

PAPUA NEW GUINEA

The Many Benefits of Building Self-Reliance Among Women in Mining and Petroleum Regions

Papua New Guinea (PNG) is composed of many socially and culturally distinct tribal groups whose kinship ties are mainly patriarchal. Despite the existence of some matrilineal cultures, in practice, women are afforded far fewer opportunities than men. Out of the 136 countries listed in the UNDP's gender development index, PNG ranks 124th, placing it in the bottom 10% of countries worldwide. Violence against women is rife, as national statistics demonstrate: two out of three women have experienced domestic violence and 50% have experienced forced sex.

The rapid development of extractive industries in PNG has highlighted the inequalities suffered

by women in remote and rural areas. Global evidence suggests that the mining sector is gender biased, both in terms of the opportunities and the risks it introduces to communities living around industrial sites. In PNG, World Bank experience during the implementation of the first Mining Sector Technical Assistance project confirmed that men tend to dominate benefit capture (jobs, compensation payments, ability to influence decision making) while women are disproportionately

burdened with negative externalities (family disruption, loss of agriculture land, food insecurity, prostitution, sexually transmitted infections-STIs, and domestic violence). Lacking both authority and voice in their communities, women are highly vulnerable to becoming trapped in a cycle of declining prospects.



Photo: Sewing training in Tolukuma

The Project

The World Bank Women in Mining (WIM) Initiative was launched in 2003 and was developed during the implementation of the first Mining Sector Technical Assistance Project. Several characteristics were noted, not least that mining companies were providing many social services, with government being largely absent in many cases. At the same time, the industry is highly transitional, with mines potentially closing and eventually transferring the provision of services to government. Finally, there was gender-bias, with women being marginalized.

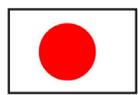
During project consultations, it became clear that the sustainable development of these mining communities would not be realized without a dedicated intervention to support the participation of women.

Women were not participating in any of the community-wide discussions involving men, yet were extremely open in expressing their grievances in separate consultation fora. The first step in the WIM Initiative was, therefore, the creation of a safe space where women could voice their needs and discuss the challenges they face. WIM conferences held in 2003 and

The vision of the JSDF Self-reliance Program for Women in Mining and Petroleum Areas:

"A future of peace and financial independence resulting from improved quality of life reflected in the extent to which women are able to make choices on issues affecting their lives and have the means to put these choices into action."

- Task Team Leader



2005 brought together women representatives from all over the country to hold dialogue with company representatives and Government officials. Women identified the priority actions required to mitigate risks and create opportunities in their communities. Given the remoteness of most mining sites, and the relative absence of Government, strong participation was required from mining companies; following the 2003 WIM conference, each company agreed to set up a gender desk to work directly with community women. Six local WIM action plans were developed in close consultation with women's groups and associations in the main mining areas and were merged into the **Five Year National Action Plan for Women in the Mining Areas** (the Action Plan, see right), which was approved by the Cabinet in December 2009.

The purpose of the JSDF grant was to pilot implementation of the Action Plan by providing practical assistance to women in mining communities and to begin reversing their bleak prospects by increasing their voice, agency and capacity. The vision for the JSDF project was to begin creating the foundations for women to assert their rights to participate equitably in the development of their communities (see Box 1). Social empowerment had to be accompanied by economic empowerment and improved economic independence of women was identified as a critical step towards increasing their leverage within the household and their status in society. Additionally, evidence from the mining communities suggested that, when given access to income, women were more likely to prioritize family welfare in their allocation of resources and were less likely to spend income on alcohol or consumer goods when compared to men. Investing in the development of women is an investment in the development of the community as a whole.

The JSDF self-reliance project was implemented with women in both mining and petroleum areas of PNG. The petroleum areas were included based on the recognition that similar gendered patterns of inequities accompanied the rapid expansion of the oil and gas sector. The Project aimed to build the capacity of women groups and associations to better manage community programs and provide them with the necessary skills and tools to become reliable partners in the decision-making processes which affect their lives. JSDF funded activities focused on delivering practical training in skills that women could immediately apply to make improvements in their daily lives.

Key Features of the Project

The process began with a participatory needs assessment in each of the main mining and petroleum areas. This subsequently informed the development of tailored training programs. Representatives from the gender desks of each mining company and local level government officials were consulted to ensure coordination with other ongoing donor-supported initiatives and community programs. Women highlighted different priorities according to the specific needs and opportunities in their communities, a process that helped to build cooperation, collaboration and a sense of collective identity among each cohort. Given the high levels of vulnerability among

Box 1 - The PNG Five Year National Action Plan for Women in Mining Areas

GOALS:

1. *Raise the level of general education and literacy to improve the status of women*
2. *Ensure reproductive health services, including family planning, are accessible, affordable and consistent with community values and norms*
3. *Prevent or control the incidence of tuberculosis (TB)/sexually transmitted infections (STIs), particularly HIV/AIDS and to minimize their social and economic effects on families and communities*
4. *Increase the opportunities for women and girls to participate in and benefit from the economic, political, cultural and social lives of their communities*
5. *Strengthen women's associations capacity to operate beyond mine closure*
6. *Ensure that communities are able to sustain their livelihoods*
7. *Mitigate and avoid environmental degradation that reduces the quality of life*
8. *Promote and maintain safety, security and peace in mining communities.*

village women - and the greater returns derived from training highly motivated participants - beneficiaries were invited to self-select into the project, with the final list being subject to community validation. The project worked with women's associations, to build their capacities and begin creating institutional structures that could continue training younger women after the JSDF project ended. A few spaces on each training course were left open for unemployed men to join. These proved popular; in one case, two men from a very remote outpost walked for two days to reach the training location.

Training covered the following broad areas:

- **Basic literacy and numeracy:** Women in mining areas have typically received very little, if any, formal education. Illiteracy rates are high for both sexes but for women in remote rural regions, the statistic is around 97-99%. Even marginal gains in literacy and numeracy significantly enhance the ability of women to participate in decision-making within the household and increase their opportunities to succeed in economic activities.
- **Improvement of small-scale agricultural techniques:** In the highland areas of PNG, women are responsible for gardening activities. The soil is very fertile and

Box 2- Key Data

- Trust Fund #: TF055412
- Implementing Agency: PNG Chamber of Mines and Petroleum (CMP)
- Grant Amount: \$671,000
- Implementation Period: 2008-2010

supports a wide variety of crops for subsistence and market sale, including cocoa, rice, peanuts, cassava, cabbage, beans, broccoli, oranges, bananas, papaya, mango, tomatoes and pineapple. However traditional methods of cultivation are time-intensive and quickly exhaust the soil of nutrients, necessitating fallow periods and the continued expansion of the area under cultivation. Composting, terracing and the creation of nurseries for seedlings were among the techniques women used to increase productive yields from their gardens.

- **Fish farming:** The Tolukuma mine in the Central Province is only accessible by helicopter. With no road connection to Port Moresby, everything is airlifted by helicopter to the mine. The cost of essential basic foodstuffs is almost triple the normal cost, making it very expensive for people to enjoy essentials such as sugar, salt, canned or frozen goods. Fish farming training was chosen because it was not only easy for communities to manage, but fish would also provide an ideal alternative source of protein for this inland community. The training generated a great deal of interest and more people enrolled than were expected or planned for.
- **Sewing, baking and food processing:** The presence of extractive companies stimulates increased demand for goods and services, and opportunities for local procurement. Additionally, increases in waged labor among (mostly male) community members creates a secondary level of demand as disposable income grows. Women identified niches for the production of non-traditional foodstuffs, but lacked the knowledge or equipment to make these. The project taught women to bake (e.g. cakes, bread) and construct their own small ovens from oil drums. Training was also given in food processing techniques (e.g. solar drying of banana chips) and in sewing, for example to make simple clothes. The project also provided some of the communities with sewing machines and men were trained in the repair and maintenance of this equipment.
- **Life improvement skills:** Women lacked basic awareness of simple skills and knowledge that could potentially bring significant improvements in their lives. Some of these areas were practical, such as basic hygiene, family welfare and feminine healthcare. Other areas were less tangible, including investment and business development and awareness of a woman's rights in both household and community settings. The project provided training aimed at mainstreaming these areas.
- **Capacity building for women associations:** Most of the women's associations and groups, identified by an assessment of their capacities to carry out community programs, were not efficient or effective organizations. Under the JSDF project members received training in Financial Management, Reporting and Communication, Strategic Planning and Human Resource Management as well as Health (Village Birth Attendant Training).



Photo: Women beneficiaries sharing results of their training on life skills improvement during the 2010 third WIM Conference.

very strong working relations with both companies and government. CMP's access to both government officials and company executives - and its convening power to bring these key partners together in the sector - was a vital advantage that could be leveraged to explore potential linkages between the JSDF and related development efforts. CMP has developed an extensive network in the mining and petroleum regions, where it is known and trusted by women's associations as well as by the community more broadly. Their role in conducting in-depth needs assessment to inform the design of capacity building trainings financed under the JSDF gave them an unique understanding of the development challenges faced by women and their families in mining and petroleum areas.

Delivering Results

The training programs were implemented in eight mining areas and five petroleum areas, with the participation of more than 1,100 women and men. The three international Women and Mining Conferences organized under the WIM Initiative (2003, 2005 and 2010) provided women with a forum where they could share their experiences and identify solutions to address their issues, as well as acting as a platform for dialogue and action that brought together relevant stakeholders - government, communities and private industry. It was noted that the increase in social empowerment resulting from the Project was also now enabling the women to become partners with their male counterparts in discussions around the sharing of benefits from mining.

In terms of summarizing the achievements of the Project, these include:

- Increasing the effectiveness and equity of community development in mining and petroleum areas, providing a model for corporate social investment activities and helping to mitigate the negative effects of the industries on women;
- Contributing to the creation of several female-led micro-businesses, notably in food processing and sewing uniforms for sale to companies;

Implementation

The project was implemented by the PNG Chamber of Mines and Petroleum (CMP), an independent NGO with

- Establishing and strengthening linkages among women in the community and within women's associations, and reinforcing their legitimacy as participating interest groups in shaping local resource allocation and development decisions;
- Building the self-esteem and confidence of women through stimulating voice and facilitating agency in designing and participating in their training programs;
- Highlighting nationally how activities within a particular sector (extractives) can have an impact on women's social and economic empowerment more broadly, and raising the profile of gender issues in the national development dialogue.



Photo: Learning how to make compost - Kainantu mine

Lessons Learned

- **Successful sharing of industry benefits necessitates using a gender lens** - By examining mining and petroleum projects through a gender lens, a host of previously 'invisible' issues and challenges came to light. Through listening to the specific concerns of women and tailoring a program of interventions, the Project was able to contribute to the wider sustainability of development outcomes in the extractives sector. The inclusive approach to community engagement piloted under the JSDF project also resulted in the increased interest of Government and companies to approach their activities in a gender sensitive manner.
- **Projects work best when they are locally tailored and designed by beneficiaries** - By responding to the specific needs and requests of women rather than lecturing to them or following a prescriptive model of assistance, the project built strong local ownership and support. The project facilitated the creation of a strong platform for dialogue among women in the communities, their associations and the local government leadership. By allowing women to set the agenda for training design and implementation, the project created a precedent for the leadership and contribution of women to local development.
- **Building leadership development into project activities is core to sustainability** - By empowering participants in the Project and encouraging them to pass on the skills acquired in their training, the Project created a multiplier effect as well as a wider range of role models for younger women and girls. Women's associations and groups actively engaged in income generating activities that gave them the leverage to assert a stronger role in community decision-making processes.
- **Building the self-esteem and confidence of women is an essential foundation for all other efforts** - Without foundational work to instill a sense of basic self-esteem in female participants, the Project would not have succeeded. Creating the opportunity to allow women to exert both voice and agency was perhaps the most significant, though least tangible, outcome of the Project.
- **Improving channels of communication and information increases project effectiveness** - By stimulating the participation of women in discussions of risks and benefits associated with mining, the Project enabled them to become active agents in the planning process, rather than passive victims of it. Women learned about their rights and the kind of opportunities that could become open to them through the acquisition of education and skills. The Project opened a conduit for women to mining companies (through representatives on the dedicated gender desks) and to a certain extent, provincial government, and allowed women and women's associations to gain confidence in engagement with these decision makers.
- **Companies can be key agents of gender improvement in the community** - The mining companies were very supportive of Project activities, acknowledging that development outcomes from community investment programs could be improved through consulting women and supporting women's activities. As recommended during the 2003 WIM conference, many companies subsequently set up gender desks. Over the years, the Women's Mining Associations have engaged with these gender desks to develop activities that resulted in the economic and social empowerment of women. While the well-being of women has improved, the mining industry has also been able to make an increasingly effective and efficient contribution to community development.

Follow-on Activities

This successful JSDF project was able to create considerable demonstration effect and subsequently allowed the World Bank team to leverage a grant of \$600,000 from Esso Highlands to replicate the training program in their operating areas.

The Japan Social Development Fund -- JSDF Good Practice Notes seek to share achievements, knowledge and lessons learned from the implementation of JSDF projects over the past decade. The JSDF is a partnership between the Government of Japan and the World Bank to support innovative social programs that directly meet the needs of the poorest and most vulnerable groups in developing countries. JSDF projects meet four basic requirements: Innovative, introducing new approaches to development; Responsive to the needy, by directly meeting the needs of vulnerable, marginalized, and disadvantaged groups; Rapid response activities that deliver short-term results and benefits to targeted beneficiaries; and Community capacity building activities that empower local governments, NGOs, and disenfranchised groups, while promoting stakeholders participation and ownership.