number of countries have adopted population and development policies that include measures to meet the health care and education needs of girls and women, including their reproductive health needs.

The Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action for human rights (1993), the Programme of Action adopted by the ICP1), and the Platform for Action adopted by the Fourth World Conference on Women (Beijing, 1995) also strongly support gender equality and women's empowerment. These agreements, while not legally binding, are powerful instruments for promoting change.

'The full realisation of all human rights and fundamental freedoms of all women is essential for the empowerment of women.' (Paragraph 9, Beijing Platform for Action, cited in O'Connell, 1996). Most national Constitutions give *de jure* rights to women but these remain nominal because customary laws, in particular, are discriminatory and tend to over-ride other laws. This is one area in which women's civil rights under the legal systems are clearly violated. Customary law is a powerful force in many countries, even when there is a formal legal system in place. It tends to be women who are most discriminated against under customary law, since such laws deal with issues such as family relations, marriage, divorce and custody - often central issues in women's life.

Legislative changes have taken place in many countries to redefine the female role. Jobs are not classified as restricted to males or females, equal pay is given for equal work and maternity leave entitlements allow women to leave and re-enter the workforce. The young woman in present day Papua New Guinean society has far more options than any previous generation. She does not have to regard her future just as that of being a housewife and mother, but attitudes change slowly.

In the past few years, many legal victories have been registered. Mexico and Peru, for example, have passed laws to increase access to reproductive health services. Portugal has amended its constitution to specify that the Government has to guarantee family planning. Botswana, China, Colombia, the United Kingdom and Vietnam have increased penalties for various sexual offences. Bolivia no longer requires that a woman be found "honest" to be considered the victim of a sexual offence. Germany has criminalized rape by a husband against a wife. Several have outlawed female genital mutilation. But much more remains to be done.

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### 4.4 Activity 3

*Brainstorm what can be done by governments, political leaders and women's groups to create conditions for gender equality.*

*What legislation affecting the rights of women is already in place in PNG?*

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## Topic 2: Gender-based violence

**i** Extracts on wife-beating, trafficking in women and girls and 'honour' killings are provided in the Additional support material. These may be copied for use in class.

At least one in three women has been beaten, coerced into sex, or abused in some way, most often by someone she knows. One woman in four is abused during pregnancy. Two million girls between ages 5 and 15 are introduced into the commercial sex market each year. Perhaps as many as 5,000 women and girls are murdered each year in so-called "honour" killings by members of their own families. Rape, battery and other forms of gender-based violence are widespread worldwide.

Many cultures condone or tolerate a certain amount of violence against women. In parts of the world, men are seen as having a right to discipline their wives as they see fit. Even women often view physical abuse as justified under certain conditions. Justification for violence stems from distorted views about the roles and responsibilities of men and women in relationships. Events that may trigger violent responses include not obeying the husband, talking back, refusing sex, not having food ready on time, failing to care for the children or home, questioning the man about money or girlfriends or going somewhere without his permission.

Violence can cause immense damage to women's reproductive health and well-being, resulting in unwanted pregnancies; unsafe abortion; persistent gynaecological problems; sexually transmitted diseases, including HIV/AIDS; and psychological and emotional problems that can be more difficult to bear than physical pain.

Each year rape and domestic violence cost women worldwide the equivalent of millions of lost years of healthy life.

### **A call to our cousin brothers**

I commend *The National* for publishing the insightful and well-written article by Divine Word University student Jaive Smare, about changing gender roles in contemporary Melanesia (*The National*, 9 Nov.). Jaive offers us an important perspective in his search for underlying cultural causes that might explain the mindset and motivation of young men who rape women.

His is a timely commentary, as once again the horror of rape has gripped the nation last week, and we struggle to make sense of this violent crime and how to deal with it.

Jaive's article suggests that men commit rape as an act of punishment against young women who challenge traditional gender beliefs - "girls who wear tight blue jeans like a man!"

We all can be certain that the vast majority of the estimated 55 per cent of PNG women who have been forced into sex against their will (according to statistics referred to by the President of the National Council of Women)

were not wearing tight blue jeans, nor for that matter were they challenging gender norms.

Nonetheless, this particular explanation suggests that the act of rape is far more widespread than the newspaper headlines and police reports would indicate. It suggests that rape is committed not just in the course of violent armed robberies, but as an "opportunity" for the expression of male sexuality. In this sense, Jaive's article reveals something about the mindset of young men that I believe is often overlooked in our attempts to understand the motivation behind acts of rape. A different level of meaning is uncovered by the way Jaive makes reference to his own cousin brothers' behaviour.

More than being an act of control and punishment, it seems that rape - the offence of which in PNG is most often committed by a group of men acting together, rather than by a lone rapist - has much to do with male bonding and the need for men to experience and express their sexuality through group action and identity.

By personalising his article with reference to his cousin brothers' behaviour, Jaive highlights a key opportunity for dealing with rape as one of PNG's most serious social issues. He begins by describing how his cousin brothers tell him stories about the girls they rape, boasting about how they did it, what they did. He ends his article with a passive sigh of resignation - "Others (men) are sadly, in one way or another, like my cousins."

Please, Jaive, don't leave it at that. You have given us a thoughtful analysis of the underlying gender dynamics that contribute to this destructive expression of male sexuality. Now help us confront the action itself. Cousin brothers hold the most important role of all of us in society - fathers, mothers, sisters, teachers, pastors, and elders - in confronting the confused mindset that allows rape to become acceptable male behaviour. Cousin brothers must turn their boasting stories into constructive and soul-searching discussions about male sexuality and desire. Cousin brothers must support and reinforce each other to develop the qualities of compassion, respect and mutual pleasure with their sexual partners, rather than "resorting" to the crime of rape as the means to express their manhood. Only when young men can convince each other through their own bonds of kinship and friendship that rape is wrong and abusive, and ultimately self-destructive, can we hope to rid our society of this horrific behaviour.

Marlene Kennedy, NCD

*The National*, 16 November 2001

## Ashamed and appalled over rise in rape

PLEASE allow me space in your column to voice my concern over the horrific rape incident that occurred two weeks ago. I am ashamed and appalled to say that rape is becoming more and more and is rapidly on the rise in Papua New Guinea. The incident with the Air Niugini female staff raised alarm among many Papua New Guineans and, hopefully, made many realise that drastic measures need to be taken to stop such animalistic behaviour.

Then again, "animalistic" could not be the appropriate word to describe the acts performed as even animals with less than half the brain power as man, do not practice this sort of behaviour.

Also reported in another rape incident was the rapist stating that he committed the offence because the victim lured herself to his attention by wearing tight jeans. What sort of a lame excuse is that? If that is to be used to justify his actions in the court of law, then all democratic rules relating to freedom of choice should be scrapped. PNG women should be allowed to wear whatever they feel comfortable in. It always seems to amaze me how the excuse of PNG women being the ones who tempt men by showing off too much of their skin in their mini skirts can be used when our very own ancestors wore almost next to nothing and yet their thoughts and actions were somewhat more civilised.

It seems to be the common mentality that if a woman gets raped she "asked for it". Now how many people would actually want to be physically and more so mentally scarred for life? Not many I should think!

Nobody, not one single human being (let alone a female), deserves to be raped whether they may be the normal everyday school girl or the prostitute on the street. What all this boils down to is the simple and sad fact that this nation lacks respect for all its mothers, sisters and daughters.

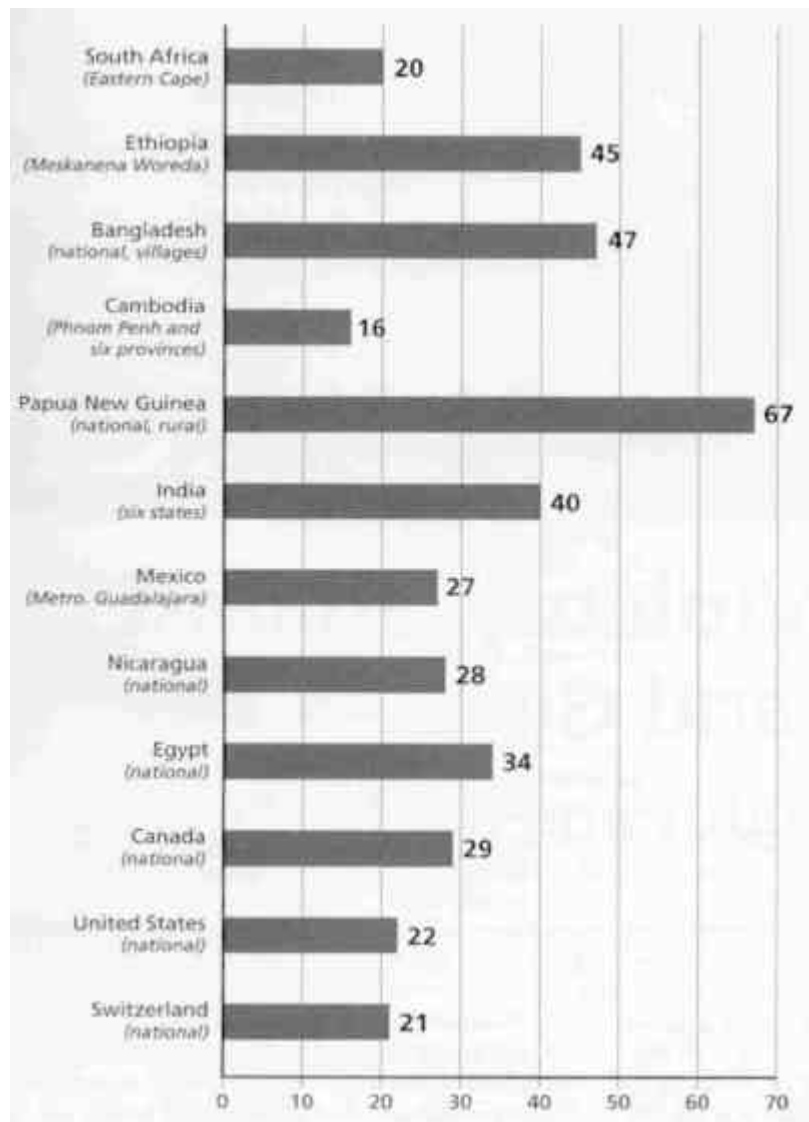
Rape is a serious crime and should be treated as such. At the moment the only punishment I see fit for persons committing rape (besides executing them) would be to castrate or unman them. A jail sentence has no assurance that he will not repeat the same offence, whereas with castration put in a simple way would mean, "the job cannot be done without the proper tools".

How many more rape cases and victims can this nation accommodate? I plead in fear for all Papua New Guinea women that all leaders and citizens of this country help put a stop once and for all to this Godforsaken crime.

Concerned PNG woman, Lae

*Post-Courier*, 19 November 2001





Percentage of adult women reporting physical abuse by a male partner From: *The State of World Population 2000*

#### 4.4 Activity 4

*The two letters about rape raise some important points. Study the letters carefully and record two or three statements made by the writers that reflect your own views. Identify also those statements with which you disagree.*

*What arguments are used by men to justify rape? To what extent are these arguments supported by traditional practices, the law or religion?*

*Study the statistics in the table above and try to explain PNG's position in relation to other countries.*

*Design a poster/cartoon on the topic "Say No To Violence"*

### Topic 3: Equity in PNG

**i** It is always easier to work from the known to the unknown. While the majority of students are probably familiar with traditional roles, it is important to recognise that many urban students have had little contact with such roles.

It is also important that students realise that no culture is static, unchanging and what is called 'traditional' by community members now is not necessarily what was 'traditional' 50 years ago.

Ideas about cultural adaptation and change are also discussed in SS – Module 1.4, SS – Module 3.7 and SS – Module 3.4.



*Women involved in 'traditional' activities such as performing in ceremonies and selling market produce*

### Enabling our women to play an equal role in our society

*Message from Sir Rabbie Namaliu on the occasion of International Women's Day.*

One of the greatest challenges that Papua New Guinea faces today is to enable the women of our nation to play an equal role alongside men in every aspect of the life of the nation. International Women's Day is held each year to mark the achievements of women, and to focus on the need in all countries for women to have equal opportunities in education, careers, business, sports, community life, and, importantly, in government at all levels.

The advances made in PNG in this respect since Independence a quarter of a century ago have been totally inadequate and disappointing. Women continue to be under-represented in public office, at the national, provincial and community government levels, in employment, and the skilled professions in particular, in business, education, especially higher education, in sport and just about every other aspect of our community life.

The enhancement and advancement of the role of women in PNG society will in no way devalue the fundamental role of women as wives and mothers - as the heart of our family unit and family life. Our women can play a wider role in the life of the nation, and our own communities, without undermining the wonderful, fundamental role of women in the family and the home. Indeed, if women can be encouraged to play a greater role in the life of the nation, their role as wives and mothers will actually be strengthened, and the respect women deserve, and all too often don't receive, will be restored.

Nowhere is the loss of respect for women more tragically evident than it is in the appalling and shameful level of sexual and other crimes against women in urban and rural communities alike. The courts need to take a much tougher line with criminals who sexually and physically assault women; the evil crime of rape needs to attract maximum, not minimum, penalties. But the task of building the role of women in the life of nation is a task for every leader, every business organisation, every professional group, every church, and every community organisation.

In some countries, programmes to develop the role of women in employment are compulsory. Our women ought to be given incentives, possibly even tax incentives, and active encouragement by the nation's leaders, and community leaders, for programmes which strengthen the role of women in employment, and in business and professional life. These programmes must be backed up by an education campaign directed at men as much as women, and at the youth of today, highlighting the role of women, the rights of women, and the need for women to play a greater role in the areas mentioned, as well as others, including the role of women in farming.

The failure to develop the wider role of women in the life of our nation is the fault of every government since Independence, including the Government I had the honour to lead between 1988 and 1992. We made a start, but we did not do enough, nor has any government done since.

On the first International Women's, Day of the new millennium, we need to take a hard and honest look at how little we have done as a nation, and as communities within a nation, to encourage and help our women to play their rightful role in the life and development of Papua New Guinea. Much needs to be done, and we must do it together - as political leaders, as community representatives, and business people, as leaders of sporting groups, as church leaders, and as ordinary, average citizens.

We must commit ourselves to giving the women of Papua New Guinea the opportunities they deserve, and are entitled to, to use their talents, energy and education for the good of themselves, their families, their community, and their nation.

Today, that ought to be a commitment we all make, willingly and proudly.

*The National*, 9 March 2000



Women involved in 'traditional' activities such as gardening and food collecting.



## Traditional roles

Papua New Guinean has both matrilineal and patrilineal structures. In a matrilineal system, the members trace their descent from a common ancestress through successive generations of women. In some cases, women receive both rights of descent and of the land and in other cases they receive only the rights of descent, the rights of land passing through their mother's brother. In contrast, in a patrilineal system the people trace their descent through successive generation of males to a common ancestor. The male members 'hold land in common, often live together in one settlement, and help each other in work, ritual enterprises, and exchanges'. In this type of society, the relationship between the male members is very strong and is expressed in mutual assistance and help. Although there are wide variations within the patrilineal and matrilineal societies, there are clearly defined social roles.

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### 4.4 Activity 5

*Research the roles of women in the matrilineal and patrilineal traditional societies and the division of labour according to sex-roles. Do this by interviewing older members of the community or by observing roles still in operation in remote areas. Provide one or two specific examples eg women in the Trobriand Islands in the Milne Bay Province are responsible for distribution of surplus goods during the ceremonial exchanges.*

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## Women and education

Education, in particular that of women, has a larger impact on infant and child mortality than the combined effects of higher income, improved sanitation and modern-sector employment.



*Girls participating in aspects of education such as group work and sport*

## Gender Inequality in Education Persists

Studies repeatedly show that investment in educating girls and women raises every index of progress towards sustainable economic growth and development. Despite this, an estimated two thirds of the 300 million children without access to education are girls, and two thirds of the some 880 million illiterate adults are women.

In 1996, 29 per cent of the world's females over age 15, compared to 16 per cent of males, were illiterate. In the past few decades, all regions expanded primary education, though in Africa, progress began to slow in the 1980s because of higher costs for parents and declining school quality. In the developing countries as a whole, the gender gap at the primary level has narrowed significantly, although it persists in sub-Saharan Africa, North Africa and South Asia. Female representation decreases at the secondary and postsecondary levels, but the gender gap has narrowed somewhat in recent decades.

Larger gender gaps are observed in regions with lower overall levels of education. Faced with a choice, some parents choose to educate sons because there are more and better-paying jobs for men than for women. Some girls are taken out of school to work at home. Some families are not willing to educate girls if the school is distant or the teachers are male. Some parents invest less in girls' education because economic returns will go to their future husbands' families after marriage.

Once girls reach puberty, pregnancy may prevent them from staying in school. Students who become pregnant often drop out of school, or school authorities expel them. Mothers' unwanted pregnancies may lead them to withdraw daughters from school to help at home.

Family size influences educational attainment: children of either sex from small families have better educational opportunities. One study in Thailand found that with other factors being equal (income, religion, residence, parents' educational attainment and parents' ambitions for their children), in families with four or fewer children 31 per cent went to upper secondary school. In families with more than four children only 14 per cent went to upper secondary school. Similarly, a study in Bangladesh found that children in small families stayed in school longer because they were not called upon to care for younger siblings at home. However, in both the Thailand and Bangladesh studies, boys had a higher level of educational attainment than girls.

From: State of World Population 2000

### 4.4 Activity 6

*Use an up-to-date atlas or population resource to produce graphs on education and literacy rates for females and males in PNG and other Pacific countries. Include at least two main Western countries in your graph for comparison.*

We, Year two students are outnumbered 3 to 1 by male students. This dominance gives male students a numerical and psychological advantage. While both sexes mix in class, a significant number of women band together for reasons of culture, shyness and intimidation. Class participation is easier for our male counterparts who are in the majority while for us, being in a minority, it is much more difficult. It is the view of both male and female students that we do not on the whole participate to the best of our ability. For example, women are not given an equal place in the reading of texts, and this reinforces the secondary role we play in the traditional society.

During class male participation is more conspicuous as male students have a tendency to offer suggestions and to be more forceful in expressing their opinions. In addition more than half the students claim that male ridicule in class and pressure outside discourages women.

Our male colleagues say that we express our ideas as clearly as they do and in some ways that we are more intelligent. We do not have to work longer or harder to achieve the same results.

From: *The Women's Voice in Education*

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## 4.4 Activity 7

*The comments above were made by female students at the University of Goroka. To what extent are they similar to your experience at a primary teachers' college?*

*Design and use an observation checklist to study female participation in a PTC class or in a primary classroom during practice teaching. Comment on your findings.*

*Survey at least twenty female and male students about their favourite subjects, interests or activities. What do your results show?*

*Discuss ways to assist female students to stand up for their rights by expressing themselves freely in class or out of class without being discouraged by the male students.*

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## Women and work

Women are making up an increasing percentage of the world's workers, but many still find it impossible to break into top jobs. Women - who make up around 40 per cent of the global work force - face a "glass ceiling" when they try to get to the top in business and politics. Worldwide, women hold only 3 per cent of top executive jobs. Eight countries have female heads of state while less than 14 per cent of the world's lawmakers and 1 per cent of labour union leaders are female.

Even women who do get to the top on average earn less than men. Wage differences in male and female managerial jobs stem from the reality that even when women hold

management jobs, they are often in less strategic, lower-paying areas of a company's operations. One reason for the slow move towards equality is the increasing number of hours top executives were expected to work in order to gain recognition, as well as the fact that there are few part-time managerial positions for women trying to juggle career and family.

Women who choose part-time work early in their careers often find their advancement hampered, even after a return to full-time employment, since their male counterparts will have invested heavily in career building during the same period.

Although the percentage of women members in national parliaments has risen in countries in the past few years, it is still well below that of men. According to the Inter Parliamentary Union, at the beginning of 2001 women occupied 14 per cent of seats in parliaments and 13.2 per cent in the upper chamber or senate. The report said improving women's qualifications was a key element in reducing inequality. Governments also had to improve legislation guaranteeing equality and eradicating discrimination.

### **Tackling the glass ceiling**

The Teaching Service is a major sector of the nation's work force. Naturally, it comprises the largest number of the country's female employees. Yet as former Teaching Services Commissioner, Dame Rose Kekedo notes, female teachers are under-represented at senior levels of the teaching service.

"The national department of education has taken the initiative to ensure that more female students are recruited to teacher training, but it is not giving them promotional opportunities, she said. "While there are qualified and experienced women teachers out there, for some reason they are not being promoted to levels higher than a headmistress!

The 1971 Teaching Service Ordinance was the first law in PNG to give female members of the teaching service full member status. Even at that early stage, the Teaching Service Commission was showing its progressive and pro-active attitude by pushing for equal rights for women by making provisions for married women to be members of the service. Other provisions included maternity leave, leave fare to the female officer's home province, head of family status, et cetera.

At that time the teaching service was the largest employer of women in the country, with about 25 percent of 9,988 teachers being women. By 1997, the percentage of female teachers had risen to 37 percent, out of a total of 21,136 teachers. The percentage of women in the Teaching Service has continued to increase, especially since the introduction of elementary schools. Also, women who had earlier left the work force to raise families are now returning to teaching since.

The National, 11 July 2000



## 4.4 Activity 8

*Select three women from different employment sectors eg education, clerical, trade, public service, management, and interview them about their career choice and prospects for advancement.*



*Women involved in 'modern' activities such as sales, computing and engineering.*

Values ascribed to women's work are relatively low compared to men's work and this is what makes the sexual division of labour problematic. The modern cash economy makes a clear demarcation between paid and unpaid labour. It also clearly discriminates against women by employing women in low-paid jobs in the formal sector. Particularly in the service sector of the formal economy, women are employed as casual, cheap and low-paid workers often under exploitative conditions. A failure to fully appreciate the value of women's work within the household and/or the informal sector means development assistance and interventions often exclude the work that women perform.

## Women's work is under-rewarded

Much of women's work is unpaid, and even when cash exchanges are involved, the contribution of women is not included or is discounted in national statistics. For example, in rural areas, women not only prepare but also grow most of the family food, and it is primarily girls and women who collect water, fuel for cooking and fodder for domestic animals.

In West Africa, the Caribbean and Asia, between 70 and 90 per cent of all farm and marine produce is traded by women. Street and market stands are part of an under-recorded informal economy that generates an estimated 30 per cent of all urban wealth.

It is estimated that women's unpaid household labour accounts for about one third of the world's economic production. In developing countries, when unpaid agricultural work and housework are considered along with wage labour, women's work hours are estimated to exceed men's by 30 per cent.

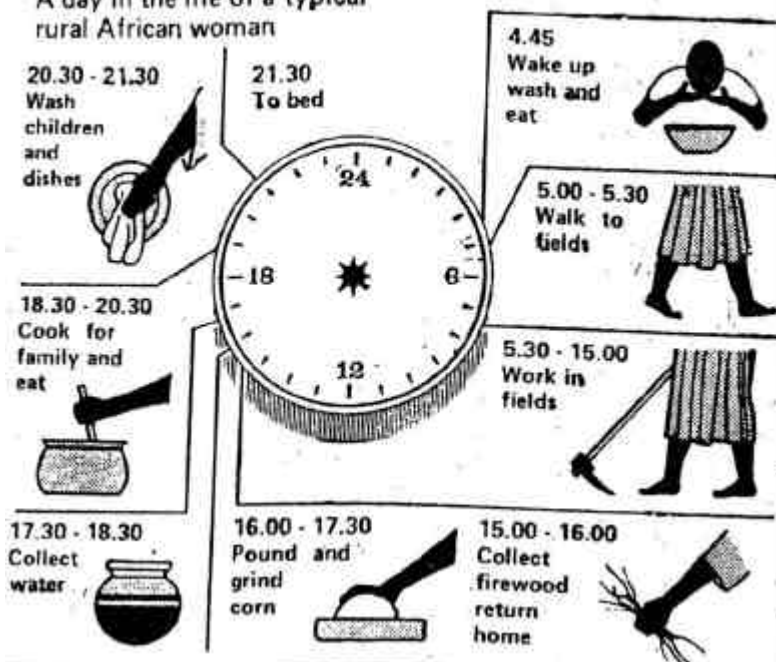
Discrepancies in pay are often more entrenched in developed countries. For example, in Kenya women's average wages in non-agricultural employment are 84 per cent of men's, while in Japan women earn only 51 per cent of what men earn.

From: *State of World Population 2000*

### 4.4 Activity 9

#### A WOMAN'S WORK IS NEVER DONE

A day in the life of a typical rural African woman



*Divide into six groups. Study the following diagram describing the daily routine of a woman in rural Africa. Construct similar diagrams for the following women – a college lecturer, an ancillary staff member, a market seller. Select three different male workers and construct the same charts for them. What conclusions can you make about work and leisure for males and females when you compare the diagrams?*

### **Morobe women marking World Rural Women's Day**

Morobe will join millions of women around the globe to celebrate World Rural Women's Day on October 15. Rural women play a major role in the development and stability of rural areas.

Very often these are women who have little or no status at all. As such they often lack the power to secure resources or to access vital services such as credit, extension, training and education. Yet they produce most of the food in their household, working long hours carrying out multiple tasks for the day. They also hold some of the most valuable traditional knowledge which they tend to pass on to their children.

Today, in the name of development, women are working three times harder. They have to fetch water, cook for the men, help men to carry materials for their "projects", care for the babies and children and tend to food gardens. Women's work is just never done.

Morobe women are getting together to organise the day in Lae, which will highlight organizations where rural women can go for assistance. One of the main aims of this event will be to disseminate information on agriculture – for example, new skills and techniques and higher yield and more disease-resistant varieties of crops. The day will also be a time for these rural women to reflect on their lives and their contributions to the development of PNG. Often, these contributions are taken for granted and not recognised.

*The National, 5 October 2001*

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#### **4.4 Activity 10**

*In groups, brainstorm what skills and abilities were/are valued in traditional society? Think about your mother, grandmother or another female relative who did not get much schooling – What skills did she have to plant the gardens, harvest, feed and care for the family?*

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#### *Role models*

In societies where women are able to choose their roles, there are few social pressures to do one thing or another. Women can stay at home and look after their families or they can follow a career. Their career choice may be a job traditionally regarded as men's work. Even in those societies, some women had to be pioneers, showing the way for other women to expand their choices. Such women are role models for other women.

### First female electoral manager

Being the only woman manager for the Electoral Commission is a challenge. Emily Kelton Nandie, the only woman of the 20 provincial managers for the commission, has found many challenges in her work, including the prospect of next year's general elections. From Souh on the north coast of Manus Province, she was posted to New Ireland Province in February 1990. Ms Kelton said she held that position until she was recently transferred. She felt very proud of being the only woman provincial manager.

Ms Kelton said there were many challenges one had to take on when doing the job such as 'going out to the remote areas and interviewing people to get on the common roll.' It was also a task facing men who had not previously seen women officers deal with them as election manager. "As you know, in typical Papua New Guinea society women are meant for the kitchen. That is something I will not bow down to," Ms Kelton said.

*Post-Courier, 29 October 2001*

### Rose leads way for women in agriculture

Rose Kakae is a fine example of women in agriculture. As a factory manager of Goroka Coffee, she supervises more than a dozen people, three quarters of whom are women. The work atmosphere here is excellent. The operation is small, and a lot is being achieved because the workers do the work together. Although Rose is not a DPI Officer or *didimeri*, she is well versed with her job due to many years of work experience. She has held the position for nearly 16 years.

Apart from her managerial skills, from the way she portrays herself, she has qualities of leadership. She is dynamic, charismatic and flamboyant. And she is in control because she getting the work done through other people. "I think they are very proud and satisfied, they do not come to me with any problems at all," said Rose.

Asked if she found her job similar to running her household, Rose said she was proud of her job, it was interesting because she was selling PNG to the world.

*Post-Courier, 17 April 2001.*

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## 4.4 Activity 11

*Select one woman whom you think portrays a good role model for either rural or urban communities. Do a single page profile for this person, for example a brief family background, significant contributions at the community, provincial or national level whether it be in public, private sector or an NGO group.*

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## Women in decision-making

Women have always been leaders in community and non-governmental organizations, but are under-represented at most levels of government, especially in ministerial and other executive bodies. A dozen countries still have no women in parliament, and in at least eight countries, women cannot even vote. Women are 13 per cent of the world's parliamentarians, up from 7 per cent in 1975. Only in nine countries is the proportion of women in the national parliament 30 per cent or above (the target set by the Fourth World Conference on Women): Denmark, Eritrea, Finland, Germany, Iceland, the Netherlands, Norway, South Africa and Sweden (with more than 40 per cent).

In some countries, the constitution mandates quotas for women's seats in parliament. In others, political parties may agree to quotas or set targets for the proportion of candidates for election who are women.

In Eastern Europe and Mongolia, for example, the elimination of quotas that accompanied the shift to democratic political systems resulted in dramatic falls in women's share of parliamentary seats. In South Africa, by contrast, the proportion of women rose from 1 per cent to 30 per cent following the end of apartheid.

Several other developing countries have seen dramatic increases in the past 25 years, including Uganda (1 per cent to 18 per cent), Ecuador (1 per cent to 17 per cent), Bahamas (4 per cent to 20 per cent) and Barbados (4 per cent to 20 per cent).

Women hold 30 per cent or more of ministerial level positions in just six countries - Barbados, Eritrea, Finland, Liechtenstein, Seychelles and Sweden. Ten other Western European and Caribbean countries have a level of 20-29 per cent. Some 48 countries have no women ministers.

From: *State of World Population 2000*

Fundamental changes have occurred at the formal/institutional level, as a direct result of women organising in PNG. The Constitution of PNG contains the general principle of equality which forms the basis for 'women's development' and at the same time gives women the right to demand recognition. The most important constitutional guarantee for women is that of *"increased participation by women as both beneficiaries and agents in the development process and improvement in the quality of life for all"*.

Looking at the policy level and the overall situation regarding 'women and development', the government of PNG does recognise that women play an important role in their families, and in national development. Nevertheless, there is widespread feeling amongst women that this official recognition has yet to be fully matched by development practice. In the last decade or so, some progress have been made due in large part to pressures from women in government as well as women's organisations such as the National Council of Women.

### *The National Women's Policy*

The National Women's Policy is a mechanism developed through the concerted effort of the women's network, including women in government and NGOs, and was approved by the National Executive Council (PNG's cabinet) and launched in 1990. The formulation of the Policy was in response to the consistent failure of government to plan for women's advancement. The policy sets out far ranging goals and implementing strategies for women's

development in PNG and clearly shows women's expectations of the government. It calls upon both the national and provincial levels of government to "...ensure that women's programs are not marginalised but integrated into existing plans and programs of departments" (PNG Country Report, 1995). The Policy's broad goals include:

- Government Departments and agencies must be responsive to issues facing women by effectively integrating them in their development process
- The government must recognise and strengthen the National Council of Women and the efforts of non-government women's organisations to mobilise women for individual and family betterment
- The government must provide opportunities for individual women to recognise and develop their own potential and determine the outcomes of their lives
- The government must enhance women's critical contributions to development as the primary food producers, processors and distributors, as the mainstay of family and community health and as the principle educators of future generations

Inevitably the process of change for women will be slow, and involve negotiations and compromises. The Women's Division in the Home Affairs Department is the only department at the forefront of women's development. It has become the focal point (in association with NCW) for women to exert pressure on the government. The Department of Religion, Home Affairs and Youth and previous Departments responsible for women's development have always had low status compared to other Departments. Even within the Department of Religion, Home Affairs and Youth low priority is given to Women's Division which is reflected in the low budgetary allocation.

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## 4.4 Activity 12

*Outline attempts to formally recognise women's status at your college.*

*Divide into small groups and each group research one of the following questions*

- *How many women candidates are being supported by the major parties for the 2002 elections?*
- *What does the 'Integrity of Political Parties' Bill have to say about women in politics?*
- *What is the proportion of women in three LLGs close to your college?*
- *How many women are there in the current National Government? Who are they, what party do they belong to and what electorates do they represent?*

*Identify three women's groups operating in PNG and describe who and what they represent.*

## Glossary

- Equality** means every person receiving the same treatment regardless of who or where he or she may be.
- Equity** means fairness and impartiality. In social exchange fairness exists when persons who have made large contributions receive relatively large outcomes (rewards), those who have made small contributions receive small outcomes, and so on. In a social context equity also involves conscience or principles of natural justice. This can result in people being given different treatment if this is considered fair or just. Therefore some people may be recognised as more deserving than others. The basis on which differentiation is made is important in judging whether a case is just or unjust. It can vary according to basic beliefs or political persuasion.
- Gender** refers to those behaviours and attitudes that are culturally accepted as being ways of being a woman and ways of being a man.

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