



MINING AND LOCAL-LEVEL DEVELOPMENT

**Examining the gender dimensions of
agreements between companies and
communities**

Case report for Newcrest's Lihir mine
Papua New Guinea
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ACRONYMS

CSRSM	Centre for Social Responsibility in Mining
GII	Gender Inequality Index
GRI	Global Reporting Initiative
IBP	Integrated Benefits Package
LBS	Lihir Business Services
LMALA	Lihir Mining Area Landowners Association
LMP	Lease for Mining Purposes
MCA	Minerals Council of Australia
MOPU	Million Ounce Plant Upgrade
NGO	Non-governmental organisation
PNG	Papua New Guinea
UNDP	United Nations Development Program

Executive summary

This report provides the outcomes of a study on the gender dimensions of agreement processes at Newcrest's Lihir gold mine in Papua New Guinea. The study was undertaken by three researchers from the Centre for Social Responsibility in Mining (CSRSM) at The University of Queensland. The analysis draws on desktop research, a brief site visit during May 2012 and a series of interviews with community leaders and Newcrest personnel.

Research scope

The scope of the research on Lihir was retrospective in orientation. The research focused on the 2007 agreement process and the Lihir Sustainable Development Plan. By way of background, in 1993 a Development Forum was held for Lihirian leaders, government and company representatives in Port Moresby to discuss the distribution of equity from the Lihir mine project. The Development Forum is mandated under Section 3 of the *Mining Act (1992)* and is a round table process through which companies, communities and different levels of governments to negotiate benefit-sharing agreements. Following a two-year negotiation process, an initial agreement called the Integrated Benefits Package (IBP) was formalised and signed in 1995.

Following the first (and protracted) review of the IBP which commenced in 2000, the company and landowners finalised an amended agreement in 2007, and the 'Lihir Sustainable Development Plan' was launched. The 2007 agreement encompassed provisions for compensation and benefit sharing between the government and Lihirian community with scheduled reviews of the agreement to occur on a five yearly basis. The plan outlined a 20-year partnership between stakeholder communities, the Nimamar local level government and the company aimed at achieving sustainable development for Lihir. The content of the plan was divided across five chapters and covered a wide range of initiatives around capacity building, trust fund payments, compensation, training and localisation, infrastructure and utility development, town and village planning, commercial and contract management opportunities, and social wellbeing. 'Women, Youth and Churches' were included as a specific program within chapter one and were to be managed by the local level government. The 2007 agreement was under review at the time of this research.

Method

CSRSM researchers applied a semi-structured interview protocol adapted to the Lihirian cultural context. In line with the scope of work as agreed with Newcrest, the interview protocol was oriented towards the 2007 agreement processes rather than mining impacts or development benefits per se (although discussion of impacts and benefits informed many conversations). Some interviewees were targeted for the research, with a snowballing technique applied to supplement the participant list. Once the research was underway, several opportunistic interviews were also undertaken, as several local people had heard about the research and wanted to participate.

Prior studies

Several existing studies have documented some of the gendered impacts of mining on Lihir, with specific reference to women.¹ Key negative impacts that have had a significant effect on women include:

- a rise in gender-based domestic violence
- rising rates in prostitution and sexually transmitted and other diseases
- reduction of women's traditional status in customary activities
- exclusion from agreement negotiations and, consequently, a lack of project benefit and control over cash benefits/compensation monies
- exclusion from development planning processes within the local level government and at the ward or village level.²

Broader cultural context

In line with pre-existing research, this study also confirms that women have largely been excluded from agreement processes on Lihir, either directly or indirectly. Despite this conclusion, it is important to understand this instance of gender inequality in its broader cultural context. Gender inequality is a national issue in PNG. Women have limited voice and power and generally lag behind men across all indicators of gender equality including politics, education, health, employment and other economic opportunities.

In the context of mining in Lihir, a number of cultural factors emerged from the research, which appear to be leading determinants affecting women's participation in agreement processes and negotiations. The issues and challenges affecting women's participation and engagement at the local level include: the traditional matrilineal society, issues with gender and *kastom*, and the complex political environment. As Lihir is traditionally a matrilineal society, women are afforded a certain value and status regarding the ownership of land. However, the management of the land and the negotiations surrounding it are conducted by men. This arrangement tends to extend to contemporary systems of ownership, value and management, as men maintain management and undertake negotiations in the contemporary (mining) world on behalf of women.

Another key factor inhibiting women's participation and involvement in agreement processes is *kastom*; that is, the local traditional rules and understandings that inform how one should behave. Traditionally, under *kastom*, women would not work collectively outside their clan and lineage groups, nor would they speak publicly in front of mixed clan groups. Interpretations of *kastom* and how they transpose to the new ways brought about by mining and modernity has created great divergence among communities and individuals. The research found that specific interpretations of *kastom* significantly affected women's ability to speak out, thus, affecting their ability to contribute to decisions affecting the community and clan both within the clan and the public sphere (such as agreement processes).

¹ See for example Macintyre & Foale (2004), Macintyre (2006), and Hemer (2011).

² For more information on some of these issues see Macintyre & Foale (2004, p. 247-9), and Banks *et al.* (2010, p. 29). On the issue of women's increased burden, see Macintyre (2006, pp. 137-9).

Further, the political environment in PNG has tended to hinder development for all of Lihir, including women. The high level of complexity and dysfunction of governance, accountability and transparency affects women in the sense that resources and structural relationships between representatives and different organisations are not clear and there are divergent views around how different organisations and individuals should interact and relate to one another. Within the context of mining, these determinants have had significant consequences for the women of Lihir and all Lihirians, and they have been documented in this report.

Summary of key findings

The study found that women generally felt excluded in negotiations related to the mining on their lands. This was evident in the under-representation of women in formal agreement processes and in the limited participation and involvement of women in formal political processes. Formal female representation was only apparent in one (local level government) out of the three major institutions (the company, the landowners association and the local level government) involved in the agreement process. The landowners association's executive and management has historically been the exclusive domain of men. The company has never appointed a woman to the negotiating table for the agreement.

Although the company was not seen by women as 'preventing' the participation of women, they were neither considered to be enabling it, as they had not set a good example to other parties that women have a place in the negotiating process. By not having an appointed woman at the negotiating table for the agreement process (both past and present), the company is perceived to directly and indirectly endorse the male-centric interpretation of *kastom*.

Historically, women have never been elected into the local level government of Lihir. However, following a national government directive, each local level government in PNG was required to appoint women's representatives (one for urban areas, two for rural areas such as Lihir). Further, a recently implemented national government gender strategy also required wards to appoint women's ward coordinators. These coordinators are required to report to the local level government women's representatives on a regular basis. This official role is important at the local level as it is seen as one of the most effective ways to date in which a collective women's voice can be heard. Despite this promise, women's representatives are required to report to men who carry their concerns forward. Thus, there is no direct line of communication for women's voices to be heard in negotiation and agreement processes.

The research also found that women's involvement, or lack thereof, in community-level engagement processes affected their ability to engage in agreement processes. The company's and the landowners association's community level engagement did not always actively enable the participation of women during engagement processes. Although the company held open community meetings, it did not always acknowledge or accommodate for the barriers women faced in speaking out at public community meetings (e.g. *kastom* traditions). The company did not take measures to actively engage women separately from men during engagement processes. As with the company, the landowners association also did not engage women separately in any way. The engagement processes showed little consideration for special processes that enabled women to freely express concerns, questions and aspirations.

A number of additional issues/impacts were found to affect women's participation at the community level, including the increasing pressure on female leaders and conflict between the two women's organisations (Petztorme and Tutorme). Lihir's two women's organisations have been in conflict for several years. This conflict has hindered women's ability to advocate for greater involvement in agreement processes, and to collaborate and secure funding for priority projects. Further, the study revealed that for some men the conflict had become evidence that women could not lead and should not be politically active outside their community. Female Lihirian leaders are placed under immense pressure and are expected to take responsibility for a broad range of tasks, duties and committees, which place great demand on their energy and time. Further, women find it difficult to be effective female leaders not only because of the workload, but also because of trust issues, which at times results in violent backlash from husbands.

Implications

These factors affecting women's engagement and involvement in agreement processes and negotiations has created a strong sense of frustration among the women who participated in this research because they believe they have been excluded from agreement processes and have subsequently not received a fair distribution of benefits.

Women's concerns over being left out of the agreement process include that:

- women are not receiving their share of benefits
- women and youth programs are not receiving financial support
- women are not receiving information about opportunities for development
- men (and some youths) are misusing the benefits through spending money on drugs, alcohol and extramarital relationships.

Women clearly expressed they would like to see:

- a critical mass of female representatives at the negotiating table
- female representation within the landowners association
- a united, effective women's association for Lihir
- opportunities for women's development through skills training, and business development
- greater attention paid to community engagement processes in order that women's experiences and perspective on impacts and opportunities are heard.

Summary

In summary, this study confirms that Lihir women have largely been excluded, either directly or indirectly, from agreement processes and negotiations. Current initiatives seeking to address some of the identified issues include the Women in Mining (WIM) initiative and some company initiatives. The Women in Mining initiative established by the PNG Chamber of Mines and Petroleum and the World Bank attempts to address some of the gender-based problems faced by women. Although the initiative is a key example of an explicit mining and gender strategy at the national level, the policy is not regulatory and thus companies are not bound. Further, as the strategy is high-level and local communication systems are lacking, it does not have significant impact at the grassroots level. For example, although some Lihirian women attended past conferences, information was not always

communicated to other women in the community, particularly those women in the outer islands, and thus the benefits of this initiative were not necessarily seen at the grassroots level.

Efforts have been made by the company to empower Lihirian women. However, while their intentions are good, there is a clear lack of capacity to support women in addressing the ingrained challenges that they face with modernity and mining. Although the company recently appointed an employee to specifically address women's issues, the role does not have a designated gender strategy, or a grassroots engagement strategy to guide future initiatives. This, coupled with daily operational constraints and a lack of resources, affects the company's ability to strategise on broader gender issues and concerns.

Future opportunities

The study draws attention to areas which can be addressed by the company, local level government and the landowners association. It also presents opportunities that exist for the company to take a leadership role in supporting women's issues and concerns, to support a unified Lihir women's association and to aid in communication of conference and workshop outcomes and related information across the island groups, including a more strategic approach to community engagement more generally. The company could also play a key role in influencing the landowners association to appoint women's representatives to their organisation.

Case report for Newcrest's Lihir Mine, Papua New Guinea

1 Research description

1.1 Fieldwork

As part of the broader research project, three researchers from the Centre for Social Responsibility in Mining (CSRSM) from The University of Queensland visited Lihir in Papua New Guinea (PNG) for a week in May 2012 to undertake field-based research on gender dimensions of agreement processes. The Lihir Island Group is a cluster of four inhabited islands located in the Bismarck Archipelago, part of New Ireland Province of PNG. Like other places in PNG that are far from the capital city or provincial administrative centres, Lihirians have referred to their islands as 'las ples' in Tok Pisin, meaning 'remote and overlooked'. This outlook has changed somewhat since mining began, as through this industry Lihir has become much more connected to the outside world, and is now more involved in the global economy. The Lihir Islands are a distinct cultural and linguistic group, and mining activity in New Ireland Province is dominated by the operations in this island location.

Since 1995, the mining operation has had an agreement in place with the Lihirian community called the Integrated Benefits Package (IBP), which was the focus of the research. At the time of the research, the agreement was subject to a five-year review. A similar review was undertaken previously, commencing in 2000 and culminating in the Lihir Sustainable Development Plan in 2007, which provided a framework for implementation of the revised IBP Agreement. Further explanation is provided in the Background Context section below.

The researchers undertook a total of 19 interviews during the Lihir field visit. Of these, 15 interviews were conducted with individuals, the remaining four in focus groups; two with 2-3 participants and two with 12-15 participants. The male to female ratio was relatively even with slightly more females interviewed overall. Interviewees came from a range of locations and social groups across Lihir. The majority of people interviewed held one if not several formal positions within the church, community, women's organisations or company. The sample targeted adult clan leaders and, as such, did not capture the voice of youths, seniors and other community members.³ Most interviews were conducted in the township of Londolovit within the Lease for Mining Purposes (LMP), either in the Lihir Mining Area Landowners Association (LMALA) or the company's Community Relations office.⁴ The majority of participants either lived and/or worked on Aniolam, the largest island of the Lihir island group. However the researchers also visited an outer island and on the final day observed

³ It is important to note that clans continue to provide the most immediate point of identity for most Lihirians. There are a number of clans and sub-clans on Lihir, which fall under two distinct moieties, and there is a sense of hierarchy within the clan system which is exacerbated in the present day mining context as particular clans position themselves more assertively regarding landowner's rights and access to benefits due to their geographical proximity to the mine. The research sample was not based upon clan affiliation and therefore did not attempt to gain a range of perspectives from different clan groups.

⁴ The Community Relations office is located in town for ease of community access. Other management offices are located on the Special Mining Lease, a 10 minute drive by sealed road.

a meeting between the company and members of the women's groups in the harbour area of Aniolam.⁵

1.2 Method and limitations

During their time in the field, CSRSM researchers applied a semi-structured interview protocol adapted to the Lihirian cultural context. Reflecting the scope of work as agreed with Newcrest, the interview protocol was oriented towards agreement processes rather than mining impacts, however a number of important issues surfaced during this research that warrant further investigation. Some interviewees were targeted for the research, with a snowballing technique applied to supplement the participant list. There were several opportunistic interviews undertaken, once the research was underway, as several local people had heard about the research and wanted to participate.

Each interview was led by Lihir cultural heritage specialist, Dr Kirsty Gillespie, using a combination of English and Tok Pisin. Dr Gillespie's pre-existing relationships and local networks significantly enhanced the research team's ability to interact with women and men from Lihir for the purposes of this research. The research analyst focused on instantaneous translation of Tok Pisin into English for the chief investigator. This meant that the natural flow of the conversation between the lead interviewer and interviewee(s) was essentially maintained.⁶

As with any rapid field research, there are several limitations worth noting. During the field visit some targeted interviewees were unavailable due to community obligations. Poor weather and transport limitations also prevented the research team from travelling to some of the more distant islands and from visiting communities on the other side of Aniolam. Finally the limitations of time in the field constrained the richness of information that may have come through 'storying', an important way of communicating within the Melanesian context.

⁵ The largest island of the Lihir group is also known by the name 'Niolum' (this form of the name excludes the article).

⁶ Most interview quotations provided later on in this report are translations of Tok Pisin.

Part 1 – Background context

2 Papua New Guinea

2.1 Geography and economy

Located in the south-western Pacific Ocean, the Independent State of Papua New Guinea (PNG) occupies the eastern half of the island of New Guinea and approximately 600 islands scattered across a 463,000 square kilometre area. The population is estimated at seven million, with the majority (87.5 per cent) located in rural areas and a smaller urban-based population (12.5 per cent) distributed across Port Moresby (national capital), Lae, Madang, Wewak, Goroka, Mt Hagen and Rabaul.⁷

The population largely identifies as Melanesian, with small numbers of European, Australian and Asian immigrants. PNG is considered to be one of the most culturally and linguistically diverse nations in the world, consisting of several thousand communities divided by language, custom and tradition. While the country's official languages include Tok Pisin, English and Hiri Motu, another 800 indigenous languages are believed to exist.⁸ It is estimated that over a thousand different cultural groups exist in PNG, each with different forms of cultural expression in art, dance, weaponry, costumes, singing, music, architecture and different ancestral belief systems. Many communities combine their Christian faith (more than 96 per cent of people indicate that they are members of a Christian church) with pre-Christian indigenous practices.^{9,10}

While PNG's economy is dominated by extractive industries, the informal agricultural sector supports livelihoods of the majority of the population.¹¹ The formal sector includes industries such as timber, coffee, cocoa and palm oil, however the extraction and exportation of minerals accounts for almost two-thirds of export earnings. In the past two decades, PNG has benefitted from resurgent commodity prices which have buffered the economy against the global economic crisis. Relative to other Pacific island countries, PNG has held a reasonably strong macro-economic position in recent years.¹² In 2010 PNG's gross domestic product was \$US 9.5 billion ranking 126 of 196 countries. In the same year, the economy expanded at its fastest pace since the resource boom of the early 1990s.¹³

2.2 History and politics

Until the nineteenth century, the island of New Guinea was a territory largely unknown to the wider world. The eastern half of the island (what is now known as Papua New Guinea, as opposed to the western half of the island which is known as Irian Jaya, or West Papua, and is a part of Indonesia) experienced German colonial rule in the north (New Guinea) and British colonial rule in the south

⁷ Central Intelligence Agency (2012).

⁸ Lewis (2009).

⁹ U.S. State Department (2003).

¹⁰ While data collection for the 2011 census has been completed, the results are yet to be released in the public domain. This report therefore draws upon data taken in the 2000 census.

¹¹ Agriculture currently accounts for 25 per cent of GDP and supports more than 80 per cent of the population.

¹² World Bank (2011a).

¹³ World Bank (2011b).

(Papua). During World War I, Australia occupied the region and in 1920 was given a League of Nations mandate to rule. In 1945 the two states of Papua and New Guinea were combined in an administrative union. In 1975 PNG gained independence from Australia however the government is a constitutional monarchy, remaining part of the Commonwealth realm.¹⁴

PNG has three levels of government – national, provincial and local. Members of parliament are elected from 18 provinces, the Autonomous Region of Bougainville and the National Capital District. The Supreme Court, National Court, and local and village courts form the independent justice system. Recent national elections, despite adhering to a democratic system, have been fraught with electoral misconduct and violence. PNG continues to receive widespread criticism, both internally and externally, given its high levels of corruption, limited capacity to deliver on basic services, law and order and development to most of the country.¹⁵ This had led to PNG being referred to widely (and controversially) as a ‘failed state’.¹⁶

Women have historically been under-represented within PNG’s formal political and legal spheres.¹⁷ The government has not enforced specific quotas to ensure a critical minority in parliament. In 2009, 0.9 per cent of total seats in parliament were held by women (equating to a single seat).¹⁸ Women are also under-represented in key decision-making institutions such as the higher judiciary. In 2007, for example, 7.3 per cent of judges were women.¹⁹ These figures are consistent with other countries in the region. According to the United Nations Development Program (UNDP), women across Asia and the Pacific are under-represented in economic, political and legal institutions, which diminishes women’s voice and power in public politics.²⁰

2.3 Human development

Despite prosperous macro-economic performance, the 2011 Human Development Index ranked PNG at 0.466 i.e. in the ‘low human development’ category, holding the position of 153 out of 187 countries and territories.²¹ Between 1980 and 2011, there were only marginal improvements in key HDI categories such as health, education and life expectancy. Life expectancy in PNG is 62.8 years with the population facing serious health challenges. Approximately 33 infants die each day from preventable illnesses, HIV/AIDS rates are drastically high and growing annually by 15 to 30 per cent. In addition, 58 per cent of the population still does not have access to safe drinking water or adequate sanitation. The education system faces a number of challenges, including lack of access for many young people to schools, low student retention and poor quality education.²² Across PNG, 61

¹⁴ Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (2012).

¹⁵ Transparency International (2010) reports high levels of perceived corruption in PNG.

¹⁶ For more on the topic, see Hughes (2003).

¹⁷ From 1975-2012 only four women had ever been elected into the PNG parliament. The successful election of three women in the June 2012 election is a sign of change. Women’s increased participation in parliament has followed targeted capacity building programs supported by the United Nations Development Program. For more information see Pacific Women in Politics (2012).

¹⁸ United Nations Development Program (UNDP) (2011, p. 4).

¹⁹ In addition, the Papua New Guinea legal system has not been effective in addressing crimes of sexual violence against women. Zorn (2012, p. 164) argues that the “PNG courts are very ambivalent about rape” because the dominant sentencing rational continues to reflect the beliefs and values of judges from the colonial era and PNG’s male-dominated communities.

²⁰ UNDP (2011, p. 3).

²¹ UNDP (2011, p. 3).

²² AusAID (2012).

per cent of all people aged 15 years and over are literate, compared with 94 per cent for the whole of the East Asia and Pacific region.²³

The UNDP Gender Inequality Index (GII) provides a relative indication of gender inequality across a composite of indicators: reproductive health, empowerment and the labour market.²⁴ In 2011, PNG's GI was 0.674, positioning near the bottom end of the index at 140 of 146 countries. Statistics indicate that women in PNG face significant barriers on a number of fronts. For example, 12.4 per cent of adult women have reached a secondary or higher level of education in 2011 compared with 24.4 per cent of men. In terms of health, for every 100,000 live births, 250 women die from pregnancy-related causes and the adolescent fertility rate is 66.9 births per 1000 live births. While female participation in the labour market is high at 71.6 per cent compared with 74.2 for men, there appears to be no publically available data for the types of work men and women do, nor on discrepancies in pay rate. Although there are no comprehensive statistics, gender-based domestic violence is understood to be very high and a key concern for women in PNG.

3 Mining and PNG

PNG is richly endowed with natural resources and has become a leading global producer of gold and copper. In 2008 alone, PNG recorded production rates of 2.1 million ounces of gold and 159,650 tonnes of copper.²⁵ PNG's large-scale extractive industry burgeoned in the early 1970s as a result of foreign direct investment in the sector. Within a decade, mining surpassed agriculture as PNG's largest source of export earnings, a trend which has continued to the present day.

At the time of writing there were eight commercial mines in operation: Lihir, Ok Tedi, Porgera, Simberi, Sinivit, Ramu, Tolukuma and Hidden Valley. Three mines had ceased operation: Panguna (Bougainville), Misima and Kainantu and at least three were in advanced stages of development, including Solwara, Yandera and Imwauna. In addition to mining operations, there are active and widespread exploration activities within the country. According to the PNG Chamber of Mines and Petroleum, at the end of the first quarter 2012, the Mineral Resources Authority recorded over 282 current exploration licences and renewals and over 394 outstanding applications spread throughout the country.²⁶ The largest extractive venture to date is the establishment of the LNG project in the Highlands, currently under construction and expected to be in operation from 2015. This project has a proposed pipeline that will traverse several provinces, affecting not only the Highlands but also the coastal regions.

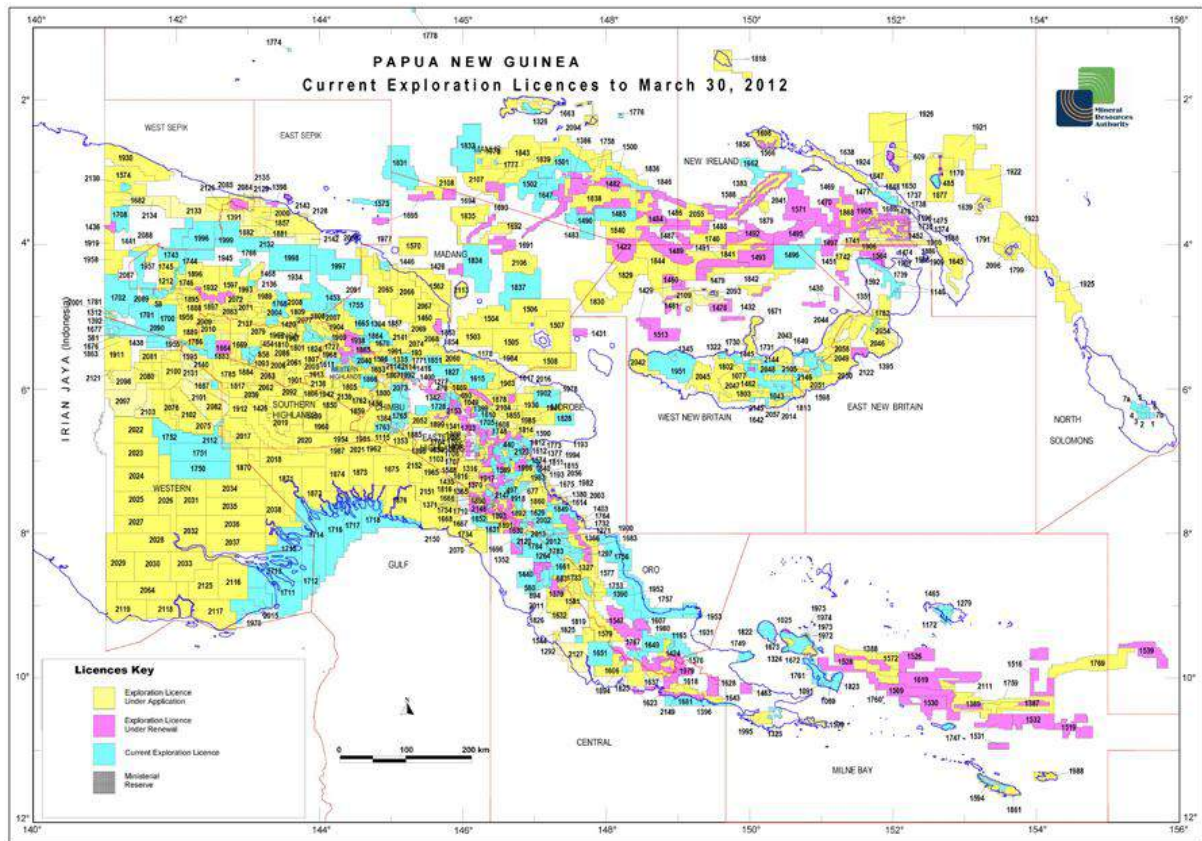
The following diagram demonstrates the extent of mining exploration activities in Papua New Guinea.

²³ United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (2010).

²⁴ The Gender Inequality Index is a composite measure reflecting inequality in achievements between women and men.

²⁵ PNG Chamber of Mines and Petroleum (2012).

²⁶ PNG Chamber of Mines and Petroleum (2012).



Source: PNG Chamber of Mines and Petroleum (2012)

3.1 Mines and communities

Large-scale mining projects in PNG have precipitated cumulative and complex effects at the community level.²⁷ The PNG Chamber of Mines and Petroleum asserts that local populations benefit from mining investment through basic infrastructure and services including roads, education, medical facilities and employment.²⁸ In addition, most companies have developed specific policies and programs which aim to enhance positive local impacts from mine development, either as part of or in addition to benefits negotiated within the Development Forum (a round table process connecting companies, governments and communities over the topic of benefits arising from projects – discussed further below). In contrast, some non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and anti-mining lobby groups call into question the benefit of extractive industry projects in PNG. Many suggest that despite positive macro-economic indicators, the negative impacts of mining are most strongly felt at the local level, where communities experience inequities and disruption to their way of life, including displacement from traditional lands, in-migration, loss of food and water resources due to pollution, increased conflict, violence and other forms of significant social change and disruption.

²⁷ International institutions, scholars and a number of non-governmental organisations (NGOs) have been instrumental in documenting the social and environmental impacts of the industry.

²⁸ PNG Chamber of Mines and Petroleum (2012).

3.2 Agreements

The State of PNG is legally empowered to issue exploration and mining leases, however as an estimated 97 per cent of land is held under a complex customary tenure system, companies require the consent of entire landowning communities to proceed with resource development activities.²⁹ Ostensibly, communities hold a strong bargaining position in negotiations over resource developments and typically negotiate compensation at the Development Forum, which is required before the State will issue a mining contract.

The Development Forum is mandated under Section 3 of the *Mining Act (1992)* and continues to be the primary instrument for the negotiation of benefit-sharing agreements between developers, landowners and different levels of government. During the process, communities agree to grant a company access to land in exchange for a suite of benefits that typically include provisions for infrastructure, employment, business contracts and compensation, equity in development and royalties.³⁰ While there is evidence of community participation in Development Forums held during the past two decades, the national policy framework is considered lacking in any effective mechanism for ensuring implementation or tracking actual development contribution.³¹

Outside the Development Forum, the principal legislation for regulating environmental (and socio-economic) impacts of projects in PNG is the *Environment Act (2000)*, administered by the Department of Environment and Conservation. Social impact assessments, however, are the sole responsibility of the developer and are disconnected from the negotiation of compensation and benefit sharing agreements.

3.3 Women in mining

A number of major international institutions, NGOs and scholars have advocated ‘women in mining’ as a strategic focus within PNG government and corporate policy.³² World Bank consultations have confirmed much of the existing research suggesting that men receive a disproportionately large share of project benefits through employment and compensation, while significant social and environmental impacts and risks are experienced by women and children. In response to these findings, the World Bank instigated a ‘Women in Mining’ (WIM) initiative which served to promote action on women’s empowerment in mining communities and strengthen the social and economic status of women.³³ The WIM vision statement is as follows:

“A future of peace and prosperity resulting from improved quality of life and level of living where the quality of life is reflected in the extent to which women are able to make choices on issues affecting their lives and having the means to put these choices into actions.”³⁴

As part of a broader program of technical assistance in PNG, the World Bank hosted a conference on community and sustainable development in 2002, where the gender dimensions of mining impacts

²⁹ Banks (2008, p. 24). For an alternative view on this statistic, see Filer (2011; 2012).

³⁰ Banks (2008, p. 25).

³¹ Filer (2008), Filer (2012, p. 149).

³² See for example, Wienders (2011) and Eftimie (2010).

³³ Eftimie (2010, p. 6).

³⁴ Department of Mining (2007, p. ii).

were discussed with industry and other stakeholders. The following year, the first WIM conference, also hosted by the World Bank, was held in Madang where government and company stakeholders committed to acting on improvements for women's social and economic position in mining areas. As a result, in 2005 the PNG Government established the WIM Steering Committee that leveraged advice from women in strategic positions within State departments, including from Mining, Planning, Agriculture, Community Development, Environment and Attorney General's office. In 2006, a five-year Women in Mining Action Plan was drafted for 2007-2012 with inputs from women's associations in different mining communities. The plan was endorsed and funded by the PNG government and considered to be a milestone national-level strategy for gender-based social inclusion in mining, however the current direction of this plan is unclear.

4 Mining and Lihir

The mine on Lihir is an open-pit cyanide-leach mine. Construction started in 1995 on the Lihir island of Aniolum, almost a decade after the first social impact study was completed, with the first gold pour in 1997. The current mine site is unique as it is located below sea level, and in an active volcanic caldera. The mining venture on Lihir has changed hands a number of times, with Newcrest Mining Ltd now the owner-operator following a merger with Lihir Gold Ltd in late 2010.³⁵ At the time of this research, the expansion of the Lihir plant site, known as the Million Ounce Plant Upgrade (MOPU), was well underway and due for completion by the end of 2013.

Newcrest is an international gold company and one of the world's lowest-cost gold producers with operations and projects also in Australia, Fiji, Indonesia and West Africa. The company is Australia's largest gold producer and a global top 10 gold mining company.³⁶ The company adheres to a number of international regulatory standards including the Global Reporting Initiative (GRI) and is a member of the Minerals Council of Australia (MCA).³⁷

4.1 Mining and social change

Over several decades various studies have documented mining and social change within the Lihir Island Group.³⁸ This work highlights that local communities have experienced a range of direct and indirect impacts and benefits from mining. Drawing on this established body of knowledge and recognising that there are often complex interactions between different impacts, the following list provides a brief summary of some of the well-documented positive and adverse social impacts of mining on Lihir:

4.1.1 Positive impacts

- infrastructure in the form of new roads, houses, water, power, telecommunications, shopping and banking facilities
- improved education and health care services
- improved maternal and child health and increased life-expectancy

³⁵ For a historical overview of mine ownership at Lihir, see Bainton (2010, p. 16).

³⁶ <http://www.newcrest.com.au/>

³⁷ Newcrest (2011, p. 42).

³⁸ See Bainton (2010) for a comprehensive bibliography.

- economic development, particularly business development, employment opportunities and increased access to cash economy.

4.1.2 Adverse effects

- social and economic stratification (emergence of new inequalities across social groups and between geographical areas)
- in-migration, generating tensions between ethnic groups and an increased sense of civic insecurity, especially as a result of the high numbers of unemployed male migrants seeking new opportunities in Lihir
- increased violence and disputes over land, theft, and marital/family interference
- increased dependency on the cash economy leading to an abandonment of traditional practices and an increased reliance on store-bought goods
- high degree of local dependence upon the mining company to deliver all forms of social and economic development
- continued inflation of the cost of local goods and services
- geographic inequity, as the island where mining occurs (Aniolam) receives the majority of social and economic benefits
- increased alcohol and other drug consumption
- prostitution and related sexual health issues
- emergence of chronic lifestyle diseases
- rapid cultural changes.

Several existing studies have captured information relating to the gendered impacts of mining, with specific reference to women.³⁹ Key negative impacts that have a significant effect on women include:

- a rise in gender-based domestic violence as a result of alcohol and drug abuse
- rising prostitution rates among local and immigrant women in the island of Ariolam
- increasing rates of transmission of sexually transmitted and other diseases, including HIV/AIDS
- reduction of women's traditional status in customary activities, which has also resulted in diminished respect and a reduction in bargaining/negotiating power
- exclusion from negotiations around the agreement, and consequently a lack of project benefit and equal control over cash benefits/compensation monies
- exclusion from development planning processes within the local level government and at the ward or village level
- increased burden for both women and men in terms of finding time and resources to attend to family and community obligations.⁴⁰

Notwithstanding immediate pressures related to day-to-day business and the MOPU project, there continues to be a weakness in management systems within the organisation around key community-

³⁹ See for example Macintyre & Foale (2004), Macintyre (2006), and Hemer (2011).

⁴⁰ For more information on some of these issues see Macintyre and Foale (2004, p. 247-9), and Banks & Bainton (2010, p. 29). On the issue of women's increased burden, see Macintyre (2006, pp. 137-9).

related issues such as the management of grievances, the tracking and implementation of obligations and agreements, the management of cultural heritage sites within lease areas and resettlement, all of which have resulted in ongoing demand for high levels of compensation from the community. Weak systems in a pressurised organisational context tend to constrain the Community Relations management team's ability to focus on longer-term, strategic and overarching priorities. Despite previous studies that have outlined the gendered impacts of mining on Lihir, the company continues to lack a comprehensive gender strategy.

5 The agreement

In 1993, a Development Forum was held for Lihirian leaders, government and company representatives in Port Moresby to discuss the distribution of equity over the Lihir mine project.⁴¹ Negotiation meetings continued into the following year as Lihirians discussed the costs, benefits, rights and obligations arising from the project and bargained for unprecedentedly high compensation and royalty rates. In 1995, the Development Forum reconvened for the last time and an official agreement was formalised and signed.

The agreement encompassed provisions for compensation and benefit sharing between the government and Lihirian community with scheduled reviews of the content to proceed on a five-yearly basis. Within the review process, which commenced in 2000, a joint negotiating committee was commissioned by the local level government and the landowners association to represent landowners and Lihirians. In 2001 when the agreement was first reviewed, Lihirian landowners expressed dissatisfaction that the promises and obligations therein had not been fulfilled, and that the plan was inadequate, suggesting that it had not succeeded in addressing their development goals. It was not until 2007 that the company and landowners finalised an amended agreement and launched the 'Lihir Sustainable Development Plan'.⁴² This plan outlined a 20-year partnership between the mining company, the Nimamar local level government and stakeholder communities specifically aimed at achieving sustainable development for Lihir.⁴³

The local level government is the legally mandated body for administering and implementing social development programs. However, within the agreement framework, project areas were divided across five sections and managed by different stakeholder groups such as the landowners association, among others. The content of the plan covered a wide range of initiatives around capacity building, trust fund payments, compensation, training and localisation, infrastructure and utility development, town and village planning, commercial and contract management opportunities and social wellbeing. 'Women, Youth and Churches' were included as a specific program area within Chapter One and to be managed by the local level government. Each managing group has a council of representatives which decides on funding distribution and project priorities.

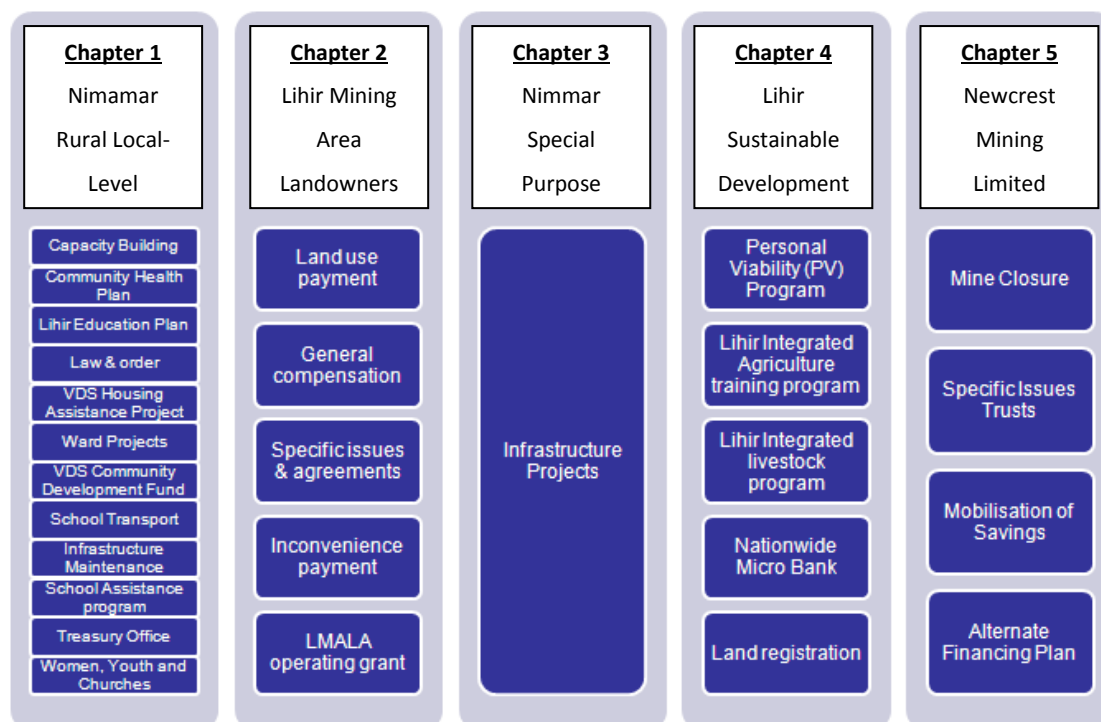
The below table illustrates the five sections that constitute the Lihir Sustainable Development Plan:

⁴¹ Bainton (2010, p. 24).

⁴² The agreement was informed by four overarching principles that suggest the development should be 'parallel' (mine and community developing at the same time), 'balanced' (equally distributed), 'sustainable' (long term, avoiding dependency) and 'stable' (with respect for Lihirian culture). For more information see the World Bank (2010, pp.164-5).

⁴³ The name 'Nimamar' is a conflation of the names of the four inhabited islands of the Lihir Group – Aniolam, Malie, Masahet and Mahur – and as such reflects the local level government's role to represent all islands within the group.

Lihir Sustainable Development Plan



The current disagreement between the landowners association and the local level government about management of funds and programs under the development plan emerged after the signing of the LSDP in 2007. As a direct result of this dispute, the development plan's funds and program of work were, at the time of this research, effectively frozen.

Part 2 – Findings from the field research

6 General views about women’s involvement in agreement processes

6.1 Exclusion of women

There was a strong sense of frustration among women who participated in this research because they believed that they have been excluded from agreement processes and have not received fair distribution of benefits. They indicated that men increasingly exerted an unacceptable level of control over agreement processes and received a far greater proportion of the benefits.

“This is a matrilineal society, yet we aren’t benefitting. They are making a huge profit on our ground and we don’t see any good programs coming for us, the women. The company is consuming our land, yet not supporting us”.

As Lihir is traditionally a matrilineal society, women are afforded a certain value and status regarding the ownership of land both within their community and under PNG law. Land rights are passed through a woman’s bloodline. However, it is important to note that this does not translate into women having a strong political voice in their local community, as the management of this land and the negotiations surrounding it are conducted by men, in particular a woman’s brothers and uncles.⁴⁴ This arrangement extends to contemporary systems of ownership, management and value, as men continue to negotiate in the contemporary (mining) world on behalf of women.

Several women invoked the language of rights, suggesting that women’s participation in agreement processes was indeed a ‘right’ that was being denied. It was not always clear whether this related to ‘human rights’ or ‘customary rights’, but either way, the language of rights was clearly invoked. Some men recognised these rights and also expressed concern that women were not involved in agreement processes.⁴⁵

6.2 Gender and *kastom*

Without exception, the issue of women’s influence and involvement in agreement processes was linked to *kastom*, which is a general Melanesian concept that refers to local traditional rules and understandings that inform how one should behave. While people’s ideas of *kastom* and tradition will always vary, in Lihir there were quite divergent views about whether (and if so how) *kastom* should relate to the ‘new ways’ brought about by mining and modernity (both as it is played out in agreement processes and broader development processes). Despite this divergence, interviewees articulated a desire to see positive development combined with a strong local culture. The question was not about one or the other, but how the two fit together. While discussing education for example, one male interviewee explained:

“It’s good for the women to get knowledge from outside ... but they must behave with respect for our tradition, our kastom.”

⁴⁴ See Filer and Mandie-Filer (1998) and Macintyre (2012, pp. 244-5).

⁴⁵ Recent work on women’s rights in the Pacific, particularly Vanuatu, is relevant. See for example Jolly (1996) and Taylor (2008).

Many interviewees – male and female – suggested that more attention should be given to relating these two ontological systems within the context of the significant changes that had taken place on Lihir in recent decades. For example, females who are leaders in modern settings are required to act in different ways to females who are leaders in the customary sense, and it is not clear how these two systems can coexist effectively. Traditionally, women did not work collectively as they are required to do in community organisations, though they did (and continue to) work in groups consisting of lineage and clan relatives in *kastom* activities such as feasting. Neither did women traditionally speak publicly in front of mixed clan groups, but women’s participation in agreement processes would most likely require this. It was suggested that men were misrepresenting *kastom* by claiming that women should not speak out, which served to diminish women’s status within Lihir’s matrilineal society.⁴⁶

“Within kastom, men must sit down and talk with the women with status, but now they are twisting kastom. Before the women were allowed to talk when there are big decisions to be made ... it was always like this ... we had a system where the women can talk out within the clan.”

Many women believed that this manipulation of *kastom* affected women’s ability to contribute to decisions that affected the community and clan, both within the clan and the public sphere. From this perspective, not only were the benefits and impacts unequally distributed among women and men, most women believed that their voices were being overlooked and ignored by men in power.

“I think here in Lihir it’s upside down – the men, they do all the decision-making and they look down on us, the women, even though we have knowledge too.”

According to several company representatives, some Lihirian men asserted in agreement negotiations that women had no role at the negotiation table for the agreement as *kastom* dictated that this was a man’s domain. Women expressed that they might be owners of the land, but men managed the land and therefore decided who was ‘at the negotiating table’ to make decisions. Generally speaking, women did not disagree that it was a man’s role to manage land on behalf of their mothers and sisters. However, most interviewees explained that within the clan, while both men’s and women’s perspectives were important and must be heard, women were increasingly “left out”. For one interviewee the existence of a matrilineal system should mean that women had the “last say” on important decisions within the clan.

“...with the agreement, we should have the last say [otherwise] the outcome will just be for the men’s interests. And we, the women, will be left out.”

Many interviewees suggested that *kastom* should be adaptable to the current day context so that women could have more involvement in public processes outside the clan system, including agreement processes. Some women suggested that even if women were not at the negotiating table then there should be a women’s representative body that “had a say” about the agreement.

⁴⁶ It is important to note that ideas about *kastom* are often articulated in particular ways for various political ends, by both men and women. This politicisation of *kastom* in Melanesia is extensively covered in anthropological literature.

It is vital to note that ideas of how things are done traditionally (in terms of *kastom*) are interpreted very differently between different clans and family groups of Lihir people, and between men and women. *Kastom* has a political application, that both men and women are not hesitant to interpret to suit their needs.

6.3 Protest and resistance

There were no women involved in any formal capacity for either the original agreement of 1995 or the 2000-7 review, either as representatives or signatories.⁴⁷ In response to this exclusion, in 2004, the women collectively asserted their right to participate in agreement negotiations via a formal letter to the local level government that outlined 40 development priorities and called for an inclusive, transparent and bottom-up agreement planning process. In addition to this letter, the women organised a public protest against the lack of benefits flowing to women and youth as part of the (then) proposed Lihir Sustainable Development Plan.⁴⁸ As one woman recalled:

“We marched from the waterfront ... we were yelling, ‘Why did you leave us out in the agreement package?’ We had been missed entirely. “

As a result of the protest and other efforts by Lihir women to have their voices heard, the revised plan included a dedicated budget and program of work for Women, Youth and Churches. While the protest raised the issue of benefit flows, it did not address the lack of female representation within the formal negotiations. This protest appears to have been the only collective gender-based protest in relation to the agreement or any other mining-related matter.

6.4 Women and “speaking up”

Whatever the level of discussion – community-level or island-wide concerns – women are increasingly motivated to raise their voice because they perceive that since the first agreement in 1995, the men only “*talk, talk, talk and nothing happens*”. Women feel there has been little positive development in their communities as a result of this inaction on the part of men. There was awareness among interviewees of dysfunction within and between parties to the agreement and the degree to which this was stifling development and improved livelihoods. There were also several other drivers for women’s increasing desire to speak up, including initiatives by the National Government to mandate positions for women in the political system (see below). Further, the Women in Mining initiative established by the PNG Chamber of Mines and Petroleum and the World Bank spurred some women to action. Although several Lihirian women had attended WIM conferences, those who did not attend said that what went on in the conferences was not always communicated to others (see below). In addition, it was not always apparent how the events benefited women at the grassroots level (leading some women to the conclusion that the events were a form political elitism that generated distinctions between women).

⁴⁷ Company representatives explained that some women were involved in signing related agreements, such as relocation agreements around the mining area where all relocates had to sign. The researchers did not have an opportunity to engage these women.

⁴⁸ See Hemer (2011).

6.5 Political complexity

Interviewees perceived that issues of governance, accountability, transparency and the nature of local politics on Lihir had stifled development for all of Lihir, including women.⁴⁹ While the company was embroiled in this system, interviewees did not see this as the fault of the company alone. However, they certainly hoped that the company would make good decisions and take action to improve the situation. The high level of complexity and dysfunction affected women in the sense that structural relationships between different women's organisations and representatives were not altogether clear and there were certainly divergent views about how different organisations should interact and relate to one another.

7 Parties to the agreement – women and representation

The researchers acknowledge that while formal representation is a key avenue for women's influence in agreement processes, it does not always equate to 'voice' (since women's representatives can feel intimidated even at the negotiation table) or relate to the level of informal influence.⁵⁰ Notwithstanding limited information on informal processes, the issue of formal representation was a key topic of discussion, largely because women recognised that they had been absent from the formal process. There was a strongly held view that women had a right to participate in formal negotiations in some way:

"We have to have women inside the [negotiating] team ... we have knowledge too, but [at the negotiating table] they are just talking about the men's perspectives. We have something to say."

Consequently, this section discusses interviewee perspectives on the level and type of women's representation and formal involvement within organisations that form the joint negotiating committee for the 2007 agreement, as well as the policy framework that underpins each organisation's approach to gender.

7.1 Company

The company has never appointed a woman of any culture to the negotiating table for the agreement. Women have been involved, but only in support or advisory roles (e.g. administration or legal counsel). The absence of women in senior ranks within the company and the mining industry more generally arguably makes it more difficult to appoint a woman for this role than a man. But in the context of this research, the absence needed to be noted.

More generally, the company does not have a gender strategy that underpins its approach to community relations and/or social development. The company has intermittently had a women's desk/officer as part of its Community Relations team, however, several interviewees commented that it was not entirely clear as to the level of focus this position was meant to have on gender issues, and these officers had been drawn into other more general work. At the time of the research,

⁴⁹ For more information on Lihir political structures see Bainton (2010).

⁵⁰ For example, O'Faircheallaigh (2011) highlights the engagement women have in the informal sphere, and this is an area that warrants future research in Lihir.

the company had appointed a new women's officer as part of the Community, Planning and Development team.⁵¹

Broadly speaking, the company was not viewed by women as 'preventing' the participation of women, but neither were they considered to be an enabler, as they had not set an example to other parties that women had a place at the negotiating table, by neither having one, nor actively encouraging or requiring others to do so.

7.2 Landowners association

Historically, the Lihir Mining Area Landowners Association executive and management has been the exclusive domain of men. There are no women in management roles within the organisation. Like the company, women are employed only in administration positions. A company representative directly involved in the original negotiations recalled that Lihirian men told the company that women had no role in negotiations over land or compensation under *kastom*. Recently, a woman was appointed to the Executive Committee. She explained that she was selected not because she was a woman but because she was a "maus meri" or a woman who was recognised as a good speaker. She did not always attend meetings because of obligations in her community, including the church, which she prioritised over mining business.

Some women believe that it is both necessary and possible for women to represent their community on the Executive and within management roles within the landowners association, but for most women this was not the key focus of their concern. Most women interviewed were focused on 'women's projects' so that they could secure a larger proportion of benefits that they could control. When asked, women indicated that if they were appointed to a senior role within the landowners association, they would focus the organisation's work on themes such as families, education, health, church and spirituality, and capacity building for the youth and business. Several also said that it would be important to have a critical mass of women in leadership positions, so that it was not a couple of women working alone with men. A critical mass of women would encourage women to speak out more and give strength to their cause.

7.3 Government

Women have never been elected into the local level government on Lihir, which is divided into 15 wards, each with a representative member. In the last election, several women ran for a seat for the first time, but none were elected. Several were planning to campaign in the upcoming election and were hopeful of being elected. Some of these women were interviewed as part of the research and they indicated that the support of their husbands enabled them to be politically active. They explained that there was a high degree of trust and mutual support between them and their husbands. Interviewees explained:

'Plenty of men don't want women to go out [into public work] because other men might flirt with them ... we [women] must build trust. If my husband doesn't trust me, I can't do it.'

⁵¹ The new women's officer was not on shift at the time of the research.

They explained that when men and women worked together to support each other, a lot could be achieved for the community. One woman emphasised this point in a metaphor:

“If I get a canoe to go to Namatanai (a town on another island) with my girlfriend, we won’t make it. If we travel in the canoe with men by our sides we will get there.”

Following a national government directive, each local level government is required to appoint women’s representatives (one for urban areas, two for rural areas such as Lihir). Lihir’s local level government has appointed two such representatives and CSR researches spoke to one during the field visit. She said that until more recently, the two women had not fully understood agreement processes or their level of influence. In fact, they considered themselves to be ‘backbenchers’, but intended to be more active in the future.

A recently implemented national government gender strategy also requires wards to appoint women’s ward coordinators. This official role has become important at the local level. There are clearly different degrees of functionality within each ward, with some coordinators reportedly not as effective as others. Many communities however utilise this function as a mechanism for raising issues and discussing local-level priorities, including those that relate to mining – from there pushing them upwards in the political system. These coordinators report on a regular basis to the local level government women’s representatives. This function is seen as one of the most effective ways to date in which a collective women’s voice can be heard. This is very important to note in the current context given that the local level government is a stakeholder in agreement-making on Lihir but that the landowners association has asserted a preference for a direct relationship with the company.

8 Organisations not party to the agreement

8.1 Women’s organisations

Lihir has two women’s organisations – Petztorme and, more recently, Tutorme. The formation of the latter organisation evolved from internal conflict present in the former.⁵² Thus, Tutorme represents a breakaway group itself in conflict with Petztorme. These two organisations have been in conflict for several years, which has effectively hindered women’s ability to advocate for greater involvement in agreement processes, and collaborate and secure funding for priority projects. Many interviewees indicated that this conflict had become evidence for some men that women could not lead and should not be politically active outside their community. In addition to the conflict between these two groups, both organisations have suffered from a lack of capacity and have mismanaged funds, providing further so-called proof of women’s inabilities. However, not everyone used this as evidence, with one male interviewee commenting that:

“Women are good at making good decisions, keeping records ... they do so much in the community and in the church, we need to support that.”

The women’s organisations also face other challenges in terms of representing ordinary members, especially those in the other islands.

⁵² For more detail on the formation of Petztorme and the conflict surrounding the organisation, see Macintyre (2003).

“In the outer islands we don’t know what they [the women’s organisations] are doing. They are supposed to include us too but they don’t. We are a little disappointed because we don’t even know what’s going on.”

In light of the apparent dysfunction within and between the two women’s organisations, it should be acknowledged that prior to mining there were no Lihir-wide collective women’s organisations. This goes some way towards explaining why the establishment of these organisations has proven a challenge. One woman explained:

“In the community the women will talk out, but then they go to town, when they are in a different place, they can’t talk out (in public), they don’t feel good.”

Men are not expected to unify along gender lines. Rather, they are embedded within organisational structures that are required by the state (and, traditionally, by the clan system) and so remain in positions of power, despite perceived or actual dysfunction. In contrast, women’s organisations have to reach a level of functionality before being seen by other entities to be a ‘valid’ entity that can participate in and access the benefits of mining. Women have been told by the company that once they are unified, they will get access to a greater range of opportunities, some of which have been offered by the company itself (see Section 13).

Despite their issues, the prevailing view held by both men and women was that a single, functional women’s organisation was an important mechanism for women to have a stronger political voice and to secure mining-related benefits from the agreement. Both women’s organisations had agreed to a women’s forum to be held in June 2012, where the two organisations would come together, settle their differences and unite so that all the women’s programs could fall into one “basket”. The basket is an important traditional metaphor in the Melanesian context. By using this metaphor, women evoked the notion that the basket should be full of food (programs) to nourish the entire community.

The women’s forum is being driven by women and is being supported by the company’s Community Planning and Development section within the Sustainable Development Department, with support from the women’s officer who has been recently appointed. Women said that a newly united body could represent Lihirian women’s interests into the future. It would be an entity that could receive funds, generate income through business enterprise and campaign on women’s issues and other issues of interest to women.

Not everyone supports the concept of an independent women’s organisation for Lihir. For example, one male interviewee indicated that an independent women’s organisation that was not connected to the church would not succeed (church activities being the only precedent for women’s organised work across clans). In this sense, he indicated that an independent women’s organisation seeking political influence was the “wrong way” to be working:

“The women’s organisations used to be in the church but now they are in a ‘no man’s land’, and so because they are trying to stand up independent of the church we have problems.”

There were mixed views about the women's organisations and the level of attention given to 'the spiritual' in their operations. One female interviewee from the outer islands was concerned that:

"The women's organisations don't think of the spiritual side, they are thinking in the market and their projects, not the spiritual."

Notwithstanding these issues, there was a strong view expressed by most interviewees that women should have a formal role at the negotiating table and in the management of the agreement and its implementation. The strongest suggestion was that the united women's organisation should be party to the agreement through the negotiating committee.

8.2 Churches

There was a strong sense that the church was, generally speaking, an enabler of women's participation in public life, particularly at the village level.⁵³ Women were very involved in church activities. Some interviewees, both men and women, thought it was important that the Council of Churches be involved in the agreement review as they felt that this institution would in some way reflect issues that were important to women.

"Churches weren't part of the last review but we are pushing to get churches as part of the agreement process this year."

Interestingly, the Bible was used by some men to justify men's dominance over women. Women's narratives were very different – they referred to Christ rising from the dead and the fact that women were told first – recognition that women could be trusted before men. Also that Eve was made from the bone of Adam's hip – an indication that it came from his side, somewhere equal. This is an example of how religion, like *kastom*, can be interpreted in varying ways for political ends.⁵⁴

9 Leadership

9.1 Women in leadership

There was much discussion among research participants of 'leadership' and, in particular women's leadership. The majority of men and women indicated that women's leadership was vital for positive development on Lihir. Some interviewees focused on leadership within the clan whereas others were interested in seeing female leaders become more prominent in the public sphere. Whatever the focus, there was agreement among both men and women that capacity building would help develop women's leadership capacity.

Interviewees explained that either women or men could be leaders within their community – gender did not matter as much as the quality of the leader. In Lihirian society, the first born child has status and is often looked to as a leader, regardless of gender.⁵⁵ Women who do not have traditional or

⁵³ The vast majority of Lihir people are members of the Catholic Church, with the second most represented church being the Uniting Church. There are other forms of Christianity on the islands, with a reported increase in interest in evangelical churches in recent times.

⁵⁴ For more on the relationship between church, gender and violence, see Eves (2012).

⁵⁵ The first born male has particular status and is the leader and inheritor of the matrilineal line, unless he does not display good leadership skills, in which he is usually superseded by a brother. Women are only the leader of the matriline if there are no suitable male leaders. For more information see Bainton (2010, pp. 85-6).

customary entitlement to lead but those who show natural talent can become leaders. In this sense, female leadership can be developed. Within the community, this is typically fostered through church work or youth programs. Women who complete their education are in a better position to lead as educated women and have greater scope to participate in the contemporary space.⁵⁶

9.2 Pressure on female leaders

There was much discussion about the challenges that female leaders experienced once they developed a level of competency in modern political realms. Effective female leaders were expected to take responsibility for a broad array of responsibilities, committees and so forth, which placed great demand on their energy and time.

“We [the female leaders] get so much work, because we are women who talk out, so we get elected on everything.”

Female leaders are also expected to “fill the gap” where there is dysfunction. Researchers spoke to one woman who had taken ‘unofficial’ responsibility for the women’s ward coordinator position because the incumbent in her village was not seen to be fulfilling her role. When researchers asked why there were not more female leaders, interviewees explained that it was difficult due to the workload and the trust issue, which at times resulted in violent backlash from husbands. An added complication was that women who worked away from their community were perceived to be put in situations where they could be sexually compromised.

In addition, unless they had good support from their family and their community, leadership could diminish a woman’s capacity to keep gardens and pigs due to time constraints (also the case with paid employment). Being able to provide a largess of garden produce and pig meat was important in traditional feasting rituals, which in turn provided women with an important customary role and a degree of status. All these pressures influenced women’s ability and willingness to take on a leadership role, particularly outside the traditional cultural system.

10 Engagement and participation

10.1 Importance of expression

While much discussion centred on the structural and macro-political dynamics of representation, there was also discussion about community-level participation and the involvement of women and how this influenced agreement processes. Generally speaking, women agreed that whether a leader or not, it was vitally important that women had a forum to express their feelings about mining and the agreement. At the community level, this was considered to be fundamental to wellbeing and good health. One woman observed:

“Sometimes women develop mental illnesses because of this. This kind of illness (e.g. depression, anxiety) is happening a lot, because they can’t speak out.”⁵⁷

⁵⁶ This appears to be in contrast to the situation for males. For more information on the challenges for male leadership roles see Bainton (2008).

⁵⁷ For more explanation on Lihir emotional states and how they are expressed, see Hemer (2013).

Women's groups, the women's ward coordinator position and other community-level processes were considered to be important mechanisms for women to come together to discuss issues and share perspectives about mining, including the impacts of associated social changes (such as in-migration, access to cash, alcohol, increases in prostitution and so forth – see also Section 12 below).

10.2 Company

Interviewees acknowledged that the company did undertake some community level engagement, but there was a general view that they had not engaged the community in a systematic and comprehensive manner with regard to agreement-making, but also more generally. One male interviewee said:

“In 2007 there was a review, but the women missed out. The consultation process was not good. The company went out and consulted with men and women together, but they should have done that separately ... done a proper assessment so that the women could speak out.”

When the company engages locally, it often holds open community meetings. Women explained that it was not always easy for women to speak out in front of the men, and that it would be good if there was more regular and direct engagement with women (separately from men) so that they could more readily express their views. Some women perceived that the company was aware of the barriers women faced in speaking out at public community meetings and assumed that by not actively engaging women separately from the men, the company was showing that it did not value women's interests and agendas. As a woman from one community said:

“We think it would be good if the company spoke to us separately. If they talk with us, we would know that they are thinking of us [and our issues].”

There was a general sense that women and men were often concerned about similar issues, but researchers certainly found that when men were not present, women disclosed additional information about particular issues, such as incidences of prostitution in their communities, and health concerns such as the transmission of diseases such as HIV/AIDS during breastfeeding. Consequently, gender-segregated engagement as part of an overall community engagement plan warrants further exploration.

10.3 Landowners association

It was clear from the interviews that the landowners association has not sought to engage women as a discrete demographic in any way. There had been recent village level meetings held by the landowners association about the agreement and the current review. Women had been invited to attend and had raised issues, but there was no deliberate process for ensuring that women's perspectives were systematically captured. Like the company's consultation sessions, these sessions showed limited consideration of processes that enabled women to freely voice concerns, questions and aspirations. In this way these meetings functioned more as awareness sessions than actual consultations.

10.4 Local level government

As mentioned above, the local level government and ward structure has endeavoured to enable women's participation in political processes. The effectiveness of this process is dependent on the quality of village-level engagement and the relationship between the women's coordinator and their ward member. Ideally, this system should provide an avenue for women's perspectives from each ward to be elevated in agreement review processes, however, the local level government itself is currently being excluded from agreement processes by the landowners association. Finally, while the association is said to represent all landowners of Lihir, in practice the focus is on communities proximate to the mine and associated infrastructure (i.e. known as 'affected' communities). Women from more remote communities have even less chance of having their voices heard as part of agreement processes.

11 Other impacts/issues affecting women's participation

There are a number of additional impacts/issues affecting women's participation at the community level which in turn affects their ability to influence or participate in the agreement negotiation space in varying ways. As these issues are of direct concern to women's wellbeing and that of their families, a forum for women to discuss these concerns at the time of agreement-making may assist in finding a solution.

11.1 Cash economy

Many women explained that people's interest in voluntary community work had diminished since the advent of mining:

"Before [mining] people would help out, but now they want money to do anything. Before, we used to work together as a community."

Women explained that the availability of cash meant that more men were drinking and getting drunk, avoiding traditional responsibilities and being violent to wives and other women in their families:

"The women are in the middle of all of this development on the island. The mothers have to look after the children and the house, while some men are drinking away the money."

Women said that cash was also serving as a de-motivator for school attendance. Some young people no longer saw the point of studying to get a job to earn money because there was sufficient cash available to the community through royalties, compensation and other monetary flows. Some of the women commented that they felt they were losing control of their adolescent children when it came to education:

"The women and mothers are finding it hard to control the youths, all of the social issues are ruining the youth. We are finding it really hard to control this."

11.2 In-migration

Largely based on the perception of available wealth, Lihir has experienced high-levels of in-migration from other areas of PNG as people seek to take advantage of the opportunities that mining brings. Almost every interviewee raised this as a significant mine-induced problem. One man said:

“You can see here how the mining has ruined everything. They [the company] don’t have a good plan. Men are coming in from outside, they are changing everything, we are losing our ways.”

The company has recently developed an in-migration strategy and has been working with the community to address this issue. In the meantime, most women and some men remain concerned about what some called ‘city ideas’ – such as a growing drinking and drug culture and the associated increase in prostitution and related sexual and social health issues. There were reports of new areas being established in and around the mine town of Londolovit where men could pay for sex, and even reports of sex workers being taken from Londolovit to stay overnight on other smaller islands in the Lihir Group.

11.3 Health

While there have been well-documented positive effects on women’s and maternal health since the advent of mining through the establishment of a hospital and health post, women are extremely concerned about the increase in prostitution and the transmission of sexual diseases including HIV/AIDS. A government health worker commented that there had been a recent increase in recorded cases of gonorrhoea in Lihir. She was surprised at the lack of availability of condoms within the mining area and held a strong view that without intervention, there would be an exponential increase in STDs and HIV/AIDS in Lihir in the future.⁵⁸

11.4 Education

Education and literacy were considered by most interviewees to be key enablers of women’s participation in community life, politics and agreement processes. Education provided women with ‘power’ and knowledge, which they could apply in everyday life, as well as in agreement processes. One interviewee explained:

“Education is changing things, in kastom we [women] couldn’t rise up, but now with school, we can. When I see my [lesser educated] brother in a meeting, he will look to me for direction, or to input into decision-making.”

Certainly, education is a formal priority of the government, the Lihir Sustainable Development Plan and the company. Women agreed that increased education had led to improvements for the community, including girls. For women, numeracy and literacy were especially important (though this was not a women’s-only issue). Interviewees cited cases where educated children were accessing household monies freely without retribution because their mothers were not able to read

⁵⁸ In considering the availability of contraceptives, one needs to take into account that the majority of Lihirians belong to the Catholic Church, where the use of contraceptives is not condoned. However, in the experience of one Lihirian female aid post worker, young Catholic men and women often frequent her clinic for contraceptives, and rarely refuse condoms when they are freely offered.

account balances to protect their financial interests. Women also said that it was becoming increasingly important to make written submissions to the mining company, such as for funding applications or to document concerns and grievances. They indicated that without literacy, many women were increasingly at a disadvantage in terms of these applications as well as managing their households.⁵⁹

11.5 Support for women

Finally, there was a strong sense that women needed men's support in order to reach their potential, speak up when they want to be heard and build their capacity to manage money and implement projects that reflected their practical and strategic interests. Many of the women interviewed had the support of their husbands, but indicated that many others did not and that it was difficult for those women to speak up, even within their own household. Many of these women were subject to regular violence and abuse, and this was described as a "big problem". Interviewees indicated that it was important that men were educated about the importance of valuing women as leaders and partners in development.

12 Observations from the final day of research

On the final day of fieldwork CSR researchers observed a meeting between:

- members of the two women's groups – although the majority of attendees appeared to be aligned with Tutorme, and the president of Petztorme was not in attendance.
- a representative of the company's agreement review team.
- a representative of Lihir Business Services (LBS).
- several representatives from the Community Relations Department.

The purpose of the meeting was to discuss the ownership and operation of a newly-renovated building at the waterfront, constructed by the company as part of the Lihir Sustainable Development Program. This building, in its pre-renovated form, had a history of being used by the women's organisation Tutorme as a sewing centre for business purposes.

In this meeting, chaired by the company representative, the new building was offered to the women's group (as one unified group) as a 'business opportunity'. Maps showing the layout of the building were presented to the women during the meeting – on this map the building was named 'Tutorme', with a room labelled 'Petztorme'. At the meeting the company announced that the women could manage the building and hire out the space to other groups such as LMALA for meetings in order to raise revenue. At the same time, it was suggested certain issues would have to be resolved, such as the conflict between the two women's groups and the mismanagement of funds by the women's groups in the past. The services of LBS were offered to the women to assist them in designing the required business plans (not the other issues). In sum, this business opportunity was made to the women "if they want it". The women accepted this offer even though the terms of the offer were not altogether clear. The women as a delegation then entered the premises for the first time to inspect their building. Company media staff in attendance documented

⁵⁹ See Macintyre (2012) for a discussion on women's education and other factors which serve to improve structural inequalities between men and women in the PNG context.

the meeting and the building visit in photos with a view to publishing the story in the local newspaper *Lihir i Lamel*.

While the offer was obviously made by the company with good intentions, it raises three key issues:

- The idea to own this building and operate it as a place for hire did not originate with the women themselves. There was no process to involve women in this decision – the meeting was the first time that women heard about the opportunity.
- The building was ‘given’ to the women as a unified group, which they currently were not, and as such there was no executive, no women identified to take negotiations forward. Indeed, actual ownership was not defined, nor were conditions of use (implied to relate to the venture’s success and the resolution of issues listed above). Several key women were absent from the meeting (reportedly uninformed of it) which would most likely serve to inflame the current conflict and potentially inhibit future unification.
- Women present at the meeting could not be expected to decline the offer, despite the issues outlined above. The women commented that they were “glad that the company had not forgotten the women of Lihir”. To refuse the offer would be to rebuff one of only a few public acknowledgements that the company considered women to be important to the future development of Lihir.

These issues should be taken into account as the company moves to support Lihir women in this and other business opportunities.

Part 3 - Conclusion

13 Conclusion

In summary, this research confirms that women have largely been excluded from agreement processes on Lihir, either directly or indirectly. However, it is important to understand this instance of gender inequality in its broader cultural context.

13.1 At a national level

Gender inequality is a national issue in Papua New Guinea. Women have limited voice and power in politics. In the context of mining on Lihir, issues and challenges manifest themselves in particular ways with significant consequences for women and families, which have been documented in the field research, and also in prior studies referenced within this report. However, this situation is largely symptomatic of the dominant political narrative, rather than a particular response to mining on the islands.

The broader landscape of development in Papua New Guinea also needs to be taken into account. PNG has struggled to deliver development more broadly, an issue that has become all the more critical in the context of the resources boom. PNG's macro-economic position has remained strong, but inequalities between regions, groups and between men and women are well documented and ongoing. Issues of corruption and an apparent lack of capacity are issues that exist on a national level but also play out locally.

In terms of efforts to address some of the above issues, the Development Forum provides some potential, but also has its limitations. Generally, the forum is not linked to impacts, and is neither well regulated nor monitored. There is ostensibly little emphasis on gender or the needs of different groups; rather, the focus is on macro development and service delivery (e.g. infrastructure, health, education). In addition, there is little emphasis on community participation to set the forum's agenda. Generally speaking, the current politics of representation sees the male-dominated elite represented. There are few opportunities for women to participate, even indirectly or via proxy, in the process.

An important attempt at addressing problems experienced by women and the development process is the WIM Initiative, spearheaded by the World Bank. The WIM Five Year Plan framework remains a leading example of an explicit mining and gender strategy at the national level. However, it is a policy that is not built into regulatory drivers, so is therefore voluntary and companies are not bound by it. Also, as the strategy is high-level, it does not have adequate resonance on the ground. In Lihir, there was some frustration that the few Lihirian women who go to the WIM conferences do not report back about their experience to the other women in the community, especially those on the outer islands. This is not seen as a deliberate strategy, but reflects the difficulty of effective communication about the outcomes of the conferences.

At a company level, although Lihir women have participated in the WIM Initiative, Newcrest Lihir does not have a designated gender strategy, nor in fact a grass-roots engagement strategy, even though an employee was recently appointed to specifically address women's issues. Overall, the

daily operational constraints that affect the Newcrest Lihir Sustainable Development team has left little room for strategising on broader issues, despite more than a decade of sustained social study that has documented the significant social change experienced by the Lihir people. Efforts have been made by the company to empower women by providing them with business opportunities, as has been outlined in the report, however while these are seemingly good ideas with good intent, there is clearly a lack of capacity to support women in addressing the very ingrained and systemic challenges that they face which are not alleviated by modest enterprise initiatives.

13.2 At a local level

This study found that women generally felt excluded as a result of negotiations related to the mining on their lands. Existing studies surveyed as part of this research have documented Lihirian women's disenfranchisement as a result of mining in terms of the broad effect it has had on the community level, especially in relation to alcohol-induced violence, and an increased domestic workload for women. Some studies also show how women have benefitted from mining on Lihir, such as a vastly improved maternal health service, and increased access to education, training and employment. While this study reflects some of these findings, it does not focus on the effect of mining on Lihir but rather specifically on the processes affecting women's engagement in the agreement processes.

Out of the three major stakeholders involved in agreement processes (the company, the landowners association and the local level government), formal female representation was only apparent in one: the local level government. This representation however only occurred at the ward level through the establishment of a women's representative – these women had then to report to men who would carry their concerns forward. Thus, there was no direct line of communication for women's voices to be heard in agreement processes through this avenue.

Women's concerns at being left out of the agreement process included the fact that:

- women were not receiving their share of the benefits
- women and youth programs were not receiving financial support
- women were not receiving information about opportunities for development
- men (and some youths) were misusing the benefits through spending money on drugs, alcohol and other women.

Women clearly expressed that they would like to see:

- a critical mass of female representatives at the negotiating table
- female representation within the landowners association
- a united, effective women's association for Lihir
- opportunities for women's development through skills training, and business development
- greater attention paid to community engagement processes in order that women's experiences and perspectives on impacts and opportunities are heard.

In sum, while some of the concerns about women's involvement in mining agreements on Lihir can be viewed within the context of a broader trend at the national (and Melanesian regional) level, this study has drawn attention to the specific structures and nuanced features of the Lihir experience.

The study has drawn attention to areas which can be addressed by the local level government, the landowners association and the company. In particular, there is an opportunity for the company to take a leadership role in supporting women's issues and concerns, to support a unified Lihir women's association and to aid in communication of conference outcomes and related information across the island group, including a more strategic approach to community engagement more generally. The company can also play a role in influencing the landowners association to appoint women's representatives to their organisation. With an adequate and consistent commitment to co-operation and support between the company, landowners association and local level government for women's issues, Lihir women's aspirations for greater voice and agency can be reached.

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