

**HARDLY FAIR:
Gender equity during the 2012 Papua New Guinea
National Elections in the Wabag Open electorate**

Philip Gibbs

1. Introduction

There is a saying in Enga society, “Women don’t climb trees” (*Endame ita kisala naenge*). Taken literally it is not true. Enga women can and do climb trees (Gibbs 2005). However, this common saying might be heard from a man when he wants to prevent a woman from doing something.¹ A woman might also direct the saying at a man if he is not doing the work expected of him. For example, a woman might use the expression, combining its literal and figurative senses, to express her annoyance if her husband returned home without bringing firewood. The saying also links to gender related taboos in Enga culture. A woman must never walk over the legs of a seated man. Nor can she step across weapons or food, lest they become *angupae* (stepped over) and thus rendered weak or powerless.

Paradoxically the power of women to render men powerless in a bio-mystical sense finds little parallel on the stage of modern electoral politics. Men will readily acknowledge, “because of women, men win”, but this is because of women’s essential support role for any successful electoral campaign. When it comes to being elected, women might say that because of men, women cannot win. In the 2007 elections, two women contested in Enga. One of these, the late Jenny Nidel contested for the Wabag Open electorate.² In 2012 no women contested for that electorate.

As team leader of the domestic observer team sponsored by the Electoral Support Program through the PNG Electoral Commission I facilitated observation of the election campaign, polling and counting in Enga, particularly that of the Wabag Open Electorate.³ In my observation report I questioned whether the election was free and fair, and concluded, “If measured on the scale of one person, one secret vote, then the election was not free or fair. On the other hand, there has been a communal expression of opinion that has resulted in a relatively peaceful change of political leadership in the

Wabag Open Electorate. It seems to us that the question of a free and fair election should continue to be raised in order to foster the ideal of a culture of democracy” (Gibbs 2012).

This paper continues with that question. Details of the 2012 election in the Wabag Open electorate of the Enga Province are published elsewhere (Gibbs & Kukum 2013). Here I consider the gendered experience of that election - how men and women experienced the event – specifically, whether and how they found it to be free and fair.

2. Method

In the domestic observation report (p. 27) I noted how a woman told us, “Mipela painim hat stret long vot tru bikos papa, brata, ol i kisim olgeta pepa bilong yumi na ol yet i makim. Dispela em i no stret olgeta” (It was really hard for us to vote because our father or brother took all our papers and marked them. This is not right). In a table at the end of the report (p. 49) I noted how only 25/70 people interviewed by the observation team responded affirmatively to the statement, “Women able to vote freely without intimidation”. These responses moved me; with support of Caritas Australia, to do follow up research on the issue of Gender and the elections, specifically how men and women experienced the election as free and fair.

I developed a set of questions to be used in semi-structured interviews (See appendix). Two men and five women, all from the Enga Province were trained to conduct interviews.⁴ Three of the women had been members of the domestic observer team. Between August 2012 and January 2013 we interviewed 33 men and 55 women. Interviews ranged from 20 minutes to over one hour. Interviewers used a convenience sample with the guideline of making the sample as representative as possible in terms of sex, age, education, etc. There was a remarkable correspondence in opinions expressed in the majority of the interviews. That supports the validity of the responses indicating that we had reached a stage of data saturation.

Normally women were to interview women and men to interview men, though this was not strictly adhered to. Interviews were conducted in English, Tok Pisin or the Enga language. With consent, they were recorded and transcribed. Interviews in Enga were translated and transcribed into English,

with key expressions in Enga being noted in the text. The transcribed texts provide the basic data for the findings in this paper.

3. What do we mean by Free and Fair?

There is some debate today about whether “free and fair” should be used to evaluate elections in favour of “credible”, “legitimate”, “participatory”, etc. (ACE 2013). However “free, fair and safe” was the theme of the 2012 election in Papua New Guinea, hence the focus of this paper.⁵ The ACE electoral Knowledge Network finds that elections are free, fair and credible if they meet the following criteria:

The right and the opportunity for every citizen to vote and be elected, free from discrimination, in regular, genuine and competitive elections, that uphold fundamental human rights, including universal and equal suffrage, security of the person and the right to a timely and effective remedy. Fundamental electoral rights cannot be divorced from election processes, procedures and institutions.

The Commonwealth observers, in their report on the 2012 PNG elections noted how:

We will consider, among other things, whether conditions exist for free and competitive elections; the voter register provides for universal suffrage; there is a level playing field in the campaign; state apparatus and public media are impartial; freedom of expression is provided for and the media meets its responsibilities for honest and balanced reporting; voters are free to express their will; the secret ballot is respected; and the results process is transparent and timely (Commonwealth Observer Group 2012, p. 46).

Free and fair in this paper is based on the above; particularly equal suffrage, a level playing field and security of the person

4. How to talk about free and fair in Enga?

Questions 3 and 15 in our question guide (see appendix) referred specifically to free and fair. At first some of the team interviewing in the Enga language were using the loan term “fri”. Preferring not to use loan terms we had to decide how best to express that in the Enga language. We found three expressions that seemed appropriate.

1. *Enda baa waina katao* – were the women able to (free from)
2. *Auu kaepaeyame pyandapi* – voted for whom he/she liked
3. *Tange ketome pyandapi* – with his/her own strength he/she voted

Those interviewing in the Enga language used variations on these terms, for example:

Interviewer: *Enda kisa kendapi, pundunpi mende nasipumupa banya yoko iki pyandaime lao masilipi pyandala naeyapi lao masili?* (Were women able to vote without any problem?)

Interviewee: *Enda kenda family anya, akalimi kuki lyaa minili pimi.* (Women had problem within the family, and men had control over them).

Interviewer: *Emba tangeme ketome vote pyandeo lao masilipi, waka mendeme pyanda peaminopa pyandeo lao masili?* (Did you vote freely or did someone influence you?)

Interviewee: *Wane nambanya ongo maito lao sekeo ongo maiyu. 2, 3 olapo nambanya auu kaengeme maiyu.* (I gave my first preference to whom I supported, but my second and third preferences were given to whom I liked).

[Note the difference in the above response between “supporting” and “liking”. As will be shown below, support usually involved a monetary transaction leaving a person unfree on polling day].

5. Traditional Cultural values

Modernity influences change in Enga gender relations today, yet differences still structure relationships between men and women in Enga society. Gender divisions create a high degree of dependency between men and women. Men depend on women for domestic tasks like supplying food and raising children. They also rely on their wives’ influence in establishing and maintaining relationships with her relatives, a man’s affines. Women depend on men for constructing houses and fences, and supplying firewood. They also rely on their husbands’ relatives, since most often Enga residence is virilocal. Men tend to play a dominant role in public life, yet, as Kyakas and Wiessner show in their fascinating book, *From Inside the Women’s House*, much more influence comes from inside the women’s house than is obvious at first (Kyakas & Wiessner 1992). Women exert influence over public affairs through private channels.

The reference to women not climbing trees was noted in the introduction. There are many other traditional sayings in Enga designed to position women in relation to men, for example:

“*Endame mena mondo petala akali kamanya kalya pena lenge*”, (Women raise pigs and send the men to the ceremonial grounds.). “*Endame mena miningi ongo endame tee napinigi, dee kama kainanya katapala maku nalenge*”, (Women can look after pigs but they can’t take part in pig exchange ceremonies nor can they deliver speeches). Such traditional sayings are used by men telling women that they are wasting their time entering into the men’s public space of politics. Some women will reply and ask men if they came from a tree or if they came from a woman. Vying for position in society continues.

6. Contemporary Structures

The table below indicates some vital statistics for women, and how men and women participate in essential structures in Enga Province today.⁶

Enga Population 2011	452,596. Female population (48%)
Maternal Mortality	High>450/100,000 births
Adolescent Fertility	Moderate. 43.5/1000, 19 yrs and under at Wabag Hospital 2007-2012. (66.9/1000 for PNG [UNDP 2011])
Government Representation	Low. In 2012, 368 wards of Local Level Government 29 women councillors appointed, 1 elected.
Education	Low - Moderate. In 2012, 4705 students in grades 9-12 in 11 high and secondary schools. 69.8% male, 30.2% female
Paid work	14.7% of positions in Enga administration held by women. 1% in top management, 90% in low management.

7. How were men and women free during the election period?

7.1. Free from traditional customary work

Life changed during the five week campaign period when customary and other ethical norms were set aside. This is partly due to the prevailing “carnival” atmosphere that comes to pervade much of Enga during the campaign period, but also because as the campaign period progressed people were aware that they were fighting for their future. One hears people talking about candidates being “enemies” and that even though there was no open tribal fighting in

the Wabag Open electorate, still competing groups were participating in a “cold war”. Regular house building ceased in order for men to build campaign houses. Routine gardening switched to harvesting food produce to be used in the campaign. Some with regular duties such as teachers and village court officials freed themselves to take time out to support their candidate.

7.2. Free from customary marriage relationships

Election fever caught on down to the family level. Some married couples separated as men (and some women) went on the campaign trail. Many women were left to maintain the local campaign house, though some, particularly the unmarried, divorced and separated women were free to go around and campaign as they wished. A considerable number of respondents noted how many married people felt free to enter into extra-marital relationships during the campaign period.

[We] agreed that all our wives should be free. We told them to trick men who came from other places to give us their vote by telling them that they (our wives) were single mothers or divorced or do not have husbands and can talk freely to other men who came. We had already agreed on that and that was what our wives were doing and we did not know whether they were talking only or they had sexual contacts. If one of our men suspected and hit his wife, that would be disaster for all of us because other clans or candidates would criticize us. So we let them. That was purposely planned and agreed to attract and lure votes from people who came from other places (Married man).

Anthropologist Mervyn Meggitt, writing in the early 1960s, labels Mae Enga men’s attitudes to women as the “anxiety of prudes” trying to protect themselves from contamination by women (Meggitt 1964, p. 222). With reference to Meggitt, Jenny Hughes, who worked among the nearby Huli notes how like the Huli, “Enga had a well-defined sense of correct and incorrect behaviour between the sexes” (Hughes 1991, p. 132). This has changed in recent times, but election related sexual behaviour signals a radical change from past tradition.

7.3. Free to participate in the vote market

During the campaign time in Enga there is a prevailing sense that this is a “chance” not to be missed. Large amounts of money were circulating and one stood to gain by participating in the vote market. There were six votes to sell (3 preferences for both the regional and the open seats), and some people accepted money for all six preferences. Men in the campaign houses did much

of the negotiation, and some men accepted money for the votes of their whole extended family, giving a small sum of money (such as K10) to wives and other dependants, telling them to stay away from the polling.

One man explained the importance of accepting campaign funds (often expressed in Enga as “eating money”). In his view politicians were not to be trusted and he thought that after the elections there would be little to gain since the elected member would go to the capital, Port Moresby and subsequently only assist a few people. So this was the one chance in the five-year cycle to actually benefit materially from the political system.

This chance happens only once in five years so they have to make use of any opportunities, whether they are good or not. They know that afterwards they will return to normal life and eat sweet potatoes.

Some women felt free to contribute to this market, not just in terms of “green gold” (betel nut), but also with substantial contributions. Professional women gave cash donations at campaign rallies and village women might contribute large amounts of garden produce. One village woman gave three large pigs and K10,000 cash to her chosen candidate.

7.4. Free to campaign

If a community has a person standing in the elections, they feel obliged to support that candidate. Where there is no candidate from the community, community leaders might trade votes, particularly first preferences, following political alliances. Campaign houses are known to be associated with a particular candidate and people also go around to other campaign houses and noisily on vehicles to campaign for “their” candidate.

Women play very important roles during this time. They have the task of making sure that the campaign house is “warm” with food, and women must also be ready to offer hospitality and for younger women, to court with visitors. Men depend on contacts through their wives’ clans and relatives when they go seeking votes. Women also play a leading role in composing and singing in ways that praise their candidate and put down others.

Of many songs, here are just two, illustrating the type of harsh imagery used. *Samuel wanenge nelyamo miliki nelyamo, nanatena naa lao masio upa moname*

misiu (Samuel's daughter is drinking milk. I was thinking to myself that you will never drink again). Milk signifies a luxurious existence. The daughter refers to sitting member Sam Abal's entire life. The song is saying that Samuel has been living a good life with the people's money and that this is going to end when their candidate wins the election and Samuel loses.

Keaponya bui lao Wapali bui Samuelenya soo katenge. Sepiki baseta mendeme nyoto lelyamo kondo ete kondo, kondo etete kondo. (Samuel has the position now and I feel very sorry for the Sepik bastard who says he is going to get it). The song was sung by Samuel Abal's supporters against Robert Ganim who is of mixed (Wabag and Sepik) parentage.

Men note how if they would use such hurtful language, it might easily erupt into a fight, but women are left free to compose and sing such songs during the campaign.

The campaign freedom extends beyond singing because with customary norms, relaxed people particularly young people feel free to enjoy themselves in ways that would not normally be available. They enjoyed drinking alcohol and participating in a wild "coffee machine" dance. A female secondary school student put it as follows:

I was free to go around and enjoy myself. They thought I was at school, but sometimes I went around with other girls and drank beer and had sex with men. ... I entered into relationships with men in order to con them into getting their votes. No one cared about what I was doing and I think it was the same for many young girls.

A young man put it this way:

I really enjoyed myself to the fullest. There was a lot of money floating around, food was surplus, and there were women every night. The parents of young girls provided us good meals and in return we had sex with their daughters. They didn't care much about the food they fed us or money they spent on us, or their daughters having sex with us. They consider our votes more important than anything else.

7.5. Some people were free to make their own choices

The greater liberty during the campaign period also allowed individuals

to make their own choices. For example, a number of practicing Christians said they had refused to accept money for their vote. Some chose not to go to campaign houses or to participate in behaviour associated with them. A young woman responded as follows:

Election itself is a good thing, but we are not allowed to accept bribery, rather to support and vote for a candidate freely. When you accept bribery, you go into the campaign house and drink beer and for young girls they would dance and have sex with big shots and get HIV. I saw a lot of young girls doing that and I feared greatly the possibility of getting HIV/AIDS. So, I did not go to the campaign houses. The other reason was that I feared God because God is so big and we cannot trick him, for we are all seen by God. So I did not join other girls to attend campaign houses or campaign rallies. I stayed at home and got involved in leading the youths in prayer meetings and fellowships praying for the elections.

8. How were men and women not free during the election period?

Despite their greater liberty during the election period as noted above there were also factors that caused people to feel unfree. This affected women more than men, and was felt by women particularly on polling day. I will discuss five ways that people felt unfree.

8.1. Unfree due to fear

Some women had considered competing in the elections, especially if the "women's bill" would pass.⁷ However, months before the election word went around that at election time people would be "fighting with money". This put off women candidates as they and their supporters were afraid that they would not be able to compete if it depended on money and financial resources. There were no women candidates standing for the Wabag Open electorate in the 2012 elections.

People were also afraid because they had accepted money for preferences to a number of candidates and could not fulfil the commitments they had made. One young man described his experience on polling day as follows:

I was filled with fear and my legs trembled and my body shook. Then I closed my eyes when I got the ballot papers and got the courage and said to myself, 'I will not always go to their house to ask for anything. What I took from the

candidate was a chance time and that was it, it will never come again.' So I called the name of Robert Ganim and marked the papers and gave them to his supporter and went away. The supporters of other candidates looked furiously at me.

Another young man who had accepted food and hospitality in many campaign houses said that he was so afraid that he hid himself on polling day and asked his parent to mark his ballot paper in his place.

When asked about their experience of polling day, many women said that they had not voted because their male relatives threatened them. Of 55 women interviewed, only 27 (49%) said they had voted (4 of these counting their vote having been included in "group voting"). Thus less than half the women asked had not voted and for some this was because of real or threatened violence.⁸

For young girls, the boys would pull their ballot papers and voted for whom they like and if the girls complained, they were kicked around (Young male respondent).

8.2. Unfree due to accepting money or favours for votes

People felt constrained to vote for the candidate they had accepted money from. Both men and women accepted money for votes. One man put it in terms of "moni i kalabusim mi" (money imprisoned me). Voting choice would be obvious because in Enga candidates' supporters are either close enough to see the way a person marks the ballot paper or the voter actually gives the ballot paper to the supporter of his/her first preference to mark. The practice of marketing votes is more problematical when the head of a family had "sold" the votes of other family members. One man explained how "the men used their wives' votes to pay back the money he had collected from the candidates".

In contrast, a young educated woman (with consenting brothers) who had refused to accept money for votes described how she felt free on polling day:

When people were bribed, they no longer possess the freedom to vote and the voter's freedom solely lies on the hands of the person who bribed him/her. I decided for myself. I thought that bribery would make life worse so when my name was called, I went to collect my ballot paper and told the other members of my family that I wanted to do a secret voting and I got the paper and marked the papers myself.

A number of people gave troubling testimony about how young girls were used to offer sex as "bait" to "lure" men into giving votes. A woman told us how "whether you like it or not you have to sit there and 'tanim het'" (engage in courting)". A young man said:

Sometimes the young girls didn't want to court with us and they tried to get away but their parents told them that that wasn't the way to get votes and they should remain to court with the men. That was kind of a consent we got from the parents so we did whatever we wanted with the girls.

Some girls got married during this time. At the end of the elections if she did not attract the number of votes anticipated she might be asked to return to her place and the marriage dissolved. Some families do not welcome her home if she is considered already "spoiled" and particularly if she is already pregnant.

8.3. Names not on roll

Like many parts of PNG, eligible names were missing from the roll. This affected both men and women.⁹

It was not really free. It was not fair because a lot of names were not on the roll and were missed out. Also it wasn't free because there was a lot of argument going on with the ballot papers. Some people pulling out ballot papers from weak and poor people and it was not free (married woman).

Ironically there are others with their names appearing on the rolls of various rest houses. One woman explained how she and her family had their names on the roll at three different places and she could not be bothered going to more than one, so she asked other relatives to vote in her name at the other two sites.

8.4. Family Order and Alphabetical rolls

The Electoral Commission sent out the New Roll of May 18th in alphabetical order. This was displayed for some days in the Wabag District Office. Local Electoral Officials were unhappy that it appeared in alphabetical form and requested that it be reworked in family order. An officer went to the Electoral Commission in Port Moresby to assist with this process and the final roll for the 2012 elections was issued on 8 June 2012. This is partly in family order and partly in non-family order (i.e. alphabetical order). People recognise that polling runs more rapidly with the family order roll. However, not everyone is

convinced of its value. We asked respondents whether they prefer the Family order roll or the roll in alphabetical order. 14/33 men (42%) men said they preferred the family order roll and 17/55 women (33%) said they preferred it.

The main reason why fewer women like the family order roll is because they feel it discriminates against women. If there is good communication and trust in the family, family order allows the whole family to vote. However, it seems that in a majority of cases the head of the family, who is usually male, or male relatives take control of all the papers and other members of the family have little say. Partiality is not only between the sexes. A man told how arguments irrupted on sharing papers between him and his brothers. “Earlier I thought the family order roll was good, but when we used it, it really created problems for us, like between myself and my brothers. So the 2012 election was not really free and fair because of the family order roll”, and a woman noted, “a few men went to vote collecting all the papers and we had to sit down and watch them do it”.

8.5. The manner of voting also affects people’s freedom.

When there is group voting (sometimes called “tanim tebol” in Enga) a few leaders, appoint literate clan members (male or female) to mark the ballot papers and others have no choice. In other places people give their papers for marking to supporters of the candidate of their first preference. In a polling area observed by the writer, the majority of supporters marking the papers for both men and women were female. In any case, only a few women are strong enough to insist on voting personally. One woman was heard to say to her husband, “*Waka upanya embame isete, angenya daa*”. (You can be boss over other things but not here [in elections]). Another married woman reported:

There were some tough women, a few of them who had decided for themselves and they felt free to vote. But a lot of them were not free. For myself I felt free because I don’t listen to my husband. I decide for myself so I went ahead and gave my votes to whomever I liked. For many other women the men and boys told them that they knew who the women were thinking of and they will mark their papers and told them to back away or told them to sit down.

9. Free and Fair?

When asked the direct question whether they considered the elections in the Wabag Open electorate in the 2012 elections was free and fair, only 15/88

respondents agreed. 8/33 (24%) male and 7/55 (12.5%) female. Excerpts from interviews in previous sections of this paper provide explanations as to why so few women and girls thought that the 2012 elections was free and fair. In many ways women felt used as one respondent noted how she felt using the Enga saying, *Sape lakakinya tambu palelyamo* (like a bundle of fern leaves between two pieces of pork meat).

Free and fair elections uphold fundamental human rights, including universal and equal suffrage. The elections in the Wabag Open electorate cannot claim to realize those rights for both men and women. Robert Ganim may have won the Wabag Open seat with 53.7% of allowable votes and 35 % of the total number of persons enrolled, but how many persons in that 53.7/35% actually chose to vote him as their member in parliament – or were they constrained to repay debts in a system that is more like a market than democracy?

Besides repaying debts, people in Enga invest in their future by maintaining kinship ties. Fulfilling obligations can sometimes mean conflicting commitments making choice very difficult. A married woman had this to say:

For myself I was not free because all those who had contested had ties with us. My brother in law was contesting and my husband supported another candidate who was his cousin brother. I also thought of our councillor who normally helps me. I was confused. I wasn’t happy and did not enjoy because I found it hard to make my decision. My husband persuaded me to vote for his cousin brother and I told him that his brother is a Moresby man and will go back soon but for the rest of the time we will be together with our councillor and therefore, we have to stay with councillor now. We were not at peace in our house. There was no freedom.

There is still division in the community according to who supported which candidate. Families that previously one could depend on for contributions for bride price or funerals no longer do so. One has to be discerning as to whose bus one travels in, and there are places where one should not go, not because of traditional enmities, but because of divisions due to the 2012 elections.

Some of our interviews were held after election fever had subsided. People had come back to damp houses and overgrown gardens. Several expressed regret. A young man said, “During the campaign time they had wings but now their wings are broken.” Another young man mused that women would

“commit suicide” in order to get votes for their candidate. A young woman reflected, “Looking back I can see that I got involved in lots of stupid things and it has affected my life negatively. “Mi float long amamas tasol” (I was just floating on high feelings) and any man that asked me to go with him, I just went”. Now she is concerned that she may have contracted HIV. “I don’t know if I have HIV or not. In the future I will tell young people to think about their future before they think only of enjoying themselves during the election” (see Gibbs & Mondu 2011).

10. Conclusion and directions for the future

This paper shows how both men and women experienced considerable freedom during the leadup to the elections, but that this changed when it came to polling. Both men and women who had accepted money or favours for their vote were constrained on polling day. Ironically the person interviewed who seemed most free was a young woman who had refused bribes and who asked her family to allow her to mark the voting papers herself. However, when seen in terms of equal suffrage in voting or an equal playing field in expressing one’s choice across the electorate, women fared poorly and this is hardly fair. Moreover if women tried to counter this trend they often had to contend with threats to their security. A woman who did try to make a difference commented.

I was angry with most of the women for taking the little money from the men and I told them that the women should get up and confront the police and the men to allow us (women) to vote. The police would help the women but the women did not care. They accepted what was given to them and some of the women mumbling that they were doing that for the good of themselves and their own family. And they all got themselves busy with gambling and marketing. I told them to back me up but none agreed so I quit.

Among many there are two principal issues: How can there be gender equity on polling day, and how can both women and men successfully contest in an election.

Gender equity on polling day will require a major cultural change in the Enga Province. One woman called for separate polling booths for men and women. This is a good idea, but there would have to be substantial attitudinal and structural changes in society for that to work successfully (Haley & Zubrinich

2013, p. 98, fn. 88). Without those changes enforcing segregated voting could even lead to greater confusion and increased violence.

Equal opportunity contesting elections will also require major changes, including attitudinal changes in both men and women. Both men and women respondents in our interviews said that they would like women to stand, but one wonders how many would give their votes freely if voting for a woman is considered a wasted vote. A woman said, “We women have to learn to believe in ourselves” but as a man said, “It is in our blood and it won’t change”.

In the present political structure politicians control basic services. Having the power to distribute goods and services means that the member becomes a super “bigman”. This paper provides evidence for a generally held view that women cannot be “bigmen” and that politics today has become an arena for bigman leadership. One sees too the expansion of money politics in which males control public and private resources. The system favours those with money, influence, education; and most of those with such qualifications happen to be men. It is a matter for speculation whether a woman with such qualifications might overcome traditional cultural constraints. Generally the context in the Enga Province is not supportive of women’s right to vote and to stand for public office as guaranteed by the PNG Constitution (Constitution C50).

A woman proposed that the only way a woman will be successful is “if she thinks like a man” (*Enda mende akali masapae palenge*). Is that the solution, or would that betray what everyone stands to gain from gender equity in a free and fair political process?

Endnotes

- 1 The saying was used by candidate David Lambu against candidate Enda Cathy Kakaraya in the 2007 elections. Enda Cathy Kakaraya is reputed to have replied, “You have a baby, and I’ll climb a tree”.
- 2 She came 17th out of 19 contestants.
- 3 For further research on elections in Wabag see Gibbs (2004, 2006, 2011).
- 4 I want to thank Dorothy Kukum, Jenny Tangula, Maria Malyam, Regina Tanda, Helen Imbu, Philip Maso and William Clement for their work on these interviews and the first three for their contribution to the Domestic Observation team. I also want to acknowledge the Electoral Support Program that supported our Observer team and Caritas Australia that supported this research on Gender and the Election.

- 5 Andrew Trawen, Electoral Commissioner, Address at Return of Writs Ceremony, 1st August, 2012. www.pnhec.gov.pg. For the sake of having manageable boundaries, this paper does not address the issue of the safety of the election.
- 6 Personal research in Education Department, Human Resources Department and Wabag Hospital in Enga Province. Sources: UNDP Human Development Report 2010, p. 91; UNDP Human Development Report, 2011, table 4, p. 141; National Statistical Office 2011, p. 18; National Statistical Office 2006, p. 111; Mola & Kirby n.d.
- 7 The “women’s bill”: The bill seeks to set aside 22 seats for women parliamentarians. It was not passed by the PNG parliament. See: <http://www.smh.com.au/world/historic-womens-bill-latest-casualty-of-png-crisis-20111219-1p1zq.html#ixzz2VgONHtbx>
- 8 In the Post election survey by 7 observers 25/70 (35.7%) people (male and female) responded positively to the statement “Women voted freely without intimidation” in the 2012 elections (Gibbs 2012, p.38).
- 9 In the Post-Election Survey from the Domestic Observation we found that 50% of men and 50% of women said that their names were on the roll. 28% were not sure, indicating that most probably the roll was not used during polling at their rest house or that they did not try to vote (Gibbs 2012, p. 48).

References

- ACE The Electoral Knowledge Network, ‘An internationally agreed normative base for free, fair and credible elections’. Available from: <http://aceproject.org/electoral-advice/archive/questions/replies/530754977>. [8 June, 2013].
- Commonwealth Observer Group – *Papua New Guinea National Elections June–July 2012*. Available from: <http://www.thecommonwealth.org/files/249878/FileName/ReportoftheCommonwealthObserverGroup-PapuaNewGuineaNationalElectionsJune-July2012.pdf>. [8 June, 2013].
- Constitution of the Independent State of Papua New Guinea 1975.
- Gibbs, Philip. 2005. “You have a Baby and I’ll climb a Tree,” Gender Relations Perceived through Enga Proverbs and Sayings about Women’. *Catalyst*, vol. 35 no. 1, pp. 15-33. Available from: <http://www.philipgibbs.org/pdfs/Have%20a%20baby.pdf>. [25 July, 2013].
- _____. 2004. ‘Democracy and Enga Political Culture’, in *Politicking in the Highlands: The 2002 Papuan New Guinea National Elections*, SSGM Discussion Papers, vol. 2004, no. 1, Canberra: Australian National University, pp. 2-15. Available from: https://digitalcollections.anu.edu.au/bitstream/1885/42056/2/04_01_dp_gibbs_etal.pdf. [25 July 2013].
- _____. 2006. ‘Limited Preferential Voting and Enga Political Culture’, *Catalyst* vol.35 no. 1, pp. 3-25.

- _____. 2011. ‘LPV in Enga: The Wabag Open Electorate’ in *Election 2007: The Shift to Limited Preferential Voting in Papua New Guinea*, eds. May, R.J, Anere, R., Haley, N. & Wheen, K., Port Moresby and Canberra: National Research Institute and the State, Society and Governance in Melanesian Program, pp. 261-283. Available from: <http://www.philipgibbs.org/pdfs/LPV%20in%20Enga-The%20Wabag%20Open%20Electorate.pdf> [25 July 2013].
- _____. 2011 (with Marie Mondu) ‘The Context of HIV Transmission during the 2007 Election in Enga Province’ in *Election 2007. The Shift to Limited Preferential Voting in Papua New Guinea*, eds. May, R.J, Anere, R., Haley, N. & Wheen, K., Port Moresby and Canberra: National Research Institute and the State, Society and Governance in Melanesian Program Port Moresby and Canberra: National Research Institute and the State, Society and Governance in Melanesian Program, pp. 157-176. Available from: <http://www.philipgibbs.org/pdfs/Gibbs%20and%20Mondu%20from%20Election%202007.pdf>. [25 July 2013].
- _____. 2012 *Domestic Observation Team Report – Wabag Open Electorate (Enga Province)*, MS, draft 3 August 2012.
- _____. 2013 (with Dorothy Kukum), *Case Study: The Wabag Open Electorate of the Enga Province*, Port Moresby, National Research Institute, 2013 (In press).
- Haley Nicole and Kerry Zubrinich 2013, ‘2012 Papua New Guinea General Elections Domestic Observation Report, Final Report’.
- Hughes, Jenny 1991, ‘Impurity and danger: the need for new barriers and bridges in the prevention of sexually-transmitted disease in the Tari Basin, Papua New Guinea’, *Health Transition Review*, vol 1, no. 2, pp. 131-140.
- Kyakas, Alome and Polly Wiessner 1992, *From Inside the Women’s House: The lives and traditions of Enga women*, R. Brown.
- Meggitt, Mervyn 1964, ‘Male-female relations in the Highlands of New Guinea’, *American Anthropologist*, vol. 66, pp. 204–225.
- Mola, Glen & Barry Kirby 2012, ‘Interpreting your country’s maternal mortality estimates: the Papua New Guinea experience’. Unpublished MS.
- National Statistical Office 2009, *Demographic and Health Survey, 2006 National Report*. Port Moresby National Statistical Office.
- National Statistical Office 2011, Papua New Guinea, *2011 National Census of Housing and Population. Preliminary Figures*, National Statistical Office
- UNDP Human Development Report, 2010, 2011.

Appendix

Interview Question Guide

(Interview men and women. But important to note at the beginning of the recording whether you are interviewing a man or woman. Record consent at the beginning of the interview)

1. Yu bin vot long **2007** eleksen o nogat?
2. Yu bin vot long **2012** eleksen o nogat?
3. Ol meri ol i pilim fri long vot long dispela 2012 eleksen o nogat? Bilong wanem? Stori liklik.
5. Sapos ol kandidat i bin toktok long sapotim o daunim ol meri long kampein bilong ol – ol bin tok wanem?
6. Sapos yu bin go long wanpela/sampela kampein haus – yu lukim ol man i mekim wanem long dispela kampein haus, na ol meri ol i mekim wanem?
7. Yu bin harim sampela stori long ol “politiks marit” o ol i givim sampela yangpela meri long ol man. Sapos osem yu ken stori liklik.
8. Long kampein taim, ol meri i mekim wanem wok? Ol i wokim wok long sapotim ol kandidat o ol i stap nating? Yu ken stori liklik.
9. Yu lukim sampela i singsing raun long kampein taim? Ol i singsing wanem na tok wanem? Ol meri i gat singsing o toktok i narakain osem ol man i wokim? Stori liklik long dispela
10. Long taim bilong eleksen yu lukim ol man i amamas? Na you lukim ol meri i amamas? Yu stori liklik long dispela.
11. Yu ting wanem long meri i go insait long politics na laik kamap memba. Em i gutpela o nogat?
10. Bilong wanem i nogat wanpela meri i sanap long Enga long eleksen 2012?
11. Sapos yu bin kisim moni long vot bilong yu – yu bin kisim hamas long 1 na 2 na 3?
12. Yu bin vot long laik bilong yu o nogat? Stori long vot bilong yu.
13. Yu ting wanem long nupela famili oda roll (bipo yumi bin bihainim alfabet orda tasol)?
14. Yu ting dispela eleksen em fri na stret (free and fair) o nogat?
15. Yu ting dispela 2012 eleksin i gutpela moa long 2007 o nogat?
16. (Kwesten i go long ol **meri** tasol) Yu bin fri long givim 1 bilong yu long tingting bilong yu yet o yu bin bihainim tingting bilong narapela?
17. (Kwesten i go long ol **meri** tasol) Yu bin fri long givim 2 na 3 bilong yu long tingting bilong yu yet o yu bin bihainim tingting bilong narapela?
18. Sampela moa samting yu laik toktok long en?

DOCUMENTS