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'Local Solutions to the High Level of Violence against Women Accused of Sorcery and Witchcraft in the Highlands of Papua New Guinea'

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ABSTRACT

The belief in sorcery and witchcraft in Papua New Guinea (PNG) is widely spread and has an important role in most of the spheres of public and private life. Most of the population of PNG does not accept natural causes as an explanation of illness or death. The belief that sorcerers and witches have deliberately used their supernatural powers in order to harm other people is a common conviction and the relatives of the victims adopt retaliation measures against the alleged witches, such as murder, torture, destruction of their property or exile. This kind of violence causea hundreds of deaths every year.

The following research does not aim to make an account or analysis of this kind of violence, as I believe this aspect has been already presented enough and it is not constructive in itself. This investigation focuses on exploring the initiatives undertaken by local activists to overcome the high level of violence, especially targeting women, arising from witchcraft and sorcery-related accusations in the Highlands of Papua New Guinea.

With that objective, I carried out a feminist ethnography, mainly supported by the theories of Postcolonialism, Postcolonial Feminism, Politics of Location, Situated Knowledges and Feminist Standpoint, putting them into dialogue with previous research on sorcery and witchcraft in Papua New Guinea and with the first-hand testimonies of more than 50 field interviews that I conducted myself.

With this research, I aim to making visible a terrible form of gender-based violence against women; highlight the work of those local women and men that are taking a stand against sorcery and witchcraft accusations in the Highlands of Papua New Guinea; and bring a more constructive and less ethnocentric view to the current academic and media discourse. In this regard, the current thesis compiles and assesses these local initiatives, trying to fill a gap in a recently discovered field of research.

RESUMEN

La creencia en brujería y hechicería en Papúa Nueva Guinea (PNG) está ampliamente extendida y tiene un gran peso en la mayoría de esferas de la vida pública y privada. La mayor parte de la población de PNG no acepta las causas naturales como explicación a la muerte o a la enfermedad y la creencia que brujas y hechiceros usan deliberadamente sus poderes sobrenaturales con el objetivo de dañar a otras personas es una convicción muy común que provoca que los familiares de las víctimas adopten medidas violentas para vengarse de las supuestas brujas. Estas medidas incluyen asesinato, tortura, destrucción de propiedades o exilio.

La siguiente investigación no pretende reflejar o analizar este tipo de violencia, puesto que creo que este aspecto ya se ha tratado suficiente y no es constructivo en sí mismo. La tesis se centra en explorar las iniciativas que las activistas locales llevan a cabo con el objetivo de contrarrestar el alto nivel de violencia, que mayoritariamente afecta a mujeres, surgida de acusaciones de brujería y hechicería en la región de la Highlands de Papúa Nueva Guinea.

Con este objetivo, he llevado a cabo una etnografía feminista, principalmente apoyándome en las teorías del Poscolonialismo, Feminismo Poscolonial, Políticas de Ubicación, Conocimientos Situados y Punto de Vista Feminista, poniéndolas en diálogo con investigaciones previas acerca de las prácticas y creencias de brujería en Papúa Nueva Guinea y con los testimonios de primera mano recogidos durante las más de 50 entrevistas de campo que yo misma he llevado a cabo.

Así, con esta investigación, pretendo hacer visible una forma terrible de violencia contra las mujeres prácticamente desconocida en nuestro entorno; destacar el trabajo de mujeres y hombres locales que se están movilizando en contra de este tipo de violencia en la Highlands de Papúa Nueva Guinea; e introducir una perspectiva más constructiva y menos etnocéntrica al actual discurso académico y mediático. En este sentido, la presente investigación recopila y hace una valoración de estas iniciativas locales, intentando cubrir el vacío existente en un campo de investigación recientemente descubierto.

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INTRODUCTION

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INTRODUCTION

“After questioning us further, they dragged me over to the Casuarian trees. They tied ropes around my hands and legs and tied me to one of the trees. I protested, ‘I am not a witch, I have done nothing’. They then dragged my mother to the other side and tied her between two Casuarian trees as well. My mother said, ‘I don’t know what you have planned for me, but let me pray first’. While she was praying they were heating an iron bar. It was not just any piece of iron, they had fashioned it such that it was like a fishing spear with two hooks on the end. She prayed and just as soon as she said ‘Amen’ they got that iron bar and thrust it into her vagina. They cooked her vagina and ripped out her uterus. The smell was unbelievable.”

(Haley 2010: 219)

1. WHAT IS THE RESEARCH ABOUT

The quotation above, collected by the anthropologist Nicole Haley in one of her fieldwork interviews during her research in Lake Kopyago, in the Highlands of Papua New Guinea, shows the brutal truth about the phenomenon of sorcery and witchcraft-related violence in this country. This crude testimony of a victim who survived a witchcraft accusation, does not intend to be sensationalistic, but rather to present a horrifying reality that happens much more often than what, from our comfortable existence, we can imagine. Sorcery and witchcraft accusations are a reality in Papua New Guinea and, in many cases and especially in specific areas such as the Highlands, they result in severe violence, causing inhuman tortures and killings.

The belief in sorcery and witchcraft in Papua New Guinea (PNG) is widely spread and has an important role in most of the spheres of public and private life. According to a research carried out by the International Organisation Oxfam in 2009, most of the population of PNG does not accept natural causes as an explanation in case of illness or death of relatives and friends. The belief that sorcerers and witches have deliberately used their supernatural powers in order to harm other people is a common conviction and the relatives of the victims adopt retaliation measures against the alleged witches, such as murder, torture, destruction of their property or exile. Police reports and case studies present experiences of victims that have been buried alive, beheaded, pushed

from high cliffs, electrocuted, forced to drink petroleum, stoned to death and shot (Zocca 2009). Unfortunately, on many occasions, the brutality of the attacks reaches inhuman levels.

The following research does not aim to make an account or analysis of this kind of violence, as I believe this aspect has been already presented enough in previous research and international media and it does not bring any constructive perspective in itself. This investigation focuses on exploring the initiatives undertaken by local activists to overcome the high level of violence, especially targeting women, arising from witchcraft and sorcery-related accusations in the Highlands of Papua New Guinea.

Throughout the research, I present and take seriously into account the voices of the local stakeholders as much as possible, including their considerations regarding the present situation, the motivations behind these practices and the challenges and difficulties they face when fighting against this kind of violence. In addition, I put special emphasis on capturing the solutions and actions that they are currently undertaking to alleviate the incidence of this phenomenon, and I also stress the future approaches that local activists, Human Rights Defenders, Church workers, members of civil society, researchers, government officials and experts on several related fields recommend, as a very important part of the investigation consists in highlighting their proposals for a hopeful way forward that will reduce this kind of violence for the coming generations.

It was in October 2012 when I first started researching about the status of women in Papua New Guinea. I came across the CEDAW report of 2010, *Concluding observations of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women in Papua New Guinea*¹, which highlights the main concerns regarding the situation of women in the country. The observation that fully caught my attention was:

The Committee expresses its serious concern about reports of brutal torture and killings of women and girls, especially old women, accused of witchcraft and it is particularly concerned that the number of female victims is increasing. The Committee regrets the lack of information on the prevalence of this phenomenon as well as on any investigations, prosecutions and punishments of perpetrators. The Committee underlines that this harmful practice is a grave violation of girls' and women's human rights and of the State party's obligations under the Convention. (CEDAW 2010:6)

The topic of women being brutally tortured and murdered because of sorcery accusations, deeply struck me, so I decided to continue my research on the subject. Unfortunately, the data related to this kind of violence is not very insightful, as there is a lack of specific and reliable information. It is impossible to know exactly how many cases of sorcery-related violence take place and what their specific characteristics are: because of specific circumstances, such as general acceptance of this

¹ The full report can be accessed at <http://www2.ohchr.org/english/bodies/cedaw/docs/co/CEDAW-C-PNG-CO-3.pdf>

practice by the population, fear of retaliation, difficult access to justice, lack of support from law enforcement bodies, or the existence of alternative dispute resolution mechanisms, the number of reported cases of witchcraft and sorcery-related violence is much lower than the real prevalence of this phenomenon. However, and despite the lack of data, the general perception seems to be that witchcraft and sorcery-related violence, specifically in the area of the Highlands, affects women in higher number than men (Amnesty International 2009; Gibbs 2012; Zocca 2010). This constitutes a good opportunity to analyze the issue with a gender perspective, as there are not many previous researches that pay close attention to the gender dynamics involved in the process. In this regard, by gender perspective I mean a research that uses the tools provided by Gender Studies and that considers gender differences and their cultural values and implications as crucial to understanding the motivations behind these violent practices and the significance that the gender factors have in the responses provided. The field of Gender Studies has also had a very important significance when providing the specific theoretical and methodological approach that I followed throughout my research.

The process of this research encompasses the period from October 2012 to August 2015, including a literature and media review for the first year and a half; development of a support network in the country; 12 weeks of fieldwork, 2 in Australia and 10 in Papua New Guinea, in which I carried out in-depth interviews, participant observation and a couple of focus groups; and an additional year for putting all the material together and following the progress of some of the initiatives in place. I have to acknowledge that the whole process was challenging due to several factors, such as budget and time constraints or the limitations of my cultural understanding. However, I consider this investigation revealing at two levels: personally, because for me as a researcher it has brought a new perspective about women's lives and activism in other parts of the world; and practically, as it compiles quite an extensive account of the direct perceptions, actions and challenges that are taking place at the local level to fight against sorcery and witchcraft accusation-related violence. Hopefully, the findings presented in this thesis will be somehow useful to map the current initiatives in the area, improve services for victims and contribute to the further development of collaboration networks between different stakeholders.

During my research I intentionally kept my opinion and judgment quite on the side, making an effort to mainly reflect the situation as the locals see it and experience it, and avoiding, as much as possible, the imposition of Western ideas with my considerations. As I said above, the vast majority of the population in PNG deeply believes in magic, sorcery and witchcraft, a fact that is already strange in contemporary Europe and it is seen by many as a sign of lack of development. However, similar to other religious codes, these beliefs shape their lives constituting a framework for ethics and moral values that works by regulating appropriate behaviors in social relations (Bartle 2005). In this regard, it is not easy for a foreigner to properly understand the deep implications, meanings and values of these beliefs. Besides this, there are many opinions from local and international stakeholders and experts that believe that these raising accusations of sorcery might also have their base on rivalry or envy rather than in deep traditional beliefs (Amnesty International 2010; Bartle 2005; Zocca 2009). According to these researchers, there has been a change in these violent

practices. These are now frequent and public, while in the past they were rare and occasional, never publicly practiced and children and teenagers were kept away.

The reasons of this significant increase and why their higher focalisation on women have not been fully interpreted yet by the existent literature. As some anthropologists have previously considered (Stewart and Strathern 2004; Jolly, Stewart and Brewer 2012), I personally agree that these practices might constitute a strategy to maintain traditional gender roles and eliminate female empowerment initiatives that challenge the conventional power structures. On another hand, they can also be responses against the dramatic changes that the communities experienced due to the influence of the colonial powers and the religious missions, and causing economic disparities, changes on the traditional concept of authority, jealousy and envy. It has been key to my research to enquire how the local population interprets these practices and what are the suggestions they propose in order to stop this witchcraft- and sorcery-related violence. All these aspects, hypothesis and perspectives have been considered throughout the development of this research and they will be further explored in the coming chapters.

I believe my research stands in the field of Gender Studies, paying special attention to the theories concerning the Politics of Location, Situated Knowledges and the processes of knowledge construction, as they have been presented by feminists scholars such as Donna Haraway, Sandra Harding, Susan Heckman, Patricia Hill Collins, Seung-Kyung Kim or Adrienne Rich. Their insights have been really useful, especially when situating myself as a researcher and clarifying the power relations existing between researcher and researched. I also support my investigation on the theories of Post colonialism and Postcolonial Feminism, basing my approach on the arguments provided by authors such as Robert JC Young, Rajeswari Sunder Rajan or You-me Park, as I considered these two theories crucial for Papua New Guinea: a country with a very recent colonial past that seems to be deeply affecting the present reality of its people. In addition, and because of the gender approach that the research aims to take, I also tried to clarify some notions regarding “sex” and “gender” and how women are socialised/considered as “others” in many different contexts of life. For this purpose, I drew on authors such as Genviève Lloyd, Simone De Beauvoir, Trinh T. Min-ha or Chandra Talpade Mohanty. Another aspect that has been key in my theoretical framework has been the previous and current research on sorcery and witchcraft beliefs, practices and their related violence, as it was of key importance to understand the context and provide a general base to build my observations on. The main authors I used for this part, many of them anthropologists, are Neville Bartle, Richard Eves, Philip Gibbs, Miranda Forsyth, Pamela Stewart and Andrew Strathern, Jack Urame and Franco Zocca. Last, but not least, it is important to note that a great part of the research has been based on the direct testimonies of the stakeholders that I interviewed: Human Rights Defenders, religious workers, government officials, academics or victims. In an attempt to provide a feminist ethnography, I used the words and perceptions that I captured during my fieldwork, which I consider equally valuable to all the previous theoretical contributions.

2. OBJECTIVES OF THE RESEARCH

The main question to be addressed in this research is ***what are the solutions and actions that the local community proposes in front of the high levels of violence against women accused of sorcery and witchcraft in the Highlands of Papua New Guinea?*** Within multiple possibilities, I have chosen this topic with several main objectives.

The first motivation that took me to conduct this research was to making visible a terrible form of gender-based violence against women that the West believes it was overcome many centuries ago. Unfortunately, the sorcery-related violence taking place in PNG is a fact that is broadly unknown in Europe and other parts of the Western world. Whenever it is approached, media normally refers to it as 'backwards practices carried out by savages'. In this sense, my research wants to raise gender awareness, enhance the genuine voice of the local stakeholders and contribute to strengthen their networks.

As a second objective, the research aims to highlight the work of those local women and men that are taking a stand against sorcery and witchcraft accusations in the Highlands of Papua New Guinea. There are many actions in place with the intention to mitigate or overcome the issue of sorcery and witchcraft accusations and their related violence. Some of these initiatives have been in place for years, but most people do not know about their existence. With this research I want to show how Papua New Guineans are the most crucial active agents when fighting against sorcery-related violence,

Finally, with this thesis, I would like to bring a more constructive and less ethnocentric view to the current academic and media discourse. These local activists (Human Rights Defenders, community-based organisations, religious workers, etc) provide assistance to victims and survivors and advocate for a positive change. However, they do not have much space in the academic production or the general media. In front of what I consider an unbalanced discourse, there was an imperative need for a fair representative speech that analyzed the issue from a local constructive perspective, leaving aside the superficial impressions and trying to reflect the voices of the local stakeholders. I believe this can only be achieved with the direct participation and voice of the people involved, listening to their suggestions and learning about their perception and reactions. In this sense, this new perspective needs to be built especially through the eyes, wishes and claims of the local feminists and pro-human rights groups.

3. INTEREST AND INNOVATION

I describe myself as a feminist who holds a particular interest in projects to promote gender equality undertaken in developing countries. It is for this reason that when the CEDAW report opened my eyes to the brutal situation of the women in Papua New Guinea, I felt called to research more about a topic that for me was as shocking as unknown. When having a first look to the issue and trying to find specific information about the sorcery-related killings that target women in Papua New Guinea, I came across several anthropological studies especially analyzing the traditional

practices in sorcery and witchcraft of different tribes of the country (Malinowski 1926; Mead 1938; Reay 1987; Stephen 1987). However, specific bibliography compiling and assessing the reactive measures from the local population is almost non-existent. It is true that in the last years, there has been increasing international attention on the topic and academic research about the local mechanisms in place to fight sorcery and witchcraft-related violence has become more important (Bal 2015; Forsyth 2014b). Currently, a group of researchers of the Australian National University are also carrying out a great job on this area, by organising conferences on the topic, bringing stakeholders together and publishing new materials that discover the thoughts and impressions of the local stakeholders. Traditional research bodies, such as the Melanesian Institute, are strongly incorporating the local perspective and lots of new initiatives by international agencies, flourishing community-based organisations and Human Rights Defenders are being set in place.

In this sense, the compilation and assessment of these initiatives is an undiscovered field of research and it can be very useful to reflect on the implemented practices and propose innovative ways forward. The information available in this part of the world about such a serious and concerning issue is very blurry, with little clarity, so there is a lot of room for innovative investigation that captures the wishes and activism of Papua New Guineans in order to overcome such a major problem of gender-based violence. This research tries to humbly fill this gap of knowledge.

4. STRUCTURE OF THE THESIS

This thesis is divided in four different chapters, namely: theoretical framework, methodology, perceptions from the field, and initiatives for a better future. The whole document is written with a self-reflexive style, showing my position as a researcher, and always prioritizing the words and thoughts of the local stakeholders. The thesis is broadly structured in two main blocks: one more theoretical (Chapter 1 and 2) and another one more focused on the fieldwork (Chapter 3 and 4). I consider both parts equally important. The theoretical framework has been indispensable to establish the ground for my research in terms of knowing the Papua New Guinean reality, but also on helping me to understand what the implications of doing feminist research are. On the other side, the findings obtained during the fieldwork were from the very beginning the focus of my investigation, and they are probably my best contribution to the academic discourse, as there is no much previous research addressing these issues.

In my theoretical framework (Chapter 1) I look at the theories of Postcolonialism and Postcolonial Feminism and I connect their ideas to the current situation in Papua New Guinea. I also summarise the situation of women in the country and examine few treats of the gender construction that can provide useful insights for a better understanding of the culture and of the current practices of sorcery and witchcraft-related violence. I also considered necessary to make a brief account of the historical conceptions of “sex” and “gender” and the constant position of women as “The Other”, and I try to explore if Papua New Guinean women also relate as “others” to me and to their male counterparts. The third section of my theoretical framework brings together relevant authors that have contributed to shape my perception about how to represent the other more accurately. I

make my argument based on bringing into dialogue the theories of Politics of Location, Situated Knowledges and Feminist Standpoint and exploring how they influence the construction of knowledge in general and, in the specific case of witchcraft and sorcery-related violence. Finally, in this chapter I also draw upon the previous research conducted in Papua New Guinea regarding witchcraft and sorcery beliefs and their related violence. This part has been of crucial importance to get and give an understanding of these specific cultural practices that are so unknown to the West. In this regard, I aim to clarify some concrete terminology, outline particular witchcraft beliefs and practices, and give a brief account of the violence arising from them: prevalence, characteristics, gender implications, and some of the motivations behind it.

The second chapter explains the methodology employed during the research and outlines the reasons for my specific choice. I clearly pose my research question: ***what are the solutions and actions that the local community proposes in front of the high levels of violence against women accused of sorcery and witchcraft in the Highlands of Papua New Guinea?***, and I explain the motivations that took me to choose this topic. I also describe why I decided to carry out a feminist ethnography and which ones have been the different steps that I followed in order to achieve that. In general, all this constitutes a very personal account of my location as a researcher and some of the challenges and difficulties that I faced during the investigation. I believe honesty is crucial, as, if I want to present a valid perspective on the topic, I have to show where my biases are coming from.

Chapter 3 is the part of the thesis mainly dedicated to the fieldwork and it clearly differs to the previous two chapters as most of the references used are directly extracted from first-hand interviews I myself conducted with the local stakeholders. I use the textual words of Human Rights Defenders, local activists, religious workers, researchers, academics, government officials, members of civil society, community leaders, peace mediators, academics or victims, and I strongly believe this provides an immense value to the thesis. I put all my efforts to be loyal to their voices and capture as much as possible their perceptions and impressions regarding beliefs and practices of sorcery and witchcraft and their related violence. In addition, in this chapter I also do an approximation to analyse the legal implications of sorcery and witchcraft accusation-related violence: I make a brief summary of the procedures and limitations of the State Criminal Justice System; I review the Sorcery Act 1971 and explain its controversy; and I compile few possibilities outlined by experts suggesting few actions that could be adopted by the Government of Papua New Guinea in order to bring effective measures to deal with this phenomenon. Finally, there is another section in which I put together the different initiatives taking place on the ground, the mechanisms that are currently in place and that are trying to intuitively react to the horror of sorcery and witchcraft-related violence in the communities. These “local solutions” have existed for many years and have been mostly operating without any support of the government and very scarce resources.

The forth chapter intends to look at the future by concentrating on those projects that are being developed and that aim to provide strategic and lasting solutions to the problem. In this regard, I focus on the most important initiative at the moment, the Sorcery National Action Plan, an action that, in a consultative manner and bringing together hundreds of voices from experts across different fields, aims to create a set of recommendations that will constitute a base for

governmental policy, addressing sorcery and witchcraft accusation-related violence from a holistic perspective. I also analyse the perceptions of some of the stakeholders regarding some tensions arising from the development of this National Plan referred to the possible clash between the bottom-up and the top-down approach. And, finally, the last part of this chapter shows a sample of positive actions that have happened in the region of the Highlands in the recent months, demonstrating that every day more and more Papua New Guineans are understanding the negative consequences of these practices and are getting mobilised against them. Unfortunately, newspapers and local activists continue to report many new cases of violence of this sort.

As the last introductory comment, I would like to say that this thesis is the result of an intense effort that has lasted for almost two years and that posed for me many challenges along the way. However, this production mainly belongs to the women and men of Papua New Guinea that accepted to share with me all their knowledge and experience from being in the frontline against sorcery and witchcraft-related violence. It is true that it has been me who typed the words in this document, but it would not have been possible without them. In this regard, I hope that, even if it is in a very small way, the following thesis contributes to raise awareness of their cause and encourages them, and many more people, to continue fighting sorcery and witchcraft accusation-related violence.

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1. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

INTRODUCTION

The following theoretical framework comprises the main perspectives that conform the thought, arguments and approach taken throughout this research. It contains the theories and arguments of influential authors that have constituted a base to the specific perspective of my study. For clarity purposes, I separate them into four sections: Postcolonialism and Postcolonial Feminism, Notions of Sex and Gender, Politics of Location for Knowledge Construction and Previous Research on Witchcraft, Sorcery and their Related Violence in Papua New Guinea. However, I myself see these theories and concepts as deeply interconnected and, to some extent, dependent on each other. For this reason, I will be making reference to them here and there all across the several sections of this chapter.

This theoretical framework has been very useful for me in order to understand my topic of research in a deeper way and set my standpoint when approaching an investigation that faces challenges such as representation of the other, establishment of a feminist point of view, definition of concepts across different cultures, combining the perspectives of different local and international actors or dealing with issues of power and empowerment.

1.1. POSTCOLONIALISM AND POSTCOLONIAL FEMINISM

Brief Contextualisation of Papua New Guinea

Demographic, Geographic, Economic and Cultural Context

Papua New Guinea is a recently independent country with an approximate population of 7.3 million people. Located in the South Pacific, in the Melanesian region, occupies the west part of the island of New Guinea, north of Australia. Besides the mainland, it counts with over 600 other islands, adding up a total area of approximately 460,000 square kilometers. Around 85% of the population live in rural areas, in scattered customary communities with diverse belief systems, cultural traditions, and distinct forms of social organisation. Most of these groups are isolated and inaccessible by road, living out of farming, depending on subsistence and small cash-crop agriculture. The other 15% of the population live in urban areas such as Port Moresby, Lae, Madang, Wewak, Goroka, Mt Hagen and Rabaul. (DFAT 2015; WHO 2015; UNDP 2015, UN Data 2015, CIA 2015).

Culturally, it is considered one of the most diverse countries in the world, with over 840 languages spoken, many of them with fewer than 1000 speakers. *Tok Pisin* (a creole language evolving from English), Hiri Motu and English are the official languages, even though *Tok Pisin* is the most widely known and understood.

Papua New Guinea is a very rich country in natural resources (gold, oil, gas, etc.). This wealth has prompted an increasing interest from the extractive industries, especially with an intense boom over the last 10 years, in which the country has experienced an annual economic growth of 6.5%. Despite these numbers, poverty levels have not changed much since 1996, keeping the country within the “low human development” category, ranking 157 out of 187 nations. Some of the reasons considered to explain this fact are the distribution of the population across rugged landscapes (which makes the delivery of government services very difficult); extremely low levels of literacy within the population; the very recent exposure to health and education services in most parts of the country; or a very limited government capacity. All together generates a very slow progress leaving a big part of the population unattended. (UNDP 2014)

The 2014 National Human Development Report of Papua New Guinea concludes that the 40 years of independence in which PNG’s economy has been based on the extractive industries have brought improvements on livelihoods, health and education but only for some. At the same time, this economic path has caused big negative impacts on communities, questioning if this system will really increase the wellbeing for most of the population. None of the Millennium Development Goals will be met in 2015. In addition, gender inequality is extremely high, with unbelievable levels of gender-based violence (AI 2011; AI 2013c).

Political and Historical background: influences and current situation

Independent from Australia since 1975, Papua New Guinea is a constitutional parliamentary democracy and a Commonwealth realm. The Head of State is Queen Elizabeth II and the Head of Government is the Prime Minister Peter O’Neill. Papua New Guinea’s political system is composed by three levels of government (national, provincial and local). The Parliament, constituted by 111 members, is elected for 5 years by universal suffrage. The Cabinet, called National Executive Council (NEC), is appointed by the representative of the Queen, the General Governor, under the recommendation of the Prime Minister (DFAT 2015; CIA 2015).

The territory of Papua New Guinea was first settled around 14,000 BC, with migrations from the Asian mainland, through Indonesia, especially bringing hunters and agriculturists. Due to the rough terrain, communities lived isolated, keeping little contact with each other and maintaining their autonomy, own language and customs.

The first Western incursion was made by Europeans in 1526, when Jorge de Menezes arrived to the island. After a brief exploration, he left as he considered there was no obvious wealth to exploit and hostile natives (Woolford 2013). The West side of the island was occupied by the Dutch in 1620 and added to their vast and profitable Empire. Before any formal colonization of the east side, European explorers initiated missions that brought to the area many whalers and traders focused on the spoliation of sandalwood and sea cucumber. New European diseases introduced by the explorers had devastating effects on the local population causing thousands of deaths, which, together with the exploitation of natural resources, generated a big hostility and resentment towards the Westerners. The hostility translated into violent and deadly attacks to foreigners, and consequently there were several massacres of locals as a retaliation measure carried out by

Westerners. All together gave a very scary reputation to the territory, marking it as the most dangerous place in the Pacific, believed to be inhabited by cannibals and head-hunters (Woolford 2013).

The east half of the island, called back then New Guinea, was occupied and colonized by Germans and British since 1884 and 1888 respectively. The British part was handed over Australia for administrative control. During this time, slavery was heavily used and many men were taken to work in plantations in Fiji and northern Australia, and British established a native police force to spread all around the benefits of British government. With the beginning of WWI, Australia took over the German part and promulgated a new legislation that restricted the commercial exploitation of the east side of New Guinea exclusively to British and Australians citizens.

Around the 1920's some gold was discovered in the unexplored northern coast. This finding encouraged Europeans and Australians to organize expeditions that allowed the first contact with the tribes inhabiting the interior of the territory. The Australian patrol officers were normally the ones assigned to these expeditions and also accounted responsible for making the British governmental presence felt on the life of the tribes. After the War, the League of Nations officially handed the control of the eastern half of the island to Australia, but in WWII, Japan took over. With the assistance of the U.S. troops, the Japanese withdrew four years later. Melanesians were initially neutral to the conflict. However, they were largely used and at the end of the war many were commemorated. It is calculated than a third of Tolais died because of their participation in WWII. It has been recently discovered that Australians used to hang New Guineans during WWII if it was found out that they were collaborating with the Japanese. In many cases, the locals assisting the Australians during the war were often forced to do so, as Australians executed hundreds of locals because they refuse to collaborate (Woolford 2013).

As colonialism became unpopular in the 50's and 60's, Australia started "preparing" New Guinea for independence, which finally took place in 1975. Since then, Australia has continued guiding the country and investing millions of dollars in development projects in PNG. Australia's program in Papua New Guinea is the second largest for the country and promotes collaboration in areas such as health, education, law and justice, infrastructure, gender equality and governance. Australia is also one of the main providers of private investors, especially in the areas of mining and infrastructures (DFAT 2015; UNDP 2014)

Since independence, it has been difficult to create a firm national Papua New Guinean identity. For Papua New Guineans, the feeling of belonging is much stronger at the local and regional levels, creating what is known as the "culture of the *Wantok*" (word that identifies those belonging to the same cultural group, those who come from the same place and speak the same language). Traditionally, PNG was politically divided into clan-based groups that had nothing to do with an organised centralised political system, until independence, when the Westminster system² was adapted. The few years that this political system has been running in the country, added to the

² The Westminster system is a democratic political system modelled from the political system of the United Kingdom. For more information, see (Patapan, Wanna and Weller 2005).

specific characteristics of a much localised culture and the traditional political structure mostly organised at the community level, have generated a lack of confidence and legitimacy from the population towards the national government. Currently, the National Government is mainly composed by party coalitions and independents, resulting on up to 90% of voters being unrepresented. The elected members are chosen by a minority of voters, mainly those who belong to the same ethnic group, who will reward their voters by establishing personal and close relations with them, which in most cases is considered corruption by Western standards (Rynkiewicz and Seib, 2000).

Need for Postcolonial lenses

Seeing this colonial past, a postcolonial framework that helps us understand the current circumstances in the country is extremely necessary. Robert JC Young, a British postcolonial theorist and historian, affirms that Postcolonialism is a political project, a project that entails a reconstruction of the long-time established Western knowledge, a critique of the ethical norms and power structures that are given for granted. It is a set of different converging perspectives that appear organized as forms of resistance to the hegemonic power and a strong critique against imperialism and colonialism (2012). For this reason postcolonialism is an extremely suitable theoretical framework to support the approach that I am taking with this research, as one of the main objectives is to deconstruct the mainstream knowledge and give voice to the local discourse.

Postcolonial theory claims that the past reappears in the future: facts, situations and circumstances are not given as such. Any current situation evolves from a previous one. Consequently, it would be quite hypocritical to ignore the influence that colonialism and neocolonialism play in the configuration of the World as we know it today. As an already known historical debate, Judith Bennett, feminist historian, talks about the tension between continuity and change, and how History has been constructed by milestones that imply big “changes and transformations” (Bennett 2006). However, she highlights the crucial role of the forgotten and less fashionable “continuities”, in which the succession of little progressive changes has been the engine that moved forward the circumstances of people’s lives. In this sense, and as Young and Rajan explain, the unsolved conflicts of the past reappear, and it is this colonial past that shapes and fills with meaning the problems and conflicts of the present (Rajan 2004; Young 2012). The affirmations of Rajeswari Sunder Rajan, Indian feminist postcolonial author, encourage having a look into the colonial history of Papua New Guinea to search for possible connections between colonial influences and the current practices of sorcery and witchcraft-related violence in the country³, as Postcolonialism takes the past to understand the present.

As a feminist researcher focusing on an issue mainly affecting women in a formerly colonized country, Postcolonial Feminism is a fundamental theory. It could not be different when studying Papua New Guinea. Feminism and Postcolonialism unite efforts in Postcolonial Feminism, ‘an exploration of and at the intersections of colonialism and neocolonialism with gender, nation, class, race and sexualities in the different contexts of women’s lives, their subjectivities, work, sexuality

³ This topic is extended in section 4 of this chapter.

and rights' (Rajan and Park 2000: 53). In addition, one of the strongest points of this paradigm is that it questions who participates in the construction of knowledge. An aim of Postcolonial Feminism is to question who the producer of knowledge has been/is and how we can make sure that this knowledge is reconstructed according to a more comprehensive perspective, including the voices of those who have been silenced. What we know about the world, what we have heard or read, is not the reality; it is what "some" consider the reality from a very narrowed and partial view, that of the privileged groups, that excludes other visions and interpretations. We need to resist hegemonic readings of the world, and also pay special attention to Third World essentialism (Rajan and Park 2000: 57), as it is quite common for Western scholars to fall into the mistake of replicating essentialist notions of "Third World Women" as a compact block of underprivileged, oppressed, marginalised and victimised individuals (Narayan and Harding 2000). Chandra Talpade Mohanty, Indian feminist scholar, criticises how some Western feminist texts essentialise this uniform view portraying a culture that does not reflect reality and that contribute to maintain the Western dominant discourse:

This average third world woman leads an essentially truncated life based on her feminine gender (read: sexually constrained) and her being "third world" (read: ignorant, poor, uneducated, tradition-bound, domestic, family-oriented, victimised, etc.). This, I suggest, is in contrast to the (implicit) self-representation of Western women as educated, as modern, as having control over their own bodies and sexualities, and the freedom to make their own decisions. (Mohanty 1984: 337)

Third World essentialism and mainstream ideas about the world produce hegemonic discourses that maintain the unbalanced *status quo*. Postcolonial feminism, as this research aims to be, is about inclusion and recognizing differences; it is about taking a new ethical perspective and shaking the power structures that run the world (Young 2012). Deepika Bahri, Indian postcolonial scholar, says that the political project of Postcolonial Feminism should be based on a deep and constant 'examination of premises, methods and tensions' (2004: 202). In this sense, the postcolonial approach tries to be self-reflective in order to avoid missing key information that allows us to understand the World as accurately as possible. It tries to go beyond the surface of the apparent by including in the analysis a deeper historical background as well as the contextual circumstances to which the so called "Third World countries" have been exposed (Young 2012). As we live in a postcolonial world, any approach taken in any kind of research, should take postcolonialism into consideration.

According to these authors, it seems crucial that the anthropological research and the developmental work put on the postcolonial lenses. It would be a mistake trying to analyze the sorcery and witchcraft practices in Papua New Guinea leaving aside the influence that the Western Christian missions and colonial powers had and have in the region. The Western colonization brought "the imposition of new forms of hierarchy, the exploitative use of labor, the extraction of resources" (Steward and Strathern 2004). Christian missions incorporated in the local communities new religious values that could have constituted a 'medley of cultural notions about witches'

(Steward and Strathern 2004: 113). The missionaries' concepts influenced the development of a new set of ideas resulting of the mix between traditional beliefs and reinterpreted Christian values (Richards and Niehaus in Stewart and Strathern 2004). As this mix has definitely affected the practices on sorcery-related violence, it would be an error to approach this research without taking this into consideration⁴.

1.2. CLARIFYING NOTIONS OF SEX AND GENDER

Along the history of Western thought, the terms “man”, “woman”, “sex” and “gender” have been used again and again with a variety of meanings. In this section, I will briefly introduce some of these uses and few of the related connotations attached to them. In order to do so, I will mainly follow the text *Man of Reason* of Genevieve Lloyd, an Australian philosopher and feminist. I am aware that scholars in the fields of Feminist Theory and Gender Studies have been extensively working on this topic generating a huge debate that seems to be constantly producing new literature. However, in this thesis, I will just present a summary of a much more complex and large controversy. To start with, I would say that “Women”, used clearly as the opposite term for “Men”, has been many times associated to that second category of human beings, “The Others”, those ones who exist outside the main reality and only because of their subjugated relationship with the primary protagonists of a truly meaningful existence: “men”. Permanently defined by men, women have been traditionally connected to concepts such as “Nature”, mystery, the unknown or the uncontrolled realm of the senses (Beauvoir 1949). The opposition between male and female in the Western discourse has been initially based on biological differences, but the most important part is that this differentiation has been used to naturalize hierarchical structures, mostly disadvantaging women.

As this research tackles a problem which seems to be affecting many more women than men, and because of this fact, it aims to provide a gender perspective, it is necessary to define words such as “sex” or “gender” and explain how they will be used from now in this investigation.

“Sex” and “Gender” are controversial concepts that have occupied pages and pages of scholarly articles and books. Nowadays, thanks to the contribution of many feminists, it is broadly understood that “sex” refers to the distinction made, generally between male and female, according to specific biological traits based on genitalia. On the other hand, “gender” is considered to be the social construct, the roles, characteristics, behaviors, etc., attributed to each one of these sexes. It could be said that sex is biological and gender is cultural. However, this last distinction has also been deconstructed, especially thanks to the work of Gayle Rubin and Judith Butler, both American philosophers and gender theorists, who question the very core of this distinction, claiming that sex is also socially created and refers to specific agreed social rules that have been naturalized (Butler 1993; Rubin 1975).

⁴ See more on this topic in section 4 of this chapter.

Looking at the existent literature, it is easily observable that the traditional Western gender system is dichotomic, presenting “male” and “female” as the two only possibilities, reducing the mark of gender to the genitalia and showing this binarism as something natural, stable and invariant. However, in the last decades, many new approaches and theories have opened this heteronormative⁵ model to many new realities. Unfortunately, for reasons of time and space I will not be able to discuss them in this thesis. However, many authors criticize this binary system when it comes to anthropological research. Henrietta Moore, for example, defends that gender identities are fluid and variable. She claims that gender dichotomies are anthropological constructions and that they do not really correspond to reality (Moore 1993). She highlights how these binarisms such as culture/nature, public/private, production/reproduction ‘are clearly anthropological imports rather than natural facts’ (Moore 1993: 194). Moore quotes Collier and Yanagisako to deconstruct the fixed connection between sex and gender that I mentioned above and that seems unavoidable. She questions the Western assumption that biological categories are natural and given. She rightly uses Foucault to support her argument that sex and sexual categories are an effect of discourse: ‘the notion of “sex” does not exist prior to its determination within a discourse...therefore, bodies have no “sex” outside discourses in which they are designated as “sexed”’. (Moore 1993: 197). This contribution is very meaningful to me, because it makes explicit how these binary systems are products of specific societies in a concrete time, allowing not only for the possibility but also the need to understand that these categories might not be even existent outside this context.

Moore, grounding her argument on more recent ethnographic research, wisely claims that the ‘gender ideology or model’ does not present a single unitary form, rather it is extremely variable between and within cultures (1993: 199). As an example, we could point out here that even Papua New Guinea is considered a highly patriarchal country, some specific communities such as Milne Bay respond to what Western literature describes as a matrilineal structure (Lawrence 2015). Moore points out the multiple and narrow assumptions that originate from the traditional Western gender ideology, such as sex being the base for gender; the existence of a unique and stable gender model in each society that is based on male/female differential categories; the perfect reflection of this model on the husband/wife unit, and the belief that sexual body features constitute identity. Consequently, the Western discourse situates sex/gender at the core of personhood, character and status, often ignoring ‘the multiple differences and multiple identities within the subject’ (Moore 1993: 204). This reflection is useful when approaching other cultures, in the sense that it encourages to think outside the box, leave our univocal explanations of the World aside and open our understanding to different possibilities. “Thinking the unthinkable”, as Young asks us to do (2012: 31).

Returning to the critique to the gender division between male and female, there is something more that needs to be taken into account. This is that, even if we take only the category of “women”, this is not homogeneous or universal. As Adrienne Rich strongly affirms ‘that faceless, race less, classless category of “all women”... is a creation of white Western self-centeredness’ (1984: 374).

⁵ Heteronormative refers to a world view that promotes heterosexuality as the “normal” or preferred sexual orientation.

Other authors as Chandra Talpade Mohanty or scholar and filmmaker Trinh T. Minh-ha have largely elaborated on the topic, especially relating to the definition of the Third World women. It is necessary to be very aware and avoid the homogenization that erases the differences and eliminates richness. 'We who are not the same. We who are many and do not want to be the same' (Rich 1984: 379). This quote perfectly illustrates the arguments defended above, about the call to advocate for different models that challenge traditional conceptions and acknowledge new realities that do not fit anymore in the old and rusted frameworks.

These concepts have been important for me because they have prepared me to be open-minded and make an effort to observe and appreciate the differences between the distinct kinds of people who I interviewed. It has been very useful in order to understand that the gender roles and responsibilities are variant in other societies, and that it is necessary to be careful when using the term gender. In spite of clarity and efficiency, even knowing that is incomplete and not representative; in this thesis I will use the term "sex" to refer to the socially agreed distinction based on biological traits; and the term "gender" as the culturally and historically specific construction more related to expected practices, performances and roles assigned to each sex. Now, I will briefly outline the situation of women in Papua New Guinea, and introduce few ideas about the gender construction in the country.

Situation of Women in Papua New Guinea

With the objective of bringing some light to the gender implications of the phenomenon of sorcery and witchcraft-related violence, I will outline few of the main characteristics regarding the situation of women in Papua New Guinea. For this purpose, I will mainly use UN data and reports⁶ and a comprehensive study carried out by Amnesty International (2006), especially focusing on gender-based violence in the country. It is not my intention to reproduce in this section an essentialist account that portrays Papua New Guinean women as hopeless victims, as after I had the chance to meet many of them, I am aware that they are strong women and active agents of change. Unfortunately, the socio-economic circumstances surrounding them make their task much more complicated. These circumstances are the ones that I am trying to summarise in the following lines.

Papua New Guinea is a male-dominated society with strong patriarchal cultural and structural systems (UN 2011). The UNDP Gender Inequality Index locates the country in the 157th position out of 187 (UNDP 2015b), and it is considered by Human Rights Watch one of the most dangerous countries to live in as a woman because of his pervasive rates of gender-based violence, similar to those taking place in war zones (HRW 2015). Papua New Guinea is one of the few countries in the world where the life expectancy at birth for women is lower than for men (54.1 versus 63.7 years, respectively) (Manjoo 2013: 4); the difference between years of schooling between sexes is huge (3.8 years of schooling for females versus 8.2 years for males) (UNDP 2015b); the rate of maternal

⁶ Human Development Reports from UNDP, UN Annual Progress Report, Progress of the World's Women 2011-2012, Concluding Observations of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women: Papua New Guinea.

mortality is 930 per 100,000 births (UNDP 2015b); and the political representation of women in Parliament is around 1% (UN Women 2011). While the government ratified the UN Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) in 1995 and there have been several attempts to enact new legislation in this regard. However, the actual materialisation of measures taken by the State with the objective to promote women's Human Rights and to protect them from abuses is very precarious (Amnesty International 2006; CEDAW 2010).

Women experience an unequal status in areas, such as access to justice, education, employment, health, political and public life, or family relations. According to the *Concluding Observations of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women* (2010), 'there are some customary practices and stereotypes present in the Papua New Guinean culture regarding 'roles, responsibilities and identities of women and men in all spheres of life' (2010: 5), and it is expected from the community that they will fulfil these gender expectations.

For example, accessing justice is very difficult for most women because of lack of information and resources: they do not know enough about their rights; do not have legal assistance; and can barely afford for transportation and court fees. In addition, the customary law applied at the village courts is still discriminating against women (CEDAW 2010). On the field of education, women's literacy rates are lower than those of men (53.4% versus 62.1%) (Manjoo 2013), and that is because there are many obstacles that prevent women from pursuing education, such as sexual harassment and abuse at schools by male classmates and teachers, drop-outs because of early marriage or expulsion due to pregnancy (CEDAW 2010). The university enrolment rates in the country show a huge disparity with 35% of women versus 65% of men (Manjoo 2013). In regard to health care, many women experience difficulties on accessing appropriate and affordable facilities and it is demonstrated that they are disproportionately affected by the AIDS/HIV epidemic in Papua New Guinea (60% of people living with HIV are women) (CEDAW 2010). It is believed that they are more exposed because of unequal power relations that might affect their ability to negotiate safe sexual practices.

On another front, most of the women in Papua New Guinea survive in subsistence livelihoods (CEDAW 2010). In these cases, the division of labour is strongly based on gender, resulting in women being responsible for food production, raising livestock and fishing, added to the tasks of housekeeping and rearing children. In addition, women are the ones who go to the market to sell any surplus of their production in exchange for money, so that the family can afford some goods in the cash economy. Consequently, women's workload is enormous, despite the fact that only 5% of women engage in formal employment (Manjoo 2013).

One of the main problems that women in Papua New Guinea face and that also hinders development, is the huge level of Gender-Based Violence, which has been normalised by most of the population and seems inevitable to many (AI 2006). According to a questionnaire survey undertaken by the Law reform Commission between 1982 and 1986, almost 100% of women in the Highlands have been victims of domestic violence (AI 2006), and more than half of the women interviewed by the Papua New Guinea Medical Research Institute in 1995 had been forced to have sex against their will. Papua New Guinean women are subjected to multiple ways of violence:

intimate partner violence, sexual violence in intimate relationships, rape and gang rape, sexual violence in the family, transactional sex, sorcery and witchcraft-related violence, police rape and sexual abuse, violence in the community, or as victims of tribal fighting. Amnesty International makes an account of few of the cases they came across when undertaking research:

A woman who had been burnt with a hot iron by her neighbours on suspicion of practicing witchcraft; a woman who had been placed alive in a grave and covered in grass because she was HIV-positive; a woman who had been raped by a group of men while walking alone in an area where tribal fighting was underway and then lately severely beaten by her husband for the shame she had caused him; an eight year old school girl who had been raped by her teacher; and numerous women who had lacerations, scars, missing teeth, bruises and broken bones inflicted upon them by angry or drunken partners, often using bush knives or other conveniently located implements. (Amnesty International 2006: 11)

In many cases, men use violence to reassert their power or to teach a lesson to their girlfriends or wives. As in traditional marriages, men pay “bride-price”, there is the extended belief that husbands own their wives, so men consider themselves with the right to do with their wives whatever they feel like, including deciding for them, hitting them and abusing them. Married women often suffer from polygamy or desertion, struggling to provide for themselves and their children (AI 2006). Another huge problem of gender-based violence in Papua New Guinea is rape and gang rape. It is so prevalent that it is considered to have reached epidemic levels and deeply hamper girls and women’s ability to fully participate in public life, directly affecting their freedom of movement. The Government expresses in a State Report:

Young women all over the country are at high risk of rape, gang rape and other forms of violent sexual assault, and the attendant fear accompanies them in many aspects of their daily life in urban and rural settings. It severely limits their rights to freedom and to assembly and their right to participate equally alongside young men in all forms of social, political and economic life. (CRC 2003:45)

Rape is such a common practice that 60% of men admit to have participated in gang rape at least once, and young boys are encouraged by criminal gangs to practice it with the objective of affirming their masculinity and promoting male bonding (Manjoo 2013).

Sorcery and witchcraft-related violence is, then, one more form of violence experienced by women in Papua New Guinea. For many activists, it fits into the broader picture of gender-based violence. The incidence and specific characteristics of this violence, together with its gender implications, are explored in a further section of this chapter⁷, however, it can be already said that the unequal power relations and the difficult socio-economic circumstances experienced by women, situate

⁷ See section 4 ‘Previous Research into Witchcraft and Sorcery and their Related Violence in Papua New Guinea’.

them in a much more vulnerable position to become targets. The extreme level of violence generates poverty, causes suffering for families and communities and makes girls and women live in constant fear. All the factors outlined above: low level of education, precarious living conditions, high levels of gender-based violence, widespread poverty, exclusion from the decision-making process or inability to access loans and credit services, contribute to keep women in a disadvantaged position that perpetuates discrimination and inequality, and consequently, impedes women's and the country's development.

Traditional Gender Construction in Papua New Guinea

To present the gender construction in PNG, I will use two main ethnographies, the study of Gilbert Herdt about the Sambia (1987) and the ethnography of Anna Meigs (1983) centered on the Hua, to provide some insights about the matter. These ethnographies are not the most recent and not the best known. However, I selected these two sources within many because of their relevance and similarities, and because the two of them are carried out with tribes in the Highlands of Papua New Guinea. However, I have to advance that I do not believe these conclusions are completely unquestionable or, even less, that they can be generalized for the whole country, as PNG has over 800 tribes that live very isolated in many cases and do not share the same practices and organizational structures. Having said so, I will summarise few of the specific characteristics of the gender systems that these anthropologists studied and documented. I do not interpret these explanations as if they reveal the absolute truth, but rather as useful approximations that are worthy to be considered and can bring some light to understand current cultural practices and meanings.

Sexual / Gender segregation

One of the main features that seems to be common in the gender patterns that these two studies share is the gender segregation present in most aspects of life. According to Herdt (1987), the Sambia, for example, understand man and woman as beings completely opposite to each other, with different biological essences. This polarization between the genders will be the base for the socialization of the new generations. It is important to highlight that the transition from being a boy to becoming a man requires the elimination of all the female substances that the boy has been accumulating throughout the long-term contact with his mother. That is why, after the initiation, the boy will be completely separated from his mother in order to be able to grow up healthy and strong. It could be said that the conformation of their masculinity is built over the denial and elimination of any feminine influence. This segregation has been often interpreted as sexual antagonism (Meigs 1983; Herdt 1987).

Meigs says that the male/female antagonism can be related to the endemic warfare of the country, so consequently, men control women as a symbol of controlling the enemy. In addition, the custom of intertribal marriage together with the patrilocal⁸ habits of most tribes can strongly contribute to

⁸ Refers to a pattern of marriage in which the bride will leave her community of origin to settle in the husband's home or community.

the consideration of women as not reliable outsiders. After marriage, women will be strangers in the new community and their loyalty will always be questioned, especially in times of tribal warfare, when the husband might doubt what side his wife favors.

This gender segregation directly affects the distribution of tasks generating a sexual division of labor: 'All economic activities are strictly regulated on cultural-based gender principles governing the division of labor' (Herdt 1987: 18). Cultural rules assign the roles of warrior and hunter to men and the role of mother, food production and harvesting to women (Herdt 1987; Meigs 1983).

Female pollution

According to Herdt (1987) and Meigs (1983), the antagonism between men and women seems to happen from the first initiation rites until death. Men deny political voice or rights of land to women and consider themselves superior, powerful and pure, while women are seen as inferior, malevolent, weak and polluted. Men will keep a cautious distance, making sure they protect their masculinity keeping themselves away from the contaminating women. Men believe that blood, the main bodily essence of women is extremely polluting and it can cause permanent damages to their masculinity. For this reason, social interactions between the sexes are highly restricted. For example, in many cases, husband and wife sleep separate and the new initiates that are still single live in the men's house, protected from any feminine pollution. However, in recent years, with Western influence, these patterns have been changing and it is less common to find these customary structures (Herdt 1987; Meigs 1983).

Traditionally, it was thought that women were especially dangerous during their menstrual cycle, when they had to get retired to the menstrual hut specifically designed for this purpose and they were instructed to walk through special paths in the hamlet, away from the main masculine areas of the village. Women were thought to contaminate children by talking or being in direct contact with them. The level of danger that a woman was considered to constitute differs throughout the different periods of her life: if she is still a little girl, if she is menstruating, if she is just married, after the first child, after every newborn baby, after 15 years married or after menopause. The most dangerous moments are during menstruation, after giving birth or after sexual intercourse (Meigs 1983). This traditional conception has been diluted throughout the years, but the general belief and attitudes are still persisting in many communities.

It is also interesting to see how the stereotyped narrow gender categories that I discussed above are challenged when they are applied to other cultural settings. The tribe of the Hua, for example, has different categories to classify gender that are not based on genitalia. These alternative categories are determined by 'the amount of pollution' contained in a person. This means that people would be classified according to the amount of "dirty" substances that they have in their body (Meigs 1983: 65). For the Hua, the *kakora* are the pure people, the ones with less amount of polluted substances and it includes preadolescents, adolescent and mature males, and postmenopausal women with three children. In opposition, there is the category of *figapa* that refers to the polluted people and include reproductive women, old men, children and menopausal women with less than 3 children (Meigs 1983).

Behind all these discourse about female pollution and inferiority, some anthropologists have devised male feelings of sexual inferiority, due to the feminine reproductive capacity (Meigs 1983). Anna Meigs strongly defends the thesis that men are afraid of the power of women and she claims that males consider them superior. According to the author, this is mainly proven in two facts: first the “myth of the flutes”, which portrays a remote moment in history where women had the control of the magic flutes that allowed them to rule the tribe. Eventually, men stole the flutes and since then they are the ones on power, making sure that women will never get the flutes back. On a second place, in some cases, men imitate menstruation, when they make their penis bleed in order to purify their bodies and maintain their masculinity strong. They can also affirm that they can get pregnant and carry a baby that will never be born (Meigs 1983).

These are the main features of the gender system in some locations of PNG that were found and interpreted by Western anthropologists. The interpretations, as said above, are mainly helpful for us to understand and organize Papua New Guinean society and make sense of what we observe in a way that relates, by similarity or by difference, to our own cultural structures.

The Concept of “The Other” connected to Women

The relation between “the self” and “the other” is a topic that has interested Western philosophers and thinkers for centuries. In this research it becomes relevant as Papua New Guinean women might appear as “the Other” at two different levels: “other” to the men in Papua New Guinea, and “other” to me, the researcher, a Western woman with very differentiated culture and circumstances. That is why I considered important to reflect on some appropriate literature that addresses the topic.

How the self relates to the other and vice versa is an area that has been largely developed, but only thanks to the contribution of Simone de Beauvoir, French existentialist philosopher and feminist, and her influential book *The Second Sex*, in which the notion of women as the permanent and subjugated other in the Western thought was made explicit and questioned. I do believe it is important to revise the implications that this idea of women as “the other” historically has had and try to see if this conception can relate to some extent to the situation of the high levels of violence against women accused of sorcery and witchcraft in PNG. For this reason, I will briefly present few insights of some of the most known Western philosophers with the support of the arguments of Genevieve Lloyd in her book *Man of Reason*, as she exposes how “reason” has traditionally been considered male, and its characteristics have always been connected to maleness. This historical conception of men as the owners of reasons consequently has ‘important implications for our contemporary understanding of gender difference’ (1986: xix).

The dichotomies Nature/Culture, Passive/Active, Reproduction/Production have been respectively assigned to female and male. The great thinker Plato said that the souls of women ‘originate from the fallen souls of men who were lacking on Reason’ (1986: 5). Later on, during the fourth and fifth centuries, the earlier Christian philosopher Augustine, promising a bit more optimism, claimed that the spirit of the mind has no sex, positively considering women capable of reason. However, the trick was yet to come, as he also thought that women are less appropriate to exercise intellectual

activities due to their body difference from men (1986: 31). To finalize with the list of examples, Hegel connected femininity with an immature stage that does not allow for the advancement of Reason (1986: 73). As it is observable from all these examples, along history, women have been clearly differentiated from men and repeatedly excluded from intellectual activities and, consequently, public life. With Sartre, a new and strong concept will be introduced. He will defend that there is no self, as the self is actually a construction made by the other: the own existence of a person depends on how she or he is recognized by the other: 'as I appear to the other, so I am' (Sartre in Lloyd 1986: 95). This new idea gives to the self an infinite number of possibilities of existence and identity.

Sartre's idea has been crucial for the field of gender studies, as Simone de Beauvoir took this concept from Sartre and articulated the idea of woman as other. Borrowing from him the idea that the self and the other have a power struggle for domination between the positions of the 'looker' and the 'looked-at', she affirms that 'with respect to relations between the sexes, one sex is, as it were, permanently in the privileged role of looker; the other is always the looked-at' (de Beauvoir in Lloyd 1986: 96). Who is looking at whom? Obviously, men are looking at women. Could we also say that the First World is looking at the Third World? This distinction between the "self" and "the other" is also directly connected to the knowledge production discourse. Who is the one producing knowledge about others? According to Beauvoir, women are submitted to be the constant other and it is their female biology, or more correctly, what men have made of female biology, that prevents them from attaining transcendence (1949).

This distinction of "the other" is not a mere division; it comes also with hierarchical connotations. The other is considered primitive, unknown, exoticized and given a lower status of immaturity (Rajan and Park 2000; Young 2012). From the view of Postcolonial Theory, Young provides us with a meaningful reminder about "the other" and our relationship with him or her:

Tolerance requires that there be no 'other', that others should not be othered. We could say that there can be others, but there should be no othering of 'the other'... Othering is what the postcolonial should be trying to deconstruct. (Young 2012: 36-37).

Unfortunately, "othering" constantly happens in anthropological research of "native" societies and multitude of development projects, generating partial knowledge and promoting unequal power relations. The contributions of these authors from their feminist and postcolonial perspective encourages me, as a researcher, to make a special effort to avoid as much as possible "othering" those who contribute on this investigation and to pay special attention to the dynamics of power present during our interactions.

Trinh T. Minh-ha has a lot to say when it comes to talking about the Third World woman and her objectification as other. She criticizes the stream of thought that searches for a permanent and pure essence of women with a fragile identity. Trinh claims that when trying to find the female identity, it is unavoidable to fall in a trap, as there are infinite forms of identity. Consequently, when searching for the essence, we are limiting the possibilities by imprisoning women who have

to respond to specific common expectations and cannot define themselves without referring to the male model (Trinh 1989): 'The search and the claim for an essential female/ethnic identity-difference today can never be anything more than a move within the male-is-norm-divide and conquer-trap' (Trinh 1989: 101). Then, if my question is "how is the native woman?" or, in this specific case, "how are Papua New Guinean women?" can I actually answer? When, just above, I made an account of the situation of women and the gender construction in Papua New Guinea, am I not looking for an essence that eliminates richness and suppresses the multiple differences between these women's identities? Are we not (myself and all those authors and readers of the several books, reports and articles that talk about Papua New Guinean women) looking for an answer that allows us to categorize reality and help us feel more relaxed and confident about our abilities to understand the World? Probably yes. But as Trinh says, categories always leak and women's identities are multiple. Women can never be correctly defined (1989). De Beauvoir says 'Truth, Beauty, and Poetry – she is all: once more under the form of the other. All except herself' (in Trinh 1989: 97), alluding to the social pressure set on women to respond to a specific gender model.

I would like to finish this section of *Woman as Other* with a very meaningful quotation of Julia Kristeva: 'In woman, I see something that cannot be represented, something that is not said, something above and beyond nomenclatures and ideologies' (Kristeva in Trinh 1989: 102). In this sense, I take her words as an encouragement to believe that it is possible, although not easy, to escape from this monolithic conception that alienates women.

Regarding the anthropological research carried out in Melanesia and PNG. The first anthropologists studying the area such as Malinowski, Margaret Mead or Godelier, within others, produced very different ethnographies to the ones which have been produced recently. These first studies did not question what was meant by "male" or "female" and interpreted what they saw under a very simplistic model of 'sexual antagonism' based on the observation of a strong segregation of male and female in many areas of life (Lutkehaus and Roscoe 1995: 6). However, many important details were not considered and the complexity of women's roles in Melanesian societies was ignored because they interpreted (correctly or not) that reproductive and care activities were less important than the productive ones, an idea that might not match the local understanding. New works focus a bit more on trying to explore the gender relations based on sexual complementarity rather than opposition. A couple of important questions for this research remain, though; are women in PNG considered as, not only others, but dangerous others? Does this fact have anything to do with the current practices of sorcery and witchcraft accusations-related violence? These issues are explored in more depth in section four of this chapter, when trying to provide arguments to the engendered nature of sorcery and witchcraft accusations⁹.

⁹ For more details see section 4 of this chapter '**Previous Research into Witchcraft and Sorcery and their Related Violence in Papua New Guinea**'.

1.3. POLITICS OF LOCATION AND KNOWLEDGE CONSTRUCTION

As a researcher with a background of Media and Communication, International Development and Gender Studies, but, especially knowing almost nothing about anthropology and fieldwork, there are several initial questions that easily pop up in my mind. How can I conduct a research in a way that addresses the real needs and concerns of the agents involved? Am I able to carry out an investigation that is really meaningful for the inhabitants of Papua New Guinea? Am I able to relate to these people? Am I capable of understanding them? Are my objectives with this investigation the same than theirs? How can I escape a centered Western knowledge production?

One of my main initial concerns was how to conduct this research in a way that prioritizes, respects and addresses the culture, worries and needs of the people involved. There has been, and still is, so much debate regarding matters such as feminist research, objectivity, accurate representation of “The Other” (especially in cross-cultural work), the relation between the researcher-researched, the feasibility of achieving a satisfactory outcome for both parties, and many other related topics.

Aiming to Objectivity

As a researcher, and person that advocates for true and interest-free information, I want my research to be as objective as possible, out of any bias that can question its validity. But, is objectivity possible? Authors such as Haraway, Harding, Kim, Wekker or Portelli claim it is not.

What is it understood by objectivity? The Oxford English Dictionary (2007) defines objectivity as the quality ‘(of a person or their judgment) not influenced by personal feelings or opinions in considering and representing facts’. According to this definition, the key to objectivity for a researcher is to completely free herself from any feelings and opinions that she might have generated through her life. However, this is not possible, as our vision comes inevitably influenced by our experiences and circumstances, ‘knowledge is situational and perspectival’ (Heckman 1997: 342). As Haraway clearly explains, absolute boundless vision does not exist (1988), and it is impossible to see everything from all the possible perspectives.

Can I escape from the fact that I am agnostic when facing the omnipresent belief in magic and sorcery in Papua New Guinea? Can I really understand and experience the same devotion and fear in front of these practices if I do not believe magic exists? How can I really comprehend what it is to be accused of being a sorcerer if for me witches have not ever crossed the boundaries of fairy-tales?

The researcher tries her best to engage with the context, avoid stereotypes, listen to what is important for her and why, but she will never be able to eschew who she is and her position. In this case, then, the best thing I can do is acknowledge these constraints and accept that the knowledge I produce will always be partial, subjective, creative and contradictory. As a result of this, Haraway clearly advocates for a science that is limited, openly located, multiple and tries to run away from power relations (1988). As she claims, the best way to get closer to objectivity is to specify where we are coming from, so this will expose our visual limitations and warn the reader of our likely bias.

If we, as feminists, are intending to give a more loyal and comprehensive explanation of the world, it is necessary to capture the variety of existing positions and expose their strengths and limitations.

How to Represent More Accurately

If full objectivity is not possible (Haraway 1988) and the 'dream of attaining absolute truth' is just a fantasy (Wekker 2006: 6), the only honest path left is for the researcher to aim for the most accurate representation possible within her or his own limitations. In the words of Harding (1997: 383), and Haraway (1988: 579) our efforts have to be directed to present 'less false stories' and provide 'better accounts of the world'. To approach this part of my theoretical framework, I will use three key theories that have been crucial for the development of feminism for the last 30 years. I will briefly explain the concepts of Situated Knowledges (Haraway), Feminist Standpoint Theory (Heckman, Harding, Hill Collins), and Politics of Location (Rich, Kim), connecting their principles to the way I want to approach my research.

Haraway's idea of situated knowledge basically addresses two points; on a first place, it seeks to reflect on how knowledge is constructed and reveal how this construction is deeply affected by the dominant power-relations, at the same time this produced knowledge itself contributes to shape these power structures and maintain the *status-quo*. On a second place, it suggests the researcher to examine her/his relationship with the "object" of the research affirming that her or his position (understand here: age, gender, nationality, self-identity, cultural background, ethical and political views, etc.) clearly influences the scope, process and interpretation of the investigation, making impossible the achievement of objective results. In this sense, if we conceive full objectivity as impossible, and I do, the only reliable option is to slip away from the false promise of a universal unique possible true vision, and clearly locate and specify the point of view of the author and the object of the research (Haraway 1988). According to Haraway, 'only partial perspective promises objective vision' (1988: 583). Her proposal of situated knowledges locates the place and ways how this knowledge is constructed, which definitely provides the reader with the necessary tools to approach a text understanding where it comes from and, consequently, the bias that can have. Situated knowledges are partial and multiple perspectives, located in particular and specific points of view. Haraway's theory advocates against totalization and against the distorted single vision of the master at the service of the power. She wants a partial, locatable, critical knowledge based on webs of connections, solidarity and shared conversations. Knowledge must be hostile to "easy relativisms and holisms" that entail the transformative power of constructing worlds with less domination structures (Haraway 1988: 585).

Haraway also claims that the fact/act of 'being' is contingent and problematic. There is no a monolithic identity for each one of us. Instead our self is split into heterogeneous and, often, contradictory multiplicities (1988). I define myself as a woman, Spanish, Catalan, Western, white, with tertiary education, student, middle-class, politically compromised with specific principles, etc. All these micro identities are the little pieces that constitute me as the person I am. Sometimes they complement each other; sometimes they can be in contradiction. Connected to this idea, Adrienne Rich, a very influential American writer and feminist, talks about 'Politics of Location', by

emphasizing the need to specify where we come from to be able to speak with authority (1984: 369-370). It is crucial to identify our location and to talk from experience; not only for what refers to gender, but also for all the other categories we can insert ourselves in, because all of them determine our personality, perception and perspective. If we understand this central point made by Rich, we quickly perceive the error involved in generalizations (1984: 371).

Knowledge is located and, consequently, embodied. There is no one single category such as 'all women', presented as a 'faceless, race less and classless' (Rich 1984: 374). And the same consideration needs to be taken into account when classifying people in general categories. The question here is who do we mean by "we" or "they"? Who are the Papua New Guinean women affected by sorcery and witchcraft accusations related violence? Can all of them be grouped and classified under a single voice? I do not pretend to deny here the power and practical value of the group. The group or the standpoint, as I will expose just right below, represents shared angles of vision that predispose to a comparable interpretation at the same time that expresses similar impediments (even if those are experienced differently by each individual) (Hill Collins 1997). However, Rich correctly warns us that when the discourse is general and abstract, it erases the background and the historical and contextual specificity and it only reflects the knowledge understood from the perspective of the powerful. To solve this, we need to advocate and carry out a feminist research that promotes an active change by locating the knowledge and allowing more women to speak (Rich 1984).

Hyun Sook Kim, professor of sociology who has explored the topic of Transnational Feminism, smartly connects Politics of Location with Standpoint Theory when she claims that 'interpretations and applications of concepts need to be situated in specific historical and cultural contexts. In other words, all knowledge production is context and time bound' (2007: 112). Standpoint is defined by Patricia Hill Collins, also American professor of sociology, as 'historically shared, group-based experiences' (1997: 375). Basically, the Standpoint Theory understands that the circumstances of life are not the same for everybody. The structures of power pose limitations or grant privileges to different groups, which allow them to see from different perspectives. Reality does not look the same to everyone. If we analyze the situation of a male politician of the national government in Papua New Guinea and that of an old Engan¹⁰ widow who lives in an isolated tribal village lost in the mountains, it is almost certain that their perception of the sorcery-related violence will be very distinct. Their power position is diametrically opposed. The sorcery-related violence affects them in a completely different manner, and their abilities to react in front of it are contrary. Consequently, they generate a very different perception of the same reality. In this sense, all perspectives of the existent multiple standpoints are partial and limited by the specific time, place and experience. This idea deeply connects with what was said above in relation to situated knowledges and Politics of Location.

However, there is a very controversial point brought by Standpoint Theory: whose vision is more loyal to reality? Whose vision is more objective? Many authors will claim that the vision of the "subjugated", the oppressed, is the most reliable one because it shows how social relations really

¹⁰ From Enga province

work and because far away from the power, reality exposes many factors that cannot be seen under privileged eyes. As Mohanty affirms, 'privilege nurtures blindness' (2003: 510). In this sense, these authors advocate for a bottom-up approach. The standpoint of the marginalized groups, in front of those of the dominant groups, constitutes an advantaged point of view (Harding 1993) because the power structures are made visible and the perception of reality is very much based on particular, concrete and material experiences that reflect the struggle. The following quotation of Sandra Harding is very clarifying in regards to the limitations of some social positions:

One's social situation enables and sets limits on what one can know; some social situations – critically unexamined ones- are more limiting than others in this respect, and what makes these situations more limiting is their inability to generate the most critical questions about received belief (1993: 54-55).

The Feminist Standpoint Theory was initially based on the questionable assumption that women's vantage point of view, as oppressed category, 'reveals the truth of social reality' (Hekman 1997: 349). With the further development of this theory, 30 years after Nancy Harstock defined the Feminist Standpoint in this way, much work has been done in this field and the initial claim of women as the voice of the real truth has been deconstructed. We still need to remember, that all production of knowledge is unavoidably biased, because it is socially situated. There is no single point of view able to observe everything from a true perspective. We can defend that the subjugated's point of view is another discourse, one that captures a more complex representation of the real world, but not the reflection of the true reality (Hekman 1997). As researchers, then, I want to look for that position that questions the dominant power structures and can offer a more comprehensive and challenging view of the world, and, in my specific case, this is mainly the vision of the local activists and small civil rights organisations in Papua New Guinea that are taking a stand to mitigate and overcome sorcery accusation-related violence.

The conclusion is then that Feminist Standpoint theory provides political and analytical tools by generating a space for resistance and criticism. Standpoint Theory questions essentialist long-term unquestioned claims, overcomes the concept of the oppressed as victims with no agency, goes beyond the use of one single voice that explains all situations and deconstructs hegemonic concepts (Kim 2007). All these are necessary if we are aiming for a better representation.

After understanding the epistemological and methodological considerations provided by the idea of Situated Knowledges (Haraway 1988), Politics of Location (Kim 2007; Rich 1987) and the Feminist Standpoint Theory (Hekman 1997; Harding 1993, 1997; Hill Collins 1997), I can go back now to the title of this section and try to answer the question on How can I represent in the most accurate way the women of Papua New Guinea who are directly or potentially affected by sorcery-related violent practices. I would say that, in my specific case, achieving accurate representation of these women passes through locating myself, creating relationships that allow quality understanding, listening

and adapting myself to the women's needs and concerns, and situating the knowledge that I collect and produce. I discuss this aspect more in-depth when elaborating on my methodology¹¹.

1.4. PREVIOUS RESEARCH INTO WITCHCRAFT AND SORCERY AND THEIR RELATED VIOLENCE IN PAPUA NEW GUINEA

In order to frame the theoretical framework for this research, it has been key to understand the beliefs and practices related to sorcery and witchcraft in Papua New Guinea. Throughout many years already there has been extensive research contemplating the existence of sorcery and witchcraft practices in Papua New Guinea and their specific characteristics¹². Sorcery and witchcraft practices constitute for most people in PNG a whole belief system. These traditional thoughts are deeply rooted, and, learnt and transmitted from childhood throughout generations, they are very present in people's daily life (Zocca 2009). From a Western point of view, it might be shocking to think that people in the 21st century still believe in supernatural powers and actions to explain misfortune, illness or death. However, as Peter Geschiere affirms in his book *The Modernity of Witchcraft*, modernity does not have to mean the end of sorcery beliefs; 'on the contrary, rumors and practices related to the occult forces abound the more modern sectors of society' (Geschiere 1997: 3). The author says that these recreations of the magical beliefs try to give meaning to political and economic changes. The anthropologists Stewart and Strathern explain how situations of conflict, uneven development or historical transformation, can change traditional belief patterns that try to adapt to the new realities.

In this regard, it is not a matter of education, as this kind of beliefs are assimilated by all the different layers of society, from the illiterate people up to the population with tertiary education (Geschiere 1997; Zocca 2009; Gibbs and Wailoni 2009). It also might seem contradictory to find such an elevated rate of people who believe in sorcery in a country that declares to be widely Christian (97%). Some anthropologists put special emphasis on the influence that the introduced Christian ideas have had over the population, providing new tools to respond to people's fears (Stewart and Strathern 2004). As Philip Gibbs affirms, most people combine traditional indigenous beliefs with adopted Christian values (2009), which they apply and use in different circumstances.

In this section, I will clarify the terminology used to refer to the different sorcery and witchcraft beliefs and practices; I will summarise which ones are their specificities and how these beliefs might develop into violence; I will also bring up some considerations about the possible gendered nature of this phenomenon; and, to finalise, I will have a look at how the colonial and postcolonial influences might have had an impact on the development of these practices.

¹¹ For more information about the specific approach taken, see Chapter 2 section '**Location**'.

¹² Some of the main authors are Bronislaw Malinowski (1926), Michele Stephen (1987), Mary Patterson (1974), Lyle Steadman (1978), Paula Brown (1977), Mary MacDonald (1982), Marie Reay (1976, 1987), Inge Riebe (1987), Eytan Bercovitch (1989), Ennio Mantovani (1998) and Jenny Hughes (1985)

TERMINOLOGY: Definitions and Concepts

There is quite a big number of literature addressing the topic of sorcery and witchcraft and their related violence in Papua New Guinea. Approaching the books, articles and reports written in English, the terms that are used to describe this kind of practices are multiple and not well defined. When they refer to the use of supernatural powers employed by people in order to harm or obtain benefits from others, mainly adopt the words “sorcery” and “witchcraft” with a lack of precise meaning in such a way that makes them very often interchangeable. New acronyms have been created in order to refer to the violence resulted of these practices: SRV (Sorcery-related Violence) or SRK (Sorcery-related Killing), putting together under the same category very different situations that respond to varying motivating factors. As Richard Eves has pointed out (2013), one of the first stages to take if anybody is to analyze which ones are the causing aspects of this kind of violence, would be to understand exactly what these practices are and what meanings they have for Papua New Guineans. In this sense, precisely defining the different terms according to the local perspective is a must. In this section, I will present some of the concepts used by the people of PNG with their equivalent word in *Tok Pisin*¹³, and try to provide a clarifying definition and an insight of the differences that exist between them. However, I need to clarify that this is still a blurry area, because due to the large variety of cultural groups with different languages the terms used are multiple (witchcraft, magic, enchantment, *puripuri*, *mura dikana*, *vada*, *mea*, *sanguma*, *kumo*, *malira*, etc.). In the following lines, I will clarify in more depth some of them.

Magic

‘Magic is the use of hidden forces to make things happen that do not ordinarily happen in nature’. (Schwarz 2011: 5).

The magical power constitutes those supernatural abilities present in some people, spirits, plants, animals, stones and other objects. Magic comprises basically a group of techniques whose control allows a person to influence the outcome of specific situations. Depending on what is the objective of these magical practices, they will be classified into “white magic” (aimed at doing good things, like healing, protecting or providing abundance) or “black magic” (causing misfortune, sickness or death). Some of these techniques that are used by sorcerers and witches are ‘mixing potions, creating lucky charms, casting spells, saying magic words, communicating with the dead, fortune-telling, making things appear or disappear, and being able to change from human into non-human form and back again’ (Schwarz 2011: 5).

Sorcery

Sorcery ‘is a set of practices that can be learnt and it is something a person sets out to do’ (Eves 2013: 2). It is the ‘ritual employment of harmful substances and objects for malevolent purposes’ (Glick 1973: 182), where the sorcerer has clear intentions of harming or killing someone (Zocca and Urame 2008).

¹³ *Tok Pisin* is an official language of Papua New Guinea and the most widely spoken. Referred to also as ‘Pidgin’, it is a creole language that originally appeared for trade purposes.

The difference between sorcery and witchcraft is probably one of the most difficult ones we face when we try to define all these concepts surrounding the magical practices. Several anthropologists and researchers have worked out these concepts before. Philip Gibbs, for example, supporting his arguments on Evans-Pritchard and Glick also highlights the difference between sorcery and witchcraft distinguishing between external and internal factors: as the sorcerer is the person who having control of specific magical techniques can influence in positive or negative ways the outcome of events, a witch possesses inherited powers that are part of his/her own person (Gibbs 2012).

In *Tok Pisin*, the word to refer to sorcery practices is usually *posin*. Sorcerers, who are normally males (Trompf in Gibbs 2012), can use their techniques for good or for bad. They often offer their services and make a living out of it by protecting people from dangerous spirits or from their enemies; supporting warriors during tribal fights and assisting them to defeat their opponents; bringing people success in life and love; finding the responsible person of a death or a negative event in the community; healing; fighting or neutralising the evil sorcery that can be inflicted against someone; etc. (Schwarz 2011). But it is believed that, as they can provide all these helpful services, some sorcerers will be willing to sell their knowledge with the objective to cause harm to others. In this sense, natural disasters, sickness, infertility or death can be caused by corrupt or malevolent sorcerers. Here, we can observe the distinction between 'innocent sorcery' (protective and curative) and 'evil sorcery' (harmful) (Zocca 2009: 68; Eves 2013: 1; Sorcery Act 1971).

Sorcerers claim that their knowledge about magical techniques and their ability to control the powers of nature and the ancestral spirits are the key to their success. They are required to undergo an intense and long training and, in order to achieve the desired effects, the rituals need to be performed correctly. In Papua New Guinea, only few selected men will be trained to become sorcerers. They will be never allowed to reveal their secrets under any circumstances, and if they do, that can bring them to death under the hands of the spirits or of the other sorcerers. It is believed that sorcerers are crucial to maintain the security of the community, which makes them needed and feared at the same time. As they are responsible for protecting people when they are vulnerable and for assisting the village during tribal fighting and rough times, their reputation and influence are tremendous (Schwarz 2011; Bartle 2005; Zocca 2009).

Witchcraft – Sanguma – Kumo

In opposition to sorcery, witchcraft 'does not comprise a set of practices that can be learnt. Rather, it is believed to be a form of possession by the witch "substance" or creature which resides in the body (abdomen, chest, scrotum, vagina, womb, head, armpit, etc.) and takes control of the possessed person' (Eves 2013: 2).

Depending on the area of PNG that we focus on, we will be able to find different words for witchcraft with slight different meanings. With the objective of not making things too complicated, I will say that in general, the *Tok Pisin* word *sanguma* is the one used to mean "witchcraft" in PNG. However, in the provinces of Simbu and the Highlands, the word most commonly employed for witchcraft is *kumo* (Zocca 2009; Gibbs 2012). According to Gibbs, *kumo* will be the name given to an

evil power that taking the form of a little creature such as a bat, snake or frog has the power to harm and kill people. This little creature lives inside the body of the “*kumo* person” and takes control over her/his will and actions. It is believed that the *kumo*-creature gains power at night, abandoning the body and walking around in search of human waste to eat while the *kumo*-person is asleep (2012). It is said that *kumo*-creatures will be running around cemeteries in search of human flesh. That is the reason why groups of armed men patrol cemeteries at night with the intention of killing the creatures that are the cause of such misfortunes. According to their beliefs, if a *kumo*-creature is killed when it is outside the *kumo*-person, the *kumo*-person will die while sleeping (Gibbs 2013).

However, these explanations are not as clear as they are posed here. There is a lot of confusion around the different terms and the uses given to them. Disputes, for example, about if it is the *kumo*-creature or the *kumo*-person who causes the harm; or if the evil spirit materializes as an animal, as a person or does not materialize at all, are very common. The explanations greatly vary depending on who is interviewed and if the interview is carried out in English or *Tok Pisin* (Zocca 2009). In summary, the explanations are vague and many times contradictory, but even if the *kumo*-person is usually considered as “possessed” and acting out of his/her will, the community greatly fears them and if they are found guilty, they will be cruelly punished for their alleged witchcraft actions. Nick Schwarz, Australian researcher at the Melanesian Institute, outlines here the main characteristics and activities of witches:

Witches are said to be unsociable, unfriendly, bad-tempered, uncharitable, and prone to unusual or suspicious behavior, especially at night. They are said to eat human wastes, and to rob graves to satisfy their hunger for human flesh. In many parts of Simbu, witches (*sanguma* people or *kumo* people) are said to possess evil spirits that take the form of animals or birds, especially ones that are active at night like bats, owls, fireflies and rats (as well as cats, snakes and dogs). Strange lights moving about at night are also believed to be a sign of spirits. *Sanguma* spirits are said to leave their hosts’ bodies at night and roam around while their hosts are asleep, and to be capable of travelling long distances to find and attack their victims; they inject them with deadly poison, drain their blood, or destroy their vital organs. Some people believe that witches can harm or kill by the power of thought alone, or by staring at their victims with evil intent. Alternatively, they harm and kill by means of their *sanguma* spirit or helper spirits that take the form of pet animals. Unlike sorcerers, witches are believed to never use their powers to do good; they are committed only to doing evil. (Schwarz 2011: 10)

For clarity purposes, the terms that I will mainly use in this thesis will be sorcery and witchcraft when recalling written information that employs these words. I will eventually use *sanguma* when referring to the perceptions and testimonies of the local population that I myself captured during the interviews, as it was this way how they expressed themselves. I am aware that this decision

might overlook many subtle differences as the testimonies belong to different cultures, speak diverse languages and their understanding of what *sanguma* is or which ones are the specific practices diverges in some aspects.

Victim

The concept of “victim” might seem very clear on a first look, but listening to the local people, it is very easy to observe the difficulties when using this word. For many, mostly people who believe in sorcery and witchcraft, the victims are those who have been affected by the evil acts performed by the witches. On the other side, for those who believe that sorcery and witchcraft are not real, the victims are the people who are accused of being witches and suffer the consequences of these accusations: such as ostracism, torture, exile or death. In this regard, a careful attention is required when talking with locals, as they often employ the term “victim” with the former meaning. The exact same confusion appears when referring to “sorcery and witchcraft-related killings”. Who are those being killed? The people affected by the witchcraft practices or the alleged witches? (Gibbs 2012; Zocca 2009).

In this thesis, I will always use the word “victim” to refer to the people who have been accused, tortured or killed because of being considered witches or sorcerers, and the term “sorcery-related killings/violence” when making reference to the acts committed against these same people.

Specific Sorcery and Witchcraft Practices

The most relevant terms for this investigation have been already defined and I have set the meaning that they will be given throughout this research, even as mentioned before it is still a blurry area with a lot of contradictions and divergences depending on the geographical zone, the specific community, the language used or the individual person who refers to these phenomena. The following section intends to give a summarized account of which ones are the most common practices attributed to sorcery and witchcraft captured by several studies on the issue, focusing on witchcraft-sanguma-kumo more deeply, as these are mostly the ones that generate accusations developing into violence.

Sorcery

As it has been presented in the previous section, sorcerers use their knowledge of magical techniques in order to influence events and affect people’s lives. Papua New Guineans believe that for a person to perform *posin*, he or she will need something that belonged to the intended victim generally called “leavings” and that can be anything like ‘food scraps, pieces of clothing, hair, nail clippings, or body wastes such as feces, blood or semen’ (Schwarz 2011: 9). A secret ritual will be performed by the sorcerer with these leavings by using magical words and items, so most of the times the victim will not know that he or she has been targeted. The fact that any personal waste can be used to cause harm to a person, makes villages where the belief is strong remain very clean (Gibbs and Wailoni 2009).

Sorcerers are usually men, with high influence in the community as people fear them. They perform a great variety of rituals according to the intended outcome and they are paid for their services

(Gibbs and Wailoni 2009). Traditionally, sorcerers had a good reputation, when during warfare time they contributed to maintain the order by using their power against their tribal enemies. However, as warfare has decreased very much in recent years, sorcerers employ their magic with other purposes (Zocca and Urame 2008).

Witchcraft - Sanguma - Kumo

Researcher and missionary Neville Bartle, clearly shows the extent that the belief in witchcraft has for many people in Papua New Guinea, including Christian believers and religious staff: 'I have asked groups of pastors what is the biggest fear in the lives of people today. Again and again, they replied: *Sanguma*' (Bartle 2005: 220). I have chosen one of the many very descriptive testimonies given by Bartle as an example of the hundreds of stories that people have about sanguma:

At daybreak, my uncle went to check on the grave, and there in the bottom of the grave was a dog. He shot the dog, and shortly after from the other side of the river, came the sounds of wailing. A woman had suddenly dropped dead in her garden. The conclusion is that the dog was the woman's sanguma spirit and when the dog was killed, the owner of the spirit died at the same time. It was obvious to everyone that the sanguma was wanting to eat the body of my wife's uncle. (Bartle 2005: 213)

According to Gibbs and to his extensive fieldwork in the Highlands of Papua New Guinea, a person can become a *sanguma* in several different ways. The *sanguma* animal and its power are said to be inherited through family descent or throughout contact with the wife or husband. It is believed that *sanguma* or *kumo* is passed from generation to generation (Gibbs 2012), especially through the female line from mother to daughter (*Ericho 2014*)¹⁴. There are other ways a person can be infected by sanguma, for example when she or he goes to a sorcerer with the intention of developing specific magical powers, but the technique is not performed correctly (Hughes 1985).

Sanguma can be observed in an infinite number of ways. However, some accounts are more recurrent than others when asking testimonies. According to Bartle (2005: 227 - 235), some of the most common *sanguma* practices comprise:

- **Supernatural travel**

Sanguma people are very skillful in travelling from place to place using hidden powers to visit relatives, collect money, or look for dead bodies to eat.

- **Lights that travel on the sky**

It is believed that sanguma fly at night showing a very bright light moving on the sky.

- **The spirit travels while the body remains still**

The creatures can leave the body of the kumo-person at night, which will be cold and lifeless. The spirit will travel around performing bad acts and will return just before the morning.

¹⁴ As I explain in Chapter 2 'Methodology', the in-text references typed in Italics correspond to fieldwork interviews that I myself conducted.

- **Extreme appetite for meat**
It is said that sangumas are always looking for meat to eat, which can be from pigs or also from human organs. In this sense, people who are always hungry, seem greedy at public celebrations or do not share their food with others become suspicious of being sanguma.
- **Demonstration of their supernatural power**
Unnatural facts happen in the presence of the sanguma person, which makes them feared and respected in the community, but also target of accusations.
- **Removal of organs**
If the sanguma spirit demands some organs, the sanguma person, using her/his supernatural powers, can get people unconscious, remove their internal organs and magically close the wounds leaving no trace. Some stories report how, animals or people that were not showing any external scars, were discovered having internal organs missing once they were butchered.
- **Stone-men**
It is said that there are little stone figures that are found in the bush and that have supernatural powers. People buy them and use them to kill enemies. The figures need to be activated by a knowledgeable sorcerer who performs a special ritual. When activated, the stone-man becomes extremely dangerous and it is able to withdraw the blood of the person to whom the witchcraft is directed. After the blood has been removed, the person becomes unconscious and the sorcerer will be able to cut his/her skin and remove the organs. Sealing the cuts with no marks, the victim will go back home ready to die few days later.

Highlanders claim that *sanguma* or *kumo* people can easily be identified in the community. They are said to look dirty and unhealthy; be skinny and always hungry, especially for meat; walk around at night; have strange behavior during funerals and visit cemeteries (Zocca 2009).

When focusing on the beliefs of *sanguma* in the Highlands, which in many cases they call *kumo*, the characteristics and powers attributed to the kumo-person and kumo-creature are similar to those of sanguma I described above. However, there are several specific characteristic that according to Bartle are attributed to kumo-people such as: especially killing immediate family members with their supernatural abilities; eating meat taken from corpses; being able to transform their appearance into animals; or being able to cause misfortune, illness or death to people they do not like because they are successful (Bartle 2005).

A crucial figure in the villages is the “kumo-doctor”, “witch-doctor” or *glassman*, who is normally a sorcerer or a kumo-person that has renounced to use their evil powers and it is now at the service of the community. He/she can help to identify other *kumo*-people or discover the person responsible for a *kumo*-attack. People in the community hire them and pay for their services (Bartle 2005; Zocca 2009; Gibbs 2012). The word of the glassman can condemn or save the life of a person accused of witchcraft.

As it has been already said before and Franco Zocca and Jack Urame clearly pose in their study (2008), the beliefs in sorcery and witchcraft are present at all levels of Melanesian life, remaining

very strongly as explanations for death and sickness. However, even the beliefs are present in different forms all across the country, they only develop into violence in some specific areas. The region of the Highlands and, with a higher incidence, Simbu province, is the part of Papua New Guinea where more sorcery-related killings take place, and it is for this reason that this research focuses in this area.

Many events of the daily life are attributed to the effects of sorcery and witchcraft. The victory of a warrior in a battle, the arrangement of a promising marriage or an abundant harvest will be interpreted as having the spirits in favor. However, crop or pig husbandry failures, infertility of women or sickness will lead to search for possible culprits. Recently, as Jack Urame says, 'people react to new ideas, technological and economic developments according to the contexts of their own beliefs' (Urame 2013), so car accidents, failure of exams or loss of promotions or employment will be blamed into sorcerers or witches. According to the *Final Report into the study of Sanguma*, many of these small misfortunes will not lead to tortures or killings, but the suspicion will remain and the accused will be likely to be targeted when a bigger adversity arrives, becoming a full accusation (HSIMR 2004).

SORCERY-RELATED VIOLENCE: Prevalence and main characteristics

Kepari Leniata, 20, was reportedly stripped naked, tortured with a branding iron and tied up, splashed with fuel and set alight on a pile of rubbish topped with car tires, while a crowd that included school children looked on [...] she was burnt in Mount Hagen by villagers who claimed she killed a six-year-old boy through sorcery, with police outnumbered by onlookers and unable to intervene. (ABC 2013).

The above quotation, extracted from a piece of news published by the Australian Broadcasting Company few days after the incident took place and accompanied by some explicit pictures, shows the brutality of the violence beyond the books. The case of Kepari Leniata, together with that of Helen Rumbali, a women's right advocate who after being accused of sorcery was ruthlessly tortured and beheaded (Chasmar 2013), sparked a wave of international actions intended to put pressure on the Papua New Guinean government to stop sorcery and witchcraft-related violence in the country. However, the accounts of cruel violence dated from long time ago. Neville Bartle provides many examples of it by using direct testimonies. This quotation is just one of them:

While he was pastoring in Simbu in 1987, the leader of a nearby village died. The people of the village accused a woman of being a sanguma woman, and they tortured her by burning her with red hot steel. She confessed to being a sorcerer and also accused two other women. No further evidence was required. The women were attacked by the mob, beaten up, locked inside a house, and the house was set on fire. The women screamed as they tried to escape the flames. One woman managed to break through the woven wall of the house, but she was immediately

struck down with a spear in her abdomen, and shoved back into the burning house.
(Bartle 2005:240)

As deaths, illnesses or misfortunes are easily attributed to black magic, any person can suddenly be accused of murder. The kind of accidents that attract more accusations are the unexpected deaths of young “healthy” men (Zocca 2009; Haley 2010). As the anthropologist Nicole Haley expresses ‘the unusual deaths’ are the ones that raise stronger suspicions on specific people (2010: 225), normally they are people somehow related to the victim: relatives, any person who did not show enough grief during the funeral, or anybody who can be considered jealous or angry with the victim. The witch-hunt starts, many times during or right after the funeral, usually targeting weak people in the community, such as elderly women, single mothers or widows (Zocca 2009). The conclusion after some research in Simbu is that the accused witches are mainly women and the victims are generally men (Gibbs 2012). As witches are considered to be a great danger for the whole community, once the suspected sorcerers have been identified and accused, they will be taken by a group of young men and often brutally tortured, forced to confess, and killed before any formal investigations by police or doctors can put some light into the real causes of the death. Besides the many people who die due to sorcery-related violence, there are many victims who survive and who have to flee their homes and villages in a search of safe shelter, losing all their belongings and many times being separated of their relatives (Zocca 2009; Schwarz 2011).

Unfortunately, the data related to this kind of violence is not clarifying at all and it seems impossible to exactly know how many cases of sorcery-related violence take place in Papua New Guinea and what their specific characteristics are. The lack of a systemized data collection institution in the country added to the general acceptance of these practices by the population, the fear of reporting and the fact that most incidents take place in remote areas, make the little data available not reliable (Eves 2006). There will always be a disparity between the prevalence of the cases and their reporting. However, it seems safe to say that this kind of witchcraft and sorcery-related violence affects women in much higher number than men, especially in the Highlands. Amnesty International claimed once that women are 6 times more likely to be accused of sorcery than men (2009). In July 2010, when she had to report to the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women, Minister Carol Kidu admitted that the government did not have concrete reliable statistics on the amount of people murdered or arrested in relation to witchcraft in the country (Varolli 2010). However, she gave an estimate for 2009 which put the number of killings only in ‘Simbu province alone to 200’ (AI 2011: 5). Again, the real validity of this information is very controversial¹⁵, because there is no official body, institution or organisation collecting comprehensive and reliable data in Papua New Guinea.

Despite the uncertainty of these suppositions, the higher vulnerability of women due to an unequal power position seems to reinforce the general perception of those working on the ground

¹⁵ Philip Gibbs affirms that the supposed source for providing this information to Amnesty International is , Carol Kidu, who cannot recall having given this data (Gibbs, 2011:108).

regarding the much higher proportion of women being targeted. This provides a good opportunity to analyze the issue from a gender perspective. According to Amnesty International,

In the remote communities and highland provinces of PNG, *puri* (the traditional belief of sorcery) is reported to be used as a pretext for brutal acts of violence against women. More than 50 reported cases of sorcery-related deaths occurred in 2008 alone, and local authorities believe that many more murders may have gone unreported” (2011: 5).

There are many opinions from local and international experts that believe that many of these raising accusations of sorcery have their base on rivalry or envy rather than in deep traditional beliefs (AI 2011; Zocca 2009; Gibbs 2012) If this is true, it constitutes a dangerous matter because it might transform these practices into premeditated murders mainly targeting women, usually related to arguments about land property, personal interests (Amnesty International 2010; Bartle 2005; Zocca 2009), or as Malinowski already observed ‘as a form of coercive social control’ (Malinowski 1926 in Zocca and Urame 2008: 21).

Those accused of killing using sorcery or witchcraft are cruelly tortured before being murdered. The extreme level of violence before killing the suspects that brings them to the confession is due to the belief that witches have the ability to come back to life and re-form, so it is necessary to ensure that after the torture they will not be able to do this anymore (Eves and Kelly-Hanku 2014). The suspects are not taken to court because these matters are normally not reported to the police or formal authorities, rather they are handled by the tribal groups. After these crimes have been perpetrated, the fear of retaliation prevents witnesses to report them, which makes impossible to make the perpetrators accountable.

According to a really interesting investigation that Richard Eves and Angela Kelly-Hanku are carrying out with eight perpetrators accused of being involved in attacks targeting people accused of witchcraft, most of the attacks were committed against women (30 out of 32 victims being women and 25 out of 27 murders being against women) (2014: 14) and perpetrators were always men. They explain their motivating factors as acting in benefit of the community by cleaning it of dangerous and undesired elements, a view that was supported by most community members. As it has been traditionally thought that the perpetrators are *drugbodis* (young boys that are under drug-consumption, with little education and no much expectations from the future), it has been proven by the sample taken by Eves and Kelly-Hanku, that this is not the common case: most of the perpetrators were employed and they were not marijuana consumers, and in some circumstances they turned to drug consumption to be able to engage in such high levels of brutal violence.

Are we talking about a gendered phenomenon? Does this Violence Affect Many More Women Than Men? Why?

In order to formulate an effective response to alleviate this kind of violence, it is crucial to understand when, how and why this violence occurs. It is for this reason that one of the main questions that researchers try to answer is who is being affected by these accusations. Are women

really more likely to be accused of practicing sorcery or witchcraft? Can we say that sorcery and witchcraft-related violence are engendered phenomena? If so, what are the reasons for it?

Philip Gibbs, an anthropologist and Catholic missionary with over 40 years of experience in Papua New Guinea, tries to bring some clarity on the issue. According to his research on the testimonies gathered by other anthropologists and his own fieldwork, Gibbs is of the opinion that women are more likely to be accused of practicing witchcraft, especially marginalised or elderly women who represent a burden for the community, because they have a lower social status, little political presence and more difficulties to defend themselves (in general, they are physically weaker and depend on men for security) (2012).

Gibbs' arguments are supported by the outcomes of a comprehensive conference on *Sorcery & Witchcraft-Related Killings in Melanesia* held in the Australian National University, Canberra in June 2013, where many experts concluded that women are particularly vulnerable and at risk due to unequal power relations and lack of support structures / access to land or income. Several anthropological studies attribute this gender-based violence to a specific construction of gender roles, where men keep the authority and the decision-making power in the community and women are mainly outsiders coming from intertribal marriages. These women will always be kept under suspicion of loyalty and will lack a network of support in their new communities, what makes them more vulnerable (Stewart and Strathern 2004; Gibbs 2012; Forsyth 2013). In addition, the influence of colonialism and the Christian missions has generated new structural power dynamics that altered the traditional Melanesian order of things and might have been a cause of the transformation of these practices into more violent patterns¹⁶.

Another hypothesis about the motivations behind the gender bias of the sorcery-related violence is also that sorcery accusations are mainly directed to women because they gain more freedom and empowerment in circumstances of change. As jealousy appears towards those who achieve "success", women can generate more envy from those who traditionally held the power (Stewart and Strathern 2004). Nicole Haley poses it in a very clear way: 'it is typically women, especially those who are seen by men to have rejected their customary obligations or to have failed to conform to local gender and sexual stereotypes, who are accused' (2010: 227). Furthermore, sorcery-killings can also represent the power fight within the tribe. As men usually have a stronger authority, they get to decide what sorcerers and witches will be killed and which ones will be saved. Gossips accusing women of practicing sorcery can easily be initiated by jealousy and old resentment. Then, when the moment for the tribal trial comes, women feel powerless, with no support networks, and in front of a group of men who want to demonstrate their power (Stewart and Strathern 2004).

As said before, these are only possible interpretations, which are worth it to be looked at, but that, according to my opinion, cannot be considered fully true and irrefutable. For this reason, it is crucial

¹⁶ See section below '**How Colonial Powers and Religious Missions Influenced The Current Sorcery-Related Violent Practices**' for further analysis

to avoid exclusively Western analysis of these phenomena and turn to the local perception in order to get a comprehensive account.

What Can Be The Reasons For the Extension and Radicalization of Sorcery and Witchcraft Accusations Related Violence? A “Second Look” into the Colonial History

Research shows that beliefs in magic, sorcery and witchcraft have always existed in Papua New Guinea. When witches or sorcerers were discovered, they were taken into a tribal court or in front of the elders and forced to confess and apologize. Softer punishments were applied, in some cases, they were forced to abandon the community, but in very rare occasions they were killed. Nicole Haley has studied the phenomenon in Lake Kopiago, in Enga province, where many women were blamed for the HIV related deaths of young men and observed how the practices in the area have changed very much from the traditional questionings that the witches had to undergo to the brutal tortures and killings that take place today (2010). Traditionally, they were forced to confess, which was considered humiliating, and provide compensation for their deeds. The tortures nowadays are carried by groups of young men, rather than the community leaders, who use these actions to reaffirm their power in the community.

However, in recent years, the pattern followed by these moralizing practices has very much changed. High levels of violence surrounding these accusations have spread all around the country being a big burden for development, causing a problem of internally displaced victims and probably becoming the main fact that makes PNG known to the rest of the world.

Some of the reasons that are considered to be possible motivating factors seem related to the colonial and missionary influence over the traditional beliefs and customs. Consequently, the topic I want to approach in this section is up to what extent the colonial administration and the religious missions that were/are present in Papua New Guinea have shaped the current practices related to sorcery and witchcraft. It seems to me that not considering PNG's colonial history when talking about the beliefs and practices of magic, sorcery and witchcraft is not looking at the full picture. The territory was controlled by Germans, British, Australians and Japanese over a period of almost 100 years. The Christian missions started in the 1840's, a bit earlier than the colonial control and, even the country is nowadays a Christian country with the main religious leaders being natives, the Christian missions still have a strong presence in PNG (Bartle 2005). Many things dramatically changed with the colonial influence, up to the point that many Melanesians use the term 'B.C [...] often understood as "Before Contact", which was a turning point in recent history. Since contact with Westerners, life has never been the same' (Bartle 2005: 46).

It is curious then that Western discourses can find appropriate references to colonialism when talking about economic development, modernization, alphabetization, judicial and political systems, etc., but it is not so commonly considered that the evolution of sorcery-related practices might have also been influenced by the presence of the White people and all the irreversible deep changes that the country experienced in such a short period of time. After reading some literature on the topic, I do defend that the violent evolution of these practices of witchcraft is actually a

quite recent phenomenon and it might have a lot to do with the deep changes that the traditional power structures suffered because of the contact with Western civilization. I am intending to present the accounts of several anthropologists who explained the evolution of sorcery in PNG towards more violent practices as a result of the colonial influence. I do not pretend to offer final solutions or true interpretations, but mainly to compile several options outside the mainstream discourse of why these practices might be as they are today.

How Colonial Powers and Religious Missions Influenced the Current Sorcery-Related Violent Practices

As I introduced before when talking about the need for Postcolonial lenses and Postcolonial Feminism¹⁷ while approaching this research, the following section tries to reflect on how colonial history had, and has, a deep impact on the current understanding of the world that Papua New Guineans have, directly reshaping the practices of sorcery and witchcraft-related violence that take place nowadays. With the objective of bringing some light to this influence caused by colonial powers and religious missions, I will present a short summary of the Melanesian world-view and their traditional religious beliefs; the profound transformation of traditional patterns caused by colonization and that modified basic traditional concepts of authority, success, exchange or community life. I will also outline the most relevant religious missions and the approach they took when dealing with the Christianisation of the natives. All these topics are significant to understand how Papua New Guinea is responding to these rapid changes by finding new interpretations of many new realities.

Melanesian World-View

In order to see the contradiction and the possible transformation that traditional beliefs have undergone, it is mandatory to try to understand the world-view of Papua New Guineans. According to Bartle (2005), there are several characteristics that greatly difference the Western world-view from the Melanesian one. To start with, life is clan-oriented: 'defense, security and well-being are all dependent upon the clan members supporting each other' (Bartle 2005: 26). As the clan is the main unity of belonging, the principal obligation of a person will be to help her or his own clan on top of any other principle, and following this idea, the concepts of "Good" and "Bad" become relative. If the main goal is the benefit of the community, acts such as stealing, kidnapping or murdering will be praised when done in order to protect or honor the community. At the same level, safety and protection are provided by the clan and independence will rather mean isolation and insecurity.

Reciprocity is central for the people of Papua New Guinea. It ensures equality and harmony in the community life. The belief is that if one gives, one will receive, and vice versa. This idea has also been used as a tool for social control: by constituting the base for moral rules that set practical attitudes and behaviors, it promises positive rewards for those who act correctly towards their fellow villagers, and it guarantees punishment to those who have inflicted suffering. The payback is a constant threat that acts as a moral mechanism and that will reach extreme cases as the ones we

¹⁷ Refer to section 1 of this chapter 'Postcolonialism and Postcolonial Feminism' for more information.

observe with the witch-hunts. When somebody dies, the responsible person needs to be found and punished with the same level of suffering that she or he has caused.

Other important characteristic from the Melanesian world-view that Bartle highlights is for example that the main objective in life is to be known as a 'Big Man', fostering relationships that will further generate great benefits (2005: 30). For example, by the rule of reciprocity, giving food or money to others will make them debtors and dependents; marrying different women from different clans will increase someone's popularity through forging strategic alliances. Individual charisma becomes one of the main attributes to reach success, which will be measured by the prestige and influence that a person (usually a man) has. Successful men would traditionally be those who have social status and economic wealth as a fruit of their own effort and their skills to develop strong social networks.

The author also refers to the different concepts of time held by Melanesians and Westerners. While Westerners conceive life as a straight timeline, for Melanesians it is event-oriented. Time is made up of the events they can remember and consequently future is almost non-existent. Life is present. In this regard, for Papua New Guineans there is no conception of a distant future, the only future that concerns them is the immediate one. This perception of the world has a big impact in the way they understand religion, the spirit world and consequently, experience life.

Religious Life for Melanesians

Despite the great influence of the Western religious missions, Melanesians always had a very intense religious life. The traditional religions have not been overrun by the arrival of Christianity, as 'for most Melanesians, the Christian God does not replace this traditional hierarchy of spirits, but rather is added to them' (Bartle 2005: 44). It is very interesting to see which ones are the characteristics of these traditional beliefs, as in my opinion, can help understand why sorcery and witchcraft have such a heavy weight in the life of Papua New Guineans and observe why Christianity might have not been able to counteract such practices.

Melanesians have a cosmic view of the world, meaning that all existent creatures and things are connected together and belong to the same whole. They must interact in harmony with each other and pursue the 'continuation, protection, maintenance and celebration of life' (Whiteman in Bartle 2005: 35). They see religion as the source of life, and its goal is the well-being and harmony for the clan, for the group. This well-being does not translate into a future heavenly life, as it has been observed above that the conception of time for Melanesians is very much focused on the present. Papua New Guineans expect to see the results of the power of religion in material and everyday life, such as health for people and animals, fertility of land and women, favorable weather, abundant crops or wealth and success. Therefore, religion is centered into the "Here and Now". They believe religion is the origin and the means for life, and spiritual and material spheres are interrelated. The power of God is something to be seen rather than believed.

The spirit world for Melanesians and Papua New Guineans is very important and impregnates all levels of daily life. Highlanders see the simplest processes of material existence deeply connected with the spirit world, for this reason, knowing about their spiritual cosmos is helpful to understand the motivations and expectations of their actions. Papua New Guineans' spirit world consists on: a

Supreme Being or God, ghosts of the dead (including the recently dead and the ancestors), nature or bush spirits, and the evil spirits and occult powers such as sanguma and kumo. These ghosts and spirits are present in the life of the community and are aware of anything happening around. It is important to respect them and keep them happy in order to have a peaceful life. They are responsible for success and misfortune, so people fear them and behave to ensure their favour (Bartle 2005; Gibbs and Wailoni 2009; Zocca 2009).

The fear to the evil powers is really strong and some people proclaim themselves witches or sorcerers in order to gain power and influence in the community. Despite the fact that most of the population is Christian, it seems that the acquired Christian beliefs cannot adequately respond to some specific needs of Papua New Guinean cultures. It is for this reason that the two religious traditions simultaneously coexist, adding to each other and adapting themselves to such a specific situation. As Bartle puts it 'although Jesus can help with the ultimate issues (such as eternal salvation), he is powerless to deal with the daily fear of sorcery and witchcraft' (2005: 44).

The Transformation of Traditional Patterns

In my entire life I have not seen anything like this witch trouble before...Suppose we suspected a woman of being a witch, we would question her and order her to kill a pig. We never touched their bodies or spoiled them like that before. This practice of burning them, there's no law or custom to that effect around here...That is the first time this has come up here. All this wouldn't have happened if there was law and order, proper medicines and proper health services here. (Jim Siape, 2004 in Haley 2010: 230)

Nicole Haley presents the testimony of community leader in Kopiago, Enga, who openly recognises how sorcery and witchcraft accusation-related violence has increased and become more violent in recent years, and he points out some of the reasons he considers as causes of it. I find positive that more anthropologists are recently broadening the possibilities to be considered when thinking about the potential motivating factors of the sorcery-related violence. As we have seen in the historical contextualization, the hostility and rivalry from the locals to the colonizers was strongly justified: spoliation of natural resources, labor exploitation and slavery, imposition of a new political and legal system that deeply contradicts the traditional patterns, etc. In this sense, it is not surprising that the structure of the magic practices, related to the value systems of the society and generated from their real daily conflicts, suffered a radical transformation.

I have found quite an extensive amount of literature connecting the colonial and religious influence to the reality of the sorcery and witchcraft practices such as we know them nowadays (Stewart and Strathern 2004; Eves 2010; Haley 2010; Forsyth 2013a; INA 2013). This literature defends that the witchcraft practices before the colonial period were very different to the ones happening today and how, in general, they evolved towards a more violent pattern. To provide an insight on this matter, I will mainly use the text of the reputable anthropologists Pamela J. Stewart and Andrew Strathern, *Witchcraft, Sorcery, Rumors and Gossip*. According to these authors, on the first place, it is important to keep in mind what is the meaning of sorcery for societies as the PNG's society. I have

already explained the main characteristics, practices of meanings of sorcery and witchcraft before, but just to summarize, sorcery, magic and witchcraft have a very important role in the Papua New Guinean society. They have a triple function: they work as a way of explaining events; they shape people's moral worlds, constructing a moral order that regulates personal and interpersonal interactions; and they are also useful to discharge tensions between people, acting as a social catalyst (Stewart and Strathern 2004; Urame 2013). In this sense, they exist in two levels: the cognitive dimension, more intellectual; and the functionalist one, which regulates their social life. The authors explain how 'social processes feed the moral imagination of people and their searches for explanations and order. The moral imagination reflects local structures of power, enshrined in class and ethnicity, for example' (Stewart and Strathern 2004: 4).

In this sense, if these social processes change, if these local structures of power are substituted by other power dynamics, the moral world will have to adapt to it. For Papua New Guineans, the spiritual world cannot be separated from the daily life. Their religious beliefs constitute more a cosmology rather than a theology (Bartle 2005). When the Christian missions and the colonial powers arrive to a remote tribal territory that counts with an astonishing variety of communities, and institute churches and administrative systems that deeply alter the social structure and dynamics of these communities, it seems logical that the moral explanations of the social processes will drastically change. For this reason, some anthropologists doubt that "modernity" will make witchcraft disappear: It has been proven already that modernity has arrived and witchcraft practices have transformed, but not disappeared. As we have seen before, the beliefs in sorcery and witchcraft in PNG are a way, if not the way, of explaining sickness and death in a manner that normally responds to patterns of suspicion and jealousy between people (Stewart and Strathern 2004; Eves and Forsyth 2015). The authors emphasize how gossip is also a crucial component that is interconnected to sorcery and used as a social control mechanism (Paine in Stewart and Strathern 2004: 35).

There is a very illustrative example of South Africa that shows how the more control the local chiefs were losing over their people (in opposition to the colonial powers), the more violent the sorcery practices were becoming. Stewart and Strathern expose how in earlier times not always accusations of sorcery ended up in deadly punishments, but they found more concealing solutions (Stewart and Strathern 2004; Haley 2013). The deep alteration of the power structures and the loss of influence of those who traditionally were given a privileged position, resulted, according to these anthropologists, in a radicalization of the retaliation for sorcery. The following reasons given in order to explain these transformations are just Western interpretations of a reality that is far away from our understanding. They might be right or wrong. However, it is valuable to have a look at them with open eyes, so they try to bring some light and sense to this complex phenomenon.

Capitalism / consumerism and destabilization of traditional power structures

The strong new presence of capitalism brought by the colonial powers, deeply transformed the long-term established power structures. The new indicators of success, such as economic progress or material possessions which seem so accessible, in reality became unreachable to many. These substitute the traditional qualities that indicated power such as: belonging to a specific clan or

family, being a brave warrior, having some special magic powers, etc. The monetization brought high frustration to many and increased social inequalities between people, providing different life opportunities and challenging the traditional custom of 'obligations of reciprocity and redistribution entailed by the norms of village life' (Stewart and Strathern 2004: 73). It is a non-written rule that people have obligations of giving and sharing their goods within the community. This idea of a mandatory reciprocal exchange is an intrinsic part of the Papuan society and it is expected to be respected. In many cases, those who belong to the margins of society and are not in conditions of following these rituals can be considered sorcerers. People associate these persons with the image of greedy people that will pretend not to have any goods, but will be secretly eating alone at night. The source of their richness will be their nightly activities. In this regard, those people observed or thought to be skipping this traditional habit of food sharing, 'those who are excluded and at the margins of social interaction' (Stewart and Strathern 2004: 68), probably more vulnerable, can become easier targets for the accusations.

Success

Jealousy of those who have become successful can be a very valid reason to practice witchcraft against someone. People who are in a better economic position or enjoy higher social status fear sorcery attacks because of envy and resentment. In opposition, those who are less privileged in society always think that the rich and powerful use magic to achieve and maintain their position (Stewart and Strathern 2004; Zocca 20019; Forsyth 2013a; Eves and Forsyth 2015). Consequently, the influence of colonization brought deep changes over the traditional patterns of personal and community life. Adapting to modern ways of living might be a complicated task, and the change on the concept of "success" tight to modernity generates a fertile ground to make sorcery beliefs grow.

New solutions for new realities

I started this section defending that the moral system supported by sorcery and witchcraft responds to the solutions that these communities give to specific observable realities. When these realities experience drastic changes, the traditional rituals evolve. As Stewart and Strathern say, 'contemporary rituals and ideas might represent a search for closure and solutions to existential problems that people experience' (Stewart and Strathern 2004: 76). There is a very meaningful idea supported by the arguments of the well-known feminist anthropologist Nancy Scheper-Hughes (2000): 'witchcraft ideas and urban legends are not simply metaphors that express ideas of exploitation and trickery; rather, they grow out of people's bodily experiences in daily life – and in their regular encounters with death' (quoted in Stewart and Strathern 2004: 89).

Epidemics

The arrival of White people brought many new illnesses that tremendously affected the local population spreading epidemics that caused thousands of deaths. Papua New Guineans looked for the explanation to these deaths into magic and sorcery and, in some cases, related the arrival of the White men to the end of the world. The Australian government used the power of sorcery beliefs to get the locals to adopt specific practices. For example, in order to avoid people going to the river to

urinate or defecate, they spread out the rumor that the contact with some infected river water was turning people into cannibals. This generated a full new set of conceptions related to sorcery (Stewart and Strathern 2004; Haley 2013). Nicole Haley is one of the authors who have studied the connection between the raise of HIV and sanguma accusations. Haley sees 'the role of AIDS as a contributor to deaths and as a stimulant of witchcraft accusations' (2010: 227), as she argues that the raise of AIDS has increased the kind of deaths that trigger witchcraft accusations: 'deaths among people of reproductive age, in the prime of their lives' (2010: 225).

Influence of the Christian missions

For over a century already, Papua New Guinea has been a land that has offered great possibilities for many Christian missions to expand their influence. Different confessions took different approaches, and some became more successful than others. In the following lines, I will briefly describe how the Catholic, Lutheran, Evangelical and Pentecostal approach deal with the local population and their beliefs and some of the repercussions of these interactions.

From the beginning, the Catholic approach has advocated for keeping the traditional temples and assigning new Christian meanings to the important traditional celebrations. They realized it was impossible to ban traditional practices because they had a really important weight in people's spiritual world (Bartle 2005), and opted for a more integrative approach, that recognised cultural differences and created mechanisms for assimilation and coexistence (Eves 2011). On a similar stand, the Lutheran approach thought that the best option would be that people came to Christ as a group while keeping their original tribal structure intact. They did not want to impose any changes; it was more about negotiating with tribal leaders, who ended up making public resolutions. Their aim was to bring people into the church and from there to continue the Christianizing process within the structure of the clan (Bartle 2005). However, Lutherans discouraged the use of pagan rituals and spells, and the powers connected to ideas of occult practices were considered evil. The potential healing benefits of witchcraft were completely forgotten and only the destructive sorcery powers were highlighted (Stewart and Strathern 2004).

The Evangelical approach soon promoted the training of local Papua New Guinean pastors. The missionaries learnt the local language and work on translating the scriptures. In addition they worked hard to promote literacy to train the people to become church leaders. They asked for a full transformation to be undertaken after the encounter with God. In this sense, they condemned traditional cultural practices, by creating a strong opposition between old and new, darkness and light, sin and salvation (Bartle 2005).

Finally, the Pentecostal approach also focused its attention on learning the local languages, establishing schools and clinics and setting up literacy programs. It is needed to say that Pentecostal churches experienced an impressive growth in PNG, according to Zocca (2009) and Eves (2011), due to how their focus on the Spirit World resembled the Melanesian World view. In the new Pentecostal churches loud dramatic preaching intertwined with demonstration of supernatural powers such as divine healing, the ability of some to speak tongues or the assimilation of dreams and visions to direct communication from God. Unfortunately, this supernatural abilities preached

by the Pentecostal church highly relate to the traditional beliefs of the existence of sorcery and witchcraft, increasing the pervasiveness of fear and accusations.

Many Melanesians have responded to these influences through something called 'Cargo Cults', very connected to the religious revival movements that link their daily practices to the preparation for the second coming of Christ and Salvation (Bartle 2005: 59). These cults count with some Christian beliefs, but also attempt to restore the political and economic power that the natives had before colonization. These beliefs are based on myths, rooted in a deep frustration (especially regarding the arrival of the white men) and focused on the present. They emphasize the spiritual experience, they believe in the correct performance of rituals in order to achieve positive observable results, and their success depends on the joint action of the community.

The influences of the different Christian missions generated new interpretations, which incorporated many Christian concepts that blend and mix with traditional beliefs. The new beliefs have not substituted the old ones, rather they have been adapted to contemporary changes (Urame 2013). For example, as the authors explain, ideas such as "Satan" and the "world's end" can be incorporated and reinterpreted: some tribes consider witchcraft as an evil power that Satan is bringing to earth in order to lead us to the end of the world (Stewart and Strathern 2004) In all cases, though, Christians continue believing and fearing sorcery and witchcraft and many pastors and church leaders affirm to have witnessed this kind of magical events. Some people defend that if you believe in God, he will protect you from the negative effects of sorcery (Bartle 2005). However, there is the general impression that God and Jesus are there for the big issues of life, such as salvation, but when it comes to the problems of daily life, full of ghosts and spirits, these are outside their control. The Christian God does not replace traditional beliefs, He just complements them (Bartle, 2005: 44; Gibbs and Wailoni 2009; Eves 2011).

CHAPTER CONCLUSIONS

Throughout this chapter I set the theoretical framework that has constituted the base for my research. I approached topics such as Postcolonialism or Postcolonial Feminism; I clarified Western historical notions of sex and gender and I connect them to the conception of Papua New Guinean women as "the Other"; I also explored the theories of Politics of Location, Situated Knowledges and Feminist Standpoint and relate these theories to my position as a feminist researcher and to the process of constructing knowledge; finally I made an account of the previous research into witchcraft and sorcery and their related violence by clarifying some key terminology, summarising some of the specific beliefs, describing the main characteristics of the violence and having a look at the influence from the colonial powers and religious missions. Altogether, this elaboration constitutes what probably is the most extensive chapter of this thesis, indispensable to establish my feminist point of view, better understand the cultural dynamics of the area of study, and be able to accurately interpret the responses of the main stakeholders to my interviews.

Papua New Guinea is a developing country with a very recent colonial past. The rapid changes experienced during the last decades have generated multiple difficulties and challenges for a weak

and corrupt government and for a society that is struggling to provide better lives for their children. The level of poverty, social insecurity and violence highly contrast with the vast natural resources of the country. Papua New Guineans are strongly demanding the improvement of basic services, such as education, access to justice, health care or employment opportunities. The Postcolonial framework presented through the chapter explains how the current circumstances are, in great measure, a direct consequence of the changes and new structures introduced during colonialism. A similar explanation can be given when referring to the evolution of the practices of sorcery and witchcraft-related violence, that in recent times seem to be more prevalent and extended to areas where they did not exist before.

I also presented some data to show how women in Papua New Guinea are subjects of unbelievable levels of violence and the difficult position they hold in family and community relations, which make them more vulnerable targets for accusations of witchcraft. As I highlighted along the chapter, women in Western history have been traditionally considered second-class citizens. We have observed that traditional gender construction in Papua New Guinea seems to maintain a similar structure, where men are generally the leaders and women are kept away from the decision-making process, relating to men as “subjugated others”. This fact has severe consequences, as socially agreed social rules that highly discriminate women, such as polygamy or wife beating, have been normalised. Women in Papua New Guinea do not have many chances to be vocal and express their thoughts and opinions. During this research, I intend to make them participants of the knowledge construction process. With their different ideas and various approaches, they have provided a unique and very valuable wisdom. Their intense experiences, sensitive ideas and innovative ways forward regarding how to combat sorcery and witchcraft-related violence are mainly captured in the following chapter, so I invite you to continue reading.

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2. METHODOLOGY

“Working not on behalf, but with and for women”

(Abdo 2013)¹⁸

INTRODUCTION

This research originated from my huge surprise when I discovered through a CEDAW report on Papua New Guinea that women in this country face a terrible form of gender-based violence: hundreds of them die every year because of violence arising from witchcraft and sorcery accusations. The brutality of the cases, the apparent lack of an organized response to this violence and the criminalizing ethnocentric discourse of the Western media, really lit a fire inside me. My interest grew even more when at the beginning of 2013 images from public killings of two women, Kepari Leniata and Helen Rumballi, were shown all around the world. Unveiling the tragedy to international audiences, generated a dramatic increase on media attention and pushed the humanitarian organisations to intervene. Since then on, much more attention has been given to the topic, but always portraying a very negative image of the country and its people. This fact encouraged me to start a research with the objective of showing the perceptions and responses of Papua New Guineans.

This section on methodology defines important aspects such as the research question, the approach and the perspective of this research, or the reasons for me to choose this kind of research. I also locate myself, setting the specific point of view from which I will be talking; and I explain the techniques used throughout the investigation and the reasons why these techniques were chosen. I explain how, in order to produce an ethnographic research, I traveled to the area to carry out the fieldwork. However, there has been a previous and posterior part of the research that

¹⁸ Quotation extracted from the lecture offered by Dr. Nahla Abdo titled ‘Culture of Resistance: Palestinian Women Ex-Political Prisoners in Israel’ inside the academic symposium **Acti-Vistas: fresh views on women’s activism in Palestine/Israel**, in 2013 at the University of Amsterdam.

has been done in the Netherlands and Spain, encompassing the preliminary research to get the general understanding and also the presentation of the findings afterwards.

2.1. RESEARCH QUESTION, APPROACH AND PERSPECTIVE

The main question to be addressed in this research is ***what are the solutions and actions that the local community proposes in front of the high levels of violence against women accused of sorcery and witchcraft?***

In order to answer this question, the investigation takes an anthropological and feminist perspective. I believe an ethnographic approach is the most appropriate one for my research, as fieldwork and direct contact with the object of study have the prominent weight. By using this methodology, I have been able to approach the matter from a different point of view, exploring reality as the participants see it and experience it. Because of limitations on time and financial resources and due to security concerns, the research does not intend to be a comprehensive account of all the local initiatives that fight against sorcery and witchcraft-related violence in the Highlands. It is, however, an approximation to the actions taken by some of the most important activists and organisations who can provide an in-depth understanding of the situation.

Choosing the Right Kind of Research

When I first decided that I was going to conduct an investigation, I needed to find out which kind of methodology was the most appropriate to explore my specific topic. After reviewing some literature of research methodology, I decided that a feminist ethnography was the one that most accurately could represent the experiences and opinions of the local stakeholders affected by the sorcery and witchcraft-related violence in Papua New Guinea. But before giving the reasons why I have chosen the ethnographic method, I will justify my choice of adopting a feminist approach. Why do I believe that a feminist analysis will actually bring some added value to this study?

It is true that the term Feminism does not have a unique, clear, single definition that makes everyone happy. According to the Oxford dictionary, Feminism is 'the advocacy of women's rights on the ground of the equality of the sexes', a definition that at prima facie does not seem very problematic. However, it has been a word extremely used and misused by many different actors, which adds several negative connotations to the concept preventing many people from feeling identified with it. Historically, the word feminism has been associated to many intellectual and political movements that had different principles and objectives, sometimes even contradictory ones. Nowadays, many scholars, political and social actors question the validity of this word to be able to represent the new spectrum of people and advocate for renewed and more complex aspirations. Wanda Pillow and Cris Mayo, American Professors of Gender Studies, offer several arguments why the word Feminism is still relevant and why we should keep on advocating for it, especially when we talk about research. As they believe that gender oppression is still an ongoing issue and feminism is the only discipline that addresses it in a reflexive and political way, it is nonetheless necessary to keep it, even knowing the controversy that the word itself causes and all the problems that might derive from its use (Pillow and Mayo 2007: 155-156). Rich defines

feminism as “women’s liberation” through “the creation of a society without domination [...] the making new of all relationships” (1984: 373). We could start here a never-ending debate about the meaning of the category “women”, the inclusion/exclusion that it implies, the suitability of an approach based on equality versus one based on difference, and many other unresolved and disputed questions. However, these are not the topics of this thesis. Despite of the difficulties that the word Feminism brings, I would define my feminism very close to Haraway’s view:

Feminists have stakes in a successor science project that offers a more adequate, richer, better account of the world, in order to live in it well and in critical, reflexive relation to our own as well as others’ practices of domination and the unequal parts of privilege and oppression that make up all positions. (1988: 579)

Feminist research is then a political choice. A choice for a different kind of knowledge production where the emphasis is placed not on what topic is researched or what method is used, but on how the investigation is carried out and to what purpose (Pillow and Mayo, 2007). It is about doing things in a different way. It is political activism. And it is for this reason that I do believe that a feminist research can definitely add a great value to my project. In the first place, it advocates for an approach that deconstructs dualisms in favor of a broader range of options; second, it understands the analysis of the object within its context, which it is crucial for a meaningful interpretation; third, it focuses on lived experiences trying to escape of generalizations and abstract descriptions; fourth, it is committed to social change, so it recognizes oppression and aims for a transformation by questioning the model of domination; and also it is trans-disciplinary, encouraging the links between marginalized groups, challenging the subjectivity of the researcher, and paying special attention to the relationship between researcher and researched (Kim 2007; Reinhartz and Harding in Pillow and Mayo 2007; Stacey 1988).

It is already obvious to me why I should make this choice and follow this path. The feminist approach provides a much richer comprehension of the issue and allows us to see a more meaningful picture of what is happening, escaping from the superficial claims and trying to provide a more accurate representation that defies the traditional power structures existent in the knowledge production process. However, I will further explore a bit more deeply some of these important points to give more clear arguments why I align myself on this side.

Why Feminist Ethnography?

Following the text of Pillow and Mayo *Towards Understandings of Feminist Ethnography* (2007), I will briefly describe the specificities of feminist ethnography and why these are relevant and appropriate for my research.

As I said before, feminist ethnography studies issues in a different way, being politically reflexive about our departure point and location as researchers and, at the same time, being conscious of the cultural and political position of the researched and of the power relation that is established between both. For the specific case of my investigation, the cultural and ideological distance

between me and the people I have interviewed in Papua New Guinea was enormous. It was impossible for me to disconnect myself from some preconceived ideas and prejudices about the situation regarding sorcery and witchcraft and their related violence. Even when trying to free my mind as much as possible, my understanding of their perceptions, feelings, fears, suggestions and solutions can only be interpreted through my specific cultural patterns. I am who I am because I was born, raised and educated in a specific context under defined circumstances, different from the ones that many other people had. For this reason, I am not really capable of fully understanding what they feel and mean. I can only humbly translate what I grasp from what they tell me into some similarly comparable own experiences that, in any case, will definitely not be the same. It was necessary during the research, especially during the fieldwork, to find the common ground that made us connect and achieve a meaningful dialogue. The differences between the person who tells and the person who listens makes the dialogue relevant, and in order to gather reliable and substantial data, the relation between researcher and researched needs to be equal, at the same level:

Only equality prepares us to accept difference in terms other than hierarchy and subordination; on the other hand, without difference there is no equality – only sameness, which is a much less worthwhile ideal. Only equality makes the interview credible, but only difference makes it relevant. Fieldwork is meaningful as the encounter of two subjects who recognize each other as subjects, and therefore separate, and seek to build their equality upon their difference in order to work together (Portelli in Wekker 2006)¹⁹.

Feminist ethnography engages with lived experiences, with the concrete, specific and embodied, so it aims to better represent the voice and the power of the subjects involved (Pillow and Mayo 2007). It is also committed to reflexivity, making visible the questions and complexities of the process of research (Pillow and Mayo 2007). As one of the main concerns of this approach is to pay attention to the power dynamics existent in the research process (Wekker 2006), it tries to generate a more egalitarian, side-to-side atmosphere, where the researcher and the researched work together in the co-creation of the narrative and, where the researcher is in a position of learning from the narrators, not only of observing and analyzing them (Portelli). In order to achieve this, the agenda of the researcher needs to be open and flexible, revisited according to the needs and specificities of the researched and the progress made (Portelli). Feminist ethnography must be 'more creative, spontaneous, open to improvisation, stumbling across the unexpected and being willing to follow where the unexpected leads' (Pillow and Mayo 2007: 161).

On the other side and as a counterpoint, Judith Stacey, Professor of Social and Cultural Analysis and Sociology specialised in Gender Studies, describes which, for her, are the 'serious moral costs' of ethnography (1988: 26). She claims that, although its apparent suitability for fieldwork and for a more accurate representation, subjects remain exposed to a higher danger and exploitation. Even it

¹⁹ Gloria Wekker is a Dutch social and cultural anthropologist, specialised in the field of Gender Studies. Alessandro Portelli is an Italian scholar, specialised in American literature and culture. He is an oral historian and writer.

seems a collaborative and reciprocal methodology, there is unavoidable manipulation, betrayal, intrusion, inequality and treacherousness (Stacey 1988). According to her, at the end of the day, the final result of the investigation belongs to the researcher and responds to her voice, purposes and interpretations. She does make an interesting point which can be used as a reminder by and for the researcher. However, I believe Stacey goes a bit too far into the pessimistic and manipulative idea of research, because feminist ethnography provides an epistemological and methodological framework to clearly avoid these facts. It is for sure not a perfect method, but it is quite likely better than other traditional methodologies. However, it is true that there is still an imperative need for the researcher to be especially conscious and careful about her position and procedures. As Pillow and Mayo affirm, 'even feminist ethnography can unknowingly replicate dominant constructions of gender, race, sexuality and class' (2007: 160). Production of knowledge through feminist lenses is not value-free, it also brings to the table political interests and reflects a power-structure (Kim 2007). That is why, despite I chose this methodology for my research, I am aware that special attention still needs to be paid to my position, my interactions and my practices as a researcher.

2.2. LOCATION

As I have already argued in a previous section²⁰, in producing knowledge is impossible to achieve full objectivity. The only way to present an honest discourse when researching is by making explicit reference to our background, position and motivations, as researchers and in regards to the topic. For this reason, I have to locate myself: make explicit where I am coming from, my personal and professional background, my interests, motivations, objectives, my privileges and my power position. This will provide some vantage points and, at the same time, probably many limitations when trying to relate and understand the narrators. In order to avoid a misrepresentation and to establish quality relations and quality understanding (Reinharz in Stacey, 1988: 22), as a researcher I need to create equal relationships and set myself in a learning position. I need to be humble. My intention is not to judge them or analyze them, as if they were objects with no agency. My objective is to really know what their concerns are, why, and what suggestions they propose to solve the problem. As Wekker and Portelli explain, if I am looking for honest and meaningful opinions and answers, opening up to them is not only necessary, but also fair, when aiming equal relations, empathy and trust. Research is dialogue and for this dialogue to happen it is necessary a connection based on common places, stories, situations that allow us to relate to each other. As Obeyesekere explains in a quotation of Gloria Wekker;

I fully recognize this common affinity and use it to understand my informants better, to engage in discourses with them, and, through these dialogues, to develop my own insights into their culture and personality...I am one with them, yet not one of them (Obeyesekere in Wekker 2006: 15)

²⁰ For more details see Chapter 1 section 3 'Politics of Location and Knowledge Construction'.

Whose voices are relevant to be heard? Unavoidably, it is still going to be me, as a researcher, who will choose who and what is important according to my perceptions and values. It is impossible to step out completely of the power position. However, it has been crucial to have a flexible and open agenda to the progress of the investigation, addressing the upcoming needs and concerns that the narrators bring up. Yet, my criteria for choosing those to be listened has relied on identifying who is able to provide a better account of the world, representing the lived experiences and opening my eyes to alternative, more comprehensive realities which the dominant construction of knowledge was hiding. It is for this reason that women's organizations and pro-human rights activists and groups have mostly been my pick, due to their position as subjugated and their hope for transformation.

Another very important point I have to address is to situate the knowledge that I find. It is not enough to locate myself and the researched as co-creators of the narrative; I also have to strongly consider the context and historical specificities. Probably, most people in Papua New Guinea do not understand magic and witchcraft the same way I do, they do not understand gender roles the same way I do and a similar issues will occur with concepts such as gender-based violence or women empowerment. The geographical and historical specificities, the cultural particularities, or the influences received at the moment of the research need to be taken into account and explained. In order to provide the reader with all this necessary information to properly interpret the following study, I will proceed to give a good overview of my location.

I am a 31 year old white Catalan and Spanish woman currently finishing my Master in Gender Studies. I define myself as a feminist pro-human rights activist who has previously studied and work in media, communication and development, besides many other side jobs that I have carried on and off to be able to pay for my studies. In this sense, I come from a hard working medium-class family, and I have been basically raised by my mother, who since very early age introduced me to values such as equality, tolerance, mutual love, understanding and cooperation.

I have traveled quite a lot and I have lived and worked in several countries such as Spain, Australia, Thailand, Jordan, the Netherlands and Papua New Guinea. For me the contact with different people is extremely enriching. That's why the thing that I enjoy the most from my experiences overseas is always getting to know the locals, their culture, their problems and their different ways to understand the world. I believe we constantly learn from each other, we just need to open up, be receptive and let it happen. Interacting with people who are culturally very different to me reminds me that two plus two does not always equals four, that truth is not absolute or univocal , and that despite difference, we are all human beings with many things in common. Researching the thoughts, feelings and ways that people from other cultures have is something fascinating to me.

I have been very involved in this research since the very beginning. It was not only academic interest; it was more a matter of feelings and principles. When I first discovered the situation that these women face, I felt horror, indignation, empathy and the impulse to act, to try to do something to change such a reality. I see the issue as a shared struggle, because, even I am not directly affected by this violence, I feel with them as women and as human beings. Being aware that I cannot include myself in the same category than these women, I still felt that after knowing

about the issue, I could just do nothing about it, and it had to be something that they considered as help. In this sense, I have to admit that I did not approach the field with a blank, unbiased mind; my clear intention was to find these activists and highlight their voice, show that their work is very useful and effective, and prove that the mainstream media discourse is ethnocentric and manipulative. I believe in the power of the people, the power of those that despite small resources have great passion and courage, and this is what I went to find.

As a Western woman, raised surrounded by scientific explanations of almost anything I could think of, I do not believe in magic, sorcery and witchcraft as Papua New Guineans do. I do believe in a sort of spiritual world and, from my humble ignorance, I am of the opinion that there are situations and experiences that escape logical arguments and go beyond any scientific claims. I am not here to judge or analyze other people's beliefs. Anybody is free to believe on anything they want as far as it does not attempt against anybody's freedom or integrity. It is for this reason that I definitely defend that the alleged witches are not such witches, that they are not responsible for any of the illnesses, misfortunes or deaths they are accused of causing; they are just scapegoats to release anger and frustration. It will be explained further how there is a division between those stakeholders who consider that the way to go when fighting Sorcery-related Violence is to eradicate the beliefs and those who consider that the focus of attention should be put on the violence arising from these beliefs. I strongly locate myself in this second group. Throughout the research I have treated everyone's thoughts with the maximum respect and I tried my best to honestly avoid stereotypes or preconceived ideas that could damage the investigation.

I believe, my location as a woman and as a researcher has undergone a deep change throughout the process of investigation. The circumstances of Papua New Guinea, considered as probably the most dangerous country to live in for women (HRW 2015)²¹, made necessary to extreme the security measures up to an extent that I could not imagine before. During my preparation for the fieldwork, I was reading particular cases and testimonies of women that had been victims of such violence. I deeply considered not continuing with the research, as it seemed that during my stay in the country my physical integrity could be in danger just for being a woman. I experienced fear just for being a woman, a situation that never happened to me before. I realised about my privileged situation, a privileged situation of which I was not fully conscious. As a white Western woman living mostly in Western countries, I never noticed up to what extent life can be difficult for many women in this world. I had to reset my mind and try to think in many categories that had been inexistent to me before: my freedom of movement was highly reduced as, in most cases, it was not safe to walk or travel in my own; the risk of being robbed or raped was constant and real, which affected very much my decisions and my interactions; the advice given by PNG women was "no man can be trusted", so it became a difficult and scary task to categorise all men as potential aggressors, but it had to be done as my safety depended on that. I had to avoid taking taxis on my own or find myself alone with a man or a group of men who I did not know. Travelling the highway by bus or by private vehicle was also risky, because it was usual to find several roadblocks along the main roads, where

²¹ For more details, see <https://www.hrw.org/news/2015/01/29/papua-new-guinea-end-endemic-violence-against-women>

groups of men normally cut the traffic asking for a small fee, many times carrying bush knives. Police forces are in most cases undertrained and underpaid, which does not make them a reliable source of assistance.

On the other side, despite all these difficulties, my personal transformation was also highly influenced by all those people who helped me at the professional and personal level. With scarce resources and expecting little return, they assisted me and made sure I was safe all the way through. I am so thankful to all of them, as I felt secure and taken care of. Their assistance made possible that I traveled all around the area, visited remote villages, known survivors and seen activists in action. They were passing me from hand to hand, keeping me away from potential dangers and bringing me with them to the key issues of the investigation. This research would definitely not have been possible without their contribution. Papua New Guinea was a challenge for me, professionally and, especially, personally. I feel I grew up during these last two years, becoming, despite the still existent distance, more aware of other realities and learning to keep believing in the goodness and cooperation between people.

2.3. PROCESS AND TECHNIQUES

The full research process encompasses the period from October 2012 to April 2015. As I briefly explained before, my interest started in late 2012 and it grew up to the point that I decided to travel to Papua New Guinea in order to carry out fieldwork. From the personal and professional close contact with the local activists participating in the research, I felt the need of contributing to their cause in a way that could make visible their work and opinions to a broader audience than those likely to be reading this thesis. That was the reason why, with the support of the State Society and Governance in Melanesia Program (SSGM) from the Australian National University, I developed a project called “Stop Sorcery Violence in PNG”, consisting on a website that showcases, through articles and videos, the first-hand testimonies of the main stakeholders participating on the research. The project has been for me the way to give back to the community, as they expressed one of their main needs was to be more visible so they could receive more support from the national government and from international organisations.

The research, then, can be divided in four phases:

- 1) Literature and media review,
- 2) Development of a support network,
- 3) Fieldwork,
- 4) Presentation of the findings (thesis writing and project development)

Literature and media review

In order to be able to approach the object of study and understand it as much as possible, a deep literature review about the social, political, economic, cultural and religious context of the country

has been essential. I have looked at the history, colonial influence, traditions and cultural practices, and also into many texts that had previously studied issues related to magic, witchcraft, sorcery and their related violence in the country. I have also done a media review to see how the issue of sorcery and witchcraft-related violence has been handled by different national and international newspaper and on-line sites. It has also been a must to connect the sorcery-related violence with the controversial *Sorcery Act 1971* and make an overview of texts describing the progress of the situation of women and their rights in PNG.

After getting a comprehensive understanding of the country and its context, it was necessary to limit the geographical and social area in which the research has taken place. In Papua New Guinea there are hundreds of tribes with much differentiated beliefs and practices. It would not be correct to generalize the results of the research to the whole country. As the characteristics of sorcery and witchcraft beliefs and the prevalence of their related violence do not affect in the same measure all the different areas of the country, I decided to limit the study to five provinces in the region of the Highlands: Simbu, Eastern Highlands, Southern Highlands, Western Highlands and Jiwaka²². This decision is based on a higher prevalence and brutality of these violent practices in this area.

Developing a support network

In order to do an ethnographic research, a crucial part of the investigation was the fieldwork. For the kind of research that I was aiming to do, I could not limit my techniques to literature review and analysis. The first-hand contact with the stakeholders was the only possible way to answer the research question if I was to do a meaningful work. One of the main and most difficult tasks during my research was to set up a network of collaboration to get support while carrying out my research on the field. As I started gathering information about Papua New Guinea, I discovered that the preparation for the fieldwork would be more difficult than I initially thought. As most of the stakeholders I was targeting for my interviews live in rural areas and belong to small communities, communication was very difficult if existent at all. In most cases, I did not even know who these people and organisations were, as their presence in academic or media production is extremely low.

Because of the difficulty on reaching the grassroots level in Papua New Guinea while being based in the Netherlands, I started making the first contacts mainly with bigger humanitarian institutions, mostly Australian organisations partnering with local activists in Papua New Guinea. I approached Pacific Women Shaping Pacific Development (PWSPD), International Women Development Agency (IWDA), Oxfam Australia, Secretariat of the Pacific Community (SPC), Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT), the State, Society and Governance in Melanesia Program from the National Australian University (SSGM – ANU), UN WOMEN and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) within others. Some of these contacts were more successful than others, but what all of them did make very explicit was the need for me to be extremely careful, as some parts of the country can be very dangerous, especially for women, due

²² See Annex 1 for a political map of Papua New Guinea.

to the high prevalence of violence and crime. Safety and security had to be a priority when planning the fieldwork: accommodation, transportation, and interpersonal relations and interactions should always be chosen taking these concerns into account and trying to minimize risks.

In this regard, I am especially grateful for the support received by Miranda Forsyth and the SSGM, Philip Gibbs, Tessa Walsh and the IWDA, and the Melanesian Institute. Their assistance has been crucial when setting up a local network in Papua New Guinea, helping me to acquire more specific knowledge about the current situation in the country, providing me with secure shelter and connecting me with the activists on the ground. The fieldwork would not have been possible without them.

Fieldwork

I finally travelled to Australia and Papua New Guinea at the beginning of May 2014 with the objective of collecting qualitative data that helped me to answer the question of my research. I stayed in Australia for two weeks, where I conducted two in depth-interviews and I participated in a *Haus Krai*²³ in Brisbane. Then I flew into Papua New Guinea, where I spent a total of 10 weeks. In Papua New Guinea I was located in Goroka, capital of the Eastern Highlands Province, where I stayed at the Melanesian Institute²⁴ (MI), an ecumenical research institution that has carried out several studies on sorcery and witchcraft beliefs, practices and their related violence. The Melanesian Institute served as a base-camp during my stay. Because of his excellent location it allowed me to easily move around covering the five provinces of the Highlands that the investigation comprises. It was also an excellent environment for research, as its library is probably one of the most specific ones regarding Melanesian and Papua New Guinean affairs, and it counts with numerous professionals and experts on the topic.

The main techniques that I have used during my research on the field are in depth-interviews, observation, participant observation and focus groups.

In the 10 weeks of fieldwork that I spent in Papua New Guinea I conducted over 50 in depth-interviews²⁵ of an average duration of 45 minutes each. The interviews took place in Canberra, Brisbane, Port Moresby, Goroka, Kundiawa, Wara Simbu, Mingende, Minj, Kerowagi, Mount Hagen, Banz and Mendi. From the people interviewed, 28 of them were women and 24 men. All of them were between the ages of 25 and 84 years old, with the main weight on the range from 45 to 65 years of age. From these 52 people, 45 were nationals of Papua New Guinea and 7 were foreigners

²³ *Haus Krai* is the *Tok Pisin* word for funeral and mourning. A *Haus Krai* is a very complex and demanding ritual (Tefuarani 2012) where people 'cry for the victim'. With a similar meaning, this concept has recently been borrowed by Human Rights and Feminist groups and used as a 'call to action to end violence against women in PNG' (Aus-PNG Network 2015).

²⁴ The Melanesian Institute (MI) is an ecumenical research, teaching and publishing institute. It is designed to help churches, government and other organisations speak more clearly to the needs of the people in Melanesia. Melanesian Institute staff have experience of living in Melanesia as well as qualifications in areas like anthropology, sociology and theology. MI's research focuses on topics of pastoral and social concern to people in Melanesia.

²⁵ See a full list of the people interviewed in Annex 3.

(3 Australians, 1 British, 1 Danish, 1 New Zealander, 1 Swiss and 1 Polish). All the in-text references presented in *Italic* correspond to the words and ideas expressed by the participants and extracted from the interviews that I personally conducted. The participants on the research were very diverse. The main reason that made them suitable participants for the research was their connection with the issue of sorcery and witchcraft-related violence in one way or another, especially because of their interest on fighting against the brutality of the situation.

I decided to use in-depth interviews because they are an excellent technique to understand the lived experiences of people and they are especially useful to reach the hidden perceptions of the respondents and listen directly to their voices (Hesse-Biber and Leavy 2006). In addition, in-depth interviews are oriented to gather information on a specific topic, in this case all the issues surrounding sorcery and witchcraft-related violence, from the perspective of the interviewee, escaping as much as possible influences from the researcher. Because of all these characteristics, the benefits of in-depth interviewing are clearly aligned with the feminist ethnographic approach that I chose for this research. Shulamit Reinharz, professor of sociology specialised in Women's Studies, perfectly expresses why this kind of interviews are very suitable for qualitative research in the field of Gender Studies:

Interviewing offers researchers access to people's ideas, thoughts, and memories in their own words rather than in the words of the researcher. This asset is particularly important for the study of women because in this way learning from women is an antidote to centuries of ignoring women's ideas altogether or having men speak for women. (Reinharz 1992: 19)

The participants comprised survivors victims of sorcery and witchcraft-related violence, women victims of gender-based violence, Human Rights Defenders, leaders and members of women's and pro-human rights groups, peace mediators, religious workers (priests, sisters, bishops, laic staff), researchers and academics, medical staff, and government officials. Most of the interviews were conducted in English, but in some cases there was an interpreter for some interviews that were carried out in *Tok Pisin* or in *Tok Ples*²⁶, especially during the parts of the research that took place in the most rural areas.

Observation and participant observation were also techniques used in this investigation. The difference between them is that, as it has been defined by Atkinson and Hammersley (1994), the second one is the 'observation carried out when the researcher is playing an established participant role in the scene studied' (1994: 248). These authors also defend that any kind of social research constitutes somehow a way of participant observation, as the researcher cannot study the world without being a part of it. In this regard, this technique is sometimes considered more as an attitude or position in the world rather than a particular method of research (Atkinson and Hammersley 1994).

²⁶ *Tok Ples* is the pidgin word used to refer to those local languages spoken in PNG (vernacular). It comes from the English words "Talk of the Place". There are more than 800 *Tok Ples* in Papua New Guinea.

In my specific circumstances, observation and participant observation allowed me, up to some extent, to integrate myself in the community and to get a deeper understanding of the cultural dynamics going on around me. During the research I had the privilege of sharing a lot of time and experiences with some of the participants. In many cases, they took me in and considered me, I believe, not as “one of them”, but as “one with them”. I shared shelter, food, trips and long informal conversations with them, which gave me probably the most important insights for my research and provided me with a priceless personal enrichment. By accompanying some of these activists, especially the Human Rights Defenders and some religious workers, I could observe from the front line how they work, their difficulties, their frustrations, and also their success. In this regard, I participated in the rescue of a group of people who had been hiding in the mountains for two weeks after fleeing their community because of sorcery and witchcraft accusations; I took part in a community consultation with Chiefs in Kudjip; I have attended as an observer a one-week workshop on Male Advocates against Gender-based violence in Banz, an awareness session on the Christian approach to Sanguma beliefs and the violence arising from it in Kipiara, and a two day workshop for the development of the National Action Plan Against Sorcery and Witchcraft Accusation-related violence in Port Moresby; I was in a village court in Goroka when a woman was taking to court a man who had accused her publicly of being a witch. I was also present few times when local activists were assisting women who had fled before being tortured because of sorcery accusations. And I could see in Par the first group meeting of a research project trying to assess the connections between deaths and sorcery and witchcraft accusations.

Another technique that I applied in a couple of occasions was the focus group, considering so a meeting where several people approach the topic in a relaxed way, which, up to some extent, reveals dynamics that are not reflected during the individual interviews. As defined by Jenny Kitzinger, communication professor and expert on focus groups research methods, a focus group is very useful to collect data from several participants simultaneously. The interaction between them is part of the method itself and during the development of a focus group ‘people are encouraged to talk to one another: asking questions, exchanging anecdotes and commenting on each other’s experiences and points of view’ (Kitzinger 1995: 311). I chose this method in a couple of occasions during my research because it is considered to be very suitable for cross-cultural research, as it is useful for identifying shared knowledge and common perceptions, and it easily shows group values and norms (Kitzinger 1995).

In this regard, I took part in a focus group with around 20 Peace Mediators (all of them men) in Minj, in which they expressed how the current situation is regarding the cases of sorcery and witchcraft accusations in the most remote villages of Jiwaka province, and which ones are their challenges and difficulties when dealing with them as mediators and authority figures in the community. A second focus group took place in Mendi with a group of around 20 women from the Catholic Women’s Association of the Southern Highlands. They discussed about previous cases of sorcery-related violence that had occurred in the area and their point of view on why women were more likely to be accused and which ones could be the aid systems that they, as women, could set in place to support each other.

Another important aspect to be considered for the methodology and the process of research is the fact that all the interviews in Australia and Papua New Guinea have been filmed. I made a special effort on capturing through video what I experienced during my fieldwork. I recorded some of the work of the activists and also some of the social and cultural realities that I faced during my stay in Papua New Guinea. I have to admit that a comprehensive filming of my fieldwork highly affected the research process, as most of the times it increased its difficulty because of technical and logistical matters. However, I believe, it also had a positive effect when gathering information, as it encouraged people to speak up bravely as they thought their testimonies would have a bigger impact. Since the moment I chose this issue as the research topic for my Master's thesis, I decided that a more theoretical account of the investigation will be captured in this thesis and that I will also develop several audio-visual materials in order to advocate for the cause on a more general level. Despite the added difficulty, I believe that both components are important as they target different audiences, which expands the potential influence. Despite the very different ways they are presented, they still share the same fundamental objectives: making visible a terrible form of gender-based violence against women, highlight the work of those local women and men that are taking a stand against sorcery and witchcraft accusations in the Highlands of Papua New Guinea, and bringing a more constructive and less ethnocentric view to the current academic and media discourse.

In summary, I am very satisfied with the results of the fieldwork, because despite the difficulties I was originally facing, I had the chance to discover the perceptions that the different members of the community have about these practices and how they experience them. Probably the most crucial and meaningful part of the research has been to learn about the local reactions triggered by sorcery and witchcraft accusations-related violence. I did that by focusing on the different agents and groups that are condemning this gender-based violence against women, asking and offering solutions for a positive change. It has also been very interesting to identify and give voice to the feminist ideologies present in these groups. At the same time, I have observed and analyzed the governmental policies, or the lack of them, that seek to promote and implement effective measures to eliminate these discriminatory practices and to ensure a real and efficient application of the laws in pro of the human rights conventions that have already been ratified by the PNG government.

Presentation of the findings

At this stage, the presentation of the findings of this research has been done in two different supports. One of them is the current thesis, used as an academic medium to back up the outcomes captured by the research. The second platform is a website, *Stop Sorcery Violence in PNG* (www.stopsorceryviolence.org), supported by the State, Society and Governance in Melanesia Program from the Australian National University (SSGM – ANU) and developed by myself, which contains videos and articles with first-hand information about real stories directly told by the women and men who are personally involved, allowing the general public to get a new insight from the hands and voices of the main stakeholders.

My aim when presenting the findings has been to integrate the most feasible requests and proposals that seek to overcome the issue, presenting possible paths and options for a better

future. I focused on listening and compiling the voices of those who are directly affected by this matter as I believe that there is no other way to address this issue in a respectful and fruitful manner. As I have already explained about my position in this research, I will not analyze neither make a judgment of the beliefs, practices or programs to overcome them. It is a reality that several international organizations such as UN Women, Amnesty International or Oxfam, are working already on this hot topic and providing very meaningful insights. However, there is also a growing body of local women associations such as Kup Women for Peace (Kerowagi – Simbu Province), KAFE Women’s Association (Goroka – Eastern Highlands Province), Voice for Change (Minj – Jiwaka Province), Catholic Women Associations all over the country, just to name few of them; Human Rights Defenders such as Angela Apa, Lilly Be’soer, Eriko Fufurefa, Mary Kini or Monica Paulus that, taking a feminist²⁷ approach, are mobilizing their resources to make their voices heard. On the other side, the Church, especially the Catholic Church in Simbu, Enga and the Western Highlands is implementing new strategies.

The opinions and proposals of these people are the ones that my research aims to highlight, because from my perspective, these local activists are the ones that can really understand the dynamics of culture, power and meaning, providing further paths and solutions that seriously engage with the context and address their real needs. Despite my intention of remaining as neutral as possible on this research, I am still the one who made the questions and the one who decided what to include in the findings and what not. In this sense, I am presenting the ones that have been in place for already some time and, consequently, are proving to be effective. I have also included those initiatives that, despite being at their initial stages, seem to promise good results. As I believe it is imperative to pay special attention to the demands and options that come up from the community and the local experts, I will be constantly referencing their words as I captured them during the interviews.

I think it is important to note that the methodology and the development of the research have been highly influenced by a series of difficulties, such as lack of reliable data, lack of previous studies with a specific focus on local solutions to sorcery and witchcraft-related violence, language barriers between the participants and me, and lack of resources, such as limited budget and time.

CONCLUSION

One of my main doubts when I was considering what methodology to apply for my research was how to approach the women in Papua New Guinea. I was afraid that I could not relate to them, that they would see me as an outsider and not open up to me. I was afraid that our worlds would be so distant that it would be difficult to find a common ground to base the research on.

²⁷ The local stakeholders do not use the term “feminism/feminist”, and if carefully examined it can be found that their idea of feminism highly differs from the general Western idea of feminism. However, I want to use this term because they do have a strong consciousness of fighting for women rights and for the issues that negatively affect women’s lives, which, in my understanding, can definitely be defined as “feminism”.

Now, after the research has been finished, I am very positive about the results. Yes, I do believe I can relate to the women in Papua New Guinea and that I can understand their worries and fears. Well, obviously with all the limitations that I have exposed above, but in my perspective, it has been possible to carry out a research that has addresses their needs and concerns and that is also meaningful for them. Some of the tools I have used are self-reflection, location, transparency of the dynamics of the process, a subject-object relationship based on equality and mutual benefit and exchange, empathy, trust, involvement, shared hope for a positive transformation and dialogue. The successful result was depending on their will to exchange their knowledge and experience with me, my capacity to recognize the value of other women's ideas, identities and abilities (Rich 1984) and the need to ensure that we are together in the same project.

Feminist Ethnography has been for me a reciprocal process where, as Kim, exposes in a brilliant way, we should 'deconstruct naturalized boundaries', pay special attention to the issues of 'agency, subjectivity and representation', approach epistemology in a different way, and give voice and authority to the subaltern, the represented. Cross-cultural analysis is possible and enriching, but we also need to be aware of its limits (Kim 2007: 113-114).

In this specific case, I approached the fieldwork in Papua New Guinea as a learning process for me, where I tried to match my interests with their interests, my objectives with theirs. My intention has always been and still is to advocate for a positive transformation, but not from my perspective, but theirs. I would like to bring up here the concept used by Mohanty of Feminist Solidarity (2003). Far away from pretending to save the world of those poor women that are suffering such a violation of their Human Rights, I envision the project more as a sum of forces and joint efforts. Even conscious of all our differences, those women and me still have many things and struggles in common, so we can unite our power and practice a shared activism. We can help each other and I believe we should do it. Cooperation is possible despite difference, and this is what I was aiming for when I started this research. Respect and recognition are indispensable. When we are able to research this way, the knowledge produced will be more valuable and meaningful. Let's continue working together, then.

3. LOCAL PERCEPTIONS, EXPERIENCES AND REACTIONS

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3. LOCAL PERCEPTIONS, EXPERIENCES AND REACTIONS

“I have been crying for so long worrying about my women who have been killed. Sometimes I’m traumatized thinking of some of them who were already killed and I can see their children neglected in the community. This just breaks my heart. But now, when I help women and they go through justice and some are repatriated, I am happy, I have a smile on my face and some of my worries are gone. I feel that I should do this work forever and I wish someone could come on board again and do work like me, to go and help other women until another generation will come in. When I do this work I just dream that the women are safe. I want more support for our women in our country”

(Fufurefa 2014)

INTRODUCTION

The following chapter tries to capture as accurately as possible the current views and perspectives of the local stakeholders directly involved in dealing with sorcery and witchcraft-related violence in the Highlands of Papua New Guinea. As explained in Chapter 2, the information provided in this section of the research is based on several academic sources and news media articles, but it is mainly extracted from the in-depth interviews carried out during my fieldwork, as well as from the personal conversations and communications established with the main activists. The transcriptions of some of these interviews can be found on the Annexes at the end of the thesis.

Despite the several books and few articles tackling the issue of sorcery and witchcraft-related violence in the Highlands of Papua New Guinea, there is a discouraging lack of data regarding what are the local initiatives undertaken in the area in order to deal with this violence. During the initial part of my research, when I was approaching the written sources before my fieldwork, I came across several sources that provided insights on beliefs, specific practices and some accounts of violence, but nothing in reference to the response measures in place. Eventually, I found some documentation extracted from the conference *Sorcery and Witchcraft-Related Killings in Melanesia: Culture, Law and Human Rights Perspectives*²⁸, organized by the State, Society and Governance in Melanesia Program (SSGM) from the Australian National University²⁹. The booklet and the podcasts

²⁸ For more information, the official page of the conference is: <http://regnet.anu.edu.au/content/sorcery-and-witchcraft-related-killings-melanesia-culture-law-and-human-rights-perspectives->

²⁹ For more information: <http://ips.cap.anu.edu.au/ssgm>

offered by the SSGM were the only materials that allowed me to get an initial idea about the local understanding and responses to sorcery-related violence. In this sense, the fieldwork and the direct conversations with the local activists have been my only access to this kind of information.

Posterior to my fieldwork, the excellent book *Talking it Through: Responses to Sorcery and Witchcraft Beliefs and Practices in Melanesia* (Eves and Forsyth 2015) has been released compiling several of the contributions presented by Melanesians and non-Melanesians at the conferences held in Canberra and Goroka addressing several factors related to the sorcery and witchcraft beliefs in the area. It is encouraging to see how the articles in this book closely match and reinforce the ideas and findings gathered during my fieldwork.

This chapter is divided into three sections. The first one presents the main perceptions that local activists hold about sorcery, witchcraft and their related violence. I will tackle topics such as the beliefs themselves, the targeted people, the prevalence of the practices and their transformation into more violent patterns, the possible motivations behind the attacks or what they consider the best approach to deal with this kind of violence. The second section of the chapter briefly focuses on the legal aspects that directly relate to sorcery and witchcraft. Some of the issues that will be approached include the lack of accountability of perpetrators, the difficult access to justice and the controversial Sorcery Act 1971 and the consequences of its repeal. Finally, I conclude the chapter with a section on the response mechanisms that are currently in place. Here I classify the local stakeholders in four groups: Human Rights Defenders and local activists, the Church, the International Organisations and, finally, the Government. In this last part, I introduce the main programs and activities that they are carrying out with the objective of alleviating sorcery and witchcraft-related violence.

I would like to remark that what is presented below does not pretend to be a comprehensive account of all the opinions and initiatives to counteract sorcery and witchcraft-related violence in the Highlands, but it intends to highlight the ones that can probably be considered the most effective and well-known.

3.1. FIRST IMPRESSIONS FROM THE FIELD

After the 52 interviews conducted during the 10 weeks of fieldwork³⁰, this passage of the thesis focuses on the information compiled during the fieldwork, consolidating ideas already present in previous research and other literature³¹ as well as new issues, opinions, concerns and challenges brought up by the participants during the interviews. The following section tries to summarize these ideas; the most recurrent ones and those that present a new perspective worth to be considered.

³⁰ For more details, see Chapter 2 “Methodology”.

³¹ For more details, see Chapter 1 “Theoretical Framework”, section 4 “Previous Research into Sorcery and Witchcraft and their Related Violence in Papua New Guinea”

The interviews during the fieldwork targeted different kinds of people providing very meaningful and diverse insights. It was curious to see how, after the two dramatic incidents of the deaths of Kepari Leniata and Helen Rumballi³² at the beginning of 2013, sorcery-related violence in PNG became a new hot topic for the international community. Amnesty International and UN bodies highly increased the pressure for the PNG government to address the issue, mainly asking for the repeal of the Sorcery Act 1971, and international media started writing about continuous tortures and killings taking place in the country. However, when talking to local activists, they confess to have been assisting victims of sorcery and witchcraft-related violence already for more than 15 years. Why something that had been almost unperceived by the International Humanitarian organisations became suddenly one of the main areas of attention? Human Rights Defenders say that these two deaths were not more or less horrific than any other ones; they were just made public, brought to the eyes of the whole world. The images of the young Kepari Leniata, tortured and burnt alive in front a big crowd and the police forces were, this time, registered by some spectators and spread throughout the media all around the world. These events constituted a turning point when dealing with witchcraft and sorcery-related violence in PNG. The international community realised how much a problem of this extent had been neglected for so long and decided to immediately intervene by applying strong pressure on the government and supporting some of the local networks. Jeffrey Buchanan, the Country Representative for UN Women PNG, expressed in a personal interview his regret about how such a horrible reality could have been dismissed for so many years.

Beyond this recent reaction from the International Community, the Human Rights Defenders in the country and many local activists have been working hard despite the incredible lack of support and resources, with the objective to save as many lives as possible and to assist survivors from this kind of violence. Their initiatives and opinions are the ones that I will focus on as I believe these people are the ones with real knowledge about the situation, better understanding of the cultural dynamics and more experience as service providers for the victims, compared to international campaigns that risk projecting western ideas onto the local community.

How do local activist see the issue?

The following section reflects the main perceptions brought up by the local activists during the fieldwork interviews regarding sorcery and witchcraft and their related violence. In this thesis, I made an effort to summarise them separately in short and specific figments for clarity purposes. However, they are all interconnected and deeply relate to each other.

Deeply rooted belief

As a researcher, it was interesting to observe how, as the academic literature previously suggested, most Papua New Guineans do believe in sorcery and witchcraft as part of a spiritual life deeply

³² For more details see Chapter 1 section 4 '**SORCERY-RELATED VIOLENCE: Prevalence and main characteristics**' and Annex 19.

interconnected with the material life. Most of the advocates and experts (Zocca 2009; Gibbs 2010; *Ericho 2014; Urame 2014*) confirmed that many people accept the real existence of sorcery powers despite their education level, their religious beliefs or despite any scientific or biomedical explanations. The belief is quickly adapting to the changes brought by modernity and industrialization, and it seems to easily coexist with Christian faith (Bartle 2005; Gibbs 2009; Eves 2011). Participants considered that this strong adherence to the belief is because it is an ingrained part of Melanesian and Papua New Guinean culture (*Urame 2014; Be'soer 2014; Gumbis 2014; Fufurefa 2014; Ericho 2014*).

From the first interview to the last one, the participants were open to express their beliefs and, in some cases, they even acknowledged the limitations that these could bring when working to eradicate sorcery and witchcraft accusations. For example, during the opening speech given by Ume Wainetti at the Implementation Workshop for the Development of a National Action Plan to Overcome Sorcery and Witchcraft Accusation-related violence in PNG, held on the 12-13th of June in Port Moresby, the National Coordinator of the Family and Sexual Violence Action Committee called for a reflection on the participant's own beliefs 'How do we deal with our own beliefs as advocates? Because many of us seated here believe in sorcery, so how are we going to do this work?' (*Wainetti 2014b*).

Addressing the violence vs. eliminating the belief

One of the questions that keeps on coming up regarding the responses to sorcery accusations related violence is if these actions should address only the violence or if they should actually focus on eliminating the belief. Most of the current initiatives center their efforts on responding to the violence. I believe this happens because stakeholders face cases where there is an urgent need for action, but a complete lack of resources. Most responses are *ad-hoc* and quite intuitive, and in general there is little time to set up a more comprehensive program that could address the root causes of the violence, such as the belief. Several of the people interviewed do not consider this as the best strategy, but they feel there is little they can do without any additional support. Miranda Forsyth, researcher and expert on the topic, when asked about if it is best to focus on the underlying beliefs or just on the negative consequences of those beliefs, she wonders 'can you actually separate the two of them?' (*2014*). The immediate need, activists say, is to break the linkage between the belief and the violence, and this is what they try to do best with the capacities they have. However, most of them wish for a more complete approach that could slowly start dealing with such a dangerous belief. Bishop Anton Bal, leader of the Catholic Diocese of Kundiawa, expresses his concern: 'Do we only study the case or do we want to go away with the belief? Then, we have to come up with a strategy [...] to convince people that this is a superficial belief' (*Bal 2014*). Jack Urame, researcher on the topic, similarly thinks:

All the approaches are directed to minimising the violence related to sorcery and witchcraft, but we talk about worldviews, as long as we don't address the belief system we will never overcome violence [...] as long as the belief is there, people will continue to attribute social crises, sickness and death to spiritual forces, so the most important question for me is how do we deal with the belief? [...] We

have to cut the roots. We are approaching the surface, but the roots are still there. This is my fear. We need to approach both dimensions. (*Urame 2014*)

There is a clear division between different stakeholders on this area regarding what the best approach would be. Despite the fact that the main efforts are put to alleviating the violence arising from the belief, some of the activists think that on the long-term the belief should be eliminated, in opposition to many others who still share it and see it as an intrinsic component of their culture. It is also important to note that the idea of eradicating the belief can be seen as problematic, especially if it follows from considering the notions of sorcery and witchcraft as false, which could be very much an approach influenced by Western ideas about truth, science and religion³³.

Mainly targeting women

The general perception, despite any reliable data to back up this claim³⁴, is that, in the area of study of this, the accusations and the violence arising from them are mainly affecting women³⁵. In other areas of Papua New Guinea, this differs and men are also targets of accusations. However, the specificities of the belief in the Highlands already portray women's body as more suitable for hosting the *kumo/sanguma*³⁶ creature and in some zones, the evil power is believed to be transferred only between females of the same family (*Ericho 2014*). Whatever the reasons are, women seem to be the main target for accusations, being more vulnerable to them due to unequal power relations in the community. When referring to assistance given to victims, all the service providers highlight the disproportioned amount of women in comparison to men.

Now we are getting more women and families accused of sorcery. They have been beaten. They have been tortured. We seem to receive about three in a week in our office. When there is a dead, they torture women, not men. The community is targeting the women. (*Be'soer 2014*).

Human Rights Defenders and local activists say that the targeted people can be classified basically in two groups: marginalized people in the community (elderly women, widows, women with no male sons able to protect them or with little resources and "dirty" looks) and people who are successful or not abide to traditional cultural norms (businessmen, owners of productive gardens, people with good economic resources or women challenging gender roles). In this regard, some interviewees talk again about how sorcery can be used as a tool for social control, for good and for bad (*Gumbis 2014; Urame 2014*).

³³ There is no space to articulate this further here; however I would like to point the attention to the need to seriously take into account this question of how Western ideas enter in the debates and interventions on this matter, especially when taking into account the (post)colonial history of PNG (that I have outline in Chapter 1).

³⁴ There are several references that highlight the fact that there is a lack for a systematised collection of data in PNG (AI 2006; Eves 2010; CEDAW 2010; Manjoo 2013). For more information, see Chapter 1 section 4 '**SORcery-RELATED VIOLENCE: Prevalence and main characteristics**'

³⁵ See Chapter 1 section 4 about the gendered nature of sorcery-related violence in the Highlands.

³⁶ See definition of these concepts in Chapter 1 Section 4 '**TERMINOLOGY: Definitions and Concepts**'

Violent patterns getting worse

As participants suggest, sorcery and witchcraft beliefs do not lead to violence in all areas of Papua New Guinea. The coastal areas are more susceptible to “counter-sorcery” rather than direct violent attacks to suspected sorcerers or witches. However, in the Highlands, the belief is directly connected to high levels of violence. All the people interviewed agree on the extension and radicalization of these violent practices. Traditionally, Simbu was considered the most active province regarding magical activities: “Simbus” are easily labeled as *sangumas* when they travel to other areas of Papua New Guinea and it is common to hear that people from surrounding provinces would go to Simbu to buy potions and spells. Most of the activists define Simbu as the area of the country where more accusations develop into tortures and killings. A common raising concern is that these practices could spread to other areas of the country where they did not exist before, which unfortunately seems to be happening judging by the recent cases reported³⁷. Jack Urame suggests that some of the reasons for this expansion could be attributed to increased geographic mobility of people, changing patterns of intermarriage, media publicity and the importation of culture from other areas of the country (Urame 2015).

The perception is that nowadays the violent patterns are getting worse and that accusations and tortures are happening more often and more violently. Activists say that anything can be blamed on sorcery: death or sickness of somebody, a car accident, failing an exam, not being selected for a job, etc. Some of them claim that is difficult to establish the percentage of accusations that respond to a genuine belief and the ones that are behind jealousy or economic interests³⁸.

Response to dramatic changes

Participants and literature (INA 2013; Forsyth 2013; Urame 2015) acknowledge the difficulty of explaining the causes of the radicalization of sorcery and witchcraft accusation-related violence. However, many of the people interviewed mentioned the specific circumstances to which Papua New Guinea has been exposed to during the last few decades as possible factors that influenced the changing patterns in the practices of sorcery and witchcraft (Forsyth 2014; Kelegai 2014; Urame 2014). Most of them consider the colonial and religious influences as the generators of huge changes that deeply modified the traditional structures that were the base of Papua New Guineans’ lives. The extremely quick changes brought up by the colonizers, such as the introduction of the market economy, the establishment of a Western-based legal system or the redefinition of the meaning of success and authority have caused much confusion within the population (Stewart and Strathern 2004; INA 2013; Forsyth 2013b; Urame 2015). The new developments have generated big imbalances in communities that few decades ago use to live according to the principles of sharing and reciprocity (Urame 2015). In the past, everyone in the community had similar wealth and a similar standard of living, but nowadays wealth and success are based on money and material

³⁷ According to cases reported on the news and personal communication with Philip Gibbs, several new cases have taken place in the provinces of Enga, and Western and Southern Highlands. See Chapter 4 section 3 ‘**Steps Forward Vs. Steps Bakwards**’ for a more comprehensive account.

³⁸ See Chapter 1 section 4 for more information on the motivations behind sorcery and witchcraft accusation-related violence.

possessions, which have left many people on a marginalized position in the community (*Urame 2014*). The very western concept of individualism clashes with the Melanesian idea that the wellbeing of the community is the first priority, and this has generated social and cultural crises. Some participants expressed that in many cases, the increase of sorcery and witchcraft-related violence, responds to an effort that tries to redress these disparities in the community and becomes a mean to channel people's frustration, especially that of the new generations (*Bal 2014*). Bishop Anton Bal says: 'Sorcery accusations have become a scapegoat for young frustrated people in the community taking advantage of the vulnerability of the situation and trying to express their frustrations' (*Bal 2014*).

Variety of underlying factors behind Sorcery and Witchcraft-related Violence

The huge problem of sorcery violence in Papua New Guinea does not respond to a single or simple motivation; there are many underlying factors intertwining in the cases of sorcery-related accusations and their consequent violence. The complexity of the beliefs and the traditional culture cannot be dismissed, but there are also so many more aspects that need to be taken into account. As some experts claim (*INA 2013; Forsyth 2013b, 2014, 2015; Matane 2014; Barker 2014a 2014b*), sorcery violence is a symptom of other bigger problems that need to be tackled holistically. Participants highlighted for example, how the weak healthcare system contributes to a high rate of unexpected deaths, which together with the extremely high illiteracy rate of the country prevents people from understanding the scientific causes of death and increases the risk of resorting to supernatural explanations (*Jaworski 2014; Menda 2014*), such as *sanguma*. Also, the general lack of legal knowledge, the existence of customary law systems, the importance given to the *glassman*³⁹, and the difficulty to access justice make people take justice into their own hands (*Advent 2014; Paulus 2014*), deciding by themselves who is guilty and what punishment they deserve. As inequality and unemployment increase, alcohol and drug consumption do too, intensifying social tensions and raising levels of violence in the community (*Bal 2014; Jaworski 2014*). As it has already been commented above, the prevalence of high levels of sorcery-related accusations and violence can be understood as a mechanism to release tension and frustration in front of social crises.

Stakeholders claim that any effective response needs to be planned under the umbrella of a multi-sectorial approach because all these motivating factors are very complex and cannot be fixed overnight. The perception is that "changes can happen" (*Urame 2014*), but that it will take long time to transform this habit.

Lack of support and organized actions

Most of the responses found during the course of the research are reactive, which means that they try to deal with the consequences of the violence once this has occurred or it is about to. Local

³⁹ Glassman or diviner is considered to be a sorcerer that is able to know who is practising witchcraft or sorcery in the community. He or she usually get paid by their services and are very respected and feared. For more information on the importance of the glassman see Chapter 1 section 4.

activists, in general, work in isolation, against social conventions, with minimum support from the community, without any economic resources besides their own, and with a complete lack of legal support from the government or from any law enforcement body. They put their lives at risk day after day to help the people accused and avoid more innocent lives to be lost. They know that cooperation networks and government support would highly improve their success ratio. However, at this stage, they acknowledge they lack capacity or resources to establish proactive initiatives to prevent the violence by addressing the roots of the problem.

One of the wishes that the interviewees expressed more recurrently was the imperative and urgent need of getting support from the government (*Apa 2014; Be'soer 2014; Fufurefa 2014; Garasu 2014; Kini 2014; Paulus 2014; Wainetti 2014a*). I have chosen two examples out of many:

The best solution is the involvement of the government [...] only the government can come down and work very close with the people on the ground. Then, we will see so many changes. (*Fufurefa 2014*)

I would like to speak to the Government: this is a national issue, and this is our people who are dying, our people who are actually being tortured. These are not foreigners, not aliens; these are the people of Papua New Guinea. It is time to have a National Action Plan to support them and help them from being tortured, abused and killed (*Oru 2014*).

The demand of the local activist for an increased involvement of the government is strong and constant. Stakeholders are of the opinion that the government does not consider sorcery and witchcraft accusation-related violence as a priority area of action, despite the increasing number of victims and displaced people caused by this phenomenon (Chandler 2013, 2014).

Approach: deep understanding and local empowerment

When asked what is needed to overcome the situation, experts and local activists deeply believe that the first step is to understand more and better what are the real causes of the issue and why it is so difficult to effectively respond to it. It is necessary to know more about the beliefs, the perpetrators, what initiatives are being effective and which ones are not. Most local activists claim that people in the communities are not heard enough by the International community (*Be'soer 2014; Gibbs 2014; Paulus 2014; Swartz 2014; Urame 2014; Walsh 2014*), and that is a mistake because they are the ones who have actually the real power to make a change. In this kind of situations there is always a debate about what approach is the most suitable: top-down or bottom-up?⁴⁰ For the advocates, a stronger presence of the government and regulatory policies and laws are a must, but at the same time they acknowledge that new laws and harder punishments alone will not reach the remote communities, the areas where the problem is much more intense (*Advent 2014; Barker 2014b; Forsyth 2015*). They advocate for an inner change, a change coming from the

⁴⁰ For a more in-depth analyses of this issue, see Chapter 4 section 2 'Right Approach: Bottom-Up or Top-Down?'

people in the grassroots. These people need to be listened to, understood and considered when designing a plan to overcome the problem of sorcery and witchcraft accusations related violence.

We have to work from their understanding, from their perspective, from their standpoint. They try to see the belief themselves and try to come up with their own decisions. We need to empower them, because we have not empowered them enough [...] this is one of the best local solutions. We should not make decisions for them. Something imposed will only be superficial, but if it is something they create, it is going to be part of them and they will live with it forever. (*Urame 2014*)

Jack Urame voices the opinion of many when calling for the imperative need to listen and deeply understand motivations and culturally specific perspectives in order to achieve a genuine and perdurable change: imposition of external values and regulations will only result in failure.

Actually, it is important to highlight that some local activists have been working on community consultations regarding the prevalence and consequences of sorcery and witchcraft-related violence. In many cases, the results are extremely positive and, starting by a single clan, they have written their own community laws rejecting sorcery and witchcraft accusations for their community (Bal 2013; *Be'soer 2014*; Forsyth 2014b)). In their opinion, and mine too, this proves that a local approach does work and that it would actually be effective on a bigger scale if economic and human resources could be allocated for these purposes.

Need for a change of mind-set

Connected to the ideas that advocate for local empowerment and for a holistic approach, many experts conclude that what is necessary is a change of attitude. Josephine Advent, a representative from the Department of Justice and Attorney General (DJAG), claims that it needs to be a change of mindset, a guided personal process that can show individuals the negative consequences generated by these beliefs and provoke a positive transformation in themselves. As exposed in Chapter 1 when talking about the Melanesian World-View⁴¹, Papua New Guineans understand the world in a very specific way. According to Jack Urame, Papua New Guineans resort to their belief system in order to find answers to unresolved questions. He says that it is a “World View dilemma”, as Melanesians understand the “material world” and the “spiritual world” as one and undivided. In this regard, sorcery and witchcraft cannot be separated from other spheres of life: the belief is so ingrained in the culture that permeates all levels of daily existence. Directly tackling the belief will not work.

We have to use the existing social structures, the communities and the context in which the belief operates, and the people. We have to use this and to try to turn the negative into the positive. Because the problem is they have not come into the state where they can realise why this belief is causing a lot of destruction. It is

⁴¹ For more details, see Chapter 1 section 4 ‘**Melanesian World View**’

lack of knowledge. And I don't mean we need to go in with a Western knowledge, we have to use the traditional belief system and understand the way people see things. We should approach from their point of view, not from ours by trying to enforce something new. We need to make them come to a state where they can understand. (*Urame 2014*)

According to Urame, and to many other activists, this change of mindset needs to come slowly, supported by the traditional social structures and embodied by the self-realisation of the people that will adapt their own belief system.

3.2. THE LEGAL APPROACH

Great number of tortures and killings arising from sorcery and witchcraft accusations are carried out publicly by a considerable number of perpetrators, usually men, acting as a group. These men take the accused women and usually strip them naked and tie them to keep them still. The torture methods vary, but most commonly the women are cut with axes or bush knives, horribly injured with hot iron bars and burnt alive in front of many members of the community who act as bystanders and onlookers. Many times, police forces are present at the scene, but they rarely intervene. Despite the, sometimes, hundreds of witnesses, most of these cases are not reported and the perpetrators are never prosecuted or held accountable for their crimes, sending out a dangerous message of impunity connected to this kind of crimes.

One of the questions that first came to my mind when I found out the problem of sorcery and witchcraft accusation-related violence in PNG was how the State deals with it from a legal perspective. Are these acts criminalised and prosecuted? It has not been that easy for me to find the information that allowed me to know how the State Criminal Justice System responds to these specific situations and I believe, unfortunately, my initial confusion regarding applicable law and prosecution is generally extended to activists, civil actors and, of course, the regular population. On the media, many articles can be found talking about the existence of the Sorcery Act 1971⁴² and briefly explaining its content and its role as a contributing factor for the raising levels of sorcery and witchcraft accusation-related violence. The act was repealed in May 2013, which brought a lot of controversy, but this decision does not seem to have been proven very effective as a deterrent for further violence.

This section approaches the legal aspects that concern the cases of sorcery accusations related violence, briefly tackling topics such as the current legislation for these criminal offences, the procedures of the State Criminal Justice System when prosecuting perpetrators of sorcery-related violence, the limitations and effectiveness of these procedures, and a couple of proposals for a possible way forward. The information presented in the following section has been mainly extracted from the recently published book *Talking it Through: Responses to Sorcery and Witchcraft Beliefs and Practices in Melanesia* (Eves and Forsyth 2015) and from the personal interviews I

⁴² For more details regarding this piece of legislation, see following section '**The controversy of the Sorcery Act 1971**'

conducted with Miranda Forsyth (Expert on criminal law directly involved on the development of a National Action Plan to address Sorcery and Witchcraft Accusation-Related Violence in PNG) and Josephine Advent (Representative of the Department of Justice and Attorney General of PNG).

Legislation dealing with Sorcery and Witchcraft in Papua New Guinea

The controversy of the Sorcery Act 1971

As it has been previously stated, it is important to distinguish between the offences committed through the use of sorcery and witchcraft practices and the criminal offences committed against alleged sorcerers and witches. Since colonial times under Australian administration, witch-killing has always been considered a crime in the eyes of the law. However, as Australians could observe that the belief in sorcery and witchcraft was very strong between Papua New Guineans, they decided to introduce the Sorcery Act 1971⁴³, a law that recognised the existence of the belief without accepting or denying the effectiveness of the powers of sorcery. It intended to legally regulate sorcery and witchcraft mainly in three different manners: first, by criminalising and prosecuting specific acts of sorcery and witchcraft, such as admitting to be a sorcerer, getting economic profit in exchange of performing sorcery rituals, or carrying instruments used for malevolent sorcery; second, by providing an offence to punish false accusations of sorcery and witchcraft; and third, by creating a provision that could consider the practice of sorcery as an act of provocation for wrongful acts, such as insults or violence, and that, consequently, allowed a partial defense in cases where the accused was charged with murder, if the murder had been committed under specific circumstances against somebody whom the accused genuinely saw as a threat because he or she had been practicing forbidden sorcery (OLCPNG 1971; Auka et al. 2015; Forsyth 2015; Stewart 2015).

After the incidents of Keparu Leniata and Helen Rumballi at the beginning of 2013⁴⁴, many international organisations focused their efforts on pressuring the government of PNG to repeal the Sorcery Act 1971 (AI 2013a, 2013b, 2013c; UNHCR 2013), considering the law a main obstacle when dealing with sorcery accusation-related violence. However, experts say that the provision of the Sorcery Act that reduced the sentence of a person convicted by murder by considering their beliefs in sorcery as mitigating factors, had been actually used only a handful of times and that ‘the Sorcery Act was for all intents and purposes a fairly defunct piece of legislation’ (Forsyth 2015: 219). Finally, the PNG government repealed the Sorcery Act 1971 on May 2013, all in block, and introduced a provision in the Criminal Code stating that any person responsible for a “witch-killing” will be charged with willful murder and sentenced to death penalty (Forsyth 2015; Advent 2014). The Sorcery Act was being reviewed by the Law Reform Commission of PNG, who advised to retain the specific provisions dealing with the existence of sorcery, the criminalisation of sorcery and witchcraft practices and the punishment of false accusations (Advent 2014; NAP 2014). However,

⁴³ See full text in Annex 2.

⁴⁴ See Annex 19 for the pages of the national newspapers reporting the incidents.

after the huge pressure, the government decided to repeal the entire act and toughen the penalties with the intention that this will serve as a deterrent, which has not being proven effective yet.

The repeal of the Sorcery Act eliminated from the legislation any reference to sorcery and witchcraft, leaving a legal vacuum for an issue that is very present in the lives of Papua New Guineans. In addition, the ability of the State to communicate these changes and to equip stakeholders with new tools to deal with these cases has been very limited, generating a general confusion between local activists, village court officials, mediators or chiefs (Forsyth 2015; Be'soer 2014). The Sorcery Act is not applicable anymore, but the belief and the fears from sorcery have not disappeared from night to day. People still see the powers of witchcraft behind misfortune, sickness or death, but they do not have any legal means to address it, as there is no law regulating or, even acknowledging, this kind of offences. If people genuinely consider that sorcerers and witches are attempting against the well-being of the community by committing criminal acts with their supernatural powers, it is understandable that they expect the sorcerers to be held accountable for their actions. If the State does not offer any solution, people take justice in their own hands and establish the punishment they consider appropriate, being this compensation, exile, torture or murder. In this regard, some experts express that the repeal of the Sorcery Act all in one was a mistake and that some of the provisions contained in it were meant to be retained and should be re-enacted (Advent 2014).

Procedures and limitations of the State Criminal Justice System

How is the State Criminal Justice System responding to sorcery and witchcraft-related killings? The court system in Papua New Guinea is divided in three levels: National, District and Village courts. The village courts belong to the Local Level Government (LLG) and they cover a population of approximately 100,000 people, comprising 10, and 20 or up to 30 villages (Advent 2014). Village Courts were established in 1975 and they deal with civil and criminal offences, trying to find “amicable settlements of disputes” and meant to apply more customary law rather than formal law (ALRC 2015). Village courts are allowed to deal with accusations of sorcery, but not with sorcery-related violence cases (witch-hunts) (Stewart 2015), which should be directed to the District Court and, if applicable, remitted to the National Court.

Sorcery-related violence can be prosecuted in our courts under charges of murder, grievous bodily harm, or even as unlawful assaults [...] The process begins when an aggrieved person lays a complaint with the police; the police then investigate and if there is sufficient evidence they will arrest the perpetrator or perpetrators and charge them accordingly. (Auka et al. 2015: 244)

When a case is reported, the police should carry out an investigation to collect evidence and clarify the course of the events. Once the investigation is done, the case should be presented in front of the District Court and if this considers that there is enough evidence to start a trial, the case will be remitted to the Office of the Public Prosecutor (OPP) and the case will be dealt with in the National Court. Unfortunately, the number of cases of sorcery and witchcraft-related violence that have

been reported to and judged by the National Court of Papua New Guinea do not reflect the real prevalence of this tragedy (Auka et al. 2015).

Ravunamu Auka, Barbara Gore and Pealiwan Rebecca Koralyo, all of them officers with the Papua New Guinea Office of the Public Prosecutor, have analysed several of the cases reported to the National Court for Sorcery and Witchcraft-related violence for the last 32 years (Auka et al. 2015). They observed that people found guilty of killing a suspected sorcerer or witch have been normally charged with willful murder or murder, and subject to a sentence of imprisonment for more than 25 years, life imprisonment or death. In the earlier times the courts used the belief in sorcery as a mitigating factor, which could reduce the imposed sentence up to one third, reducing the charge of murder to one of manslaughter, as it seemed understandable that if people deeply believed sorcerers to be a great danger for the community, they would want to eliminate the threat (Stewart 2015). However, in the last 10 years, the tendency of the PNG judiciary has been to dictate more severe sentences in these cases, considering the belief in sorcery as an aggravating factor (Auka et al 2015; Forsyth 2015; Stewart 2015). As an example of this, I find this statement pronounced by a judge presiding a case on sorcery and witchcraft-related violence, very meaningful:

A strong punitive and deterrent sentence is required to punish the offenders and to send a clear message to their own community; who apparently seem to think that it is alright to kill a sorcerer or a reputed sorcerer for that matter; that it is wrong to kill another person including a sorcerer, reputed or not, and that they will be punished by the Courts, if they do.

(Judge's statement in *State v. Boat Yokum & Ors 2002* in Forsyth 2015:230 and Auka et al. 2015:248)

As Miranda Forsyth claims, when analysing the sentences of the cases judged at the National Court on sorcery and witchcraft-related violence, it is obvious that with tougher sentences and stronger statements, the State Criminal Justice System is sending out a firm message showing these crimes are unacceptable. However, it does not seem that this position is perceived by the general population, eliminating the deterrent effect (2015). Actually, from the fieldwork interviews, most of the stakeholders highlighted the lack of prosecution of these crimes and the lack of action from the government in providing justice for the victims and their relatives. Forsyth emphasizes that focusing on sentences that include customary mechanisms and that pay attention to restorative justice could be more effective (2015): considering traditional ways of dealing with conflict, such as compensation or public apologies, and promoting the reestablishment of healthy relations between the parties in order to achieve a peaceful community.

Looking at the law, the legal procedure and the severity of the sentences, it seems that the government of Papua New Guinea is strongly fighting against sorcery and witchcraft-related violent crimes. However, just by looking at the media or talking to the local activists, it is clear that the cases arriving at the National Court are just a ridiculous minimum percentage of all the cases involving tortures or deaths of people due to sorcery accusations. Human Rights Defenders and church workers number these cases on several hundred per year. Why are these cases not

reported? Why the perpetrators are not hold accountable? Why is there a widespread impunity for the perpetrators of sorcery and witchcraft-related killings? Archbishop Young claims that “it is not the severity of punishment that deters crime but its certainty” (Social Concerns Notes 2013), and in Papua New Guinea it is almost certain that offenders will not be reported, prosecuted or punished.

Regarding the limitations of the State Criminal Justice System, the first thing to take into consideration is the State’s lack of capacity to extend law enforcement to all the geographical areas of the country: police forces are insufficient to service the entire population; they are not properly trained, poorly equipped and under-resourced (*Lari 2014; Kua 2014; Poulsen 2014; Forsyth 2015; Forsyth and Eves 2015; Urame 2015*). In addition, on the areas where the Justice System is present, many aspects of it are still very precarious. For example, Josephine Advent, DJAG representative, expresses how access to justice is still a challenge for many in Papua New Guinea, especially women:

The people who have access to justice are those ones who can easily go to the village court. For the rest will be very hard, taking into account the distance, as many people live in communities very far apart from each other [...] It is very hard to access justice at the community level. Access to justice is not really at the community level, it is only in certain areas, mainly the town areas, and those areas where they have a very effective road network and they know where to seek legal assistance or to seek justice. But usually, at that level we have ward councilors or even village leaders, who are the people to resolve the issues at the community level and most times they mediate on sorcery killings or even general accusations. If those leaders agree for the killing to take place, that’s it, it just goes ahead because they all listen to this particular person. Access to justice is a challenge still and we are trying to address that by increasing the number of village court officials in a particular court sitting and also by increasing the number of women magistrates. We realised that with more men magistrates women are not comfortable to come in and report, so now that we have more female magistrates, women are becoming more proactive and they are starting to come out and report cases [...] but still, there is a long way to go. (*Advent 2014*).

Advent explains some of the initial measures that the Department of Justice and Attorney General is setting in place in order to increase the reporting of cases of gender-based violence, as the rate of people attending the courts does not correspond to the real incidence of offences. Miranda Forsyth asked her colleagues during the Implementation Workshop for the National Action Plan Against Sorcery and Witchcraft Accusations Related Violence, ‘which ones are the difficulties to arrest and prosecute perpetrators of sorcery-related violence?’ They admitted people do not report, nobody lays any complaint: witnesses are afraid, as there is no witness protection program in the country; police do not lay charges because they are expected to be paid in order to initiate an investigation

(bribery); and the population are, generally, afraid of sorcerers, so they prefer not to have them in their own communities⁴⁵ (Forsyth 2015).

Experts claim that the general acceptance of the belief in sorcery by most of the population makes many people think that getting rid of the witches is a common good for the community and those who kill them are taking a very brave stand in order to preserve the well-being of all (Bartle 2005; *Ericho 2014; Gibbs 2014; Rafael 2014*). Sometimes, these crimes are explained and seen as very courageous actions that deserve praise rather than punishment, so perpetrators will not be reported because many times they are considered saviors. According to the law, suspected sorcerers and witches must be taken to court, where the judge will decide on their guilt and punishment. However, providing the evidence to prove a witch has been using her supernatural powers to harm someone becomes very difficult in court, as the traditional ways such as dreams, divination or torture will not be accepted (Forsyth 2015). A witch taken to court will most likely be left free due to lack of evidence. That is the reason why people do not report a suspected sorcerer, instead they prefer to take justice into their own hands and deal with the threat themselves.

For people who believe in the innocence of the women and men accused, it is unfortunately very difficult to take a stand during a public torture. Any challenging comment or action that intends to protect or exonerate the accused will easily be interpreted as a sign of complicity. It is believed that anybody trying to protect a *sanguma* does so because she or he is also a *sanguma*. People are really afraid to stand up to defend an alleged witch, as it is very likely that they will be the next ones to be accused, tortured and killed (*Bal 2014; Be'soer 2014*). Very often the police witness the crimes, but despite this, they rarely intervene or prosecute the offenders because they also believe in the dangerous supernatural powers of the accused. In those cases where they do not, they usually find themselves powerless, outnumbered and outgunned by villagers.

Possible ways forward

Following the excellent article of Miranda Forsyth (2015)⁴⁶, the prevalence and intensity of the cases of sorcery and witchcraft-related violence, pose some important questions for the Criminal Justice System and require some urgent regulatory responses. She argues that, as much as criminal law is crucial when dealing with this phenomenon, it will not be effective if it is used in isolation. Criminal justice can provide short-term measures that hopefully can reduce the incidence of the violence, but will not solve the underlying issues that contribute to the prevalence of this kind of crimes. These underlying issues will require solutions on the long run. Forsyth believes that the

⁴⁵ Conclusions extracted after my personal attendance to the workshop and also captured by the article of Miranda Forsyth (2015).

⁴⁶ I consider this article very relevant because, after personally meeting the author, I know it has been developed throughout a long process of intense research and it is the result of listening to and working together with many well-informed local voices. Forsyth compiles in this text the work and conclusions that have been brought up to her for more than one year by many legal officers and government representatives from Papua New Guinea. After personally interviewing some of these people and attending myself one of the workshops where many of these discussions took place, I feel this article really gives voice to most of the concerns of the local experts. In addition, her powerful insights are extremely valuable.

repeal of the Sorcery Act 1971 will not be enough to stop the violence and that additional legal measures need to be introduced. If most of the population still deeply believes in sorcery and witchcraft, a simple direct resolution from the government will not change this overnight: 'the problem of sorcery- and witchcraft-accusation violence cannot be simply responded to by treating the belief as 'nonsense' and refusing to engage with it except to prosecute those who murder accused witches and sorcerers.' (Forsyth 2015: 221).

After her intense research and her close contact with several local stakeholders immersed in the legal sector, the author sees two possible options that could be considered when rethinking the way that the PNG government should deal with the matter from a regulatory legal approach. She proposes the Pluralist Paradigm (a framework that recognises several regulatory systems that coexist and act in a parallel way) and the Holistic Paradigm (a framework where the State cooperates with other service providers to develop a more comprehensive response, overcoming its lack of capacity). It seems that after the joint work done during the workshops of Goroka (December 2013) and Port Moresby (June 2014), both of them focused on the development of a National Action Plan to address Sorcery and Witchcraft Accusation-related violence in PNG, participants established the Holistic Paradigm as the most feasible option, directing their efforts towards a joint strategy with shared responsibilities between the State, churches, academic institutions, civil society actors and organisations, international bodies and other relevant partners. They decided to focus on breaking the connection between the belief and the violence, and saw this cooperative action as a practical and effective response that could provide positive results⁴⁷.

For what is specific to the area of legal action, Miranda Forsyth suggests several measures such as creating a series of offences similar to the ones contained in the repealed Sorcery Act that would deal with the practice of sorcery and witchcraft, but being very careful with the wording used so that the new offences would criminalise the intention of causing harm, the threat to do so or the action of accepting money and making economic profit from people's beliefs and fears. She proposes that the new laws should be complemented with:

[A] range of other regulatory initiatives, such as awareness-raising in villages about the criminalisation of such offences, training of police and prosecutors and paralegals about how to use the provisions, development of witness protection programs, capacity building for community leaders to start to break down environments of fear, and making reliable connections between community leaders and state criminal justice personnel. (Forsyth 2015: 227)

These additional measures suggested by Forsyth could reduce impunity and increase the accountability of perpetrators. Furthermore, the State should reinforce the existence and build the capacity of other means that deal with accusations of sorcery and witchcraft in a non-violent way, such as village courts, community mediators, church workers, chiefs and community leaders. Restorative justice should be considered much more by the State, and district courts and police

⁴⁷ See further section on the NAP for details about the development and the content of this National Action Plan in Annex 20.

forces should be aligned to support these initiatives. She explains how the criminalisation of false accusations is a delicate issue with several pros and cons, because by criminalising them the social tensions arising from these accusations and leading to further violence could be reduced; on the other hand, this could make accusations more hidden and more difficult to counter-act. She proposes that a better choice would be to criminalise the incitement to violence connected to sorcery and witchcraft accusations.

Altogether, I believe that the ways forward suggested by Forsyth are very relevant and representative of the voices of Papua New Guineans, relatively easy to apply and worth to be deeply considered by the governmental bodies.

3.3. THE SITUATION ON THE GROUND: WHAT RESPONSE MECHANISMS ARE CURRENTLY IN PLACE?

Unfortunately, peace work, reconciliation and forgiveness do not make good headlines in newspapers, but burning witches does, so it is easy to have an out of balance view. We need to be aware of that. Perhaps it is difficult for people overseas because when they see these headlines, they think that everyone in PNG is involved in this sort of thing, which is not true. The majority of Papua New Guineans feel that these sort of thing is horrific and they would not want to take part on it at all....But that does not make news, does it? ... There is much more good happening in PNG than bad. There is much more peace work going on than war or violence. There is that violence, but if you want to look at the cross-section of society and people's lives, there is much more people putting up with other people, forgiving other people and doing things for other people, than ever doing harm. It would be nice if that would make headlines, but it doesn't. (*Gibbs 2014*)

I find this quotation extracted from the personal interview I did with Philip Gibbs very meaningful, and I would like to emphasize that the specific point he makes constitutes the main focus and reason for my research: stop the accounts of horrific and sensationalist violence and rather concentrate on the positive initiatives undertaken by local activists to overcome the high level of violence arising from witchcraft and sorcery-related accusations.

In the following section, I will give a brief account of the local initiatives against sorcery-related violence that I came across during my fieldwork in the Highlands. I want to clarify that by no means the following constitutes a comprehensive account of the response mechanisms in place, but a compilation of the most organised, accessible and effective efforts carried out by locals. During the 10 weeks of fieldwork, I had the privilege to meet, interview and be a first-hand witness of their everyday work. I asked them about how they organise themselves, which ones are their main objectives, funding, resources, procedures, challenges and wishes. After 53 interviews, I decided to classify the several actors within four main groups: Human Rights Defenders and Local Activists,

Church initiatives and programs, the work of the International Organisations, and the actions taken by the Government.

Human Rights Defenders and Local Activism

Local activism is by far the most extensive group of all and the one I held the closest contact with. I believe it is a really crucial group because it is part of the civil society of PNG, expressing the will of the citizens to act in a defense of a cause. In my opinion, it is impossible to quantify the number of activists, as despite the several organisations properly registered as associations or community based organisations (CBOs), there are hundreds of individuals that freely collaborate trying to make a difference, just volunteering in any of the existent associations or by supporting survivors, hosting victims, participating in rescues or providing assistance during and after the relocations. The number of local activists is huge. Some of them, who provide services for people as their main occupation, describe themselves as Human Rights Defenders. Many others just act instinctively, without considering themselves as any kind of activists; they just act according to their principles of protecting and helping those who are in need.

These activists are local men and women that in many cases belong to organisations working towards the well-being of the community by providing several services. Most of these associations are founded and led by women, and besides their social component, they have a clear feminist⁴⁸ approach, working for gender equality, women empowerment and the eradication of gender-based violence. Their leaders and collaborators are usually strong middle age women who have been victims themselves of gender-based violence, feeling the unfortunate burden of being a woman in Papua New Guinea. Victims of abuse, beatings, sexual violence, accusations of witchcraft, most of them were deserted by their husbands and abandoned with their children. That is why they decided to take a stand for themselves and for the other women in similar situations, working for the current and future generations to end the unjust violence and lack of opportunities for girls and women in their country.

Monica Paulus, one of the most well-known Human Rights Defenders, gives her personal reasons that motivated her to start advocating for women's right in Simbu province:

I had a marriage that was very violent [...] I also used to believe in sorcery, and I didn't take it that seriously....but that torture that the women were going through was really inhuman, so I felt that I should stand up and start helping others. And something particular happened in the village. They tortured and they killed one of my sisters with the other cousin of mine, so that was the thing that drove me into

⁴⁸ The local stakeholders do not use the term "feminism/feminist", and if carefully examined it can be found that their idea of feminism highly differs from the general Western idea of feminism. However, I want to use this term because they do have a strong consciousness of fighting for women rights and for the issues that negatively affect women's lives, which, in my understanding, can definitely be defined as "feminism".

doing it, so I started to become vocal about this thing and I came out and I started to help others. (*Paulus 2014*)

Since she started her work, almost 15 years ago, Monica has faced many difficulties: she lost her house, had to live displaced, with little economic income and always fearing for her security. She thinks about quitting once and again (*Paulus 2014*), but she knows that an increasing number of men and women rely on her and her work.

For these local activists, sorcery and witchcraft accusations related violence is part of the bigger picture of Violence Against Women (VAW). Lilly Be'soer, leader of the organisation Voice for Change, clearly affirms that sorcery violence is deeply connected to the fact that Gender Based Violence is accepted as a cultural norm in Papua New Guinea: women are men's property bought through bride price⁴⁹, consequently men think that they must respond to the husband's wishes and deserve to be hit when they need to learn a lesson (*2014*). Human Rights Watch classifies PNG as one of the most dangerous places in the world to be a woman due to its endemic gender-based violence (HRW 2015).

Local activists and civil society associations provide a reactive response to many social issues, including sorcery- and witchcraft-related violence. Due to the lack of governmental action, people organise themselves as they can in order to cope with the problem and alleviate the consequences of the violence. They mainly provide support services for survivors, such as counseling, medical care, legal assistance, temporary accommodation, relocation and repatriation services. More recently, they are developing "Rescue Teams" to be able to release the accused before the violence arises. They also provide legal advice and assistance to support those who want to take their cases to court or to the peace mediators; deploy advocacy programs that raise awareness about rights and obligations of people, the negative consequences of the violent practices related to the belief, where the law stands and where people can go to look for help; and also focus on community training in areas such as promoting human rights, combating gender based violence or creating safer communities.

Most of these organisations have been in place for 15 years already, reacting to a situation that was neglected by government and international agencies for so long. Their continuous work, their sacrifice and their success have made them gain recognition and credibility within the community. They are praised women, listened to by chiefs, mediators and by the big majority of the community. They affirm that, after all these years, they can see the change happening slowly. There is definitely an increase on the demand for assistance and for more support services (Be'soer, Fufurefa, Kini and Paulus 2014) and they feel proud of the achievements, despite the fact they recognise there is still a long way to go.

⁴⁹ Bride price is the money or property (jewellery, pigs, cash, etc) paid by the groom and his family to the bride's family during the marriage ceremony. Some people claim bride price is one of the main causes of marital violence, as men look at their wives as properties they bought rather than partners. For more information, see Mantovani 1993 and <http://www.violenceisnotourculture.org/News-and-Views/papua-new-guinea-police-cite-bride-price-major-factor-marital-violence>

Now we are doing something to our clients. Compared to the past, these 14 years, I could have done something, but some of these good ones have died. There was lack of information. What we could help, we helped, but others were killed, most of them were killed [...] I strongly believe on the kind of work that I do. And I have seen so many good things [...] I see them, when they approach us they are in a terrible situation, when we help them out they feel great. We see them coming out with a face showing they are really happy and when I see the happy face I always feel satisfied [...] we are doing a great work and I am very pleased. (*Mary Kini 2014*)

Rapid Response Team

In front of this improvised response on an ad hoc basis, Oxfam Australia decided to support and empower these organisations by providing funding to specifically fight sorcery and witchcraft accusation-related violence and its consequences. On October 2013, Oxfam started a pilot project to establish a Rapid Response Team (RRT)⁵⁰ with the aim of quickly responding to situations of accusations before these escalated into violence. The main objective was to save as many lives as possible. They chose three local organisations with a long trajectory and demonstrated success: KAFE Women's Association (Goroka – Eastern Highlands Province), KUP Women for Peace (Kerowagi – Simbu Province) and Voice for Change (Minj – Jiwaka Province). The project provided funding and also capacity building for the activists (*Be'soer 2014; Fufurefa 2014; Kini 2014; Paulus 2014; Wauga 2014*). It allowed finding District Vocal People in the communities: people who working undercover could identify a risky situation when accusations of witchcraft arise. These people are provided with some resources (mobile phone and credit to call) to quickly contact the organisation, explain the situation and give the exact location where the incident is about to happen. The early warning allows the Human Rights Defender to set up a rescue operation with the police. Funding for the police car's fuel and some extra money for the police lunch is key to get the rescue team running as soon as possible. With the assistance of the District Vocal Person, the rescue team is able to get into the village and take away the accused people (women mostly) before there is any killing. After the bigger danger has been prevented, the team focuses on providing medical assistance for the survivors (many of them have been already cut, beaten or burned), counseling and a temporary safe place to stay. Afterwards, the survivors, called "clients", and the team will assess the situation and decide what the best option is. The will of the client is always respected and the possible alternatives generally comprise:

- **Return to the community:** only in the few cases where the accusations were not too serious and it seems that there is no further danger. Sometimes this solution can be accompanied of some kind of restorative justice mechanism, such as compensation or community mediation. However, it is considered very risky, as a person who has been

⁵⁰ Oxfam includes this project inside the Eliminating Violence Against Women Program. More information at <http://www.oxfam.org.nz/what-we-do/where-we-work/papua-new-guinea?gclid=CIWxgtLej8cCFRQatAodZ1sE1Q>

labeled as a *sanguma* or witch once, remains under suspicion and vulnerable to new accusations.

- **Relocation:** one of the most common and secure options is to abandon the community right away. The victims, and sometimes their family members need to be hosted by other people in a community nearby for an indefinite period of time. They share their house and their little resources, as the survivors normally come empty handed. This option, which happens quite often, shows the good will and solidarity of many Papua New Guineans.
- **Repatriation:** despite the confusion that the term “repatriation” can cause, it refers to the relocation to the original place of birth of the woman. In Papua New Guinea, most women marry outside their clan and province, moving into the husband’s village after the ceremony has taken place. In their new community, these women are always strangers and lack support networks. Once they have fled, they cannot survive in their own, as they do not have land or any other resources. One of the most common options is to find a place for them to stay with their relatives, back in their place of origin. Plane tickets or land transportation will be provided, which entails high costs. However, this is normally considered the safest option.
- **Legal assistance:** regardless of the chosen alternative, victims can always decide to take their cases to court. In these cases, the Human Rights Defenders will try to provide legal assistance. Unfortunately, very few choose this option, as the access to justice is expensive and very complicated, and prosecution is normally very difficult. Costs are involved on getting medical records, paying the police for the investigation, covering the court fees and paying for transportation. It is a lengthy and costly process that most victims cannot afford, and the funding for the Rapid Response Team is limited and needs to be carefully managed to cope with the many existent cases.

The RRT is, according to the activists, a great achievement. They show immense gratitude to Oxfam for funding and supporting their work. However, despite the improvements and the fact that this last year activists admit to have saved many more lives thanks to this initiative, it is clear to everybody that there are still many shortcomings: resources are still very scarce, which creates difficulties and slows down the response in many occasions. There are still many instances when the rescue team cannot get into action because there is not enough funding available. Funding is provided little by little and needs to be carefully justified, many times in advance, with receipts and invoices, a request that might seem very reasonable in a Western environment, but that is not so easy to accomplish in PNG. Oxfam also distributes the money given by the donors in several batches with different purposes, which causes much confusion and complications when the money destined for salaries or repatriation is finished, but there is still several thousand kina available but not usable because they have been allocated to capacity building workshops.

In my humble opinion, the RRT is an excellent initial step, but it needs to be worked out meticulously and more closely to the local women that are carrying out this job.

The Highlands Women Human Rights Defenders Network

The Highlands Women Human Rights Defenders Network (HWRDN) is an organisation created in 2013 that brings together the several community based organisations, civil society associations and individual local activists that have been working for many years to defend the Human Rights throughout the seven provinces of the Highlands. “The HWHRDM aims to promote peace building, end tribal warfare and eliminate gender-based violence in communities of the Highlands”⁵¹ (HWRDN 2015). As activists did not feel strong as individuals when facing real troubles, they decided to set up this organisation to work together as a team and support each other’s work (*Kini 2014*). The Network intends to be one voice when dealing against Gender Based Violence and to establish a strong network of resources and collaboration.

The Network is supported by some International Development Agencies. The women meet periodically, take part in workshops and trainings and express the issues they face in front of the group, so that they can all find a workable solution. Between the meetings, they also stay in close contact by phone, referring cases to each other when they believe another organisation is better equipped to deal with the specific situation. The HWHRDN is a great initiative for collaboration, capacity building and empowerment, as the women feel recognised and supported. They deeply believe that throughout the organisation, they can make a change for women in Papua New Guinea, that their voices will be heard. Despite its limitations and the fact that it is still on the initial stages, I do believe it has a great potential and it will bring exceptional results, as it is an empowering structure that complements the passion of the activists with additional support and knowledge.

Challenges and limitations

As explained above, the work of the Human Rights Defenders and the local activists is very risky and precarious. Lilly Be’soer says that there are very limited services for survivors, and the assistance given is, unfortunately, not properly coordinated. The main challenge, as they express it, is the lack of funding and the consequent lack of resources. There is never enough money for transportation or fuel: most of the HRD do not have a vehicle and they have to rely on public transportation or pay for the fuel for the police car, just to be able to move around. This terribly slows down their work, preventing them many times from attending meetings or court cases on time, or starting a rescue as soon as possible. In many occasions, they also run out of phone credit, losing contact with their counterparts on the field and putting the whole operation at risk. Once the victims have been rescued, the clients need to be hosted in a secure place. Unfortunately, despite the constant demands, there are no safe houses in the Highlands, which pushes the activists to use their own houses as a refuge, as the budget is so limited that they cannot always afford temporary accommodation for the victims. Funding for relocation, repatriation and to cover first hand needs is

⁵¹ For more information, see <http://womenrightsdefenders.wix.com/papuanewguinea> and <https://www.facebook.com/HighlandsWomenHumanRightsDefendersMovement>

also a problem. Follow up of cases is rarely made, as it also requires additional resources and time⁵².

Another crucial issue they face, derived from the lack of money, is that the activists are not paid (*Apa 2014; Be'soer 2014; Fufurefa 2014; Kini 2014; Matane 2014; Paulus 2014*). In general, they do not get any salary, but continue doing their work voluntarily because of their principles and their passion. However, this deeply affects them, as they also face economic hardship and struggle to provide for their children, their family and themselves. They depend on other women and family networks, but this is sometimes a source of problems too, as there is a lack of understanding and support for what they do within the community and their closest ones (*Paulus 2014*).

Another aspect that the activists complain about is the absence of police presence and their general lack of collaboration (*Be'soer 2014; Meier 2014; Paulus 2014*). As explained above, law enforcement is a pending area for the Papua New Guinea government, and except on those cases where HRD have worked hard to establish strong networks of cooperation with specific police teams (*Fufurefa 2014; Kini 2014*), police do not generally facilitate the work of the activists. Little action is taken unless some extra funding is provided, and it will still very much depend on other factors such as the police beliefs, who the offenders are and how much they are willing to pay to have the charges withdrawn. A good example is how KUP Women for Peace has set up a Special Task Force in Kerowagi counting on the close assistance of the police... Sergeant James Kua and officer Peter Lari, from this Special Task Force, express their satisfaction with this collaboration, as they feel that by acting in collaboration with the Human Rights Defenders they have been able to react quickly to raising accusations and prevent the arising violence. They are proud to say that this year they have saved some lives. They believe that the structure of the Special Task Force could introduce a model for other organisations (*2014*)

When asked what should be in place in order to make their work more effective and reduce the problem of sorcery and witchcraft-related violence, the top answer within all of them is the involvement and support of the Government, which seems to be the main drawback they face. As a recently independent developing country, Papua New Guinea's government confronts multitude of challenges when having to respond to the needs of its high percentage of impoverished population. Despite the economic growth experienced in the last years, it seems that the benefits of it have not reached the main bulk of the population, as still 40% of its people live below the poverty line (DFAT 2015). Government investment prioritizes infrastructures in front of services and some opinions are very critical. For example, Mekere Morauta, former prime minister of Papua New Guinea, says:

Unfortunately, the government's record is lamentable. Public money is not being used properly; there is no budget discipline; the public service lacks capacity; and there is no accountability for expenditure or for poor results [...] and thus no real development, no improvement in services for our people. (2012)

⁵² Conclusions extracted from accompanying the activists during their work and from having private conversations with them.

The general inability of the government to provide services and guarantee the basic needs and rights of its citizens generates an extended perception of corruption and incompetence that is easily seen in the conversations with the activists.

Besides government support, Human Rights Defenders also wish for: firmer laws that allow prosecuting perpetrators and do fair judgments; salaries for the activists; stronger and extended support services for the victims, growing from a close collaboration between government, police and other service providers; mechanisms to empower women economically and with information; and mechanisms to empower the community through training and local consultations (*Apa 2014; Be'soer 2014; Fufurefa 2014; Kini 2014; Matane 2014; Paulus 2014*).

The Church

Another very important sector that provides several powerful initiatives dealing with sorcery and witchcraft-related violence is the Church and many of its religious staff. Especially the Catholic Church in the provinces of Simbu, Western Highlands and Enga has a very active role in providing assistance to survivors and also carrying out prevention work. Bishops, priests, brothers and sisters, locals and expatriates, strongly stand against this kind of violence and make a real difference on the ground. It is important to mention that there are many different types of churches in Papua New Guinea, but, as my contact was primarily with members of the Catholic Church, I will focus this section on them, excluding other initiatives that might come from the Lutheran Church and other confessions. This does not mean they do not exist; I just could not gather enough information about them. However, the role of some of these churches can be controversial, and voices have been raised in several instances to express the concern that confessions such as the Pentecostal church or the revival movements pose to the pervasiveness and spread of sorcery and witchcraft accusation-related violence (Eves 20110; *Gibbs 2014*)⁵³.

Father Philip Gibbs

One of the main activists who has been actively fighting against this issue is Father Philip Gibbs, Catholic missionary and priest who has been working and living in PNG for more than 40 years. His academic background in anthropology, philosophy and theology meet with his vast experience as a parish priest, researcher and lecturer, and make him one of the main figures of authority in the matter of sorcery and witchcraft in the Highlands of PNG. He describes his work as divided in three areas of intervention: prevention, relief and reconciliation (*Gibbs 2014*).

The prevention side mainly includes workshops⁵⁴ for the Church workers and community members: village leaders, chiefs, police officers and influential people in the community. He brings up reflection questions, deals with topics such as how reliable evidence is and starts relevant discussions which, properly guided, achieve very positive effects on people. Sometimes, there are

⁵³ For more details about the different approaches taken by the several main churches present in PNG, see Chapter 1 section 4 'Influence of the Christian missions'

⁵⁴ See program and report of one of the workshops in Annex 22.

also survivors coming in person and explaining their story to the audience. The workshops generate a lot of talk and normally, several people would feel deeply moved and decide to become active advocates against this kind of violence. He also produces films, with footage obtained from these workshops or from interviews with people who have been involved in a situation of this kind (witnesses, *glassmen*, survivors, police officers, etc.) and uses this material to raise awareness. Gibbs also employs his opportunities when officiating the mass to send out critical messages about *sanguma* beliefs and accusations, and many times his homilies make analogies and resort to examples to invite the churchgoers to reflect on their beliefs.

Regarding the relief work with survivors he says that he tries to be present to comfort and assist the people who have gone through horrible torture. These people are normally left in a very critical medical condition, with no economic resources and far from their support networks. They need assistance to cover their basic needs and also psychological counseling. He tries to connect the relief work with the reconciliation work by not only working with the victim, but also going back to the community that has tortured her and banished her from the village in order to explore further possibilities:

I would like to see that the community would realize that what they did was wrong and that there could be some of sort of reconciliation and that the person could eventually come back to the community, but that very seldom happens [...] I think it is important to speak to both sides if we are going to get anywhere. I try to understand where the people who are doing accusations, the people who are torturing, where they are coming from. We got to enter into that logic and deal with them within that logic (Gibbs 2014).

Reconciliation work, however, poses many difficulties, causing people to fear for further violence, for legal consequences and also unveiling the confusion caused by their clashing Christian and traditional beliefs (Gibbs 2015).⁵⁵

Philip Gibbs also does many other tasks simultaneously to help eradicate sorcery and witchcraft-related violence: he presented a submission to the hearing in Port Moresby for the case of the late Kepar Leniata⁵⁶; he often acts as a crucial contact for journalists, promoting constructive messages about the matter on national and international media; he is undertaking a research pilot project in Enga to monitor the incidence of *sanguma tok*⁵⁷ after any death, the Katambi project⁵⁸; he writes reports, articles and chapters for books related to the topic; and he is also member of different organisations, boards and committees that somehow are directly involved on this issue.

⁵⁵ For more information on this specific issue, see: Gibbs, P. 2015 "Practical Church Interventions on Sorcery and Witchcraft Violence in the Papua New Guinea Highlands" In Forsyth and Eves (eds.) *Talking it Through: responses to sorcery and witchcraft beliefs in Melanesia*. Canberra: ANU E Press.

⁵⁶ See full document in Annex 24.

⁵⁷ *Sanguma Tok* is the *Tok Pisin* term for witchcraft and sorcery accusations (Gibbs 2015).

⁵⁸ See report elaborated by the group in Annex 23.

5 Point Strategy

According to many, the Catholic Church is taking a strong stand against sorcery and witchcraft beliefs, accusations and their related violence. One of the most relevant strategies in place is the “5 point strategy” from the Catholic Diocese of Kundiawa. Created by Bishop Te Maarszen already in the 1980s and continued by his successor Bishop Anton Bal, the strategy tries to prevent the rise of accusations and consequent violence in the event of a sudden death (Gibbs 2015; *Bal 2014*). As its name suggests, it is constituted by 5 steps, starting by trying to clarify the causes of death through biomedical explanations. Members of the church ask for healthcare professionals to provide medical reports and clear scientific reasons that justify the causes of the death. It has been proven that the cases where health workers are not able to provide a specific diagnose are much more likely to generate witchcraft-related accusations and violence.

As a second step, it is crucial the early intervention of a church representative just after the death or during the funeral. The pastoral presence really helps to dissipate gossips about sorcery and witchcraft practices, so as soon as the church members are informed about a death that is likely to initiate *sanguma tok*, they go to the community, show their presence, comfort relatives and try to reinforce the Christian beliefs over the magical ones.

The third step requires an immediate family member taking ownership of the situation, so if there are other people willing to start accusations, this person can express the will of the family to adhere to medical reports and Christian beliefs and not to look for witches as the responsible ones for the death.

The fourth point of this strategy is to promote respect for law and order within the members of the community by helping people understand the laws, the rights and obligations of good citizens, and the sanctions established for those who do not respect them and take justice into their own hands. This helps to promote safer communities and develops a base of critical villagers that can advocate against this kind of practices, eventually evolving on community laws and community policing (*Be'soer 2014; Gibbs 2014; Jaworski 2014*).⁵⁹

The fifth and last step consists on reinforcing Christian faith as a mechanism to overcome negative attitudes and strong emotions. Gibbs affirms that Christian faith should provide an alternative to the traditional Melanesian way of understanding sickness, death and misfortune by substituting blaming others for gratitude to God for the life given (2015). Religious staff tries to foster this view throughout their work. Some examples are the workshops taking place at the parish level, the production of a training course with audiovisual support for believers, or the church sanctions imposed to those who take part in accusations or their related violence.

It is very difficult to quantify the success and effectiveness of the “5 point Strategy” of the Catholic Church in Simbu. However, the general perception is that the outcomes are positive and encouraging. For this reason, Bishop Anton Bal together with several priests, are working to extend the strategy to other Christian communities by inviting members of other churches to learn about

⁵⁹ For more information on community laws against sorcery accusations see Bal 2015; Forsyth 2014b.

this approach. The intention is to establish a uniform voice that increases the effectiveness of the efforts out to eradicate sorcery and witchcraft-related violence. Workshops for quite a big number of participants are organised by the Catholic Diocese of Kundiawa and held periodically. They talk about the current situation, discuss examples and specific case studies and explore possibilities, trying to set up strategies for efficient solutions (Bal 2014).

The Sisters' work

Another section of the Church that provides support services for survivors is the religious sisters. There are many different congregations that nurture Papua New Guinea with remarkable sisters who make the mission their purpose of life. The sisters in Papua New Guinea are impressive women who 'are involved in social work for the victims of violence, the disabled, the sick and homeless, for those who suffer from all kinds of addictions' (Official Vatican Network 2015)⁶⁰. The general relief work of the nuns is extensive and reaches many different fields, being one of them the support to victims of sorcery-related violence. The Sisters in Mendi or in Mount Hagen, for example, often host women who have been badly tortured, using the religious premises as safe houses. They provide medical attention, counseling, relative safety and protection and cover the basic needs of the victims. However, this task is very risky as it often exposes them to angry mobs that demand the release of the refugee women.

For example, Sister Gaudentia Meier, nurse, midwife and researcher with more than 50 years of experience in PNG, played a key role on the survival of one woman who was captured and extensively tortured in Mendi in 2012. She explains how the incident took place:

We heard that they had some differences in a village near by, and they said they were going to torture her. I was enquiring and then they told me they brought her to the police station. I went up there to check up what is happening and she was locked up, so I thought she is ok at least for tonight. Nothing will happen to her'. But next morning I forgot about it, and then around 12 o'clock I heard some children running by and saying "oli cooking meri", so I knew it was that woman. I asked the nurses if they would come with me. They volunteered to come along, so we went, left the car on the roadside and walked into the village. In the village, it was all secured up. In the middle, there was a stand with the iron and her hands were tied up and also her feet and she was completely naked...I tried to go in. It was all fenced up and all the people were outside the fence. I would say around 600 people, with small children, all looking at this woman all-naked. When I saw that picture, my heart was really...she had to be rescued. I tried to go in but then I was threaten, so I could not do anything. I tried to get some assistance from the police. Back to the car, up to the town, talking with the police, I said 'come and see', but they were not coming [...] I went back to the mission to find one of the priests to come with me hoping they had more respect for him...but the same happened to him. So I made a public

⁶⁰ <http://www.news.va/en/news/oceaniapapua-new-guinea-the-religious-voice-and-pr>

call: 'those who do not agree with what is happening here, come'. We prayed the rosary together, maybe about 15-20 people joined us, and we showed the rosary beads, so they could see it. Meantime people brought more tires to be burnt to make hot iron for the woman to be tortured, and then, when we finished with the rosary, the rain started, really heavy rain, so they took the woman down. (Meier 2014)

After the public torture, it seemed that the woman was, at least temporarily, out of danger. Unfortunately, the incident did not finish here, according to the testimony of Sister Gaudentia (Meier 2014), the next day the police car went to the mission with Angela and her mother, who had also been tortured. Sister Gaudentia and the other nurses took the two women in and provided medical care, but soon enough groups of people started gathering around the clinic where the two women were and asking the Sisters to release them, under the arguments that they were "*sanguma* women" and could not stay there. Sister Gaudentia Meier stood up and insisted on keeping the women, but the furious crowd started to stone the clinic and threaten to break in. The Sisters called the police and reached an agreement: Angela and her mother would be taken to the police cell and kept locked over there, and the Sisters would be allowed to visit every day in order to bring food and provide medical care.

This situation lasted for three weeks, but the women needed hospital attention as Angela had very serious burns and wounds and her mother had a broken leg and a pelvic fracture. In cooperation with Father Jan Jaworski, surgeon of the Kundiawa hospital, Sister Gaudentia gathered some help to take the two women away secretly in the middle of the night and transport them to the hospital, five hours away. Father Jaworski provided protection and treated them for two months. Once the two women were recovered, they were relocated to a safe area, not able to return to their home for fear of being attacked again.

Angela's case is only one example within many, but it proves the danger and difficulty of these cases. It also shows how the religious workers cooperate and risk their safety in order to save lives and provide relief. Religious sisters actively participate in alleviating the consequences of sorcery-related violence and their task should be more recognised and better supported.

Bishops' Statements and cooperation for an integrated approach

Recently, several other mechanisms have been adopted in order to complement the actions taken against sorcery and witchcraft-related violence. The Catholic Bishops from the Highlands Region met in mid-2013 and wrote a strong statement urging Catholic followers to reject *sanguma* beliefs and all the activities related to it (CathNews Nezealand 2013; Gibbs 2014, 2015)⁶¹. The statement was distributed to all the parishes of the Highlands in English and *Tok Pisin* and read after mass. In December 2015, Bishop of Wabag (Enga province), Arnold Orowae, President of the Catholic Bishops Conference, highlighted the admirable behavior of the Wabag policemen when protecting

⁶¹ See the full statement in Annex 21.

two women that were about to be tortured and expressed the strong stand of the Catholic Church against *sanguma* or sorcery-related accusations:

It is saddening to hear and experience such brutal killings. In this age and time we cannot continue to act and behave like barbaric people who have no respect for life and kill to protect their territories... God has given us this life as a gift and we should respect it and only God can take it back. He does not give us the permission to take away the lives of others, even the unborn, the disabled, the criminals, the unwanted, the sick, and even those who have no cure, etc.

I encourage all our citizens not to get into this bad habit of accusing innocent and defenseless people of sorcery, resulting in torturing and killing. This is a moral evil that should not be practiced. (Orowae 2014)

This is one example of the actions that the Catholic Church is taking to send the message out to its believers that sorcery and witchcraft accusation-related violence is simply not acceptable under Christian values and Human Rights principles. Besides independent actions, the Catholic Church is also participating in the development of an integrated approach together with several NGOs, government and international organisations. The objective is to get a joint strategy that will work at the national level.⁶²

At the same time, the Church Partnership Program, an initiative financed by the Australian Aid program that intends to contribute to development and social stability by increasing the capacity of church groups and faith-based organisations, is starting to focus its attention into the issue of sorcery and witchcraft accusations related violence, which might develop into new programs and higher resources for the alleviating measures already in place (Gibbs 2015).

Going further

According to Philip Gibbs (2014), there are some positive results, but there is still a long way to go. For this reason, the best approach is not for individuals, but there is an imperative need for cooperation. He proposes six suggestions for a more effective response such as: development of more prevention strategies, expansion and monitoring of church initiatives, collaboration and dialogue between different churches (especially including those whose practices can create parallelisms with beliefs in witchcraft), application of legal sanctions for perpetrators and firmer cooperation between a wider range of stakeholders (Gibbs 2015).

In summary, despite the clash between traditional beliefs and modern Christian doctrine, PNG is a country with a very strong emerging Christian consciousness. The presence of the Church in many colonial areas of the world has been very controversial as, despite being useful in many senses, such as promoting literacy or democracy, religious missions have also brought with them many colonial ideas in terms of power relations and imposition of Western ideas (Kimber Buell 2009; Maxwell 2000). It needs to be noted that the influence of the Church over the general population of

⁶² See more about the National Action Plan (NAP) in Chapter 4.

Papua New Guinea is huge. This fact, that would seem dangerous in some parts of the Western world, has actually a great potential in PNG, as the Church reaches places that government resources do not. In remote villages, where literacy levels might be really low and resources very scarce, members of the Church are still respected and listened to. For this specific reason, it is crucial to ensure that religious staff has the knowledge and the skills to deal with sorcery and witchcraft beliefs and practices, and that the message given is univocal and optimal. The work done by some members of the Church in order to alleviate and prevent sorcery accusation-related violence is paramount⁶³. However, this potential should be used to the fullest through more initiatives and stronger coordinated action.

International Organisations

As a developing country with a Human Development Index of 0.466 (rank 156) and a poverty rate of 37.5% (UNDP 2015a), Papua New Guinea is aided by many NGOs and International Organisations. Just to bring up some clarifying data, PNG received in 2013 a net official development assistance and official aid of over 656 million US dollars (World Bank 2015)⁶⁴, from which the Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) is the main contributor. For example, the total Australian Official Development Aid estimated contribution for 2015-2016 adds up to \$553.6 million (DFAT 2015)⁶⁵, which through the Australian Aid Program will especially focus on the areas of health, education, law and justice and governance. The United Nations counts with nine different agencies in the country⁶⁶ including UN WOMEN, UNDP, OHCHR and UNICEF. Besides that, many other International agencies, such as Oxfam, Red Cross, MSF, Care or World Vision within others, undertake development work⁶⁷.

As many other developing countries, most of Papua New Guinea social and environmental programs highly rely on the resources provided by external donors and coordinated by these International Organisations and INGOs. This fact causes contradictory feelings between the local stakeholders, who express their gratitude for the resources provided, but who are also able to highlight the difficulties and shortcomings of this structure.

The international initiatives in regard to sorcery- and witchcraft-related violence are not that many. From my research on the field, I could only identify few that I will present in the following pages.

Oxfam

The PNG branch of Oxfam International is probably one of the most visible heads when it comes to international initiatives dealing with sorcery and witchcraft-related violence. The organisation just

⁶³ It is important to remember that there are several confessions in Papua New Guinea and that some of them, such as the Pentecostal Church, are considered problematic when it comes to dealing with sorcery and witchcraft-related violence. For more details see Chapter 1 section 4 “**Influence of the Christian missions**”.

⁶⁴ For more information, see <http://data.worldbank.org/indicator/DT.ODA.ALLD.CD>

⁶⁵ See <http://dfat.gov.au/geo/papua-new-guinea/development-assistance/pages/papua-new-guinea.aspx>

⁶⁶ See http://www.pg.undp.org/content/papua_new_guinea/en/home/operations/undp_un.html

⁶⁷ See http://www.commonwealthofnations.org/sectors-papua_new_guinea/civil_society/

started a brand new project in September 2013 within its area of work towards the Elimination of Violence Against Women (EVAW). Kamane Wauga, Oxfam EVAW Program Officer, explained how this initiative, specifically focused on sorcery, was a new experience for the country and for the organisation itself, as “it had never been an intervention like this before in Papua New Guinea” (Wauga 2014). Oxfam decided to initially pilot this project with three partnering organisations from different provinces in the Highlands and raised over 900,000 Kina (around 300,000 Euros) for the first year. The main objectives were the creation of a Rapid Response Team in order to prevent the violence before it started⁶⁸, and also the service provision for victims, including counseling, paralegal support, repatriation and case management (Wauga 2014). According to Wauga, there are two secondary aspects of the project that are also very important: on one side, researching and understanding how the issue of sorcery and witchcraft accusations works, so that in the future more effective measures can be deployed; on the other side, building the capacity of these activists and partner organisations by working together with them, providing support on day-to-day basis, and improving their skills on accounting, bookkeeping or reporting (2014).

Oxfam claims to have developed the program under the guidance and expertise of the local women, all of them members of the Highlands Women Human Rights Defenders Movement, who had already been responding to the situation for many years. Kamane Wauga says that when the project started, the donors had big doubts about its success. However, at this point, the results of the program have exceeded expectations and the organisation is planning on extending it. On the first year, from the money received by donors destined to the project, one third (300,00 Kina) was allocated to support Oxfam’s necessary logistics to run the program, and the other two thirds (600,000 Kina) set aside for the project itself. From these 600,000 Kina, each one of the partners received 78,000 Kina as direct credit (allocated quarterly), some 200,000 Kina were used for capacity building (workshops, training, monitoring, etc.), and the rest was money destined to cover the cost of repatriations (Wauga 2014).

The local activists partnering with Oxfam seem to have mixed feelings about this new way of working. On one side, they are very grateful for the funding as they are aware that it allows them to intervene in situations where women are at risk before the violence starts, having a direct impact on the number of saved lives (Be’soer 2014; Fufurefa 2014; Kini 2014). On the other side, they acknowledge that, in order to justify the expenses and receive further funding, they are currently subjected to an excessive amount of administrative work and procedures that are very difficult to follow with their limited human and technical resources. In addition, the situation of the activists is still very precarious as the funding only includes symbolic salaries for some of them and, in some cases, there are no salaries assigned at all. However, the money destined to Oxfam’s logistics and workshops for capacity building appears excessive to some. The women also express their frustration due to the difficulty on getting quick funding for emergency cases, lack of clarity regarding the funding available and lack of personal support in front of damages directly derived

⁶⁸ Rapid Response Team (RTT) is explained in more detailed in the above section. **‘Human Rights Defenders and Local Activism’**

from their activities as Human Rights Defenders⁶⁹. It has been few cases where some of these women have been attacked or had to flee their town for a while as a consequence of their work against sorcery-related violence. According to them, Oxfam could not provide any additional support. Other complaints relate to the feeling of not being listened to and losing ownership of the process.

In summary, I agree with the general perception of the activists that Oxfam's initiative has made a difference for these women and for PNG when it comes to fighting sorcery-related violence. The potential of this program to continue growing and set effective lines of action to prevent deaths is huge. However, I also believe that Oxfam needs to highly improve some aspects such as communication and support for the activists, transparency to their eyes and, especially, take a more humble approach when dealing with the women, making them part of the decision-making process and attending more effectively to their needs and concerns, because despite of their age, limited resources and education, these "mothers" are the real experts. They know what they are talking about because they are the ones who face the risk on the ground and save women's lives.

IWDA

The International Women's Development Agency is an Australian-based non-governmental organisation that focuses on women's rights and gender equality in the Asia Pacific region. Its approach aims for a strong collaboration with local partners and they praise themselves on setting their programs, projects and areas of action after asking their partner's for their needs and priorities. In Papua New Guinea, IWDA sees the problem of sorcery-related violence as a gendered issue deeply connected to the enormous rates of violence against women in the country⁷⁰. According to Tess Walsh, IWDA Program Manager for Papua New Guinea, violence against women in the country takes different shapes: polygamy, sexual violence, tribal conflicts, etc. Walsh explains that IWDA's partners understand sorcery-related violence as a part of a bigger problem of gender violence and that for them it is difficult to approach this issue in isolation. Activists claim that having programs dealing only with one kind of violence does not respond to their real needs because "it is not taking into account the whole experience" (Walsh 2014).

Consequently, IWDA mainly provides support to organisations and activists in the Highlands and Bougainville who work to eliminate violence against women at the community level. As one of the forms of violence against women is sorcery-related violence this support also targets those who work on this area. IWDA specifically works in Jiwaka province, with the organisation Voice for Change and also supporting the HWRDN. They are currently focusing on capacity building, providing training in Human Rights, Trauma Counseling and Peace Building (Walsh 2014). IWDA provides developmental support to improve the activists' skills, bringing up new ways and procedures that they can apply to their daily work. In 2014, for example, they focused on trauma counseling, which is a crucial part of the work these activists do, very important for the healing process of the

⁶⁹ Information not reflected on the recorded interviews, but extracted from the meeting of Women Human Rights Defenders Network in July 2014 and also personal conversations with the women activists.

⁷⁰ For more information see <https://www.iwda.org.au>

community and also for themselves, as they face very complicated situations and most of them come from traumatic experiences occurred during their childhood or youth. The idea came up from the HRD themselves and the training was arranged by IWDA and delivered by Papua New Guinean women with an extensive experience working in trauma counseling.

The work of IWDA is characterised for investing at the community level, leaving aside national level programming. Tessa Walsh affirms that the reasons for this decision come to the fact that the policy and legal outcomes achieved in Port Moresby do not usually reach the broader community. National actions have, at this stage, a limited ability to change what is happening in the grassroots level because there are not mechanisms in place to implement them: people do not know the laws and village courts or policemen do not apply them (*Walsh 2014*). They believe it is necessary to work with the values, attitudes and behaviours that are leading to this violence in order to achieve a sustainable change. IWDA's approach aims to listen to the women they are dealing with because they know better than anybody what their needs are; the women are asking for support at the community level and the role of the international community is strengthening what is already being done (*Walsh 2014*).

My perception, after my interview with Tessa Walsh and my attendance to the training workshop of the WHRDN, is that despite the modest funding that IWDA is able to provide for EAW programs in PNG, the organisation is at the hearts of the Human Rights Defenders and its contribution is highly appreciated by the activists, as they receive support that directly addresses what the activists themselves really consider important, attending their professional needs and also supporting them at the personal level.

OHCHR

From the different UN agencies present in Papua New Guinea, it seems that the Office of the High Commissioner for the Human Rights (OHCHR) is the one that shows more concern for the issue. This office works at the policy level, trying to apply pressure to the government using different mechanisms, such as the recommendations from the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), the suggestions from three Special Rapporteurs who visited the country in the last years (Special Rapporteur on Violence Against Women, Special Rapporteur on Torture and Special Rapporteur on extrajudicial, summary or arbitrary executions), and research conducted to clarify the legal responses to sorcery-related violence (*Poulsen 2014*).

Based on the different findings brought up by these mechanisms, the OHCHR proposes several measures on the issue of sorcery and witchcraft accusations related violence, such as the need to put an end to impunity by taking the cases of sorcery accusation murders to judicial processes, setting up emergency measures that allow rescuing and resettling women at risk, protecting the activists who work on this field, improving support services for victims, establishing a human rights and peace education program to be implemented in schools and complemented by advocacy campaigns, and the creation of a National Human Rights Institution (Manjoo 2013; Heyns 2014).

The intentions of the OHCHR are probably the best ones and it is clear that their efforts contribute to advocate against this kind of violence. However, the real reach of these actions seems to be doubtful for many local activists and Human Rights Defenders, who would prefer to count with a more direct support on the ground. Other fronts talk about the lack of collaboration with other stakeholders, not sharing all the information gathered and duplicating efforts⁷¹.

SSGM

The State, Society and Governance in Melanesia Program, from the Australian National University has been actively involved since early 2013, when Miranda Forsyth and Richard Eves started to organise a Conference approaching the topic of Sorcery & Witchcraft-Related Killings in Melanesia. Since then, the SSGM, with a great support of the Australian Aid Program, has been a crucial party on the several efforts directed to the development of a National Action Plan to tackle the violence arising from sorcery and witchcraft accusations in Papua New Guinea. Different academics from the SSGM have been part of a Committee created to push the project forward and have highly contributed to the creation and future success of the National Action Plan. I will present more detailed information about SSGM's participation on the following chapter.

After having had close contact with some of its members, I see the contribution of the SSGM as the key piece that bands together the good intentions and the excellent ideas of the different stakeholders. Their collaborative, humble, constructive and practical approach makes things possible, transforming the local knowledge and experience into specific actions and documents. The academic approach of the SSGM is completely pragmatic, aiming at developing research and work that can actually have a profound impact in real life. They are ready to support, but most importantly, ready to listen and learn from the local experts. The SSGM has been providing great support regarding organisation, guidance and academic backup of many initiatives focused on constructively dealing with sorcery and witchcraft accusations related violence.

The Government

Another, and very important, area of action comes from the PNG government. What is the PNG government doing to alleviate sorcery and witchcraft accusations related violence? Well, the problem is that seems not to be doing much. When talking to activists about what they need for their work to be more effective, most of them strongly requested the active involvement of the government. They heavily complained about the lack of interest of the government about this issue and strongly raised their voices calling for support.

It was a very great pain for so many years and nobody seemed to come out, even our government does not come out to help us and support us, to help the women, to rescue them. (*Fufurefa 2014*)

⁷¹ Critiques gathered through personal conversations with the stakeholders and not captured in the recorded interviews.

Maybe because of this lack of government's involvement or maybe because of my inability to properly understand the system and establish a fruitful connection with it, I have to admit that I could not find much information on the government specific actions. However, I will outline a couple of initiatives undertaken by bodies directly related to the government.

CIMC / FSVAC

The Consultative Implementation & Monitoring Council (CIMC) is a consultative organisation created by the National Executive Council in 1998 that attempts to integrate civil society and private partners to develop and influence policymaking. Through extended consultation processes, the CIMC captures the needs and suggestions brought by the wider community regarding important areas by promoting dialogue between them and the government, ensuring that these recommendations are endorsed and implemented. It is chaired by the Minister for National Planning and Monitoring and its Council members belong to the Government, including secretaries from government agencies, private sector, NGO delegates and representatives of civil society (CIMC)⁷².

These consultation processes are extremely important because to some degree they allow the wider population to influence government's decisions. The CIMC gets the opinions of the stakeholders through regular forums and also from its eight sectoral committees. From all of them, the most relevant one for the topic we are dealing with is the Family and Sexual Violence Action Committee (FSVAC). The FSVAC works "towards eliminating occurrence and suffering from physical, sexual and psychological violence within families" (CIMC)⁷³. This sectoral committee was established in 2000 and works mainly on seven focus areas: increasing capacity building for institutions to better respond to Family and Sexual Violence (FSV); ensuring access to justice for survivors; providing services for victims; engaging men in advocating against FSV; promoting initiatives for effective prevention and quick response; reducing the prevalence of sexual exploitation; and increasing monitoring, evaluation and research on related topics (CIMC).

As a part of the area of work of Gender Based Violence, recently the FSVAC included the fight against sorcery-related violence into its program as a part of working for the rights of women (*Wainetti 2014a*). FSVAC counts with a wide and stable network established in all the provinces of the country, and it partners with organisations that deal with service provision, focusing on survivors, perpetrators and with a high emphasis on advocacy. Ume Wainetti, FSVAC National Coordinator, asserts that their presence on the ground is crucial to alleviate the consequences of sorcery and witchcraft accusation-related violence. She claims that the advocates have the passion to stand up for the rights of women to be protected, however there are not enough resources to provide these advocates with the necessary training that will improve their skills (2014).

The main project of the FSVAC on this area is the coordination of the development for a National Action Plan against Sorcery and Witchcraft Accusation Violence (NAP). Through a wide and intense

⁷² For more information, see <http://www.cimcpng.net/>

⁷³ To expand information on this see <http://www.cimcpng.net/index.php/committees/fsvac>

consultation process, the plan has been submitted to National Executive Council for endorsement and further policy implementation⁷⁴. According to Isi Oru, FSVAC Projects Coordinator:

What we want to do at the national level is to make sure that civil society issues are addressed by the National Government. We create avenues for people to be heard on what their experiences are on service provision in relation to sorcery-related violence for victims and survivors, so that the Government can hear and plan in terms of addressing it at the national, provincial and district level. (*Oru 2014*)

The work of the FSVAC is of high importance and it connects the needs and experiences of the stakeholders on the ground with high-level policy makers. It is a slow and intensive task that, for many, promises really positive results. Despite their direct cooperation with several government departments, The FSVAC is fully funded by development partners, such as DFAT or the UN (*Oru 2014*).⁷⁵

Department of Justice and Attorney General (DJAG)

As in any other country, the Department of Justice and Attorney General of Papua New Guinea is responsible for law enforcement and administration of justice. It is divided into 17 branches that aim to protect and enforce the basic rights and freedoms recognised by the Constitution and to respond to any question related to the interpretation or application of the law (DJAG)⁷⁶.

Some branches of the DJAG and some bodies directly related to it, such as the National and Supreme Courts, the Public Prosecutor's Office, or the Public Solicitor's Office are progressively realising of the capital importance to set up mechanisms to legally respond to the phenomenon of sorcery and witchcraft accusations and their related violence. I have exposed above that in the last 10 years, magistrates at the National Court have been imposing tougher and tougher sentences to perpetrators of this kind of crimes. However, there are only few of these cases that actually make it to the court. Some of the legal bodies connected to the Government, have started to analyse which ones are the impediments that prevent these cases from being reported and prosecuted⁷⁷ and are trying to develop new measures to address the shortcomings (*Advent 2014*).

The first measure taken by the government was the repeal of the Sorcery Act 1971, which already explained, raises lots of questions about its real effectiveness. According to Josephine Advent, Principal Legal Officer from the DJAG Legal Policy and Governance Branch, there are several other measures that are being considered and developed. For example, the DJAG is working on making easier access to justice; increasing the number of women magistrates to encourage women to report; preparing training for Village Court Officials to refer the cases of sorcery killings; and further developing restorative justice mechanisms to educate communities to be responsible for their acts

⁷⁴ Detailed information about the development and content of the NAP is included in Chapter 4.

⁷⁵ For extended information on the specific programs and activities of each focus area, see interview to Isi Oru in Annex 7.

⁷⁶ Reference: <http://www.justice.gov.pg/ministryofjag.php>

⁷⁷ For more details, see section 2 of this chapter 'The Legal Approach'

and avoid retaliation (2014). There are several policy initiatives on progress, but they still need to develop into concrete implementation plans. It is encouraging to see how the DJAG and these other legal institutions have taken up the commitment to stand against this violence and they are actively joining on the development of the National Action Plan.

The Deputy Secretary of the DJAG, Jack Kariko, claimed in a personal interview during the implementation workshop for the National Action Plan, that

The Government as a whole recognises the importance of ensuring that the issue of the violence related to sorcery and witchcraft is actually addressed, but addresses in a more meaningful and tangible manner, so that we can be able to say that we can actually tick off the action items from the different action areas that have been identified (*Kariko 2014b*).

In summary, it seems that the government, despite its limited capacity, is starting to take small steps in order to alleviate the consequences of such a horrible way of violence. The initiatives are good, but many stakeholders consider they are not enough and they claim that the only way for any action aimed to successfully counteract sorcery and witchcraft-related violence requires strong involvement and support from the Papua New Guinean Government (*Advent 2014; Fufurefa 2014; Garasu 2014; Oru 2014; Wainetti 2014a*).

CHAPTER CONCLUSIONS

Along this chapter, I mainly tried to capture the perceptions, experiences and reactions of the main stakeholders by deeply focusing on the data gathered during my fieldwork. I referenced some academic literature, but I found it crucial to use as a source the more than 50 interviews that I conducted with academics, government officials, researchers, Human Rights Defenders, religious staff, members of civil society organisations, policemen, NGO workers, businessmen, businesswomen, and victims. After listening to their testimonies and having the privilege to accompany some of them during their work in assisting victims or advocating for a change, I put all my efforts in order to be as loyal as possible to their insights, concerns and words, keeping my judgment quite silent. I am aware this decision can be interpreted as a lack of critical approach, but I would like to highlight that it has been an intentional choice, as I do not consider my opinion as relevant as the knowledge and expertise of these local activists. As I said before, they are the real experts. I consider their words to be much more valuable than any opinion I can have as an outsider who has read several relevant articles, visited the country for a couple of months and is a complete foreigner to their cultural dynamics. However, because of our different circumstances, probably many of them will not have the opportunity to voice their knowledge, opinions and worries directly to a broader academic audience, and here it is where I can contribute. These are the reasons why, along the whole thesis, and especially throughout this specific chapter, I prioritise their perceptions and not mine. Nevertheless, at this point, I would like to allow myself to make few critical insights.

In this chapter, I compiled their testimonies and divided them into three sections. The first one addressed the first-hand impressions of the main stakeholders regarding the belief, the violence arising from it and the approaches that they consider more successful in order to alleviate sorcery and witchcraft accusation-related violence in the country. In the second section, I briefly presented some legal matters related to this kind of violence and its criminalisation, examining the procedures and limitations of the State Criminal Justice System and considering possible ways forward that could prove more effective, such as introducing elements from the customary systems or increasing the focus on restorative justice. Finally, the third section brings together the response mechanisms that are currently in place. I divided them into four differentiated groups according to my perception: Human Rights Defenders and Local Activism, the initiatives from the Catholic Church, the presence of the International Organisations, and the actions of the Government.

Regarding the situation on the ground and the responses in place, I would like to highlight that it is impressive to discover the great amount of people and small organisations that are getting mobilised to support the victims and avoid new accusations and tortures. The activists have a profound consciousness about Human Rights and, in many cases, Christian values of love and respect to the neighbour are the only motivating factors that move villagers to stand up for the lives of their fellow *wantoks*. However, as much as these local activists put all their good will and efforts, the results are negatively affected by a critical lack of resources and capacities. Their work is still slow and complicated, as they have to cope with an overwhelming amount of tasks and adverse circumstances.

Local activists see the issue with a mix of satisfaction and frustration: they are passionate about what they do and aware that the services given to victims have been improving in the last years; unfortunately, it is never enough and many people, especially women, continue being tortured and killed. The violent patterns are getting worse and it is difficult for them to address the root causes of the problem, as they are structural factors that require organised cooperative action from a multisectoral approach. One of the main topics that stakeholders repeated again and again was the need for deep understanding of the practices involving sorcery, witchcraft and their related accusations. They loudly claim for local empowerment and a change from inside out, where the community itself decides to make a step towards eliminating this custom. As a researcher, I cannot agree more with this approach, however I also believe that the government should take responsibility and support these changes with policies and services, as it has a duty to protect its citizens. In addition, I believe that local activists need to learn how to create cooperation networks that alleviate their burden and allow them to work as a team, implement joint initiatives and learn from best practices.

From a another angle, but still directly connected to the role of the State as the body that guarantees safety and protection for its citizens, there are many legal implications that need to be worked out in order to eliminate basic problems that have deep repercussions on the cases of violence related to sorcery and witchcraft accusations: improving access to justice, ending impunity by making perpetrators accountable, increasing the legal knowledge of people, or ensuring the law enforcement bodies are correctly trained and they properly fulfill their function. In this regard, it

would be a very progressive step forward if the Government of Papua New Guinea could take a cooperative approach with other service providers and implement some of the recommendations suggested. I will explore this topic more deeply in the following chapter with the development of the Sorcery National Action Plan.

In summary, the situation on the ground is quite encouraging, as there are many people willing to make a change, but it also requires hard work and patience, as these changes do not happen overnight. The ideas need to be made more specific, the resources allocated, and the whole range of experts need to be deeply involved. The most important part, in my opinion, is for the stakeholders to continue working, keeping this issue on the top of their minds and remembering that it depends on them to change this negative situation and achieve a safer, more peaceful and developed society for the next generations: a better future.

Mary Kini, one of the most active and well-known Human Rights Defenders, clearly expresses her wish for Papua New Guinean society in the coming years:

It is our right to be happy. Happiness is one thing that is missing within our community and in our society. That is all to do with respect and love. We really need to love each other and we need to respect each other so that we have a very good and peaceful society. If we have love and respect I think we can minimize all these problems. (*Kini 2014*).

Having discussed all of this so far, it now becomes important to focus on those initiatives that are being developed in order to create a sustainable medium or long-term action to respond to sorcery and witchcraft accusation-related violence. The next chapter tries to analyse this and the few doubts that are arising from it.

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4. POSSIBLE OPTIONS FOR A BETTER FUTURE

Fear of sorcery in PNG goes back a long time into the annals of History. Violence related to sorcery accusations seem to be increasing and seem to be spreading to provinces where it did not seem to be so prevalent. People are the victims, living in fear: families are destroyed, communities are destroyed and it is almost like Papua New Guinea is in a war zone. Clearly we need an Action Plan that is carefully worked out and not just reactive. We need to make sure that we have the whole community's involvement, all the government agencies and that all aspects of the issue are addressed.

(Paul Barker 2014b)⁷⁸

INTRODUCTION

Across the previous chapters of this thesis, I tried to provide a detailed account of the extent of the problem of sorcery and witchcraft-related violence in Papua New Guinea and also of the local measures in place to eliminate this violence. From everything mentioned above, it is obvious that sorcery-related violence is a huge problem for Papua New Guineans: a deeply rooted belief which violent patterns are worsening and that is affecting a vast number of women, creating insecurity, destruction, suffering and poverty for families and communities. Experts believe that this violence is due to the interaction between the specific cultural and religious beliefs, and several other underlying factors, such as high levels of illiteracy, weak healthcare system, youth unemployment, inequalities in the community or new ways of understanding and exercising power and authority, etc. (Forsyth 2013b). As a consequence of this, the stakeholders involved strongly claim that the issue needs to be tackled holistically, and that in order to do it successfully, there is a need for several well planned and carefully considered policy changes, as the initiatives in place so far have been basically reactive. It seems the stakeholders agree that 'what is needed is a comprehensive, holistic and coordinated approach that utilises the country's existing resources and at the same time draws on international partnerships and networks to address the problem' (INA 2013)⁷⁹

⁷⁸ Quotation extracted from the opening speech made by Paul Barker (Executive Director of the PNG Institute of National Affairs) at the National Action Plan implementation workshop taking place in Port Moresby in June 2014. For more information, see <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Nw8h2VkfFozc>

⁷⁹ The full text can be consulted here:

http://www.inapng.com/pdf_files/Outcome%20Statement%20from%20Conference_edit%2020Jan.pdf

It is for this reason that this chapter focuses on explaining the crucial step that Papua New Guinea is taking on developing a National Action Plan, an initiative aiming to respond to sorcery and witchcraft accusations and their related violence from a policy perspective. While the previous chapter emphasized the local initiatives that are already in place, this one highlights a project that is “work-in-progress” and that it is especially relevant because, for the first time, it looks at the future, trying to develop proactive measures from a coordinated departure point. It involves all the different stakeholders that have the chance and the will to make a change for their country, including the government, legal specialists, health workers, counselors, Human Rights Defenders, international organisations, researchers and academics, and it aims to combine their ideas and efforts to establish an effective network that addresses the issue of sorcery-related violence on all the different fronts. In the second section of the chapter, I bring up the opinions of the main activists regarding the suitability, advantages and disadvantages of two different possible approaches: bottom-up or top-down. To conclude the chapter, I present a brief compilation of new developments that have taken place recently, once my fieldwork was already finished. These events show positive trends and achievements that bring hope to all those working for the cause. Unfortunately, new cases of violence seem to prevail and cannot be denied, showing that, despite the achievements, there is still a long way to go.

4.1. DEVELOPMENT OF THE NATIONAL ACTION PLAN

The National Action Plan against Sorcery and Witchcraft Accusation-related violence (NAP)⁸⁰ is the result of the determination of several stakeholders who recognised the imperative need to take action against this kind of violence, not only from a legislative perspective, but from a multi-sectorial approach, aiming to provide an organised holistic response with a strong base on governmental policy, but directly impacting practices at the community level. This section aims to present an account of the different steps that have been necessary to develop the NAP, as the process was initiated in Canberra (June 2013) and continued in two follow-up conferences / workshops in Goroka (December 2013) and Port Moresby (June 2014). I personally had the opportunity to attend to the last implementation workshop, which gave me the opportunity to capture information and testimonies from first hand. The information about the two previous meetings has been gathered through relevant literature and personal interviews to some of the participants.

Canberra

The development of the action plan had several stages. It can be said that the conference on Sorcery & Witchcraft-Related Killings in Melanesia, held at the Australian National University in Canberra on the 5-7 of June 2013, sowed the seed. The conference, funded and organised by the SSGM, focused on the negatives consequences of the magic beliefs across Melanesia and especially intended to fill the gap of how these consequences can be dealt with by governmental policies that

⁸⁰ The National Action Plan (NAP) against Sorcery and Witchcraft Accusation-related violence has also been called more recently Sorcery National Action Plan (SNAP). The two forms are valid, however in this thesis I will preferably use NAP.

have a direct effect on people's lives. The conference had a very constructive approach, encouraging dialogue between participants from different fields and with the very practical objective of developing efficient solutions to stop the violence (ANU 2013). Key speakers, experts on the topic and the area, presented papers on relevant topics considering aspects such as the evolution of these practices, gender implications, economic and social factors affecting beliefs and practices, religious and historical influences, the legal spectrum or responses and challenges from the local activists.⁸¹

The conference in Canberra was a complete success, bringing together some of the most relevant and influential people on the topic. It made obvious that, especially in PNG, these beliefs caused an unacceptable amount of brutal violence, provoking suffering and hampering economic and social development (Forsyth and Eves 2015). It was here where the participants concluded that the solution had to be holistic, involving multiple government sections and really responding to local particularities. Experts made several recommendations including: the need to educate and raise awareness about scientific explanations for the causes of sickness and death; legal and human rights advocacy for the general population; use of bottom-up approaches and local traditional authorities and structures; consideration of non-violent mechanisms of resolving sorcery and witchcraft-related conflicts; support to Human Rights Defenders and local activists that act as service providers for victims and survivors; explore possibilities of furthering church strategies to prevent accusations around deaths and funerals; support critical voices inside the community and provide assistance for them to develop and grow; reinforce legal institutions to make sure laws are correctly applied and enforced (Forsyth 2013).

Goroka

The interest of many of these Papua New Guineans to follow up and find ways to put an end to the problem of sorcery- and witchcraft-related violence culminated with the creation of a Committee and a follow-up conference in Goroka in December 2013 (Forsyth 2014a). The conference was organised by the DJAG and the CIMC, with support of the SSGM, the Melanesian Institute, the University of Goroka and the Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT). It was titled *Sorcery and Witchcraft Accusations: Developing a National Response to Overcome the Violence* and it focused on breaking the link between sorcery accusations and violence by creating a comprehensive action plan that, once finished, would be presented to the government for its endorsement and further implementation (INA 2013; Draft National Action Plan 2014).

Participants were of the opinion that the matter had to necessarily be dealt by a cooperative network of relevant stakeholders and had to use existing systems and structures already in place, to optimise resources and legitimise the process. After three days of intense presentations and discussions, attendants came out with several recommendations for each one of the different agents who had to be involved: the PNG Government, Churches, Civil Society Organisations and NGOs, INGOs and Development Partners, and Academic Institutions.

⁸¹ For more information, see the full program of the conference at http://regnet.anu.edu.au/sites/default/files/files/Conference%20booklet%20%5BReduced%5D_final.pdf

According to the Outcome Statement from the 2013 Conference on Sorcery and Witchcraft Accusation-related violence (INA 2013), most of the recommendations were for the government to take effective action. They covered the areas of law and justice, health, education and community development and they were more specific than the ones made in Canberra, contemplating more detailed actions aimed to achieve concrete objectives. Some of these recommendations included: developing legal awareness campaigns, using mediation and restorative justice mechanisms, training village court officials and police forces to deal with cases of sorcery accusation-related violence, active prosecution of perpetrators to finish with impunity, training health workers to deliver better medical diagnosis or developing programs for preventing the abusive use of alcohol and drugs. At the school level, stakeholders suggested to integrate Human Rights education in the curriculum, comprehensively train the children to look for scientific explanations of sickness and death and to teach them how to find alternatives to violence when dealing with conflict. Another area that was considered crucial by the participants in this conference was to implement mechanisms to help Papua New Guinean youth to find a meaningful role in their society by creating employment, further developing their skills and providing healthy leadership opportunities (INA 2013).

From another perspective, Churches were asked to do more research on the topic of sorcery and witchcraft beliefs and their related violence, and develop a best practices manual for religious institutions to avoid accusations and effectively respond to those taking place. Civil Society Organisations and NGOs were asked to continue with the provision of services on the areas of counseling, support to victims and repatriation. It was also made clear that critical discussion had to be encouraged and facilitated. INGOs and Development partners should continue to provide assistance to victims and government. The academic institutions involved committed to conduct relevant and coordinated research and make their findings available, as more research would allow all the stakeholders to make better-informed decisions with higher chances of success (INA 2013).

In summary, the participants at the Goroka conference not only set up a very important stepping stone by deciding to develop a country-wide policy-based action plan, but they also defined objectives, identified necessary actions and distributed tasks and responsibilities between the different stakeholders. A follow-up meeting to finalise this Action Plan was planned by June 2014 in Port Moresby.

Port Moresby and the National Action Plan

On the 12th and 13th of June 2014, took place in Port Moresby a workshop that counted the participation of around 80 people, most of them Papua New Guinean, coming from governmental institutes, human rights organisations, religious and academic institutions. All of them interested on working to alleviate the country from the burden of sorcery and witchcraft accusations related violence drafted a National Action Plan that should be presented to the National Executive Council (NEC) for endorsement. Taking as a base the two previous meetings on the topic held in Canberra and Goroka, this implementation workshop meant to be practical and specific, constituting a place for intense guided discussion that would capture objectives, key activities, lead agencies, support partners, resources required and estimated timeframes.

The Deputy Secretary of the Department of Justice and Attorney General (DJAG) in PNG, Jack Kariko, addressed the participants in the opening speech with very encouraging words, requesting their involvement and declaring the intentions of the government to take the NAP forward:

The workshop is the beginning of ensuring that concrete actions are thought out, planned and implemented. Today's implementation workshop draws on the previous two gatherings, to ensure that we not only talk, but we do the working. I guess the end result of it for us is that it will form a basis of policy and legislative reform that we hope it will alleviate the pressure of the issue of sorcery on our society. (*Kariko 2014b*)⁸²

For many of the participants, these words meant the beginning of a period of collaboration between the government and the rest of the stakeholders involved in the fight against sorcery and witchcraft accusation-related violence (*Garasu 2014; Gumbis 2014; Oru 2014; Wainetti 2014*)

The recommendations extracted from the conference in Goroka were initially divided into six core areas: Care and Counselling, Advocacy and Communications, Legal, Protection, Health, and Research. Participants were distributed into these groups and given the tasks of, first, revising and prioritising these recommendations by making sure they were comprehensive, appropriate and feasible; second, developing the implementation strategy by defining specific activities, responsible parties, timelines, coordinating mechanisms, resources needed and monitoring tools for assessing correct progress (*Draft National Action Plan 2014; NAP Implementation Workshop 2014; Forsyth 2014a*). Group and plenary discussions during two very long intense and fruitful days lead to a draft document that was agreed by all the participants. The Draft National Action Plan has a vision of having a PNG society 'free from sorcery and witchcraft-related violence through strengthened partnership between relevant stakeholders' and a mission to "stop accusations leading to sorcery-related violence; deal effectively with the perpetrators of violence; address the needs of survivors and restore security to the communities, within the legal policy frameworks and acceptable values and norms" (*Draft National Action Plan 2014: 1*).

The final document addresses five core areas, outlining the different objectives for each one. The following table has been extracted from the final document submitted to the National Executive Council (NEC) in December 2014 by the Technical Committee Against Sorcery Accusation-related violence (composed by DJAG - Legal Policy & Governance Branch, the CIMC, the University of Goroka, the Catholic Bishops' Conference, the SSGM - ANU, the Australian High Commission, and the United Nations OHCHR).

⁸² Quotation extracted from the opening speech made by Jack Kariko (PNG DJAG representative) at the National Action Plan implementation workshop taking place in Port Moresby in June 2014. For more information, see <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Nw8h2VkJFozc>

CORE AREAS AND OBJECTIVES OF THE DRAFT NATIONAL ACTION PLAN⁸³

1. Care & counselling:

- 1 To support the development of training in counselling programs for a range of service providers
- 2 To improve repatriation and support services for survivors, particularly taking into account people with special needs such as the elderly and disabled.
- 3 To mobilize key stakeholders to ensure coordinated support services for survivors, taking into account the gendered context in which the violence takes place.
- 4 To develop, review, utilise and enforce legislation and other support structures in cases of sorcery accusation-related violence where children are involved (as relatives and survivors)

2. Advocacy/Communications:

- 1 To develop advocacy and awareness materials and messages to counter sorcery-accusation-related violence
- 2 To develop and implement a strategy to ensure the communication of the materials and messages to key stakeholders and the broader public
- 3 To identify and network with organisations and individuals to provide mutual support and assistance

⁸³ Table extracted from the Draft National Action Plan. See full document in Annex 21.

3. Legal and Protection

- 1 To review the repealed *Sorcery Act 1971* and re-enact certain provisions, if any are needed, into relevant pieces of legislation (*Summary Offences Act-1977, Village Courts Act-1989, Evidence Act- 1975, Criminal Code (Amendment) Act 2002, Family Protection Act 2013*).
- 2 To ensure that cases involving sorcery and witchcraft accusation-related violence are dealt with through the criminal justice system.
- 3 Develop mechanisms and awareness to ensure that the general population and service providers know what the law is, who has responsibility and authority to act, and how they can be contacted and mobilized.
- 4 Develop or strengthen mechanisms to protect and support those who take steps to prevent sorcery accusation-related violence and to support targets of this violence, including health workers, community leaders, religious actors, civil society actors and others.
- 5 Develop a strategy for mediating sorcery and witchcraft-related accusation at community level
- 6 The police in conjunction with the courts to develop an action plan to deal with the current difficulties in arresting and prosecuting perpetrators of sorcery and witchcraft
- 7 National judicial training (including village court magistrates) to be expanded/ strengthened in dealing with sorcery accusations and associated violence

4. Health Sector

- 1 To raise awareness about the issue of sorcery and witchcraft-related violence within the health sector
- 2 Improved explanations about the disease process to patients and their families
- 3 Facilitate access to justice by providing medical evidence of illness and explanations
- 4 Community based awareness raising about public health problems and diagnosis
- 5 To develop and publicise the need for prevention / screening

5. Research

- 1 To develop an evidence-based research framework to address sorcery accusation-related violence
2. To establish a central research hub for networking and collaboration

Each one of these areas and objectives was carefully worked out: the recommendations were taken from the Goroka conference, discussed one by one in the small groups, presented to the plenary, revised by the whole group, re-worked and modified in those cases that was considered necessary. The passion, dedication, knowledge and experience of all and each one of the assistants, together with an inclusive and participatory process, legitimise the outcomes obtained and guarantee the ownership and efficiency of the strategy.

During the two intense days, participants appeared to be full of hope and positive expectations, conscious of the important step that they were taking and also aware of the hard work that was still to be done (*Gumbis 2014; Wainetti 2014*). Human Rights Defenders and local activists, used to work in isolation and very precarious conditions, expressed their satisfaction about seeing the government involved and about being able to create networks of assistance and cooperation (*Garasu 2014; Matane 2014; Wainetti 2014*). It was highlighted in several occasions the need to involve people from the small and rural communities and avoid an exclusive top-down approach⁸⁴. Training and workshops at different levels and targeting a variety of key groups were considered crucial activities for the success of the strategy (*Advent 2014; Matane 2014; Wainetti 2014*).

In the legal team, there was a lot of discussion on the reasons why these cases are not reported and prosecuted. Legal experts analysed in what specific aspects the PNG legal system is failing Papua New Guineans and again proposed education programs and training (*Poulsen 2014; Barampataz 2014*), requested urgent action to protect victims and activists (*Matane 2014*) and planned some responses to ensure broader access to justice. The main focus for the health sector team was to reduce unexpected deaths and improve diagnoses and explanations for this kind of deaths. It was obvious to participants that low levels of literacy are directly related to understanding the processes of sickness and death, and that an extra effort should be made by the Government in order to increase education (*Menda 2014*). On the sector of Research, Nellie McLay voiced the thinking of many regarding the capital importance of specific research pathway that could inform the decisions to be taken by the government and by other stakeholders, and that would serve to monitor the achievements of implemented actions (*2014*). The need for sharing findings and making the information widely available was also emphasized.

Generally, the final feeling was very positive and the stakeholders expressed their constructive approach and their positive feedback. They were especially satisfied with the involvement and commitment of the government, positively highlighted the added value of bringing together experts of different sectors, and expressed hope for the further implementations of the recommendations:

It will be very successful because we are having a mixture of expertise from the civil society, the faith-based, from private sector and also from the government. (*Oru 2014*)

We achieved something because the government is willing to take it forward. To me, that is an achievement...We are making it at the end, but we still have a long way to go. (*Wainetti 2014*)

It is important to continue to advocate with the government, talk with the government, find who are those people in government systems that will understand, that will hear you, and understand what you are saying. That's the only way to make it happen. (*Garasu 2014*)

⁸⁴ Extracted from the conversations held by participants during the workshop.

I think it is going to be effective if and when all the different agencies participate on it and if the government of PNG can come in and see the significance of this particular plan ...We need to tie all the loose ends, so it is “work in progress”.
(Gumbis 2014)

The positive feelings of the participants were promising. However, there was still some hard work to be done in order to get the document ready for its submission to the National Executive Council.

The NAP was finalised in December 2014 and passed to the Minister of Justice, who finally signed it and prepared the submission to the NEC in mid April 2015. On June 2015, the government was still working on its approval and endorsement, but very recent communications seem to indicate that the Sorcery National Action Plan was approved on the last week of July. However there is not any further information about the NEC decision yet. In the coming months, the government and the different stakeholders should start working on its implementation⁸⁵. This progress shows that the NAP process is slowly moving forward, even if it is taking much longer than originally planned. Despite the obvious will of all stakeholders to put an end to the suffering, tortures and deaths caused by sorcery and witchcraft accusations-related violence in Papua New Guinea, it is easy to get the perception that there is not enough involvement from some of the parties as the agreed timelines and responsibilities seem to be postponed and, in some occasions, even forgotten. The National Action Plan brings a lot of promises to a population that is deeply affected by this issue and that, for the first time, can see their government willing to take meaningful action. Hopefully, the government and the stakeholders will realise about the capital importance of this initiative and continue moving forward.

4.2. RIGHT APPROACH: BOTTOM-UP OR TOP-DOWN?

Looking at the grassroots local initiatives already in place and the high-level policy approach of the National Action Plan, they seem to be very compatible and complementary. However, I would like to express in this section the reservations of several stakeholders, especially those working at the community level, regarding the real efficiency of the proposed National Action Plan. In a country like PNG, more than 75% of the population lives in rural areas where government services such as healthcare, education or legal support barely arrive. The new laws and policies set up in the government buildings of the capital have an extremely limited effect on them, if any. The National Action Plan has been carefully worked out by experts of all different levels and areas of expertise (local activists, policy makers, academics), and has included several activities to be conducted in the community with the objective to make change possible from the base of society. However, many of these local activists still see this Plan as having a top-down approach quite disconnected from reality, which they consider inappropriate and ineffective for PNG. Lilly Be’soer, Human Rights Defender and leader of Voice for Change, expresses her personal concerns about how these two different levels will meet each other:

⁸⁵ Information gathered from personal communication with members of the Technical Committee.

I was at the National Consultation, but I don't see a connection from the national to the provincial, district, and down to the community level. There is still a gap. I am really thinking how these gaps can be filled so that we can be able to work, because all these tortures and violence are happening at the community level. The community wants to make changes and they came forward with some suggestions and this is what Voice for Change is thinking to take forward now...When there is an accusation it is normally done by the family members, at the community level, so whatever approach we are taking has to be from really down there. We need the families and the sub-clans to really understand. (*Be'soer 2014*)

As Be'soer expresses, from the local activists' perspective, who are used to work in isolation, with scarce support and seeing the cruellest side of the conflict, it is difficult to believe that the distant and unreliable government will actually make a difference for the people in the villages. They advocate for higher involvement and participation of the grassroots.

Consequently, the majority of people involved acknowledge the importance of a bottom-up approach, involving village leaders, families and common men and women from the communities. Understanding, ownership and local initiatives seem to be the key for many Papua New Guinean activists, rather than new laws and policies result of a top-down strategy. Jack Urame, who has been researching practices and implications of sorcery and witchcraft in Papua New Guinea, supports the same idea of working directly with the base of the problem and warns about the approach of the Western organisations:

We shouldn't make decisions for them. Something imposed would be only superficial. But something they create is going to be part of them, and they are going to live with it forever. This is my strong belief...We have to work from the level of the people. Going out to them with our own understanding, with our own interpretations and mindset but don't enforce them. Don't try to drive your ideas into them... [International Organisations] come but they see things from the surface, because they have to submit reports, and they have their targets and their objectives. But if they really want us to change and if they want to help, they should come down and work together with us...We are repeating the same old mistake in many social issues: big meetings, conferences, money is gone to these meetings and conferences, to food, hotels and everything else, but the problem is still there and it will still be there forever. How are we going to change? Forget about all these big huge structures on top. We need simple local solutions: come down to the level of the people and work with them; get their stories and try to understand the way they understand things. If we understand them, we can be able to empower them enough to change their ways. (*Urame 2014*)

Urame voices the worry that remains in many stakeholders, especially Papua New Guinean activists, regarding efforts and resources being spent in high-level policy meetings that do not have a real impact on people's lives. However, the balance needs to be found as all activists demand higher involvement of the government and continuous support from the international partners. It just needs to be a coordinated support, with common understanding, collaboration and listening to one

another. Philip Gibbs expresses, in an excellent manner, what I believe is the perfect middle point between the bottom-up and the top-down approach by breaking this dichotomy and calling for an integrated strategy involving all the possible fronts:

I think it's not for individuals. We have somehow got to work together on it. The more people that we can get involved and to get committed to doing something about it, the better. Now, people have different ideas so we've got to discuss it. We've got to share our ideas about how we can deal with it.... We need to have people who are really committed to doing something...and not to just say 'well, it's a problem for someone else'. It's not a problem for someone else, it's our problem. (Gibbs 2014).

As I defended before in my theoretical chapter when talking about Politics of Location, Situated Knowledges and knowledge construction⁸⁶, it is important to be critical with the mainstream discourse and pay close attention to the power dynamics present in the construction of knowledge. The perception and the abilities to react to the problem of sorcery and witchcraft-related violence is very different for a government official, an expatriate aid worker or a Human Rights Defender who is using her own house as a safe house for accused women. They all have a specific perspective on the matter and can provide useful insights, but probably the more marginalised perspective can add a vision that is much more close to reality as it is not distorted by a privileged position (Harding 1993; Mohanty 2003). For this reason, I also believe that the involvement of local activists and grassroots people is crucial, because they have an advantaged understanding of reality that escapes the eyes of outsiders.

4.3. STEPS FORWARD VS. STEPS BACKWARDS

Along all the process of my research, comprising the initial phase, the fieldwork and the posterior follow-up with some of the stakeholders, I continuously experienced a very contradictory feeling in relation to the matter of sorcery and witchcraft accusations-related violence. While the cases of violence are of an unimaginable brutality and cruelty, the actions taken by many activists show extreme courage, love and respect for their fellow citizens. For me, these two sides are heartbreaking, showing the poles of what human beings are able to do. During all this time, I have got to know, more or less deeply, the reality of this issue and I have seen how there is an encouraging constant progress on alleviating this violence. Unfortunately, this slow progress alternates with recurrent episodes of more tortures and killings. For this reason, I believe it is important when talking about the state of the situation to find the correct balance and avoid extremes and generalisations: there should not be an excess of optimism when talking about the achievements made, because there are reports of new deaths and tortures released every other day. In this regard, there is a combination of steps forward and steps backwards: the achievements are there and they are preparing the way for a different and better future, however, the constant brutal violence reminds us that urgent and sustained work is more necessary than ever, and that this issue should be a priority for the government and for many other parties involved.

⁸⁶ For more details on this, see Chapter 1 section 3 'Politics Of Location And Knowledge Construction'

For example, several weeks at the end of December 2014 and beginning of January 2015, brought a considerable number of cases of women accused, tortured and, in some occasions, killed⁸⁷. In a couple of cases, fellow villagers mobilized themselves and stood up saving the lives of these women and providing support and shelter after the attacks. Other victims were not that lucky, and in Enga, some burnt bodies were found near a river.

Papua New Guinea heard about some positive developments, such as the Wabag police facing a numerous crowd for hours in order to save the lives of two women accused of practicing sorcery (Kelola 2014); the creation of a special police taskforce established in Simbu province, where police, village leaders, church representatives, NGOs, village court magistrates and councilors got together to collaborate on stopping accusations and their related violence (The National 2015); the initiative of Seeds Theatre Group, with their project *Women Not Witches*⁸⁸ (Lynch 2015); or the rescue of a woman who was about to be killed in a remote village in Enga, which finished with a reconciliation ceremony where the community publicly rejected the sorcery and witchcraft accusations⁸⁹ (ABC 2015).

These are just some of the positive actions within many more, which bring hope to the cause. However, we cannot deny the fact that there are also many other cases where women continue being accused, tortured and killed. Philip Gibbs informed in a personal communication of many new cases, especially in the area of Wabag, Mendi and Hagen. In mid-May he was told about a case in Mendi involving ten women being accused and tortured⁹⁰. In some other cases, police was not willing to prosecute the perpetrators or some relevant people in the community had to urgently intervene in the last minute to prevent a woman from being killed. Another case that has been deeply publicised in the media is that of a woman who was axed to death accused of using witchcraft to spark a measles outbreak⁹¹ (Tang 2015).

All of the cases outlined above are indications that Papua New Guinea is making a considerable effort to eradicate this habit that produces so much destruction, but that the belief is still very strong and it seems to be spreading. Intense and effective actions need to be implemented as soon as possible to avoid the very negative implications that these practices have for development and for the well-being of the PNG society.

⁸⁷ These updates have been provided in personal communications with some activists, especially Philip Gibbs and Miranda Forsyth. I express my gratitude to them for always being so helpful and cooperative. Some of the cases can be found in the blog page of www.stopsorceryviolence.org

⁸⁸ For more information see <http://seedstheatre.org/seeds-theatre-begins-women-not-witches-campaign/>

⁸⁹ For more information, see <http://mobile.abc.net.au/news/2015-01-20/png-women-accused-of-witchcraft-freed/6029374>

⁹⁰ Information gathered through personal communication with Philip Gibbs.

⁹¹ For more information, see <http://www.reuters.com/article/2015/05/27/us-papua-women-murder-idUSKBN0OC1KC20150527>

CHAPTER CONCLUSIONS

In this chapter I talked about the measures that are being planned in order to alleviate the problem of sorcery and witchcraft-related violence in Papua New Guinea which causes so much suffering and destruction for the country's population. From these measures, I especially focused on the development of the Sorcery National Action Plan (SNAP), the most comprehensive and encouraging of these initiatives, as it aims to tackle the issue from a holistic perspective, addressing not only the violence itself, but also attending to the undelaying issues, such as literacy, health care, justice access or unemployment. Following up on the different stages that have taken place in order to set the SNAP, I have considered in the above sections the tensions arising between the bottom-up and the top-down approach, a very relevant issue related to the creation of this Plan. I have also tried to do a brief account of the positive progress on the fight against this kind of violence in the Highlands, opposing it to recurrent accounts of continued violence that, unfortunately, are still happening.

In conclusion, I have presented the SNAP as a document that fills up the hopes of Papua New Guineans and, at the same time, brings many questions to the table regarding efficiency and effectiveness. The great amount of funds destined to the creation of a nation-wide political framework seems to be excessive for some stakeholders who show their many doubts, especially at two different levels: first, that this policy will ever be implemented, and second, if the activities undertaken will actually be able to generate the expected change, as they will have been applied from the top-down and not originally conceived by the people in the communities. In my opinion, the local activists have this specific perception as a result of their more accurate perception of reality combined with a lack of trust in the government. This creates a paradoxical feeling on the Human Rights Defenders and local activists, as their biggest wish is to get the support of the government, but, at the same time, they do not believe in the effectiveness of new policies and laws

As a researcher and outside observer, I do understand these doubts and I believe the reasons behind them clearly justify them: local activists are used to work in extreme circumstances, with no external support from a government that they mainly consider corrupt and inefficient. However, I also think that the top-down and the bottom-up approaches are not contradictory, as many stakeholders see them, but rather complementary. The comprehensive and lengthy process through which the NAP has been through has been very inclusive: dozens of experts in diverse areas, such as academics, policy experts, health workers, Human Rights Defenders or religious staff, have participated in extensive consultations; long discussions, where all and every single one of the participants had the chance to bring up their view, have taken place for over a year; and modifications have been done again and again with the aim to capture the best possible objectives, actions and activities to be implemented. The creation of the SNAP aims to have influence at the policy-level, to promote and enforce deep and perdurable changes, and to get the government involved on taking responsibility for the well-being of its citizens. In addition, the NAP has another added value, as it acknowledges the crucial role of the grassroots, as local activists have been involved from the beginning to the end, and many of the activities planned have the local villages and small communities as a focus of action. In summary, I believe that both approaches are

necessary and of critical importance for a successful future free of sorcery and witchcraft accusations-related violence, and the SNAP has, up to now, achieved a right balance between these two poles.

5. CONCLUSIONS

“I think this whole issue is a very complex issue, both philosophically, personally, in its dynamics, ... It is very complex and there is no simple answer to it. We have to be very patient and very discerning to try to continue to do something about it. We should not give up or be discouraged, because there will be more situations where people will be accused and hurt. We cannot think, “well, oh, we tried to do something and we failed”. No! I think we have to keep on because violence takes away our common humanity and as we hurt one another we somehow, reduce the quality of life in our world.”

(Gibbs 2014)

After all these pages presenting the findings of my investigation about the local solutions to the high level of violence against women accused of sorcery and witchcraft in the Highlands of Papua New Guinea, I have explained my specific focus and my motivations for undertaking this research; I have engaged with the theoretical framework that sustains it and explained the methodology chosen and used; I have made an account of the initiatives in place that I have seen during my fieldwork; and I have introduced the most relevant actions that can constitute a way forward in order to create a safer future for Papua New Guinea when it comes to overcome sorcery and witchcraft accusation-related violence. At this stage, then, it seems that I am reaching the end of my thesis and, before that, I would like to go back to all those questions that have been coming up along the way and see if I have an appropriate answer for them.

First of all, I would like to reflect on what I did and how I did it from the methodological point of view. From the very beginning, I strongly opted for engaging in a feminist ethnography. Now, at the end of the research, I believe it has been a great choice, as feminist ethnography provided me with a unique framework for political activism; a framework that allowed me to set and work towards the purpose of questioning the mainstream discourse about sorcery and witchcraft-related violence in Papua New Guinea and opening the way to a more marginal and constructive knowledge. For me, this research constituted, from the very first moment, a project that went beyond the academic arena to become a personal endeavor that allowed me to express my indignation against a specific kind of gender-based violence - that caused by accusations of sorcery and witchcraft- and, at the same time, show my strong support for those local activists, especially women, who were challenging the traditional oppressive structures in order to eliminate this violence. I wanted to do something meaningful; a research that could contribute somehow to their cause.

I supported my research with the theories of Postcolonialism and Postcolonial Feminism, which take an inclusive approach, recognise differences and aim for the reconstruction of the long-time established knowledge from the perspective of those whose voices have been silenced. These

theories constitute a political project that questions the ethical norms and power structures that are given for granted, and this is the reason why they have been so useful during my investigation. The participants of this research, with their specific location and their efforts to break the *status quo* generate a space for resistance and criticism.

Feminist ethnography, supported by theories such as Politics of Location, Situated Knowledges or Feminist Standpoint, helped me to be politically reflexive about my departure point and pay special attention to the process of how I was constructing knowledge. As a first time researcher and taking into account the huge cultural and socio-economic differences between these women and me, many questions came to my mind: Am I able to relate to Papua New Guinean women? Am I able to understand them and properly give them voice? The issue of accurate representation has been crucial to me, as I wanted to make sure that I did not reproduce a discourse influenced by the hegemonic Western point of view. I wanted to make sure that I was being objective. However, according to Haraway (1988) and as discussed in Chapter 1, objectivity is not possible and any knowledge produced will always be partial and subjective. In this regard, Haraway advocated for a science that is limited, openly located and multiple, escaping power relations. And that is what I tried to do throughout this investigation. If objectivity is not possible, how did I do to represent the local activists fighting sorcery and witchcraft accusation-related violence in the most accurate way? I made an effort to locate myself, create equal relations that allowed quality understanding, listen to the activists words and feelings, adapt myself to their needs and concerns, and situated the knowledge collected and produced. And here, feminist ethnography helped again, by providing tools to be aware of the power dynamics of the research process and to create equal relations between the researcher and the researched that allowed me to accept and understand difference, as Portelli advises.

Committed to provide a partial, locatable and critical knowledge (Haraway 1988), I considered the voice of the local activists as the most valid one because of their specific standpoint. They have a shared angle of vision: they are mostly women, from rural areas where the violence is taking place, they have experienced similar violence during their lifetime, and they are the ones who can best understand the cultural dynamics because they belong to the same culture. All these factors predispose concrete interpretations and express similar impediments: the Human Rights Defenders, the religious workers, community-based organisations' leaders, they all talk from experience, from the grassroots, and their location determines their perception and perspective, making it more legitimate to me than other's stakeholders' perception. Unfortunately, their vision is just another perspective, still biased and unable to reflect the absolute truth. The full truth is never attainable, but with a feminist research, I openly try to escape from the false promise of a universal unique true vision, and consequently, I aim to provide a more loyal and comprehensive vision of the world. Situated Knowledge and Feminism Standpoint Theory were very useful in order to help me choose the participants, the voices that I wanted to highlight in order to challenge the hegemonic knowledge.

With the objective to emphasise their voices and show the significance that I see in their testimonies as a valuable knowledge, I continuously referenced their ideas as they transmitted them to me, I chose to use their direct words in a great number of times and I included

transcriptions of several relevant interviews to make their opinions available for further reference. Despite the unavoidable filter that I, as a researcher, constitute, I made the biggest effort to be as loyal as possible to their words and thoughts.

In general, the participant stakeholders see the issue of sorcery and witchcraft as a deeply rooted belief that, in the area of the Highlands, develops into terrible forms of violence. Sorcery accusation-related violence is considered to be caused by a great variety of underlying socio-economic factors, such as high levels of illiteracy, precarious health care services, lack of good medical diagnoses, economic disparities in the community, frustration or social tensions. It is perceived that the violent patterns are getting worse and are spreading to areas where they did not exist before. This extension and radicalisation of the violence related to the belief might be explained because of the social stress caused by the rapid social change that the country has been undergoing in the last decades, in great measure caused by the colonial powers and the influence of the religious missions. Local activists claim that the only possible successful way forward comprises true understanding of the reality and empowerment for the local communities in order for them to be able to drive their own change of mindset.

The gender implications of this kind of violence are a topic of discussion, and it seems that in the Highlands provinces sorcery and witchcraft accusation-related violence mainly targets women. The specificities of the belief in this area added to the higher vulnerability of women due to unequal power relations are the most likely causes. According to the interviewed women, and to many other documents trying to portray the situation of women in Papua New Guinea, women are generally seen by men as 'second-class citizens', denied voice and treated as belongings. The women that are normally targeted in cases of sorcery and witchcraft-related violence are those who are "different", not fulfilling social expectations or/and not committing to gender stereotypes. In my theoretical framework in Chapter 1, I was wondering if, as in Western history, Papua New Guinean women are also seen as "the Other" by local men. If Sartre claimed that the definition of one depends on how he/she is seen by the other, de Beauvoir used this idea to apply it to the interactions between sexes, affirming that the relation between them is a continuous power fight between the position of the "looker" and the position of the "looked-at", implying obvious hierarchical connotations. After talking to the women activists and victims, I have the sad impression that in Papua New Guinea, in many occasions, women are not even "looked-at", which dramatically undermines their existence. Generalising, many Papua New Guinea women cannot access justice, are denied voice, excluded of the decision-making processes, and deprived of resources, as they have no right to inherit land in the great majority of the country. All this condemns them to a situation of dependence on men and makes them highly vulnerable to violence, including sorcery and witchcraft accusation-related violence. Sartre says 'As I appear to the other, so I am' (in Lloyd 1986: 95). Following his idea, a great number of women in Papua New Guinea are what men allow them to be, which is unfortunately not much. The local activists given voice in this research, together with many other women and men, are committed to social change and work towards the transformation of this situation. Because, as a woman, as a feminist, and as a person, I consider this task crucial, I hope my research will contribute somehow to their task.

In this regard, this research has worked towards answering the question of **what are the solutions and actions that the local community proposes in front of the high levels of violence against women accused of sorcery and witchcraft?** As it is detailed in Chapter 3 and 4, I have compiled a series of initiatives that are being undertaken mainly by local activists, community-based organisations or religious workers, such as the Rapid Response Team, the Highlands Women Human Rights Defenders Movement, the Catholic Church 5 point strategy, prevention workshops, advocacy activities or community consultations. Many of these activists have been working for over 15 years already and they initiated these projects as a reactive measure to the pervasive gender-based violence in the country. Motivated by a deep inner wish to change a terrible situation of violence and Human Rights abuses, these individuals put all their human power and their scarce resources in doing this crucial voluntary work. For so many years, their actions have been crucial to save lives and support survivors. However, much more is needed to alleviate this situation.

Their strengths are: their familiarity with the culture and the situation, their vast experience, and, especially, their passion for helping others and building a better country for the future generations. These people are moved by the principles of love, respect and solidarity, as Sister Lorraine Garasu says 'Human Rights in the Melanesian way'. Unfortunately, the effectiveness of their work is hindered by an enormous lack of resources and capacity, at the economic, logistic and human level.

Years after the local activists have been working towards trying to alleviate the consequences of sorcery and witchcraft accusation-related violence, the issue has been recently identified by the government and many other international bodies as an important area to address for Papua New Guinea's prosper development. In this regard, there is a very important initiative currently taking place: the development of the Sorcery National Action Plan. This National Action Plan that has been worked out by hundreds of experts from all different levels of society and within diverse fields of expertise, was in July 2015, finally approved by the National Executive Council. This project, aimed to breaking the link between the belief in witchcraft and the violence, has been built upon many of the local initiatives that were already in place and intends to be a base for policy and legislation changes. This, which seems to me a great step forward, generates scepticism about its actual implementation, and tensions between defenders of the bottom-up approach and supporters of the top-down one. In my opinion, after having seen the rich cultural variety within the country and understanding the different needs and specificities of each area, I agree with Haraway (Haraway 1988: 585) when they talk about the knowledge built through shared conversations, solidarity and webs of connections. In my opinion, the main strength of the National Action Plan is that brings together all the relevant stakeholders in the fight against sorcery and witchcraft accusation-related violence: Human Rights Defenders, health workers, religious staff, researchers, government officials, communicators, and many more. This constitutes a unique opportunity to make a difference and to produce this rich knowledge that Haraway and Harding refer to.

However, in order for this Plan to succeed, people, used to work in isolation and under precarious circumstances, need to learn how to work together and appreciate the benefits of cooperation. It is crucial that the individuals that have been working for so long providing reactive answers to this violence understand the gain in adding other's suggestions and procedures to their existent experience. Dualisms need to be broken. It is not about 'them' or 'us', it is not about 'the policy

level' against 'the grassroots level'. It is about joining forces and collaborating in a meaningful way. The more it is done to eliminate sorcery-related violence, the better. As several participants said, 'we all should be agents of change to address social violence in this country'.

And with this call to action, I wrap up these conclusions and this thesis. I just hope that this research has brought a different perspective to a misleading specific representation usually presented in international media about the country of Papua New Guinea, their women, their people, and the situation of sorcery and witchcraft accusation-related violence. I also hope that this document, and the project surrounding it, can contribute to spread the knowledge about the initiatives in place and increase the number of advocates for the cause.

As a last remark, I just want to highlight the strength and courage of the men and women that I met and to whom this research also belongs. I am profoundly impressed by the work they do, and I want to encourage them to continue moving forward with such a passion; to fight for their dream of a Papua New Guinea free of violence. Thank you again for sharing your knowledge and experience with me.

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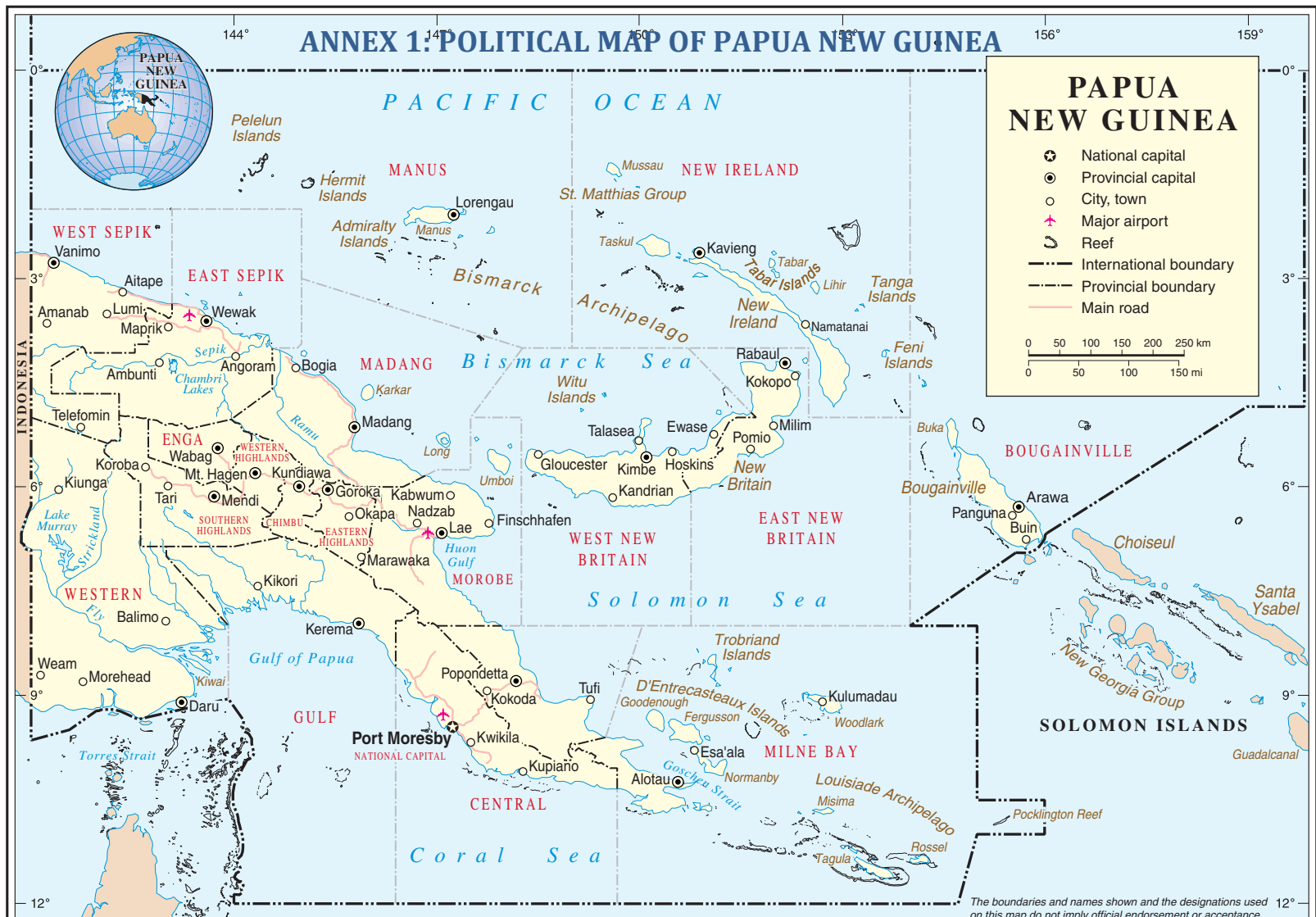
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ANNEX 1: POLITICAL MAP OF PAPUA NEW GUINEA

PAPUA NEW GUINEA

- ⊙ National capital
- Provincial capital
- City, town
- ✈ Major airport
- ☞ Reef
- International boundary
- - - Provincial boundary
- Main road

Scale: 0 50 100 150 200 250 km / 0 50 100 150 mi



The boundaries and names shown and the designations used on this map do not imply official endorsement or acceptance.

ANNEX 2: SORCERY ACT 1971

Chapter 274.

Sorcery Act 1971.

Certified on: / /20 .

INDEPENDENT STATE OF PAPUA NEW GUINEA.

Chapter 274.

Sorcery Act 1971.

ARRANGEMENT OF SECTIONS.

Preamble

PART I – PRELIMINARY.

1. Interpretation.

“act of sorcery”

“forbidden sorcery”

“harmful result”

“implement of sorcery”

“innocent sorcery”

“social group”

“sorcerer”

“sorcery”

2. References to social groups.

PART II – PRINCIPLES, APPLICATION AND EFFECT OF ACT.

3. Preamble as statement of objects and principles.

4. Innocent making of certain implements of sorcery.
5. Existence and effectiveness of powers of sorcery.

PART III – OFFENCES, ETC., IN RELATION TO SORCERY.

Division 1 – Offences.

6. Sorcery generally.
7. Criminal acts of sorcery.
8. Attempting to commit offence by means of sorcery.
9. Administering sorcerous substances, etc.
10. False report of sorcery, etc.
11. Possession of implement of forbidden sorcery.

Division 2 – Forfeiture and Reparations.

12. Forfeiture of profits of sorcery.
13. Forfeiture of implement of sorcery.
14. Reparations.

PART IV – DEFENCES ARISING OUT OF ACTS OF SORCERY.

15. Special defence in relation to charges of adultery.
16. Sorcery as provocation.

PART V – PROCEDURE, EVIDENCE, ETC.

17. Evidentiary effect of possession of implement of sorcery.
18. Evidence, proof, etc.
19. Saving of Customs Recognition Act.

PART VI – MISCELLANEOUS.

20. Preservation of rights and liabilities under other laws, etc.
21. Regulations.

SCHEDULE 1 – Definition of Innocent Sorcery.

SCHEDULE 2 – Evidence, Proof, etc.

INDEPENDENT STATE OF PAPUA NEW GUINEA.

AN ACT

entitled

Sorcery Act 1971,

Being an Act to prevent and punish evil practices of sorcery and other similar evil practices, and for other purposes relating to such practices.

Preamble

There is a widespread belief throughout the country that there is such a thing as sorcery and that sorcerers have extraordinary powers that can be used sometimes for good purposes but more often for bad ones, and because of this belief many evil things can be done and many people are frightened or do things that otherwise they might not do.

Some kinds of sorcery are practised not for evil purposes but for innocent ones and it may not be necessary for the law to interfere with them, and so it is necessary for the law to distinguish between evil sorcery and innocent sorcery.

There is no reason why a person who uses or pretends or tries to use sorcery to do, or to try to do, evil things should not be punished just as if sorcery and the powers of sorcerers were real, since it is just as evil to do or to try to do evil things by sorcery as it would be to do them, or to try to do them, in any other way.

Sometimes some people may act, or may believe that they are acting, under the influence of sorcery to such an extent that—

- (a) their conduct may not be morally (and should not be legally) blameworthy; or
- (b) actions that would ordinarily be regarded as customary offences may, in traditional social groups, be regarded as excusable or capable of being compensated for.

There is a danger that any law that deals fully with sorcery may encourage some evil-intentioned people to make baseless or merely spiteful or malicious accusations that their enemies are sorcerers solely to get them into trouble with other people, and this is a thing that the law should prevent.

PART I. – PRELIMINARY.

1. Interpretation.

(1) In this Act, unless the contrary intention appears—

“act of sorcery” means any act (including a traditional ceremony or ritual) that is intended to bring, or that purports to be able or to be adapted to bring, powers of sorcery into action, or to make them possible or carry them into effect;

“forbidden sorcery” means sorcery other than innocent sorcery;

“harmful result” includes fear, intimidation or injury in mind, body or property;

“implement of sorcery” means any thing that—

(a) is designed or intended for use in acts of sorcery generally, or in a particular act or class of acts of sorcery; or

(b) has, by some ceremony, ritual or act (including an act of sorcery), been adapted for use in acts of sorcery generally, or in a particular act or class of acts of sorcery;

“innocent sorcery” means sorcery of a kind referred to in Schedule 1;

“social group” includes a family, an extended family, a lineage, a kinship group, a descent group and a local group or community;

“sorcerer” means a person who—

(a) claims to have powers of sorcery; or

(b) directly or indirectly pretends to have, holds himself out to have or professes to have, powers of sorcery;

“sorcery” includes (without limiting the generality of that expression) what is known, in various languages and parts of the country, as witchcraft, magic, enchantment, *puri puri*, *mura mura dikana*, *vada*, *mea mea*, *sanguma* or *malira*, whether or not connected with or related to the supernatural.

(2) A reference in this Act to custom shall be read as a reference to the relevant custom of the social group or groups concerned.

(3) A reference in this Act to proceedings brought by virtue of this Act shall be read as a reference to proceedings in which reliance is placed, for the purpose of bringing the proceedings, on any provision of this Act, to the extent that the provision or its application is in question in the proceedings.

2. References to social groups.

(1) A reference in this Act to a social group shall, in its application to any matter before a court under this Act, be read as a reference to the social group or groups that, in the opinion of the court, is or are of the most relevance.

(2) In this Act, a reference to a social group includes a reference to any settled community, or a part of that community, whether it is a traditional community or is composed of members of different traditional or other social groups.

(3) This Act does not prevent a person being regarded as a member of more than one social group or community.

PART II. – PRINCIPLES, APPLICATION AND EFFECT OF ACT.

3. Preamble as statement of objects and principles.

Notwithstanding anything in any other law or rule of statutory construction, in the interpretation and application of this Act the provisions of the Preamble shall be taken fully into account in all cases, and each provision of this Act shall be read and construed as being intended to give effect to those provisions.

4. Innocent making of certain implements of sorcery.

(1) Subsection (2) does not apply where–

(a) to the knowledge of the person relying on that subsection, the implement of sorcery concerned was made or adapted for use in a particular act of forbidden sorcery; or

(b) the implement of sorcery concerned was intended to be used in an act of forbidden sorcery.

(2) Notwithstanding this Act, the mere making of an implement of sorcery (including the adaptation of a thing so as to be an implement of sorcery) is not an act of sorcery, nor is a person who claims to have the power to make an implement of sorcery a sorcerer by virtue only of his claiming that power, if the implement is designed, intended or adapted for use both in acts of innocent sorcery and in acts of forbidden sorcery, depending on the use made of it in any given set of circumstances.

(3) The burden of proof that Subsection (2) applies in relation to an implement of sorcery is on the person relying on that subsection.

5. Existence and effectiveness of powers of sorcery.

Even though this Act may speak as if powers of sorcery really exist (which is necessary if the law is to deal adequately with all the legal problems of sorcery and the traditional belief in the powers of sorcerers), nevertheless nothing in this Act recognizes the existence or effectiveness of powers of sorcery in any factual sense except only for the purpose of, and of proceedings under or by virtue of, this Act, or denies the existence or effectiveness of such powers.

PART III. – OFFENCES, ETC., IN RELATION TO SORCERY.

Division 1.

Offences.

6. Sorcery generally.

(1) This section does not apply in cases where the sorcery involved is innocent sorcery only.

(2) A person who, directly or indirectly, pretends to be, holds himself out to be, or professes to be a sorcerer is guilty of an offence.

(3) A person who influences or attempts to influence the acts of another person by the use or threatened use of the powers or services of a sorcerer as such is guilty of an offence.

Penalty: On conviction on indictment—imprisonment for a term not exceeding two years.

On summary conviction—imprisonment for a term not exceeding one year.

7. Criminal acts of sorcery.

A person who—

(a) does any act of forbidden sorcery; or

(b) aids, abets, counsels or procures, or by act or omission is in any way knowingly concerned in or party to, the doing of any such act,

is guilty of an offence.

Penalty: On conviction on indictment—imprisonment for a term not exceeding five years.

On summary conviction—imprisonment for a term not exceeding one year.

8. Attempting to commit offence by means of sorcery.

(1) If an act of sorcery is intended to produce or purports to produce any unlawful result, the person doing the act is guilty of an attempt to produce that result and is punishable accordingly.

(2) Notwithstanding anything in any other law, the fact that the unlawful result did in fact follow the act of sorcery does not prevent a charge of an attempted offence being brought under Subsection (1), but nothing in this section affects the operation of Section 20.

9. Administering sorcerous substances, etc.

(1) This section does not apply where the act of sorcery involved is an act of innocent sorcery only.

(2) A person who unlawfully administers to another person or to an animal—

(a) any substance that has been subjected to an act of sorcery; or

(b) any substance in the course of or in fulfilment of an act of sorcery,

is guilty of an offence.

Penalty: Imprisonment for a term not exceeding eight years.

10. False report of sorcery, etc.

(1) This section does not apply in cases where the sorcery involved or allegedly involved is innocent sorcery only.

(2) The *Defamation Act 1962* does not apply to or in relation to an offence against Subsection (3) or (4).

(3) A person who (except in the course of, or for the purpose of the institution of, legal proceedings or in any other case in which such an accusation or threat is privileged or excused by law) falsely accuses, to a third person, or threatens to accuse another person of—

- (a) being or of having been a sorcerer; or
- (b) performing or having performed an act of sorcery; or
- (c) having been concerned in or a party to an act of sorcery,

is guilty of an offence.

(4) A person who spreads a false report that another person—

- (a) is a sorcerer or performs or has performed an act of sorcery; or
- (b) is or has been concerned in, or a party to, an act of sorcery,

is guilty of an offence.

Penalty: Imprisonment for a term not exceeding one year.

11. Possession of implement of forbidden sorcery.

A person who, without lawful excuse (proof of which is on him), has in his possession an implement—

- (a) made or adapted for use in a particular act of forbidden sorcery; or
- (b) intended for use in an act of forbidden sorcery,

is guilty of an offence.

Penalty: Imprisonment for a term not exceeding one year.

Division 2.

Forfeiture and Reparations.

12. Forfeiture of profits of sorcery.

(1) Where a person—

- (a) is convicted of an offence against this Act; or
- (b) is convicted, by virtue of this Act, of an offence,

the court that convicts him may order any money or other thing that has been paid or given to him in consideration of the performance of an act of forbidden sorcery to be forfeited to the State and, subject to Section 14—

- (c) the money shall be paid into the Consolidated Revenue Fund; or
- (d) the other thing may be dealt with in such manner as the Head of State, acting on advice, directs,

as the case may be.

(2) If the convicted person is no longer in possession of the money or thing, the amount of the money or the value of the thing, as assessed by the court, is a debt due to the State and the court may make an order for its payment.

13. Forfeiture of implement of sorcery.

(1) Where a person—

- (a) is convicted of an offence against this Act; or
- (b) is convicted, by virtue of this Act, of an offence,

the court that convicts him may order any implement of sorcery owned by him or in his possession or under his control to be forfeited to the State.

(2) A court may at any time order any implement of sorcery that can be used in an act of forbidden sorcery to be forfeited to the State.

(3) An implement of sorcery forfeited to the State under this section shall be dealt with in such manner as the Head of State, acting on advice, directs.

14. Reparations.

(1) Where a person is convicted of an offence involving an act of sorcery, the court that convicts him may order him to make such compensation as the court thinks proper to—

- (a) any person at whom the act of sorcery was directed; or
- (b) the social group to which any person at whom the sorcery was directed belongs or belonged at the time of the act.

(2) An order under Subsection (1) may be made at the time of conviction or sentence, or if the court thinks it proper to do so at a later date, and the court may in any event—

(a) admit further evidence, after conviction or sentence, in relation to the question of compensation; and

(b) adjourn the matter in order to enable the parties to reach agreement on the compensation to be made,

and may make such further or other order as it thinks proper.

(3) An order under this section may include an order that any money that has been or is liable to be forfeited to the State under Section 12(1), or any amount that is recovered or recoverable by the State under Section 12(2), be paid as part or all of the compensation.

PART IV. – DEFENCES ARISING OUT OF ACTS OF SORCERY.

15. Special defence in relation to charges of adultery.

(1) In this section, “**charge of adultery**” means a charge of an offence against—

(a) Section 17 of the *Native Regulation (Papua) 1951*; or

(b) Section 14 of the *Native Administration Regulation (T.N.G.) 1951*,

or against any corresponding or analogous provision of any other law.

(2) It is a defence to a charge of adultery that an act of sorcery had been performed, without the consent (express or implied) of the accused person, of such a nature as to be generally believed, in the social groups of which the husband and the wife are respectively members, to have the effect—

(a) of inducing the accused person to have the sexual intercourse in question; and

(b) by custom, to excuse the act of intercourse in all the circumstances of the case.

(3) The burden of proof of a defence under Subsection (2) is on the accused person, and that burden need not be discharged beyond reasonable doubt.

(4) Subject to Subsection (5), the circumstances referred to in Subsection (2) include any circumstance (including any customary compensatory or conciliatory arrangement) that arose before the act of adultery, or that arose, or that the court dealing with the matter is satisfied will arise, after the act.

(5) The circumstances referred to in Subsection (2) do not include any act, matter or thing that—

(a) constitutes, or is an ingredient of, an offence committed by or on behalf of the accused person against any other law; or

(b) is repugnant to the general principles of humanity or is not in the public interest; or

(c) is, in the opinion of the court dealing with the matter, improper to be taken into account.

16. Sorcery as provocation.

(1) An act of sorcery may amount to a wrongful act or insult within the meaning of Section 266 of the *Criminal Code 1974*.

(2) It is immaterial that the act of sorcery—

(a) did not occur in the presence of the person allegedly provoked; or

(b) was directed at some person other than the person allegedly provoked.

(3) The likely effect of an act of sorcery relied on by virtue of this section shall be judged by reference, amongst other things, to the traditional beliefs of any social group of which the person provoked is a member.

(4) A defence provided by this section is in addition to and not in derogation of any defence that is—

(a) available by reason of any effect attributable, under any other law, to the act involved; or

(b) otherwise available to an accused person.

PART V. – PROCEDURE, EVIDENCE, ETC.

17. Evidentiary effect of possession of implement of sorcery.

(1) For the purpose of any proceedings under or by virtue of this Act, evidence that a person has at any time owned or had in his possession or under his control, otherwise than in an official capacity or in a capacity not implying or suggesting the possession of powers of sorcery, an implement of sorcery is evidence that he has been at all relevant times a sorcerer.

(2) The burden of proof of a matter referred to in Subsection (1) is on the person alleging it.

(3) The provisions of Subsection (1) are in addition to and not in derogation of the other provisions of this Act.

18. Evidence, proof, etc.

Schedule 2 applies to and in relation to proceedings brought under, or by virtue of this Act.

19. Saving of Customs Recognition Act.

Except so far as this Act expressly provides to the contrary, this Act does not affect the operation of the *Customs Recognition Act 1963*.

PART VI. – MISCELLANEOUS.

20. Preservation of rights and liabilities under other laws, etc.

Except where the contrary intention appears, nothing in this Act takes away from any person any defence, right or liability, whether civil or criminal—

- (a) that is or has been available, acquired or incurred; or
- (b) that will or may be available, acquired or incurred,

to or by him under any other law, but nothing in this section shall be deemed to show a contrary intention within the meaning of the *Interpretation Act 1975* or to affect Section 16 of the *Criminal Code 1974*, or any other similar law.

21. Regulations.

The Head of State, acting on advice, may make regulations, not inconsistent with this Act, prescribing all matters that by this Act are required or permitted to be prescribed, or that are necessary or convenient to be prescribed for carrying out or giving effect to this Act.

SCHEDULE 1 – Definition of Innocent Sorcery.

Sec. 1(1).

1. For the purposes of this Act, “**innocent sorcery**” is sorcery that—

- (a) is protective or curative only, or is not intended to produce, and does not purport to be calculated or able or adapted to produce, any harmful or unlawful result, or to exert any harmful, unlawful or undue influence on any person; and
- (b) is generally regarded in the social groups of which—
 - (i) the accused person; and
 - (ii) the person at whom the act was directed; and
 - (iii) the person whose conduct was intended to be influenced,

are respectively members as being, by custom, legitimate or harmless and not offensive in all the circumstances of the case.

2. Subject to Section Sch. 1.3. the circumstances referred to in Section Sch. 1.1. include any circumstance (including the courtship of an unmarried person by an unmarried person, betrothal, marriage, the fact that the act of sorcery was intended only to counteract or nullify the effect of a previous act of sorcery or any customary compensatory or conciliatory arrangement) that arose before the act of sorcery, or that arose, or that the court dealing with the matter is satisfied will arise, after the act.

3. The circumstances referred to in Section Sch. 1.1. do not include—

(a) any act, matter or thing that constitutes, or is an ingredient of, an offence committed by or on behalf of the accused person against any other law; or

(b) any act, matter or thing that is repugnant to the general principles of humanity or is not in the public interest; or

(c) any other act, matter or thing that, in the opinion of the court dealing with the matter, is improper to be taken into account.

4. For the purposes only of Section Sch. 1.3.(b) and (c), an act of sorcery shall not, simply as such, be deemed to be not in the public interest or improper to be taken into account.

5. For the purpose of allowing any circumstance referred to in Section Sch. 1.1. to arise, if the court dealing with the matter considers it proper and in the interests of justice and the amicable settlement of social or personal disputes or differences to do so the court may by order adjourn the hearing of the matter for such period and on such terms and conditions (including the entering by any person into a recognizance for any purpose connected with the matter) as the court thinks proper.

SCHEDULE 2 – Evidence, Proof, etc.

Sec. 18.

(1) Evidence that–

(a) an act is, in the social group to which the doer of the act belongs, believed to be an act of sorcery; and

(b) a person believed that–

(i) the act was directed at him or at some other person; or

(ii) his conduct or the conduct of some other person was intended to be influenced by or as a result of the act,

is evidence that the act is an act of sorcery within the meaning of this Act and that the doer of the act knew it to be an act of sorcery.

(2) Where in a prosecution for an offence against this Act there is evidence of a general belief in the social group to which the doer of the act belongs that an act is an act of sorcery, the doer of the act shall, in the absence of evidence to the contrary, be presumed to have intended the act to be an act of sorcery.

2. If in a prosecution for an offence against or in reliance on Section 8 the accused person is proved to have done an act of sorcery then–

(a) it is immaterial that the thing done was incapable of causing, or was not adapted to the fulfilment of, the result intended, if either—

(i) the accused person; or

(ii) the person at whom the act was directed; or

(iii) any person whose conduct was intended to be influenced,

believed that it was capable of producing the intended result or some similar result, and in the case of a person referred to in Subparagraph (ii) or (iii) the belief was known to the accused person; and

(b) until the contrary is proved, both the belief and the knowledge referred to in Paragraph (a) shall be presumed on the part of the accused person.

(1) In considering for the purposes of this Act the question of the existence or effect of a traditional belief or of its being generally held in a social group, a court—

(a) is not bound to observe strict legal procedures or to apply technical rules of evidence; but

(b) shall—

(i) admit and consider such relevant information as is available (including hearsay and expressions of opinion); and

(ii) otherwise inform itself as it sees fit.

(2) For the purposes of deciding a question referred to in Subsection (1), a court—

(a) may refer to books, treatises, reports or other works of reference, or statements by Local-level Governments or committees of Local-level Governments, as to any custom (whether published or not), and may accept any matter or thing stated in them as evidence on the question; and

(b) may of its own motion call such evidence or require the opinions of such persons as it thinks fit,

but this section does not limit the discretion of the court in obtaining evidence or information for itself on the question.

2. The burden of proof that an act of sorcery is an act of innocent sorcery is on the person alleging it.

ANNEX 3: LSIT OF INTERVIEWS

PERSONAL INTERVIEWS

N.	NAME	POSITION	NATIONALITY	LOCATION	REFERENCED IN TEXT AS
1	Angela Apa	Human Rights Defender - KUP Women for Peace	PNG	Kerowagi	<i>(Apa 2014)</i>
2	Bishop Anton Bal	Bishop Catholic Diocese of Kundiawa	PNG	Mingende	<i>(Bal 2014)</i>
3	Brian Kugame	Local activist and businessman	PNG	Goroka	Not referenced
5	Christina Temai	Victim of gender-based violence	PNG	Wara Simbu	Not referenced
6	Clara Aropa	Human Rights Defender – Vocal District Person	PNG	Wara Simbu	Not referenced
7	Clement Kone	Family Life coordinator – Diocese of Kundiawa	PNG	Kundiawa	Not referenced
8	Donald Gumbis	Lecturer & Researcher - University of Goroka	PNG	Goroka	<i>(Gumbis 2014)</i>
9	Dr. Jan Jaworski	Senior Surgeon at the Kundiawa Hospital	Poland	Kundiawa	<i>(Jaworski 2014)</i>
10	Eriko Fufurefa	Human Rights Defender - KAFE Women's Association	PNG	Goroka	<i>(Fufurefa 2014)</i>
11	Gloria Ramis	Human Rights Defender – Catholic Women's Association	PNG	Mendi	Not referenced
12	Isi Oru	FSVAC Projects Coordinator	PNG	Port Moresby	<i>(Oru 2014)</i>
13	Jack Kariko	Deputy Secretary of the DJAG, PNG	PNG	Port Moresby	<i>(Kariko 2014a)</i>
14	Jack Urame	Lutheran Pastor and Researcher – Former Director of the Melanesian Institute	PNG	Goroka	<i>(Urame 2014)</i>

N.	NAME	POSITION	NATIONALITY	LOCATION	REFERENCED IN TEXT AS
15	James Kua	S/Sgt. Kerowagi Police Station	PNG	Kerowagi	<i>(Kua 2014)</i>
16	Jeffrey Buchanan	UN Woman Country Representative	United Kingdom	Port Moresby	Not referenced
17	Jetro	Witness of sorcery and witchcraft practices	PNG	Mendi	Not referenced
18	John	Victim of sorcery-related violence	PNG	Kerowagi	Not referenced
19	John Ericho	Eastern Highlands Family Voice Director	PNG	Goroka	<i>(Ericho 2014)</i>
20	Josephine Advent	Representative of the Department of Justice and Attorney General (DJAG),	PNG	Port Moresby	<i>(Advent 2014)</i>
21	Judy Girua	Policewoman at the Family Sexual Violence Unit in Goroka	PNG	Goroka	Not referenced
22	Kamane Wauga	EVAW Program Officer - Oxfam International	PNG	Kundiawa	<i>(Wauga 2014)</i>
23	Katrina Mui	Victim of sorcery-related violence	PNG	Wara Simbu	Not referenced
24	Lentjee Be'soer	Human Rights Defender - Voice for Change	PNG	Banz	Not referenced
25	Lilly Be'soer	Human Rights Defender - Voice for Change	PNG	Minj	<i>(Be'soer 2014)</i>
26	Lincoln Menda	Public Health Specialist, Angau Memorial Hospital	PNG	Port Moresby	<i>(Menda 2014)</i>
27	Maria "youths"	Youth Leader – Catholic Women's Association - Mendi	PNG	Mendi	Not referenced
28	Mary	Victim of sorcery-related violence	PNG	Wara Simbu	Not referenced

N.	NAME	POSITION	NATIONALITY	LOCATION	REFERENCED IN TEXT AS
29	Mary Kini	Human Rights Defender - KUP Women for Peace	PNG	Kerowagi	<i>(Kini 2014)</i>
30	Miranda Forsyth	Research Fellow at SSGM in the College of Asia and Pacific at ANU	Australia	Canberra	<i>(Forsyth 2014c)</i>
31	Monica Paulus	Human Rights Defender - Simbu Province	PNG	Kundiawa / Wara Simbu	<i>(Paulus 2014)</i>
32	Muy Yarops	Victim of sorcery-related violence	PNG	Wara Simbu	Not referenced
33	Naumi Wigo	Victim of gender-based violence	PNG	Wara Simbu	Not referenced
34	Nick Swartz	Researcher at the Melanesian Institute	Australia	Goroka	<i>(Swartz 2014)</i>
35	Paul Barker	Executive Director of the PNG Institute of National Affairs	Australia	Port Moresby	<i>(Barker 2014a)</i>
36	Peter	Victim of sorcery-related violence	PNG	Wara Simbu	Not referenced
37	Peter Lari	Special Police Task Force Against Sorcery-related violence - Kerowagi	PNG	Kerowagi	<i>(Lari 2014)</i>
38	Philip Gibbs	Secretary of the Commission for Social Concerns and Researcher	New Zealand	Mount Hagen	<i>(Gibbs 2014)</i>
39	Philma Kelegai	Founder and co-director of the NGO "The Leniata Legacy" - Australia / PNG	PNG / Australia	Brisbane	<i>(Kelegai 2014)</i>
40	Prosephine Kalinau	Policewoman at the Family Sexual Violence Unit in Goroka	PNG	Goroka	Not referenced
41	Rafael	Peace Mediator - Kerowagi	PNG	Kerowagi	<i>(Rafael 2014)</i>
42	Ruby Matane	Human Rights Defender	PNG	Port Moresby	<i>(Matane 2014)</i>
43	Signe Poulsen	Human Rights Advisor	Denmark	Port Moresby	<i>(Poulsen 2014)</i>

N.	NAME	POSITION	NATIONALITY	LOCATION	REFERENCED IN TEXT AS
		UNOHCHR in PNG			
44	Sr. Gaudentia Meier	Catholic sister, nurse and midwife, director of the	Switzerland	Mendi	(Meier 2014)
45	Sr. Kathy Thomas	Catholic Sister and nurse working in the HIV clinic in Mendi	PNG	Mount Hagen	Not referenced
46	Sr. Lorraine Garasu	Founder of the Nazarene Rehabilitation Centre on Bougainville	PNG	Port Moresby	(Garasu 2014)
47	Stella	Caritas Australia – PNG	PNG	Port Moresby	Not referenced
48	Tessa Walsh	IWDA Program Manager for Papua New Guinea	Australia	Goroka	(Walsh 2014)
49	Ume Wainetti	National Coordinator of the Family and Sexual Violence Action Committee	PNG	Port Moresby	(Wainetti 2014a)
50	Sina	Activist at Voice for Change	PNG	Minj	Not referenced

PUBLIC SPEECHES

NAME	POSITION	NATIONALITY	LOCATION	REFERENCED IN TEXT AS
Paul Barker	Executive Director of the PNG Institute of National Affairs	Australia	Port Moresby	(Barker 2014b)
Jack Kariko	Deputy Secretary of the DJAG, PNG	PNG	Port Moresby	(Kariko 2014b)
Ume Wainetti	National Coordinator of the Family and Sexual Violence Action Committee	PNG	Port Moresby	(Wainetti 2014b)
Alithia Barampataz	National Human Rights Officer at OHCHR, Papua New Guinea	?	Port Moresby	(Barampataz 2014)

FOCUS GROUPS

NAME	NATIONA-LITY OF THE PARTICIPANTS	LOCATION	REFERENCED IN TEXT AS
Chiefs Kudjip	PNG	Kudjip	Not referenced
Peace Mediators Jiwaka	PNG	Minj	Not referenced

WORKSHOPS

NAME	NATIONA-LITY OF THE PARTICIPANTS	LOCATION	REFERENCED IN TEXT AS
Chiefs Kudjip	PNG	Banz	Not referenced
Implementation Workshop for the development of the National Action Plan against Sorcery and Witchcraft Accusation-Related Violence	PNG	Port Moresby	Not referenced
Women Highlands Human Rights Defenders	PNG	Banz	Not referenced

ANNEX 4: INTERVIEW WITH ANGELA APA

05:10

M: Could you introduce yourself?

A: My name is Angela Apa. I am the coordinator for Kup Women for Peace. Kup is the name of a village which is my place, in Kerowagi district in the Simbu province. We use peace because Kup is a tribal war zone. We (women) came together and decided that we should do something to bring about peace in our area especially for women and children who were being victims. So we formed this organization “Kup women for Peace” and our main objective is to stop tribal fighting and prevent conflicts.

07:10

M: When did you start with the organization?

A: This organization started in 2000 after a big tribal fight in Kup central. The fight started in 1999 and continued onto 2000. The women, as I have mentioned, came together and decided that there were enough tribal fights so we did a lot of underground movement – woman to woman – and we make awareness in our own area Kup. After the awareness and seeing that all women in the area agreed, we launch this in 2002. The fight in Kup lasted for 33 years and during the launching of the Kup Women for Peace, people of the warring tribes came to congregate and for the first time after all these years, all the family kin and ties met and there we had reconciliation. We got some funding from UNDP for this reconciliation ceremony, which lasted for a week. People from the warring tribes contributed with food and kind. They performed traditional ways of expressing their sorrow by putting black charcoal on their faces and rubbing with mud and so on. They shared and exchanged pork meat and other food items and this broke their enemy grievances for the last 33 years. Through this program they made peace between the warring tribes. Mary comes from Kumai tribe, Agnes comes from Eduka tribe and I come from Kumga tribe. These are the three tribes who had been enemies in the last 33 years. When we came together and stood together, the men also joined in and started to make peace. At these days small inter-clan fights have been stopped.

10:40

M: So the role of the Kup Women for Peace was key to end the tribal fighting in this area...

A: We were the key into that. The role of the Kup Women for Peace was to prevent fight and prevent conflict. Our role was also to have training with the community leaders on community justice and peace foundation people came to train all the village people. We have community police whom we trained them, village court magistrates and on HIV/AIDS, involved with Kup Ambuga group, which is only for girls, we conduct leadership training in the schools. We did a lot of awareness on peace building, sorcery, documenting sorceries, water sanitation and livelihood. We had four (4) components, which are: human rights, livelihood, health & sanitation, and law &

justice. We try to make all these four components happen. We had training and workshops for all community leaders and for women. We had counselling programs and did many good things. For livelihood and sanitation, we had water supplies from a nearby village to the station with the help of European Union and AusAid. We got these funding so we delivered the services. We provided water tanks for schools and churches, we supported livelihood by supporting people with animal husbandry, chickens, and other projects. These were some of the things that we were doing. By 2004, our work was recognised by the community and community leaders. In front of the Provincial Police Commander and other respectable leaders, the community leaders gave us (women) a spear which was kind of a mandate given to us women to stand up in front of the men and the public to present or make speeches which is not allowed by our custom. They called us "*pawa meri, lida meri*" (powerful women, women leader) which then gave us the strength to stand up and talk in public or in front of men. That was a big success for us women. The general Simbu province recognized our effort in building peace in our area. Our district manager recognised us and was very supportive.

Our work was really good and our people respected us and we respected them and there was peace and harmony. There was no problem. Because of the different kinds of training we gave to the people at Kup, they were fully aware of human rights however, those people who have been away from the area went in and created problems for us. The elites, the educated went in and had disagreement over some properties and made the tribes divided in half. They went to our centre and destroyed everything. So we (Mary, Agnes and myself) came out of Kup. We were so hurt and so we came out. While we were going through this problem, IWDA took us out and also Fiji women also wanted us and they sent us over to Fiji for two weeks where we stayed and relaxed. There we attended the Pacific Secretarial Meeting and another meeting for all the universities in the South Pacific. When we came back, we had no place to operate but we did not lose hope because we knew that peace building is something that we must do. In tribal fights women were accused of sorcery and things happened in front of us, so we decided that we must keep on doing it despite the problems.

After we came back, we had no place to start so we mind our own business doing other things to help ourselves. Then the district manager and the district management team came to us and said, "you are somebody who had done something good for the district, province and the country and we would like to talk to you." So they came and took us to their place and provide us with a huge building at the district centre, which was an old police quarters. They said they would help us sign a MOU to take the building for our work. We couldn't believe our ears and we cried of joy because we had no shelter, no office to operate and we use to sit under the trees.

Since Mary has the skills to write to donors, she tried, and Oxfam gave us money and we renovated the old building given to us. Oxfam has been helping us all the way through. The last money they gave was used to renovate and to equip the building with office supplies and required materials. In that office we have been working and in 2009 we came out and in March 2010 we were given the

building and we started to operate from there. Then we gave birth to the Human Rights Defenders in the Highlands Provinces.

22:39

M: How many women were working with you when you started this work in 2000?

A: We had 6 from the warring tribes and a total number of 26 steering committee members. Out of the 26 members 10 men and 12 women, we have gender balance here and then we have the village courts, two officials from each village court area, and we have a woman from central Kup who is the deputy chairperson and is one of the signatories to the bank account. For community justice we have 500 plus people and half of them are women and the other half men.

23:57

M: Do you have any idea of how many clients you have helped all these years?

A: When we were at Kup, $\frac{3}{4}$ of the population in Kup came to us and we helped them. In here for the first two years (2011 & 2012) people did not recognize our work. From June 2013 to this year 2014, we have been seeing about more than 1000 clients. Every day we have about 5 – 12 clients coming to us. Unfortunately, at the moment, we are dealing with only sorcery and domestic violence. For livelihood and sanitation, we do not look into them anymore and for community justice, it is like a cross cutting issue and so when anything arises, police and others come in as well to resolve it.

25:52

M: What would the clients do if Kup women did not exist?

A: If Kup women group was not there, sorcery cases for instance would get out of hand. Of course police is there but not every incident is reported to the police. For Kup women, we have focal people on the ground in the province. We have six districts and we are working with four districts. We are getting clients from the four districts and helping a lot of them, so if Kup Women for Peace was not there, police would not have done much but because we have the RRT there, police intervenes quickly and helps the victims to be repatriated and get the perpetrators to the police station. There have been some good positive things happening and we are happy. With domestic violence, a lot of women are coming into our office. We have counsellor in Kundiawa, Gumine and here. Two of us are counsellors ourselves so we counsel them and many times the women are serious and want to take their husbands to court. And the husband attempted to murder the wife and so we counsel them and stay with them and talk with them and later, they realize their mistakes and gradually they reconcile and go back to the family. If a woman is very serious, we help them to get preventive order or we separate them. We have no right to separate their marriage but only upon their request. One classic example is that a woman is now happy, one who is supposed to come but she is not here. They had their problem for 14 years and just last Wednesday we mediated them in the presence of the Provincial Station Commander (PSC) and now they are living

together again. She is happy and very appreciative and would like to come here for an interview but she is not here. In most cases the woman would go to the police station and put the husband behind bars but because he is the bread-winner she would take him out again after 3 days or so. Because of these kinds of things, the police do not take domestic violence so seriously. That's why they come to us. We do it our way to bring about peace. We do a lot of counselling and we normally go out to check on them. We attend to clients every day. We have time schedule for them to come and see us but we are not so strict with our schedule. We do it every day and everywhere. They sometimes come to our houses and we do it there too. About 5 – 10 people would come to our houses. They come for safety and to get relief so we just attend to them. We have no safe house. Our house is like a safe house. An example is that, one of my daughter's in law was beaten severely by my son and when she came to me, I sent her to Mary's house and said that she went to the safe house. My husband and family members thought that she actually went to a safe house but it was Mary who took care of her. Her husband was so violent so I sent her away. I pretended that I did not know anything about it because we do a lot of cover up work. When I take out a woman from the neighbourhood, I pretend to be normal because our lives are also at risk when we are repatriating them. If we remove a woman with a child, the husband would be frustrated and he can do anything to us. So we are very careful of our movements, in what we do. Many times they are happy and come back to thank us and sometimes to thank us in bigger ways but we tell them that it is our job to make them happy. That gives us the pleasure of helping other people.

34:47

M: Are you a survivor of violence?

A: Yes, of course, I am a survivor of violence. In 1999 during a clansmen fight, I have lost everything. From 1999 to 2000, my clansmen have accused me of sorcery. They beat me up and called me a sorcerer. They hit me with the gun butt and they tried to shoot me. If it weren't for my sons, they would have killed me. Somehow I ran away with my husband and sons to Waingar and stayed there and Mary was there. We met and Mary saw the black marks on my face and asked what had happened. I told her everything and told her that the people had beaten me up so badly. In spite of this, I never give up my work. I wanted other people to be happy. Also in the 2009 tribal fight, Mary's properties were lost. Agnes' properties, my properties and the organization's properties were all lost. In my own village, I had livestock, house, beddings and so many things but they burned my house and destroyed everything else. This is what happened, I am a survivor. While I was doing this work of violence against women and sorcery my husband just left me. He is a teacher by profession. He left me and married another wife and now they are staying together. Despite all these, I am still continuing. In this work, we are saying that polygamy is not good because it brings disease into the family and financial crisis and violence against women but the men are doing it, because we don't give them time, we have no time for them. We go out educating people and we go out trying to rescue the accused people, we want to comfort other people and we don't have time for our husbands. So they marry other wives to please themselves. So I am a survivor of violence too. One of my children left because of violence and now has completed carpentry and is in Lae. My daughter also left and struggled staying with her uncle and

completed grade 10 and is now a teacher. So the human rights defenders are victims ourselves. We want to make other people happy and cover up our own wounds. In our world here, we pretend to be happy even when we are faced with all kinds of things in our homes and lives. Once again I want to say that I am a survivor of violence.

39:30

M: And that helps you to...

A: This is my strength, my encouragement. I want other people to see me doing these things despite my own problems. Some people would say, 'you are helping sorcerers because you are one yourself,' but it doesn't worry me or put me down. Our families accused us too because we are not always with them. If I save one life, I am very happy with that and I gain strength from that and I don't care what my family or others say about me. I focus on my clients and give my time to these people.

40:55

M: Thank you very much for this interview, is there any other thing I did not ask you and you would like to say?

A: Human rights defenders fight for the rights of other people, it is risky but with a police car we feel secure, but working in the streets and trying to save someone is risky and my life is not guaranteed. We take risk in saving other people. About our work there should be a token to please us. For the Kup Women for Peace we got an award in 2004 in the pacific where we came first and came second in the world when Korea came first. No matter what, I will live and die as a Peace Builder. Only Peace Building will send me to the coffin.

ANNEX 5: INTERVIEW WITH BISHOP ANTON BAL

(48 minutes)

0:34

M: Can you introduce yourself briefly?

BB: I am Bishop Anton Bal of Catholic Diocese of Kundiawa which is one of the nineteen dioceses in Papua New Guinea. Here we have all kinds of good activities and also we have the sorcery cases. It started here and spread out to different places. I am the one who is trying my best to organize programs to deal with this issue: sorcery and sorcery-related violence.

1:33

M: What is the problem with the sorcery cases?

BB: The problem is that people are trying to give reasons to deaths of community and family members. Also they try to find reasons for some odd events like things happening to families and individuals. They associate it with someone being the cause of those disadvantages. That is how it started and it continues and it takes different emphasis at different times in history. Formerly, when people did not understand the cause of illness and deaths, they said the deaths of older people were that their times had run out and it was time for them to go. But when younger people died and important community members died, they tried to find reasons. Why? What is the cause of the death? That was how it developed and people started to accuse somebody of what they were doing on the previous days, the type of food they ate and what conversation they had, and then they accused someone who had been with the deceased to have caused the death of that person. This was how it developed.

3:54

M: Is it something very common in the Highlands?

BB: The incidents can be defined in different ways, incidents of deaths, and incidents of deaths caused by accidents. Some deaths caused by accidents are seen as the death came about as a result of carelessness. When the driver of a vehicle was drunk and driving and caused the accident, they understand it as an accident caused as a result of a drunkenness and carelessness. And for others, if they see that they have some unresolved issues that they have to deal with, the incidents/accidents become their venue for expressing their grievances, find ways to resolve the unresolved issue by taking advantage of the vulnerability of the situation.

5:16

M: Why, out of all the problems you can see in the community, did you decide to especially focus on sorcery-related cases?

BB: We decided to deal with the case because it becomes an obstacle for development, an obstacle for peace, it creates division among families, and also it creates fear and uncertainty in the community and individuals so we have to deal with it to try to control the situations. That is why we are doing it, because sorcery and sorcery-related violence had become an obstacle for physical and economic development. It has become an obstacle for relationships among families and communities. In my diocese we are working on sorcery-related violence involving five different steps. The first step is to make people understand the cause of sickness and deaths, and also of accidents and incidents. This is so that people understand. The second step we are taking is to have our leaders in the communities and leaders in our church to be alert of the news and events of their communities. If there is any incident or accident that was a cause of a death, they have to come in and play their part as religious leaders and respected leaders in the community to take control of the situation. That is the second step. The third step is to respect the law and order. It is not only the church members and the church leaders who are affected by the situation; it is the community so the community leaders and the mediation committee in the community, other church leaders and even the government in the community like police; we have to involve them. The fourth step we are doing is to work as a team. We have to try to work as a team to deal with this case. The fifth step is to find ways to assist the victim and also the perpetrator because the perpetrator is not normal. So we find ways to assist both the perpetrator and victim and bring peace and harmony to the community. The community will have to work together to empower the victim so that the victim is not completely isolated or completely destroyed but the community will have to work together to bring the victim back to make them feel part of the community and there has to be reconciliation and peace among the community. That's what the church in Simbu has been doing. My predecessor had started it and I am continuing now and very aggressively when I see the situation getting out of hand. It is not sorcery alone but sorcery accusation has become a scapegoat for young frustrated individuals in the community taking advantage of the vulnerable situation and trying to express their frustrations.

11:02

M: You said your predecessors already started with this work, how long has been the Catholic Church in Simbu working against sorcery-related violence?

BB: We started looking at it when we had the evaluation of the church in Papua New Guinea in the region in 1972, but that was at a general level. With the sorcery-related issues, we started in 1982 to deal with the sorcery-related issues particularly because there was a misunderstanding, not because of the violence but because of the misunderstanding of some Pentecostal preachers, associating the Bible devil, Satan, with the sorcery belief. That can destroy the whole understanding, so we took a stand in order to make the difference between the bible devil, Satan, and the sorcery and sorcery-related issues: it is not the person that is Satan or evil, but it is a power that is within the person that is giving them these ideas to do evil things. If we are looking at the bible and try to relate it to this sorcery that we believe in, we have to deal with it, then we have to deal with that evil activities, evil ideas and evil mentality of a person but not a man or a woman. That is the kind of distinction we are trying to stress on so that the people are not accused and

harmed. If we relate this issue to the Bible, Jesus was expelling the demons but not hurting the body. So we do not have to confuse ourselves with the Bible, Satan, devil or evil with the sorcery issue.

13:39

M: When you do your workshops about sorcery, do you deal with the belief or do you deal with the violence?

BB: We deal with the violence, leading the people to know that this belief is superficial, has no grounds and there is no such thing as sorcery or sanguma. In Simbu this belief has changed from time to time. Before when we were not exposed to other things and the time when animals and insects were around, our people call it sanguma that would take the form of insect or a bird or an animal and that was familiar to the people. Later when other animals were introduced like cows, goats and sheep etc., the sanguma would take the form of those animals. Later when vehicles were introduced, like motorbikes, buses, land cruisers, air planes and helicopters, the sanguma took the form of those vehicles. Lately when firearms were introduced, the sanguma can take the form of M16 or .22 or SLR or whatever firearm. This kind of relationship is not consistent but it is a belief that people have and they try to use it to harm other people because of their own fear so that they are psychologically comforted when they do harm to other people. That is why we are saying that there is no sorcery, nor sanguma. It is a superficial ungrounded belief.

16:45

M: Could you elaborate a little on how frustration and discomfort caused by the death of a loved one can be motivating factors for raising accusations of witchcraft?

BB: The death of a loved one is always a loss in the community, so they have this pain because the loss of their relative. But often, their immediate relatives are becoming vulnerable because they are in sorrow and grief, they are mourning. During those times, it is only those who have unresolved issues that they need to deal with, who take advantage of the vulnerability of the family in this occasion. They are harming people because of some other reasons. It is also greed. If a family has daughters only and they are married and have big land area, and another family who had desired to get that piece of land, they will use this occasion to smear the name of this family, chase the family out in order to get the land. So it is all greed and all unsolved issues, and then people take advantage of the situation.

19:10

M: During a torture, often there are many people watching, but not doing anything. How can you explain that?

BB: Ok, you want me to talk a little bit on the scene of sorcery torture. Those people who are torturing people are violent. They are drug victims, home brew beer victims, they are aggressive and they are violent. So there are people watching but they are taken by surprise and shocked, so

they become spectators only and observe what is happening. During the scene of the torture, you can't do much. Ok, somebody can step in, somebody.... People with courage, those who know that the whole thing is wrong, they can step in. But in this kind of situation, you are trying to save somebody whom they have accused already publicly and torture them and if you are supporting, they will be accusing you also for being part. YOU WILL SEE A LOT OF PEOPLE THERE AT THE TORTURE SCENE BUT THEY DO NOT WANT TO BE ACCUSED, so they become by-standees and observers watching the show.

21:27

M: Going back to the workshop, what are the specific activities that you do to deal with sorcery?

BB: The specific thing that we are doing is that we are asking our people, our church leaders, people with respect, people in the community that other people see as he has something positive to offer, we are asking these people to be alert. If there is a case coming up, they have to step in as early as possible, right at the beginning of the morning period, right up to the funeral service. We ask them to be part of the whole planning process. They would invite people and relatives to come and mourn and at the same time prayer has to be part of the program. That's what we are doing and if there someone is accused already and if our people go in late, we ask them to take ownership of the situation, first to take care of the victim. If they are injured, bring them to the hospital, if they are rejected, bring them back to your community, make them feel part of the family, and then try to console them and give their dignity back. It will take time to do that but the immediate response is to take ownership of the situation to console and give shelter to the victim. At the same time we ask them to see the situation. Is it happening because of this event now or is it a premeditated activity like what I was saying, they envy this piece of land and they want to have it but there is no chance for them. So they take advantage of the death of a relative of this family to demoralize them, diminish them, and chase them away from the community, so that they can have the piece of land. This is premeditated. And that has to go to the courts and these are the things we are doing.

24:12

M: Who is the target of your training?

BB: The target of our training are the Catholic Church leaders and Catholic Priests knowing that there are misunderstandings with the Bible on the definition of devil, evil and the demons. Now we are including pastors from other Christian Denominations. We called them together and have these workshops for our leaders and leaders of other Christian denominations. So that they work as a team and they all have the same focus. They are working together to deal with the cases and so the place where we conduct the in-services, our church leaders are taking initiatives by writing to all the pastors around the area and invite them to come. They are organizing accommodation for the pastors to take part in the in-services. We are not doing as a Catholic church alone but with other Christian denominations.

25:47

M: What are the responses from the other denominations? Are they willing to participate?

BB: The cases or issues are experienced by everyone regardless of where they come from and who they are. They want to, but they also fear because they are minority groups, they are not respected people in the community and so they fear to intervene. So when we organize as a team, it is an opening for them to come in and take part.

26:49

M: Do you have a general estimation of how many people have gone through your in-service training?

BB: We have done it for so many years already and I don't know how many have come and gone but sorcery-related violence has escalated and so we took steps to do it again. We have started again in the last two years and this year we had them in two different parishes. Those who we trained and are actively keeping their eye on the situations in the villages could be around 300 – 400 people.

27:50

M: Did you observe positive results?

BB: Of course, only when the Catholic Church leaders are there, at the scene, and if other church leaders are also there we have positive results. If our church leaders are not there and they don't take ownership of the situation or do programs and be part of the group. These cases are only happening at the remote places so only the places where we can reach, for those, we have positive results. But there are cases happening outside, which are far away from road access. These ones are always difficult.

29:12

M: What would you need to expand this good work? What would make your work easier and more effective?

BB: Good road conditions help facilitate the smooth movement of people from one place to another because in the parishes we have teams working. We have learned already that people living in the local areas can't do much. So people from another village or church leaders from around could work as a team to deal with cases. For that we need to have good road access and vehicles that are reliable. The problem that we have to reach there is road access and means of transport.

30:32

M: There are other organizations doing similar work. How important is collaboration between the different stakeholders in order to achieve a good outcome?

BB: I see the difference too in this regard. One group is interested in knowing the facts of sorcery and sorcery-related violence. People like yourself who are studying to know the facts on how it is happening and what is the belief and where does it come from and these kind of things. There are people who are interested in knowing. There are others who would like to take the situation as an issue, but they create venues for employment. That's what they are doing.

32:43

M: Like what?

BB: Like we have HIV/AIDS. It was a cross-cutting issue. International organizations were pumping money into deal with the HIV/AIDS issue. It was creating opportunity for luxury living. People would go for in-service training, courses, conventions, living in hotels, driving around in hired cars. Ok, the sorcery issues can also do the same. I already expressed that in our national convention in Goroka when people were looking at sorcery and sorcery-related violence and said 'how can we do with it and what kind of system do we develop.' I said that it can become an issue for creating employment opportunities and for luxury while we are not dealing with the case. To deal with the case is to develop a strategy. Do we only study the case or do we want to do away with the belief? That, we have to come up with the strategy. That's what my diocese is trying to do: to develop a strategy to look at the case and to convince people that this is a superficial belief. It has no substance and we go to do away with it. That's what this diocese is doing.

34: 37

M: I heard from other stakeholders a similar concern. Human Rights Defenders, for example, say that there are organisations working at a policy-level, but then when it comes to saving lives in the ground, they do not respond. What do you think about this claim?

BB: Some organizations try to deal with the victim directly which is good but we are not dealing with the issue. To deal with the issue we really have to go to the grassroots level to understand the situation on why it happens and who are doing it and try to deal with the issue itself and to convince people to do away with it.

36:50

M: What do you think is the role of the international community here: should they deal with the issue or should they let PNG do it by itself?

BB: The sorcery issue or sorcery-related violence is not something particular for Papua New Guinea. It is happening everywhere. Because I am dealing with it, I have gone through histories and learned that the last torture in Europe was in 1715. So that belief is everywhere and people are coming to change in development and change of mentality and attitudes. Here in Papua New Guinea, first contact with the outside world was only 120 years ago. In the Highlands, it's only 80 years of exposure to the outside world. So there will come a time when we will change. It is becoming an

issue and a concern now, and so we will have to take it as a concern and issue and deal with it. But it will come a time when the mentality will change. That's my belief.

38:28

M: In the meantime, what do you think the international community should do?

BB: It is an issue. Whether you deal with it at the local or from the international dimensions, it is good. It is an issue that we will have to deal with. But what I am saying is that if international organizations are interested in it, there are different ways of looking at it. They will have to look at all the levels to try to support to deal with the case. With international assistance or intervention which is good and people are taking as an agenda of the day. Now we are focusing on the violence we are talking about human dignity, equal participation, dealing with gender differences, and so this is the topic of the day now. We are looking at it because most of the sorcery-related violence or accusations are on women, about 75% are women. With the idea and the language of the day, it will be on this level.

41:06

M: If you could ask for three wishes, which ones would they be?

BB: My three wishes are to make the people know that this belief is not real. It will have to be done with the awareness and with what we are doing. My second wish is that if the governments can come in by providing the necessary assistance, we would do our work more effectively. For example, if there is a case in the village, I come and tell the police that there is a sorcery case and we have to intervene. And if the police say that 'we don't have a vehicle now, we have a vehicle here but has no fuel.' These are the things that happen. I want to see cooperation and collaboration from the stakeholders. The third wish is that if the international organizations are coming in, we'll have to see where the problem is. We are dealing with the violence relating to sorcery accusations and want to do away with it, or we enjoy it and taking it as a point of study and knowledge. That understanding has to be cleared. It is a situation we are trying to deal with, it is an issue. But are we trying to deal with the study of it or are we trying to deal with the issue.

43:56

M: Is there anything else that you would like to say?

BB: I said most of the things I'd like to say.

44: 56

M: Do you have any message of hope?

BB: The hopeful message that I am always saying is that the situation you see here is a demonstration of a frustrated society. Here we have a formal education system that brings children from elementary school up to Grade 10, and it pushes 2/3 of the students out onto the streets and

only 1/3 manage to go to tertiary institutions and colleges. Job opportunities are very rare. Those who have completed colleges are found in the streets. So the situation we see on sorcery-related violence is another demonstration of a frustrated society, frustrated young people. We have law and order problems in the country. If you are creating a situation like this, how can you expect it to be peaceful? So the sanguma accusation is also part of a demonstration of a frustrated society. They talk about drug abuse, marijuana, home-brewed beer.... These are young people doing so. The government and the international community can look at avenues where these young people can be occupied. This is the message that I want to leave.

ANNEX 6: INTERVIEW WITH ERIKO FUFUREFA

Maria: Can you introduce yourself?

(00:01:26) Eriko: My name is Eriko Fufurefa. I represent Kafe Women's Association. But normally it is called Kuswa. Kafe Adan Settlers Women's Association in the Eastern Highlands and also in PNG. So our organization is like a group of women that has been formed in 2001. We started in 2001 and we are now in 2014. So it is almost 13 years we operated. It was started with only 8 women, that we had problems at home. We had violence in our home. And our husbands they were involved in polygamy practices and they got so many wives and they did not support us, the women. Like myself I am one of the victims. And then we left, I left the husband and I just go through court and I divorce my husband and I stay with my own children. I have almost five children. My one daughter was adopted by my small sister. She insisted that I got a lot of problems in my home so she took one away and, at the moment, I have four children with me. And they are already teenagers and one of them is already married. Three are not married yet and one is young, she got married to a boyfriend but she was not really over eighteen. She was under 18, 16 years. But I think just because of my problem with my husband she got married. She was underage and she got married a man and they got a baby girl. And she is also with me at the moment now.

M: So you live with your daughter and with your granddaughter, and where is the husband of this daughter?

(00:03:51) E: Ah he owns a house in the village. So he is not living in the town. But my daughter and my granddaughter we live together in town. So sometimes he comes in and pays a visit and he goes back. Goes back to his village.

M: Do you remember when you told me the story of how you decided to divorce your husband? Can you tell me again?

(00:06:02) E: Oh yes, my husband, we had a business for almost 10 years. Before, we did not have a business. We were Christian. And then, we go to church and then we brought up our children in good home, where my children and myself were protected. But when we have enough money my husband goes out and he goes around with other wives bringing a lot of problems into our home. He got involved in marrying so many women: almost 37 to 38 wives. He just gets them in and he sometimes he goes out with them. And sometimes, I go and argue with them and all this. But some of them I don't know them. It should be more than that. But then I just, I see that it was an ongoing problem. And I feel that I need to come up with some good things that I will help myself because my husband will just continuously do all sorts of problems to affect me. So maybe one day I'll kill myself or maybe I'll be end up in some other troubles, jail or something like that. Because, I was using so many offensive things like, knife and stones, iron, and I tried to hit the other wives. And

also I fight with my husband but in the public place that I feel that it was not good. And I abused my children, sometimes I just leave the children and I just take off. Go to my village or go somewhere elsewhere, I feel like I could go and get my mind set or something like that, to relax my mind. Just leave the children and go. So these are some things that I've been doing for some years. And then, I formed a group, I tried to adjust some of these problems in my life. And I go out with some other women and I discuss about all those issues. And sometimes, some other women who attend church, they come to do counselling and they try to advise me. And also I brought so many women to court, to district court and village court, and all these. But still it doesn't help me. But once upon a time, I went up to community development because I just wanted to do summons for my children for maintenance. That's how I got up and I learnt some new things. That is why, this is a space that we need, to have a women's group established. So the adviser of Community Development, he sometimes, he brings me out in the village, thinking that I go into so many problems. So sometimes he invites me to go out, when they are invited to a community to do some advocacy. Or sometimes they go for some community work and I follow them. I just go with them and sometimes, they encourage me to say something, talk about women issues and all these social issues and things like that. But I never talked so much before, I was a very shy woman and I never talk out, talk about my issues affecting me and all these. But when I go through this community development and sometimes they send me for some other trainings, I was empowered. And also I was trained under Oxfam. I was trained under Oxfam like good governance, like the women's empowerment and all these, that's how I grow up. And I just feel confident and I come out. And then I just go more on empowering some other women who are out in the village or who have been abused with problems like me. They face more problems than me. I go and encourage them and some of them they come in and they join the group and we all work together. And then we started to voice up for women now. So that's how we come up and we form this organization. And more women, we have almost over 1000 plus women. And then also we work in communities. Like we help mothers to sow clothes and we help them to do their marketing and all these. We try to support and we work very close with the women. And train them how to do skills training like sowing clothes. There is a very high demand in our country so we have to help them to sow clothes and they can sell it and pay for school fees for their children or they can provide for the home. These are some of the things that we help the mothers to go in. Even we don't get a very big amount of support from our government, no. We were just working just voluntarily, nobody pays us, but how we struggle, we struggle. Till now, we got only a little bit of support but not very much to support our women. They mostly they come in to support with a vehicle, when we want to go out in the field and something like that: we write a letter to ask them to support us. But cash is very hard to get, they will not give us. But we do our own fundraising to help the mothers and help ourselves. So most of the women that we work in this organization, we are problematic women. We don't have husband, we are single mothers, with our children. And how we struggle we struggle to live with our children and we provide for our children. And also we help our children. We try our best to make small marketing in the communities, to get some fundraising to help our children to go to school. Also we help them to provide for the house and all these. So it is a very tough life that we go through but we are still struggling and now we are struggling yet but we don't give up. So these are some of the things I

experienced and I feel that I am confident and I can stand for my life. Now I feel that I can provide for my home and I can find means and ways to look after my children and look after them.

M: What are the main problems that women face in this country?

(00:13:41) E: Polygamy and child failure cases, is the most, and sorcery. Sorcery is now coming up. Sorcery is like, it's already in the system, it's in the culture, and it's a belief in our culture. People now they have this very strong mind that sorcery is already there. So they have a belief. Some people want to come and change it or they want to come and say no. They don't talk about sorcery but it is already in there so it will take time for them to really understand, what is sorcery. It will take them time to take out these feelings that there is no sorcery or sorcerer in the community.

M: When we talk about sorcery cases, the belief in sorcery is spread all over Papua New Guinea but the violence arising from it does not happen everywhere. The violence is mainly in the Highlands. Is that correct?

(00:15:07) the violence is continuous, the women face all sorts of problems. And violence against them all this, but people don't report. They don't report the matter to the police. They just see that, it can happen. If one is suspected of sorcery, nobody supports them. Women or men. They think that, these are the people that kill most of our people in the community. So it's a strong belief in the community. If one or two youths come and kill the women or something like that, nobody comes out and talks about the issue. They just leave as it goes. But only few NGOs now we are talking about the issues and we are taking action. I feel that so many people are now coming up, and they are hearing more about these new laws passed by our government. It is not really passed by the government but it has become a criminal offence. Criminal offence now, for the time being. If one woman is killed, the perpetrator is charged under criminal code. So they are still working under this sorcery act. So I don't know. It will take some time to make the law happen, to make it tough.

M: But the law has been toughen, now under the Criminal Code, the sentence for killing somebody accusing this person of sorcery is death penalty, but it does seem to be stopping the people; it is still happening.

(00:17:00) E: It is still. In some other parts it is still working, it's every day. Everyday women are killed and nobody reports, nobody reports. If anyone reports, he or she is at risk too. They might also kill him or her. So the other thing is they are also afraid of death. And their life is also at risk, the people in the community. So they don't talk, they just leave it as it is. And they can, torture the woman and they can bury them alive and all these, and nobody talks. But only these few, last year till now, I think more NGOs and community based organizations and churches, we are just trying to

come out and talk about these issues. And we are saying no, don't harm women anymore, we don't want more women to be killed in our country. If you see that, the real thing, have witness and all these you can take it court but we don't want men to kill more women from sorcery cases. Most of us are now acting on this and we go out in the communities to educate more of our youths and more of our people now. So that the people are aware of the new laws. And we try to educate them and telling them that, that's a belief but you have to come out and you need to stop. If you see that something is wrong you have to bring them to court and the court can deal with it. Instead of killing more women. Some are accused because they are jealous of their land, they are jealous of anything that they have in the community. Or else people want to get something out from them, they just come and they try to accuse them. They don't want this type of women to be in the community. And most victims they accuse they are the most unfortunate women. Like single mothers who have no husband and who have no enough family members in the community. These are the ones who are mostly affected in the communities. So we are now trying to educate more women to be aware of where to go and get help. We tell them where to report to, when they are abused or when they are verbally abused, calling them sorcerers. We tell them where to go and get help or report the matter to the peace mediators. Or who are the people already in the community who will help them. Sometimes we just tell them, direct to the police station or some of us. Like Kafe women's, we are dealing with these cases so they can come and see us. So that is how they come and then we help them. So when it's a very serious case, we refer to the police and our organization Kafe women's is very close with police department. So we have their direct contact numbers, so we deal with them, we call them. And then we try to help the victims. Help the victims so when we help the victims there is already some people in the community are seeing something is going on. So people are trying to change some of their behaviours now. They are afraid to, for the police they never really go and act upon these sorcery killings. But now the police are just going directly into the communities to get the perpetrators. So these are some things that I am happy that the police are now working very close with the NGOs and the community based organizations to support the women who are in need. And also we get funding from outside donors to come and help the women in the country so this is very helpful. So I would say, I just thank our partners like Oxfam and these people who support our organization, to help the victims, the women who are in great need. It was a very great pain for so many years ago and nobody seem to come out. Even our government doesn't come out to help us or support us, to help the women, to rescue them and all these. But we just had the pain for so many years till now. For not long we had these funding support from other partners like international NGOs who come in support us. Or the outside countries like Australia and other countries who come in to support us to fund the programs. And now we are operating and we see that now women are coming for help. And now more women are seeking to come for justice and all these. So I as a Papua New Guinean I am very happy about this support. Because it was a pain, I mean it was a pain for so many years. That women we were not seen like, we are human beings. We were just killed like something nothing. I don't care, nobody likes, and nobody talk about what is happening to the women of our country. But especially in Eastern Highlands, I think it is starting to move now because we have these, human rights defenders in here. So we defend the rights of the women and we also we go for advocacy programs. Like in NGOs and churches and CBOs we come together and we do more advocacy in the

public areas and also we go out in the remote areas to do more advocacy. Some other places that we don't go to do advocacy, there are serious crimes out there again. People don't know, so they are still killing the women. So I feel that we need more educational programs out in the very remote areas, to educate our youths and women folks and our husbands in the community to have respect for the women. And they will know where to come and get access to get the services like health services and they can come through justice. Most of our women out in the remote areas, they are just killed every day. They are already in the village and they are already in the ground. Buried and the new lot are coming again and all these.

M: Why more women than men?

(00:24:03) E: I mean it's a belief in our society already. So more women are killed. We have different kinds of culture in different parts of our country. In some other places, the men are the victims of sorcery. The men are also the victims. And the other provinces and districts, the women are the most victims. Like in my place, in my village, we have men who are suspected. And in Asaro to Chimbu and all these we have women. Women are the victims. Like in Henganofi, Kainatu, Okapa, the men are the main victims. Only a few women. And also not the men and women only, some children are also the victims. Some children are also called sorcerers and they are also killed. So it's a very big issue in our country. But we need more support from our government or donors so that we can go out in the very remote areas to educate our people in the communities. So that they are aware. And also the women already know where to get help. It would be helpful for our women. But now we are just going to only some communities and most communities are still, they don't know about sorcery. I mean I said already, it's already in the belief it's already in the culture, but we need more support so that we can go out in the remote areas to educate more people. So women and men will stay together and they will have respect for each other. And this, I think will help most of our people in the remote areas.

M: So you think that the main solution would be to target the small communities or you see some measures coming from the government. So what should be the approach, bottom-up or from the government-down?

(00:26:33) E: I think the best solution is that the government has to come back and go back and do the bottom-up planning. And then they could come and help our people in the communities. Because now the government is on top and then they don't go down straight to the communities to help our people. So these are some of the issues that we are facing. But I think the government is now, planning and I think it's changing a bit now. They are trying to come to the real communities to help the people in the communities. So we'll see what is going to happen but the whole idea I just want to see that the government has to really come down to the grassroots people. So that they will know, they will come and interview the people in the community and they will know what are the root causes in the communities. So if the government come down and gets the issues for

the people in the community, then they can go ahead and they can go and plan for the country. That's the best solution. If not, we will still be facing lots of problems. It will affect our country and it will also affect our people. If only the government can come down and work very close with the people on the ground. Then we will see so many changes. And the people will be afraid of the government and also they will be afraid of the justice. And then if government and NGOs hold hands and work together, the people will be changing. Work very close with the churches, government and the community people. Everything will be alright.

M: How important is collaboration and networking for a successful result of your work?

(00:28:40) E: In my organization we work very close with the police. When we have our clients, and the clients are at risk, we normally call the police. And then we refuel the police car to help the police to go out in the remote areas to pick up the perpetrator. So that's how we work together. Sometimes it is risky for us like myself to go out there so I have to refuel the police car. I help the police vehicle to go and arrest. My area is just to support, refuel the police car and they can go and do the arrest. So this is some of the things that I work on. The other thing is I work very close with the, Community Development (Department) and the police, especially the OIC for FSV (Family and Sexual Violence) unit. We come together and we plan and we see how we could come and help the victim. So three of us come and sit down together and we discuss and we do the planning together and then sometimes we see the women who are at very risk, we take them away. But it must be all in the best interest of the client. Don't make any decision for them. They come up with their own thoughts and then we just help them. So mostly we do, with some of them, we do repatriation. We take them out. When we see that the issue is very serious in the community, we do repatriation. So they go out to another province or another place. They go and enjoy their life there. Some women we already did repatriation and they went to another place. And then they go and enjoy their lives. Some of them they don't have a husband, these are some of the women that they were suspected, they go out to another place. They go and marry to a new man and they have land and they have house. Then they come and report back to us or otherwise they write letters and send it back to us. Saying that, thank you very much for your support, we came and we got this support and then now we are married and we have our own house. We married to a man that has land and we enjoy our life. So these are some of the success stories for victims. That's some of the victims accused of sorcery. They nearly kill them. Sometimes, we hide them in the police station. And then the next step, we have to do a fast action plan, then we have to send them away. So these are some of the works that we work with the victims who are under risk of sorcery-related violence. Sometimes we do repatriation, we send them back to their village or we send them back to another place. They are not safe in their communities. We ask them. What is your next step? Are you safe in the community? And when they say no, okay what do you want us to do? And they sometimes, they come and they say, we are going to another place. So we have some friends or family friends out there so we want to go. So what we do, we just put them on a police vehicle to get them to that place. And then we go and leave them and make sure the victim is safe out there. And also we just give them some little bit of money for them to go and live there. Just try to support them till when

they are there. And then we do a follow-up. Telephone call, make sure we call them and check whether they are saying they are ok and all this. When we call and when they are at risk, at that place now we have to do another plan again. So these are some of the things that we are doing. So most victims are saved. I mean it's very confidential but then we are doing this work at the moment now. Also most victims we help them they are with their children. So in my organization, we have these funds for repatriation so we help the mothers to refuel the police vehicle. Or sometimes, we hire a car or sometimes we go and keep them in a safe place. We have to pay for that and when they are with us we have to pay for the meal and accommodation. And then, whenever we want to move them out to another place, then we have to refuel the police vehicle or any other hired car. We just help them to move out. But it is not safe for us to use any vehicle, so we have to use police vehicle to rescue these victims with their children to another place. And also when the victims are already in our hands, it is very confidential, we don't tell any other people, that we have this type of people with us. We keep them secretly and myself and the policewomen we just go and we visit them. Provide food and come back and we just try our very best to sit down and do the planning. Interview them and just send them away. We don't send them away but we have to bring them back wherever they want to go. If it's like Moresby, we have to buy their ticket and send them back to Moresby. If they are going to Popodetta, we send them to Popodetta. When they are going to Lae, the same. If they want to go back to their village, we send them back to the village. But with the help of the police, because anytime, if we use any private vehicle, sometimes, the women they will be killed on the road. So we have to really make sure the victims are safe. We have to take them with the police vehicle.

M: What are the different choices for the victims that come to you? It seems there are different levels of violence and risk, and you said that you always let them decide. The alternatives could be mediation maybe, village court or district court, repatriation, etc. What are the different options?

(00:35:50) E: Now, I am a community-based organization. Sometimes, if the human being on the ground is at risk, I don't have all power for their safety. So I have to report to the police. And I have to advice to the community development, because this government department is going to look after our lives. Usually that's the area where I come in. So I have to report back to the government to make them aware that we are repatriating this client. So they have to release a letter, saying that this woman and child have to be repatriated because of this issue. So she has to write a letter and give it to me. She has to sign and give it to me. And then I have to do the repatriation. Everything we do must be reported to the government of our country, So that they are aware. If I did not report the case and if they go and find any issues, then it will reflect back to my organization. So I have to report to the police, the police are aware, and I have to also report back to the Community Development, which is part of the government. So that's how we work together. If anything happens with the client then, these people are already aware, so it will not give me more problems.

M: Sometimes you refer them to the village courts?

(00:37:30) E: Sometimes yah.

M: How does it work?

(00:37:32) E: Sometimes I refer the case to village court but when it comes to the best interest because they think back to their husband and the children who are left in the community, and they think that if we get this perpetrator to court, then they will payback and kill my husband or kill my children. The women they come up with some of their thoughts and then we sit down and discuss. They said, we want to go to the village courts. So we say, that's your choice now. And then we have to go. But when we see their case is very serious, it's not heading to the village courts, it's directed to the police station, so the police deal with it. And then if the woman wants us to go back to the village court, we have to go. Because some cases are not very serious, they just accuse them. They say, you are a sorcerer or something like that, and the victims are not happy, they report this type of matters to us and it is heading for the village courts. But when the women are killed or something like that, that's a big issue, it goes directly to the police. So the police they deal with the case and they arrest the perpetrator and they go to court and they are charged under the criminal act.

M: What are the main challenges you faced when working? I imagine funding is a big one, but if you can say any others...

(00:39:17) E: One of my challenge is, I don't have a vehicle. That is one of my challenges. When some of the victims are at risk during the night and when I call the police, I have only some of the policemen on my side. But I don't have all of the police people who will be attending to work. These are some of the challenge that I face. And then, also ourselves, our staff: we are also at risk. We are not protected by the government or by any other NGOs or something like that. We just work as other human beings on the ground. But I've already said that, it's a risky work, but we are just trying to help our people to really know and understand the process of justice and the respect they will have for women. So that is how we are working but we are also at risk. We, the women, the Human Right Defenders, we are working on the ground, we are also at risk, to save lives of people like that. So, sometimes it is very confidential, we don't have to talk about these issues in a public place. We go secretly to help our people. So this is some of the techniques that we use.

M: What is it that takes you to do this work? It is risky and difficult and you know it, but you still do it. Why?

(00:40:55) E: Because I just feel sorry for most of our women in our country. They are killed without any good reasons. As a woman, I think that I have to fight for my sisters and mothers. If I am killed, I

am killed in a good manner. Thinking that I am just trying to help others' lives and I lost my life. So it will be a good dead when I die. So that's what I normally say. And it's a promise that I have to help others. I don't care, I had problems or I am a problematic woman or whatsoever, but I have to help others who are in need. So that's the belief I had in me since I started the women organization.

M: If you could ask for three wishes, what would you ask for?

(00:46:00) E: I would ask my government to come in and support. They can come in and support. The other way of support is that they can have some funds available for our country. So that we the NGOs, CBOs and churches we can advocate more to educate our people. That's one. And number two is, our laws must be very tough, very tough for the women. Killing women must stop. So our law must be very tough. And the other thing, I think the Human Rights Defenders have to be, they really need to support the human rights defenders in the country, so that they can be paid. For so many years we've been working for free and we are not recognized. But these people are people of the country, they need to have a benefit from the government also. And these are people of our country who are losing their lives. So the government really needs to address these issues. So these are the three things that I really need to talk about and we really need to talk about: the government to increase more funding and also appeal to the public that the international NGOs who come in to support us more, to help our people in our country. I just thank some of the international NGOs and some of the countries who are coming in to help support this work. I acknowledge these as a woman of Papua New Guinea. I really thank the outside people who come in to support us. So I just ask if they could come in more to support us.

M: How do you feel when you see the life of a woman that came to you is being saved, and she is happy and...?

(00:48:25) E: I just really thank my partners for funding this program. And it's a great achievement and also I've been crying for so long, worried about my women, who have been killed. And that was sometimes...I am traumatized thinking of some women who are already killed. And when I see their children around the streets or something like that and they are neglected. This just breaks my heart. I just freely feel pain but now when I help women and the women go through justice. And some I do repatriation and get them away, I am happy. I just smile. I had a smile on my face. And some of my worries are gone. And I feel that I should do this forever until I die or something like that. Or if someone can come on board again to do work like me, to go and help other women until another generation comes in. So that's my dream. When I do this work, I just dream and I just imagine, other women are saved. And sometimes I have a smile on my face. When I see some of the women who are in trouble and who are at risk, that's the time I am sad again. So I want more support for our women in the country. As a woman of Papua New Guinea, I just need more support.

M: Well I am very happy with the interview. Thank you very much! Is there any other thing that I did not ask and you would like to say? A positive message maybe?

(00:50:16) E: Some other things...there is a great hope. I just want everybody, women, men, youth, we really need to work together: the Church, the community members, the NGOs, the CBOs, and anybody. We really need to work hand in hand. We really have to have a strong network to address such issues like this. And then, we will have a good country. So this is my dream. And even though we don't have so much support but this is my dream. I hope our country will be a country. And I believe my people will be changed and we won't have more killings of women in our country. I believe this would be more helpful and I want more people in our country to be aware of respecting women as human beings, as themselves. Not to treat women as a second class or they can be killed at any time, I don't want. I want all of us to see that we are all human beings. We have our own rights to live on this earth. So these are some of the things that I believe in and I want to see the good things happening. Not the bad things so that us women, we are not equally treated same as the men. We really have to have respect each other. We have to have love for each other. We have to know how we can address our issues then how we can take ownership, to help our own people in our country. I think that's all.

ANNEX 7: INTERVIEW WITH ISI ORU

Maria: Can you introduce yourself?

(00:01:26) Isi: My name is Isi Oru. The organization that I am working for is Family and Sexual Violence Action Committee. In short we call it FSVAC. FSVAC is the secretarial committee of the Consultative Implementation and Monitoring Council, which is administered by a think tank organization called Institute of National Affairs. CIMC was established by the National Executive Council, which is the highest level of the government. As a mechanism to dialogue between civil society and private sectors and the government. The purpose of it when it was established was to create that dialogue, that mechanism, as government mechanism for communication between civil society, private sector and the government. So in terms of development issues. In CIMC there are, 12 sectoral committees and Family and Sexual Violence Action Committee is one of the sectoral committees of the CIMC. And CIMC is actually chaired by the Honourable Charles Abel, Minister for Department of Planning and Monitoring. In regards to the Family and Sexual Violence Action Committee, the mandate of FSVAC is to actually address family and sexual violence issues within the family or within communities. The FSVAC is actually using the integrated long-term strategy on family and sexual violence in terms of rolling out the advocacy and also the awareness and also the dialogue that is created between the civil society and the government. There are seven focus areas under the strategy. There are seven focus areas. The first focus area is called institutional capacity building. In saying that, institutional capacity, FSVAC is to build the capacity of organizations or service providers, that provide family and sexual violence or gender based violence or human rights issues. There are organizations out here in Port Moresby and also in other provinces that CIMC or FSVAC is in partnership with, in terms of building that capacity.

The focus area two is regarding, in relation to legal reforms. By saying that, the main purpose of the focus is to create a dialogue between civil society and the government especially respective government agencies like the department of justice and attorney general, the department of community development, the department CIS, Correctional Institutes Services, they call them CIS. And then you have the other, office of the Public Prosecutor, Office of the Public Solicitor, constitutional law reform commission. These organizations are part of that focus area 2, where they came and then in partnership with the civil societies like FSVAC, Coalition for Change and other national series of stakeholders to actually review and highlight policies that can assist women and children in terms of access to justice. And one of the results of those consultations and for focus area 2, is the Family Protection Act. The Act on people smuggling and human trafficking, the sexual offences and evidence act, the amendment to the criminal code and now we have the Amendment to the Criminal code regarding sorcery-related violence. The repealing of the Sorcery Act. So these stakeholders are responsible in that focus area, which FSVAC facilitates, the coordination, the mechanism, the discussion, the dialogue within that focus area.

Focus area number 3 is regarding services to survivors and victims of family and sexual violence. In that focus area, we are talking about, family support centres, which are established the FSVAC in

partnership with developing partners like UNICEF and also Digicel Foundation, it's a private sector initiative. We establish the Family Support Centres in the country especially at the provincial level. And the purpose of the family support centre is actually to provide one stop shop for survivors of family and sexual violence that are going through that issue. Whether it's a medical assistance, psychological assistance or temporary or emergency accommodation. And that centre provides that venue for women and children, especially girl child's, to access so they don't have to queue at the emergency and accident section at the hospital. So the centre is there established within the hospital to actually deliver that mechanism or that support to the government. The other project that we are also doing is the safe house. *Meri Safe House*, we call it. The purpose of the safe house is to provide short term and maybe, definitely short term accommodation and also psychological assistance, so women can access it if they are in sort of like a domestic violence or domestic abuse. They can actually go there and get support from safe houses. However, it's limited in terms of roll out of the safe house. So FSVAC and its partners in support with Law and Justice, PALAJP, Papua New Guinea Australia Law and Justice Program, we have done the second consultation in terms of drafting the regulations, or drafting the guidelines of establishing the safe house. So we are in consultation with all, we are lobbying this project to be under the government, with the Department of Community Development and Religion. So it is sustained at the provincial level. But definitely we are supporting our stakeholders at the provinces that are rolling out safe houses. So there is capacity building also that we provide, going back to focus area 1. Once we establish one, we try to build that capacity in terms of gender sensitising or Human Rights trainings, paralegal assistance or paralegal trainings we provide, male advocacy training, basic counselling and trauma counselling that we provide to building that capacity for the provincial partners who are providing that focus area three.

M: I'll let you go to the focus area 4, 5, 6 and 7 later. Just a small question regarding safe houses and how they are distributed across different provinces, because I know there are really few in the whole country and in some provinces there are not safe houses at all, right? Can you speak a little bit about the lack of Safe Houses in the Highlands?

(00:10:02) I: In terms of the focus area 3, regarding safe houses, we don't actually have a sort of like not like the Family Support Centre where we roll it out in every province. However, what we are actually lobbying and also advocating is for provincial government in each of the provinces to take ownership because they have to actually build it. They have to actually provide the land, they have to actually provide the funds to have that safe house. Safe houses established at the provincial level and also at the district level. And that is something that, the stakeholders are actually lobbying to the provincial government and also to the provincial partners to lobby to their provincial government to establish the safe houses. The guidelines and the capacity building we will be definitely supporting that. We will be supporting the provincial administration or provincial government to actually if they take that into consideration and roll it out, definitely we will support that. As we all know that FSVAC it's not a donor funding agency. It's sort of like a, it's a coordination mechanism, which we can. But many times we try to coordinate developing partners in the

provincial FSVAC to actually establish that partnership to roll out some of the programs in their provinces. But definitely, there are no safe houses in the Highlands region and I think the Highlands regional partners are, should be lobbying and forward it down to provincial government to roll out this safe house. The support, we will definitely give in terms of capacity building.

M: Ok thank you for that....

(00:11:54) I: Now focus area number 4 is in relation to, we call it 'the male advocacy'. Men and boys being partners to addressing violence against women especially gender-based violence and family and sexual violence. This focus area is actually having men and boys to be champions in addressing women's Human Rights and they have to actually go through couple of trainings in terms of male advocacy but doesn't mean that if you are not a male advocate, you don't advocate for change, no. If you have a passion as a man or as a boy and if you want to actually address this epidemic, this issue, and you are talking about it in the community, with your friends, with your family then you are a male advocate, yah. Because what we are trying to do is actually to encourage men to come out and talk about these issues: with your family, with your wife, with your staff, with your partner and try to actually make a change within yourself. Before we go out and actually make the other people follow our footsteps. So that's the challenge: all the men and boys to actually come out and talk about this issue, and address it at your level, within your family, within your community. And make a change for your community and in your life. So that's all about male advocacy.

M: Can you explain what concrete measures you take for male advocacy? What are the specific actions?

(00:13:43) I: The specific or the roles and responsibilities of a male advocate... There are two types of advocates: one is a national advocate, who can provide male advocacy training, who can provide the gender-based violence trainings and who, at the national level, can lobby and assist women to actually lobby and campaign to end violence against women. And then you have the community-based male advocates, community advocates, who are at the community level. People like village court magistrates, ward councillors, LLG level ward members, village chiefs, young people in terms of youths, pastors and all these people. Having that role as a leader in your own community, what we want is for you to influence the other community members, to be one step ahead of addressing this issue. And that's something that, we would like to actually achieve and we are doing in terms of rolling it out and having male advocates in the network. You don't have to be singing and dancing, making a big television show to be a male advocate, no. Male advocates is about changing within oneself and changing your life and addressing, assisting women and being part of the campaign to end violence against women.

M: You can move to number 5

(00:15:17) I: The focus area number 5 is about 'community prevention and response to family and sexual violence'. What we are trying to actually address in here is that, community themselves building their capacity as in focus area 1, to take in and to take lead in terms of campaign and activities within their communities. And also lobbying with their ward councillors, village court magistrates, the churches, so that women can access some of the services. They can be decision makers at the community discussions or community meetings. Also empowering young women at the community level to further their education and empowering them to be who they want to be in the future, when they are having a good education and also having a good life. And being empowered to actually look after their own family. And, of course, when there are tough times, in terms of issues that you are facing, you are empowered to actually overcome this rather than the people sinking into the problem. So community response and prevention, creating activities for young people to also participate in terms of church gatherings, address these issues around: Church meetings or community meetings, involving women and children to actually be heads. So we are trying to do all this in that focus area: to work with communities so that women and children can access services at the community level, and also community mobilising, the community to address these issues at the community level. We want a zero tolerance of domestic violence or zero tolerance of family and sexual violence at the community level and within the family.

Focus area number six is about 'prevention and response to commercial sexual exploitation of women and children in Papua New Guinea'. Is the focus area that addresses human trafficking, people smuggling, commercial sexual exploitation of young girls and also sexual exploitation of women at the national, provincial, district or community level. And trying to make that awareness that, child prostitution is a criminal offence or even though we understand that it's a choice that women do if they want to go in that road towards being a prostitute, a sex worker, but you know what we are trying to do is actually we don't have to stop them but help them and assist them in terms of giving them opportunities like life skills training, in terms of baking flowers. At least, having, because we know that, women don't want to be doing that but how can they support their family? 'As a single mother, how can I support my three kids? I am not employed'. Many times women take that road but we don't have to judge them, but help them to maybe also help other young women, who are at the crossroad: 'where am I going from here?' 'Should I take this road or should I take this road?' So we have some advocates who have been in their past life, have been going through, have been actually sex workers, but have actually changed to doing a better sort of earning in life skills and in selling. Giving them the life skills training in terms of sewing, bakery or flower or poultry or anything. So giving them the opportunity to do something that they can actually do without expenses that can empower them to actually do more in their lifetime. Yah so having those women to advocate for change, for young girls who are coming up and are on the crossroad. The other issue is also lobbying for the government to actually address commercial sexual exploitation, especially where the border areas are, where women are actually trafficked across from the Pacific, from Indonesia or from the Torres Strait Island into Papua New Guinea and out of Papua New Guinea. That is something that we are actually working in partnership with other organizations such as Office of Immigration, Department of Immigration. We are working in

partnership also Department of Justice in developing an Act. It was a bill but we were in the partnership that we developed the bill and now it's an Act towards sexual exploitation, human trafficking and commercial sexual exploitation of women. So, at least, the act is there now to control the trafficking from different areas especially border territories within Papua New Guinea, and minimizing women from actually being traded off or being lured into this sort of exploitations. And also, addressing it at the provincial in terms of women and children being part of the discussions, in terms of how they can address the issue by not providing or not going towards that road. But for the community to share that information: what are laws, what are the regulations, how can we assist these young women, who are actually lured into doing that.

Focus area number seven is about, monitoring and evaluation.

M: So how long have you been working for FSVAC?

(00:23:21) I: Seven years. It is, yah.

M: So who funds it, like the government funds it?

(00:23:37) I: Not really. Development partners fund it. DFAT, I mean AusAID and then United Nations. They fund most of our programs.

M: With the programs you have, you like to know how effective they are. It seems that here it is very difficult to monitor things because there is no data. People don't really gather data, and it makes it very complicated to monitor anything. I understand there are lot of priorities before gathering data, as saving lives, but if you don't have data, you don't really know what the best options are, what is working and what is not...

(00:25:00) I: Yah it is a very difficult area in terms of, I mean, we just recently employed a researcher, data collector, well a researcher, to actually, have that mechanism developed. He is now here, he is also part of this consultation.

M: Who is he?

(00:25:32) I: Leslie Mene. You will see him around. Research group.

M: Ok! And the seventh focus area?

(00:28:17) I: Our last focus area is about ‘monitoring and evaluation’. And we have recently employed a research officer to actually take care of that mechanism, now in terms of research and evaluation for programs. In terms of the trainings that we are running and also developing of the database for the family support centres and also for the safe houses. These tools can be actually used so that the coordination of data is actually more effective. And also in terms of trainings, the couple of trainings we do and the programs that we run, we want to actually monitor and evaluate if there are impacts in terms of what we are delivering and actually make sure that what we are delivering, you know, we can actually improve. Or where are the gaps in delivering trainings and programs, what are gaps that we can identify and improve on those programs and trainings that we are running? So basically it’s this, and we are also working in partnership with our development partners and the government partners. Like the department of Health, department of Community Development to draft these data so that it is actually a government initiative. Even though we provide that expertise, but we want it to be done in partnership with governments, so the government can actually have it as part of their initiatives.

M: Who are you funded by

(00:30:05)I: We are actually, CIMC is actually funded by GoPNG and Development partners like AusAID. However, FSVAC as a sectoral committee is actually fully funded by development partners. Development donors are fully funding FSVACs programs and projects and the trainings that we run. So however, we are working towards having a partnership with the government to sustain some of these programs and initiatives at the provincial level. So the provincial government takes ownership of the trainings and the programs that we are running.

M: But how long has FSVAC been working?

(00:30:52) I: That’s a good question. Well FSVAC, CIMC has been actually established in 2000. And FSVAC came about in 2001. So it’s about more than 10 years FSVAC has actually achieved. And in doing so, we have established provincial FSVACs throughout the country. About 20 provinces have the provincial FSVAC now, as we speak, some of them are part of the sorcery consultation that is happening at the Gateway. So some of the provincial partners are here also participating in this sorcery consultation.

M: Regarding sorcery-related violence, what is the FSVAC doing?

(00:31:43)I: In relation to sorcery-related violence, as per my previous comments, FSVAC is all about coordination. All about trying to create that mechanism and, in doing so, what we want to do at the national level is actually make sure that civil society issues are addressed by the national government and by respective government agencies. And also creating venues for people to be

heard on what their experiences are in terms of providing service provision at the provincial level, district level in relation to sorcery-related violence, victims and survivors, so that the government can hear and plan. In terms of address it at the national, provincial and district level. So in doing so, we are now having this consultation on how the national action plan will look like. And we want to filter actually all of what the civil societies are doing at the provincial and district level. So, most of their programs are actually heard and written down as National Action Plan so that, government can provide funding, identify who are the service providers, in relation to sorcery-related violence at the provincial and district level, so that there is support from the national government.

M: This consultation comes from two previous conferences and its objective is like really high: to get the government to endorse the recommendations. Do you think it has been done in an appropriate way and all the stakeholders have been involved? Do you think it will be successful?

(00:33:35)I: Well, to me, it will be very successful, because we are having a mixture of expertise from the civil society, from the faith base, from the private sector and also from the government. From the GoPNG, from the PNG government, especially the national organizations, government agencies, who are also present here. And the Department of Justice and Attorney General is actually leading this consultation as the owner of the Sorcery Act and the amended Criminal Code on Sorcery Act. So this consultation is actually an initiative of the Department of Justice and Attorney General. CIMC, FSVAC and development partners and also civil society are providing a support role in creating the dialogue for government to take it and move forward in terms of the National Action Plan. So definitely I am confident that GoPNG or the government of Papua New Guinea, will be providing a very informative and high quality National Action Plan in addressing sorcery-related violence in Papua New Guinea. But this is not the end, we are going to take this National Action Plan and to do more consultations so that what we are aiming for in terms of our mission and vision, the government's mission and vision for 2015, 2020 and 2050 is actually addressed within that National Action Plan.

M: Could you explain the process of endorsement for me, please?

(00:3530) I: Yes, now the process in terms of how we are gone take this into national government especially the National Executive Council. This is the drafting of the National Action Plan. This is the first draft that we are drafting. And after this, there will be smaller groups in terms of more expertise, specialized expertise in terms of drafting of the National Action Plan, and then the process will continue. It will be taken to our law and justice partners to actually make sure that everything is in order with the government protocols and procedures. And then, from there, Department of Justice will take it forward to the department's minister, Honourable Kerenga Kua, to take it to and also Dr Lawrence Kalinoe as the secretary for Department of Justice and Attorney General, will take it to the NEC, to the parliament for endorsement of the National Action Plan. So

hopefully by the end of this year, we should have a finalized Action Plan that should be endorsed for implementation in 2016.

M: Well the time frame seems quite tight. Thank you very much for the interview. Is there anything else that you would like to say? Do you have any special call for the government, for the donors...?

(00:37:07) I: Maybe I'll just say finally, what I would like to actually say to the government is that this is a national issue and this is our people who are dying. These are our people who are actually being tortured. These are not foreigners, these are not aliens who have being tortured. These are people of Papua New Guinea, that are crying to actually have this National Action Plan to help and support them from being tortured and from being abused and from being actually killed. So actually it's a way forward I see it and then I would like the government to come and come on board, and also the development partners, in supporting the provincial partners who are providing the service. I want to thank also the provincial partners for the support and for the ongoing sacrifices and ongoing support and services that are providing to sorcery-related violence victims or family and sexual violence survivors and victims' here in Papua New Guinea. So with that I want to thank everyone, thank the department of foreign affairs and trade, AusAID in partnership with the Australian government also the Department of Justice and Attorney General and also Melanesian Institute and the ANU, SSGM and also CIMC, FSVAC in collaboration with the other stakeholders in having this consultation. Thank you very much.

ANNEX 8: INTERVIEW WITH JACK URAME

Maria: Can you introduce yourself?

04:41- Jack: I am Jack Urame, Director of Melanesian Institute. I am a pastor of the Lutheran Church. And I represent my church and work as an Ecumenical worker here at the Institute. I joined the Melanesian Institute in 2006. So this is almost my ninth year.

M: And your research?

05:00 J: We do a lot of social and cultural research. Actually when I came we began with research on sorcery and witchcraft. And the dissemination of that research continues up to now. After that, we did research on HIV & AIDS and the Churches. What are the Churches saying on the phenomena of HIV & AIDS here in Papua New Guinea? After we finish that research we did a research on national election, 2012 national election in Papua New Guinea in different electorates. Currently we are doing a research on the disability, meaning the policy of inclusive education in Papua New Guinea: how it is working and how the schools are implementing the policy and the struggles and challenges the schools are facing. So that research is current and is going on. We hope to complete by July.

M: 6:16: Can you tell me more about the research on sorcery and witchcraft?

(0:619-J:) Actually, the churches in Papua New Guinea identified the problem related to sorcery and witchcraft, so they mandated the Melanesian Institute to start the research. That was before my time in 2004. When I joined in I was part of the team. And I actually did fieldwork in Finschafen, and we sent several teams out to different provinces to conduct research. And so the result of that research was published in several publications. And we continued with the dissemination. The problem related to sorcery and witchcraft, I think it's complicated because of the differences of the cultural beliefs that we have in Papua New Guinea. And also because of the difference in cultures, the forms and the types of practices that you find are so diverse and so complicated. So it is not uniform. But if you classify under one big category like, spirituality or Melanesian spirituality, you can classify everything under sorcery and witchcraft, but the forms are different and the practices are also different. And it depends on the culture and in which society you are talking about. And so, actually cultural context makes a difference in the forms of the belief of sorcery and witchcraft. In the Highlands, for example we found that violence is related to the belief because, people believe that someone is possessed with the evil power to harm someone or cause sickness or cause death of someone. And so people retaliate when someone is sick or when someone dies. They take physical revenge by accusing people or chasing people out of the community or even killing people. And in the coastal areas they perform counter sorcery. But this is only in some parts of the coastal areas. Meaning if you perform sorcery to someone, someone believes that he is sick or he or she

dies because of sorcery. A sorcerer will perform another powerful sorcery back again. They don't use much physical violence. So there is, I think, a big difference between the beliefs and the practices.

M: Can you explain a little bit what was the methodology used to do the research?

(00:10:15) J: Actually, mostly we used qualitative approach. We did interviews but we used semi-structured questionnaires to ask different people. Victims of sorcery-related violence, those who are believed to be in possession of sorcery or witchcraft powers and community leaders, church people, pastors and also ordinary citizens of the community. So, actually, we collected data through interviews with different groups of people. After that, we came back, we transcribed everything and then tried to classify all the data into different categories. And then tried to structure how the information can be fitted together. But also we actually did site visits to places where there were cases of sorcery murder or killings. We interviewed also the police who were there. We interviewed hospital workers also, how they dealt with the people who were accused, when they came to the hospital. Or when they reported themselves to the police station for example. And also some cases were taken to the village courts, so we asked some village court officers as well. But I think the cases taken to the village courts there were not too many. Because normally people don't take sorcery-related violence to the village courts because there is some kind of a compromise, you know, because people believe that sorcery exists. And so cases are normally taken by the police. There were only very occasional cases where people took the matter to the village court, but village court officials themselves are sometimes very unable to deal with the cases because the community is always behind. When the community is behind sometimes it is very difficult to arrest the entire community members, because they support the accusation. And so actually, when we did the research, we just sat down with the people and we tried to get their stories and their reactions and their own opinion on the belief. Many said sorcery powers exist, really exist and but they don't have to believe in the power. Say if they are Christians they don't have to believe. But we found out also that a lot of people believe in sorcery despite of their education level and despite of the scientific explanations or biomedical explanations to sickness and deaths. People continue to hold on to the belief because I think it's deeply rooted. It's very difficult to unwind. I think in my view it's a world view dilemma, or you can call it a mindset dilemma. How people perceive the world and interpret social phenomena. In particular related to in times of sickness and death or generally social crisis. How do people respond to social crisis?

M: Could you summarise the main characteristics of the sorcery belief in the Highlands?

(00:14:19) J: Thank you, yes in the Highlands, as I said, I think the belief varies greatly between different cultural groups. In the highlands generally people believe that, certain people possess a power and different dialects or local languages they have different terminology for this power. In Chimbu they call it *kumo*. It is a belief that someone possesses a power that has the potential to

cause death or sickness of another person. And that power is described as *Kumo* in the Chimbu dialect. But that power can also take a form of a creature, according to that belief. Can take a form of a creature for example. The kumo power exists in a form of a creature for example like a bat that flies in the night. Like an eagle, or a dog or a rat or could be a cow, or cats. Anything. But normally these animals are animals that normally move around at night. And so people believe that, that witchcraft power exists in that animal form. And that animal form can move around and travel to distant places and cause death of other people. Or when a person is asleep at night, and he is possessed with the witchcraft power: the person is asleep but the power, the power goes out of the person in a form of a creature like an animal. And goes off into other places at nights and performs the craft or the power and then returns again. So when the creature is going out of that person, the person is just fast asleep and he or she can't wake up. And only when the power returns again after performing some kind of activity, only after the power returns or that creature returns and enters into the person, the person wakes up again. That is the belief, the common belief. And that power can only be transferred from one family member to another family member. For example, from a mother to a daughter, so they believe that when an old woman is about to die the power is transferred to the daughter or to a granddaughter for example. So the power stays within. And based on that belief, we found that a lot of witchcraft-related violence happens within family units. Meaning it is impossible to accuse someone from a neighbouring clan or outside of a clan because the power works only effectively within the family system or within the family system or clan system. Because they believe that the blood of the relative is sweet, and the power can only work effectively within the family line, within the family unit. And so if someone dies they don't look for someone outside of the clan or community to accuse. They try to identify people within the immediate family to accuse because of that belief. The power is active or effective in the family, within the family unit. And also the blood of the relative within that family unit is sweet so can only work within that context. And that's why accusation related to witchcraft you only find within the family, close relatives. So the accused is someone not always from another clan or from a distant place. The accused is always someone within the clan. And the accuser and the accused are somehow related, socially related somehow because of that belief.

M: I heard that one of the reasons for the highly vulnerability of women could be that when they marry they go to live to the husband's village, which situates them always as outsiders, is that correct?

(00:19:14) J: Correct but I think in our culture, we have an exogamous culture, where you can only marry out of your own clan system. So when someone marries, when a girl or when a woman marries a boy from another village, she is entering sort of a contract into that community, but she is actually not deeply rooted in that clan community. And she is still seen as an outsider because she only enters into contract with the relative of that boy through marriage. So even anything happens for example, she sometimes can easily become a victim for example. And because she is coming from outside and entering into that community in terms of in the context of sorcery and witchcraft accusation she can be easily chased out of the community because she has no defence. No one will

protect her because her biological relatives are living in a different community and she is now entering into a different community. So that cultural pattern of marrying into another community does not create that feeling of security so a lot of women are insecure. They are not very safe because it is not the place of their birth. It is like a foreign land to them. And they are only attached to the community through marriage but they don't have the roots deeply planted into the soil of their husband. So for that reason, many women they suffer sorcery violence and that is one I think big factor. They can't even stand up and defend themselves because they don't have the community behind. The community belongs to the line of the male. And so she is almost in isolation without security, without protection, without a support.

M: Interesting so who are the most vulnerable woman to be accused?

(00:22:19) J: according to our research, the most vulnerable group of women are very old women. Why? They become vulnerable because they are old they can't defend themselves. And those who have no male children, for example, because they don't have any defence. Or those whose husbands probably died and they are alone. And so the young men wanted to take over the land or take over the coffee gardens or take over some properties. So they become vulnerable also to sorcery accusations. And also women who sometimes appear for example, dirty, because they do heavy garden work. Or sometimes they behave abnormal at certain times, like sharing insufficient grief during mourning period. When someone is dying and if one woman is not sharing enough grief, not crying or she is doing something which is unusual, they become victims, they are most likely to be accused. And also women who sometimes do not associate with other women for example and they always want to keep to themselves. Or even today, women who always talk a lot and want to lead and they say, or she must have a special power in her. And so people become suspicious. So it all depends, the group of women who are most vulnerable to sorcery accusation are, women who are considered to be a little different in the society. Different because of their age, different because of their behaviour, different because of the way they talk. And so sorcery stories or sorcery gossips begin through maybe observation. Someone sees a woman doing something quite differently and then the story spreads. And people believe and take the gossip as real stories. So all these sorcery stories are only rumours based on suspicion.

M: Can we say then that sorcery accusations work as form of social control?

(00:25:09) J: Does sorcery works as a form of social control? Yes, I think in the Highlands the sorcery does not really work as a form of social control. But in the coastal areas yes because it keeps certain behaviour of people in control. But in the highlands, sorcery is more related to violence, because in our research we found little connection with the concept of social control and sorcery belief. Because if someone believes that he or she is a witch in the highlands, people they are afraid of the power. But in a different context it also works as a social control in the sense that if someone is believed to possess some kind of power in him or her, people are afraid, they don't go near, they respect, they don't steal from their gardens or something like that. Because they belief that they will become victims of a sorcery attack. So, it depends on how the belief works. And generally in

Papua New Guinea you can say sorcery is a form of social control. And I totally agree with that but to what extent does the belief work as a form of social control? It depends on the cultural context in which you talk about. In Chimbu for example, if I believe that someone is a witch, I should share my food. If I come back from town, I should share my money or share something with that person. Because if I don't, I know that, I will become victim because he or she will attack me through the power of sorcery or witchcraft. It again plays a very important role: the concept of equality, the concept of sharing with other people. So it breaks down that barrier between who has and who does not have. So it brings together, people together to share and to live together because of that belief. So, in a way it also plays an important social function. And maybe another example, if someone is sick and if there is no medical facility nearby, someone can be consulted if they know that he or she has the power to identify who is responsible. But also that person has the power to bring healing. So he or she can be consulted and they call it witch-doctor. So he or she is consulted and he or she comes and performs some kind of ritual. And gives a bit of cold water or some leaves or something to the patient and in the hope that the person will recover and be well. So that I think, also social function of sorcery plays a very significant role in society. And people use the belief that there is hope of the wellbeing of the community, of the wellbeing of the family, of that individual. And restoration and good health and survival so it is a little bit connected to that whole understanding of survival of existing in a society. So because there are crisis they must find a way and what is that way, the alternative is always turning to sorcery. So it plays a destructive role but at the same time it also plays a positive role. But both I think together in the context of social function of sorcery.

M...How this original positive role of sorcery and witchcraft belief ends up evolving in such a horrible violence?

(00:30:01) J: Maria, thank you for that good question. It depends on how you interpret. It depends on how people interpret. It doesn't happen in a daily life. In situations where someone is sick or a sudden death occurs in a community or someone is well now but after some few hours, after one day or after one night he become so sick and dies suddenly. Then people try to find answers. Why is this happening? And they don't ask, what causes the sickness and what causes the death? But normally it is a cultural tendency to ask *who* is responsible? And that is not scientific, but for the people, it is a logical question: who is responsible? So they go straight to the person and try to accuse. It is one, in my view, it is people's struggle to find answers to the crisis. Or to the questions they have to understand the reality of crisis like sickness and deaths. Or even, if someone fails in examination, they try to look for answers. Why? Why is someone not succeeding in school? Why is he becoming a failure? Or if a garden is not producing or pigs are not growing well. They try to connect this realities to the belief and try to find answers through the belief system. So it is generally our cultural tendency to find answers to the mysteries or to the unresolved questions or through the crisis. And so it is looking at one maybe issue or crisis trying to give an explanation through the lens of, the cultural lens, using the belief system. And that makes the difference on how people react to certain issues: whether violently or whether in a peaceful way. It depends on

their interpretation. Depends on how they see it and depends on how they interpret and how they react. That is why I said in the first place, it is a mindset dilemma. How people perceive things and interpret issues in their own world-view, in our Melanesian world-view, in that context of sorcery belief.

M: Could you explain a little bit about this Melanesian World View?

(00:33:47) J: Just very briefly, when I talk about Melanesian World View, I mean how our Melanesian people understand the world in which they live in, their Melanesian world. In the Melanesian world, people see that world not in separated fragmented pieces. Meaning this is the physical world and this is unseen world, this is sky, this is jungle, this is river, they put all these things together. That the world is connected and if you divide this world you can only have two levels. One is the world that you see, the physical world, but beyond that world, that you see exist also forces and powers that you do not see. But they cannot be separated from the physical world. So everything is seen in one realm, in one circle, under one sphere but they are connected, you can't separate them. Meaning the living beings, the bush, the sky, the ancestors who died maybe many years ago, their spirits in the bush and river or the spirits on the ground. They are somehow connected to each other and one influences the other. It's like a chain. And that's the way people see their world. So if something happens over here, in the bush, it must be connected to the spirits over there. And if something is happening with the spirits, it's connected to the human beings. The human beings are probably upsetting the spirits for example. Or if the rain is falling, there must be something happening with either the human beings, with spirits or with the bush. So this is how they see the world. So, it is unbroken, undivided world in one realm or in one sphere. But there are pieces that are connected together in that one piece. Therefore, if someone is sick they don't go to the hospital: they have to go to the bush and say, 'where was the boy last night or yesterday?' They try to consult the spirits in the bush. They try to create peace with the spirits because probably he disturbed the spirits yesterday when he was in the bush. He was shouting a lot and the spirits were not happy. So the spirits caused the sickness. So they have to go back to the bush consult with the spirits. And then come back and then they say, 'Why?' Because the family was probably divided and they were, they had a conflict and that's why that happened. So they have to come back and have reconciliation with the human beings. And so you see, that interconnectedness of the different parts that makes up together into one sphere, one realm why we call a Melanesian world. So this is the way people see and interpret. So sorcery and witchcraft cannot be separated from the living people. Therefore, they believe that there is a power within that one and that power can work. It's connected to human beings. And therefore, when someone is sick it's related to the spirits, the spiritual forces. You cannot divide. For example, if there is a natural disaster, they don't interpret for example in scientific interpretation. Like there was heavy rain and there were landslides and swept the gardens away or the entire village away. They said someone must have caused that heavy rain. And someone was behind the entire thing so they have to try to find who. And so, they have to go back to the bush, to the people, to the nature and consult all these different spheres or the different actors in that whole sphere. Why there was heavy rain and why there was a landslide?

Why the village was taken down or washed away? So that is the way they see the world. And that's why I said, it is a worldview dilemma. It depends on how they understand their world and interpret their world and try to explain both natural causes, but also human as causing disasters or crisis.

M: Basically anything can be blamed on sorcery or witchcraft?

(00:39:10) J: Correct, correct. If a boy is bitten by a crocodile for example and pulled underneath the water, people don't say, 'oohh! There is a huge crocodile that swallowed the boy'. They come back to the village and say. Yah, some human beings went into the belly of that crocodile and caused that to happen. So who was that human being entering into the crocodile? That the crocodile was watching and waiting for the boy and as soon as the boy appeared he was pulled into the water and swallowed by the crocodile. So that is why, I said, things are connected together somehow. You can't separate the human beings from the spiritual beings or spiritual forces, the spiritual powers. So what is natural and what is not natural is all connected together. What is physical can be seen and what is not physical and cannot be seen. All is connected together. But, I think, that is quite different from the scientific way of trying to understand the world. What you cannot see, you don't try to come up with assumptions on the basis of your belief. But you try to do scientific experiment to find out the reality. What is in the clouds, why the clouds are turning black? You need a scientific explanation. But in Papua New Guinea, someone could come up and say yes, someone caused that rain to fall, because there was heavy clouds, someone was responsible. A rainmaker. So they have to consult someone with maybe a power that is a little bit powerful to try to stop the rain. So they bring another person. So it's the human beings that can also influence the human nature. They believe that things are connected together. That's why I say Melanesians interpret their world according to their own belief system.

M: What is the balance between the accusations that respond to a genuine belief and those that respond to hidden interests?

(00:41:47) J: It is very difficult to make a claim. To what extent are the accusations false and to what accusations are true. On the basis of our findings, in our research findings. We only came up with some explanations, based on the data that we collected. And stories were connected to accusations, why she or he was accused because someone wanted to take over, for example, a property, someone was simply jealous or something like that. And so, accusation was only an excuse to justify another reason that was hidden behind. But in some cases we found, people had no reason. It's just based on that belief that 'oh yes, someone died so I have to try to attack', because it's based on the belief that sickness and death are caused by people. So not because they are jealous to take over a land or to take over a property, something like that. But it's based on the belief, so it depends. So we were not able to classify or to categorize to which extent are the accusations real and to which extent are the accusations only based on some other reasons. And people only used the belief as an excuse. But therefore, generally I think, we found and concluded

that many sorcery accusations were based on some other reasons. And there were no genuine accusations based on something that was real. And so it depends from one case to another.

M: Comment on the transformation of these patterns.....

(00:45:00) J: There were different influences, the Christian influence from the missionaries and colonial influence from the colonial powers. The British and the Germans and, unfortunately not the Spanish and the Portuguese, and also people who had economic interest, the entrepreneurs, for example, the gold prospectors, black birders and all these. But all these forces happened almost around the same time. And when the missionaries came, they realized that the belief was destructive and so they made some attempts to try to get rid of the belief. But in many cases, they were unsuccessful. But I know one particular missionary in Finschaffien, who was very successful. But he used the traditional belief system of the people. The people themselves decided to do away with sorcery because they realized that they sorcery belief was destructive.

Too many changes, big changes at the same time also created so much social confusion. And so people were not at that time already, people were not in a position to identify 'ok, this is the church and that is the objective of the church. They want to bring the Gospel and build up churches and convert people to Christianity etc.' So they mixed up the missionaries and the colonial administrators and the gold prospectors. They put them all together in one basket and said they were all white men coming. They are bringing all these good things and life will be changed. In many places they wanted to do magical ways of obtaining money and wealth, through magic practices. Mostly in the coastal areas, they did a lot of rituals in order to obtain the Western goods. For example they said 'all these people are bringing us these Western goods'. They called it *gutpela sindaun*. *Gutpela Sindaun* meaning: a life full of abundance, a prosperous life, where you have things in abundance, there are no more problems and you are wealthy and you are rich. And so they had this impression that, all these forces they see them as one European culture. European culture bringing good only. And so people reacted in a, depends on where they came from, they reacted really differently. Because in the highlands, we were discovered very lately in the 1930s. That's quite recently but in the coastal areas, they were discovered well before that, in the 1800s. In 1884, I know that the Germans were present at that time. And they build up plantations and recruited people. So the idea of money came in, idea of economy came in. So the European concept of capitalism was imposed somehow, and the mentality of market and production and all these kinds of things. And so a lot of people from the Highlands were also brought to the coastal areas to work on plantations. And that created a lot of social disorder in the village because the women were alone with their children, etc. They waited for their husbands for many years and then they got married to other men in the village and so there were a lot of social crises. But back to the forces of change, both the missionaries and the colonial administrators came around the same time as I said. So that created a lot of confusion and people were, I think, so confused that they interpreted the change in their own context. And up to now I think, the legacies of what was left behind by the missionaries and the colonial powers, you can still see our societies are changing and people are changing the way they understand things. The way they believe in things. So they

brought in education, they brought in the idea of economy, they brought in health and they brought in good but at the same time, I think they brought bad at the same time. Like sickness, for example. Why is sorcery and violence increasing? In that context alone, I believe that a lot lifestyle diseases are increasing. People in the past they never had all kinds of diseases like that. If you go to the village and ask the people, they will say no. We only had some kind of body ache, headache and that was it. Now all kinds of sickness, diabetes, heart attacks, and all kinds of life style diseases are increasing because of the change. The change in the life style, the change in the diet, the change in the mobility of people, the change of profession and education for example. And also health habit and hygiene is changing. And that causes a lot of death and people are dying. I think regularly and maybe often people are dying and people begin to wonder what is happening. And so now instead of saying because of life style disease they go back to the village and they accuse people. So as I say, changes are good, but changes are also bad. The missionaries sometimes are in a position to try to find a balance somehow. To inform the people that some changes are good, but not all changes are good. Some changes can bring negative impacts to the people, to the society. But our people they are too quick in accepting changes. They want change without compromising with the consequences, with what will happen. Without thinking about tomorrow. What will come up if they take this action? If they decide this way today? So without thinking seriously about the future, people they want changes immediately. So as you can see now, life style is changing, dressing is changing, eating habit is changing, everything else is changing. Only yesterday I spoke to one very old man in his 70s. And he said, he couldn't believe all these changes. And he was so frustrated that the changes happened. When he was a small boy up to now he is still alive. And he said, it happened in front of my eyes. He said, he is now so frustrated but he also admitted that we can't go back again to the old ways. To try to live in the bush house and be at peace with the nature. Now that living together and being connected to the nature and a harmonious life together with one another is no longer strong, because of these forces: the Eurocentric forces of individualism that you can survive by your own because you have the power of money. But we cannot sustain ourselves in our villages because not everyone can survive on money. But if people are departing from the village life, simple gardening, basic social relationship where you get support from one another and helping one another, contributing towards the welfare of the community and of the family. If that breaks down, then we have no identity. Then our society is on the verge of collapse. So, I sometimes, I am afraid. Are we creating our own true Melanesian identity and surviving as Melanesians? Or are we putting on the outside colour as Melanesians? We only talk about Melanesians but inside us we want to be Europeans. When, in fact, we can't live like the Europeans because our country is not developed up to that level yet. The infrastructure is collapsing and people are finding life very difficult because of economic disparity and inequality. Whilst some people have so much, other people have very little. And that again, where sorcery belief is also connected through this kind of changes. Where people don't have much but on the other side, they see in the same community a lot of people they have much. Too much money, too much food and on the other side in the same community you see a lot of people are very poor. That intensifies the belief in sorcery. If anything happens, the poor, the marginalized, they must be attacked. They must be removed from the community, because of that inequality, because of the imbalance between those who have abundance and between those ones don't have or who have very little. So the

changes are bringing us good things, but at the same time creating so much confusion. So we have to find our way out. How do we live as Papua New Guineans, as Melanesians in the midst of these changes? I think this is the most important and for me is the central question. We can't go back to our traditional context; this is gone. But without losing the values, how can we survive. As I said, sorcery and witchcraft belief can be overcome but in the contemporary society where sickness and death are increasing because of new lifestyle diseases and health problem and because of behaviour problem. Or because of new disease like HIV & AIDS and etc., heart attack or whatever, people are connecting their beliefs to the modern change and the crisis. And so sorcery accusation is intensified or is increasing. In the past, there was not so much killing. Maria, there was not so much killing. The belief was there. I did the interviews in my village. And my father said, we believed that sorcery and witchcraft was there, people possess some powers but we never killed people. We can only say 'all right, this woman can be removed from the community and sent back to her relatives in the different community where she comes from', but we never killed people openly like that: throw them in the river, hang them up, pull them behind the moving vehicles, burn them alive with flammable liquids. My father is saying, it's a new trend and I am struggling to understand why is it increasing and the degree of violence compared to the past it is so much. And I think, in my view, it is because of the changes that are happening that create so much confusion and social stress in the communities.

M: Very good. Thank you. Would you say then that the Europeans with the missions and the colonial powers are responsible for the increase of violence regarding the sorcery accusation?

(00:59:14) J: I would respond to that question, maybe I think a little bit in a different way. Not intentionally. As I said, I think the colonial powers also came with a bit of force. And they wanted our people to follow the European kind of developments and adapt to their European kind of style. Like when I did the settlement study. I found out that when the Europeans came, they said the men should not live together in the men's house. The men's house, the central, that big men's house. They said, you are coming together and increasing your male power and fighting a lot, we will disperse you. So they said, remove the men's house. Every man should go and live with the wife and husband. So the concept of individualism they brought in. The intention was good. Not to destroy them but the end result was bad. So the good intended purpose or approach became negative. And that's where to respond to your question, not directly and deliberately they took that approach or the other approach to cause problem for us or disaster for us. They meant good but in the end because of the cultural difference. They came with the European cultural perception and belief and cultural way of doing things. And their understanding was different. But they did not understand our Melanesian culture and social structure and belief system correctly. Or they did not understand it in a proper way and so their approach turned negative for us. So I would say it simply: a cultural clash, a cultural conflict. A clash between two belief systems. A conflict between two different ways of life. A conflict between two different ways of understanding things. Our cultural way of understanding changes in a *gutpela sindaun*, meaning there should be peace, family should be healthy and there should be food, and there should be pigs and gardens. We should enjoy. That is

for us, abundance of life. Today abundance of life means money, money, money, cars and houses and all these things. It doesn't compromise with the Melanesian understanding of abundance of life. But what the Europeans brought in, their ideas, their mentality and their cultures were good as far as they were concerned with good intentions but had negative consequences. And that is where I said'. We shouldn't blame them, but we should say 'no'. We should take a break and say what went wrong. Why? Because my fear is, if we continue to go in that direction, trying to adapt all the Eurocentric approach, the European way, in the next couple of years you won't have Melanesian identities and ways of doing things. They will all be gone. They will all be gone. So cultures will be modified, beliefs will be modified and also the mentality will be modified. And we are heading towards a fake kind of life. It's not real Melanesian. We have to, at least, retain some of our good values. Because I talked to that old man yesterday, and I agree with him when he said, now people are saying that because he has the financial strength he can survive. He can survive. He doesn't need the support of the community. If he is hungry, he can buy food. If he needs clothes, he has the money, he can buy. If he wants education, he can send the children to the most expensive school to get better education. So the social network, that feeling of togetherness and connection of the human feeling of being together is totally missing. And therefore, for me is a disaster because in Melanesia we should retain that, the communalism. The feeling of togetherness and living as humans in a community, because we support each other, we need each other, we rely on each other. If someone was working in the garden, people helped. Today if you work in the garden, they look at you. If you only take out one K50 note or one K20 note, he comes and helps you because he knows he will be rewarded with money. In the past never, people contributed without expecting anything. Now you have to use a different medium in order to convince people to support you. So you see a break down in our social system and that for me is already a very strong indication that we are going to head for a disaster if we don't take some steps or make some very serious decisions to try to create some kind of awareness. Help our people to realize their own values and how to survive in their own communities. My question is always 'can people survive without money?' What model of development do we need in the Pacific? Is the capitalism concept of development working for us? If it is destroying, then we have to find a different model. But what is the alternative model? I still struggle to understand.

M: Yes, I was very surprised when I saw a lot of people survived with no money!What are the solutions, in relation to sorcery accusations, what is the step forward?

(01:07:33) J: I think the step forward to overcome or minimize sorcery and witchcraft-related accusation is not to enforce so much any kind of new laws. Even though that approach might be one of the many ways. Because, as I said, it is a world-view crisis or mindset dilemma, we have to try to help our people to understand. The communities themselves should find answers. We have to empower them to help them to realize the negative consequences of the belief. It is lack of knowledge and lack of understanding that people continue to embrace that negative belief. Or even the belief may not be negative, the belief may play a positive role in the society, but we have to try to help them to see that certain aspects of that belief can cause destruction. It can break

relationships and can bring disorder in the community. So we have to try to help our people to understand all the negative consequences of the belief and people themselves should make the decisions. And I did the fieldwork myself in Finchaffen, on one of the approaches taken by one missionary. He was successful. He did not tell the people to stop. He only told the people to sit down and look at the belief again, whether the belief is helping them or not. People themselves decided and they said, 'we have to stop this stupid belief'. So we should not go into the communities, thinking that we have the answers in our hands. We have to use the existing social structures, the communities, the context in which the belief operates. And the people, we have to use these and to try to turn the negative into the positive. Because the problem is they have not come to the state where they can realize, why this belief is not helping them or is not very positive. It's causing a lot of destruction. It's lack of knowledge. Knowledge I mean, we don't have to go in with the Western knowledge, western way of understanding things. We have to use the traditional belief system and understand the way people see things. So it is taking the approach from their point of view, not from our point of view, going in and trying to enforce something new. When I go home, sometimes I sit down I talk to my people. With simple questions and conversations like, 'do you think this belief is real?' 'Is it helping you?' 'If it is not helping, what should you do?' 'What do you think are some other causes of sickness and death?' 'Or do you think are they really caused by sorcery and witchcraft?' Help them to realize, make them come up to the stage where they can understand. So it is lack of understanding, lack of knowledge. So what I mean is that we have to work from their context, from their perspective, from their standpoint. Help them to see the belief again and try them to come up with their own decisions. That means, simply, I am saying 'empower them to see and interpret these things in a different way'. We have not empowered them enough. A lot of people who are educated, they are also afraid because they can't sit with their people, with the very critical eye and a critical mind to raise serious questions about the negative impacts of the belief, so they are caught up in the belief system. They come outside and they say, you see old people they are witches and they are sorcerers, we will not go. They tell their children, don't go to the village. You will become sick, stay in town, stay in the settlements. Until all these old people die, then we can go back to the village. This is going to take a very long time. And my strong belief is to go back if we are educated to a level where we can understand what is scientific can be explained in a scientific way. And what is cultural and what is social can be explained in the social and cultural context. If we are able to have that kind of understanding in ourselves because we are educated to that level, we can be able to go back and sit down with the people. And help them to see and make decisions for themselves. So I think to cut it short, we have to start with the people, empower them to come up with their own decisions. And open their minds and eyes to see whether this belief system is helping them very helpful or they are caught up in their own belief systems. They have not realized themselves because for them killing a witch is logical enough to explain the death and sickness. So we have not given them the chance to sit down and see. I think we should start from that point. And that is one of the best local solutions. We shouldn't make decisions for them. Something imposed would be only superficial. And something they create and they make decisions it's going to be part of them, and they are going to live with it forever. This is my strong belief. I am a Melanesian, I come from Chimbu where this witchcraft belief is very strong. They believe, but I don't believe. Why I don't believe? I must have a reason why I don't believe in these things. That is

where I say that I see that as an opportunity for me to try to help people to believe because I am now able to see from a different point of view. I am now able to see from a different point of view. So with that understanding, we have work from the level of the people. Going out to them with our own understanding, with our own interpretations and mindset but don't enforce them. Don't try to drive your ideas into them.

M: So, international organizations, Western powers, what should they do?

(01:15:16) J: It's a good question. Sometimes, they come. They come but they see things from the surface. Because they have to submit reports and they have to do this and this and this and they have the targets, they have their objectives. They want to fulfil objectives. But if they really want us to change and if they want to help, they should come down and work together with us. Instead of coming down and spending just a few days in towns and in these villages, going again and writing reports because we are repeating the same old mistake in many social issues: big meetings, conferences, money is gone to the meetings, to the conferences, to food and to hotels and to the transport and everything else. And problem is still there and is still there forever. How are we going to change? Forget about all these big huge structures on top; simple local solutions. Come down to the level of people and work with them. And get their stories and try to understand the way they understand things. If we understand them enough, we can be able to empower them enough to change their ways.

M: I guess it is very difficult for an outsider like me, and many others, to understand how things work, and then there is money spent on research and workshops and so on...

(01:17:06) J: Maria I sat with a few people, when I was doing my interviews for sorcery research myself. I did a few interviews in Chimbu. Where sorcery and witchcraft belief are very strong. A lot of killings are happening in Chimbu and Jiwaka. I have some interviewees, the people which I interviewed, they told me, and it's a rubbish belief. It's rubbish, they said. We are destroying ourselves, we are destroying the community. I think I recorded two or three people in my entire interviews in Chimbu they said, the same thing. And I, this for me was the beginning, the starting point. Why are they saying things differently from the rest, there must be something different in them? That different we should understand, in order to create a difference. Because not all of them believe: among the hundreds, maybe one or two, they don't believe these things. And they are saying, 'no, we are killing ourselves for nothing'. Why are they seeing things differently? We try to understand that, that will give us a very clear idea, so that we take a very clear position how we can empower the rest in the community. To see and to understand the way he or she understands. So changes can happen, changes can happen I am sure.

M: If you could ask for three wishes.....

(01:19:00) J: My wish is no more killing, no more killing. A peaceful community and people should improve their lifestyle. Meaning living standards should be improved. Because lack of improvement in living standards causes a lot of health problems. No more killing tomorrow, if it happens I'll be the proudest man. A very peaceful community, if that happens, I can walk, my wife can walk without fear even in the night. Can walk, no one will come and ask where are you going? If it happens tomorrow, I'll be the proudest man on this earth. And if the living standard is raised, that people have good drinking water, good houses, good nutritious food. I'll be the proudest man. Thank you.

M: Is there any other thing I didn't ask and you would like to say?

(01:20:25) J: Maybe. You asked me almost everything.....Just, maybe one thing I want to mention, related to sorcery and witchcraft. We have done so much, in the, from the conference, the conferences we had so far, to the workshop in Moresby. And all the approach I've seen, are aimed or directed towards reducing or minimizing violence related to sorcery and witchcraft. But we talked about world-views, as long as we don't address the belief system, we will never overcome violence. That is one important aspect of the whole issue of sorcery and witchcraft violence that we have not taken any very clear approach. Maybe the churches, might take up that. I think I mentioned that in Moresby conference, and I want to say it again for the sake of this interview, as long as the belief is there, people will continue to attribute the social crisis by sickness and death to spiritual forces. So the most important question for me, is how do we deal with the belief? Europe changed, why Europe changed? The churches were behind the killings and so we also have a bad history as Christian church. If we had to take any kind of model, outside model for example, then we have to ask this serious question, why or how did Europe change? From the culture of killing witches to a completely different society with the culture of understanding the world with the scientific lens, explaining things in a different way. And that's why, I said, the churches should take a proactive approach, to try to proclaim the Gospel of Jesus Christ. To help them to embrace the Christian value and to see these traditional belief system as something that contradicts with the Christian teaching. If the traditional belief in sorcery produces negative results, then why do people continue to embrace the belief? If I am a Christian and if I embrace the Christian values, I should discard the other belief or my own traditional belief, if the belief is negative and causes harm and destruction. And creates disorder in the community. Why should I embrace two things at the same time? On the one hand, I say, accept the Gospel value, which is peaceful. And on the other hand, I say, I also embrace the cultural value, which sorcery belief is part of that cultural value. So how can I claim myself to be Christian and embrace two values at the same time? This is the dilemma where the Christian churches to try to work extra harder, in order to overcome. If the Christian churches are able to approach that particular aspect of sorcery and witchcraft, I mean the belief in itself. And if they change the belief, the way they understand things, their spiritual belief. Naturally sorcery violence will disappear completely. As I said, violence you see related to sorcery and witchcraft is only an outward expression of the inward belief that is deeply rooted. We have to cut the roots. Dig out the roots. So you want see all the bad branches, all the bad fruits, you know what I mean. We

are touching the surface but the roots are still there, this is my fear. But our approach, I am not saying that, it is bad. There are two sides of it, the belief but at the same time, the outward impact. We have to approach both dimensions. What's the use of saying, ok let's minimize the violence related to sorcery and not dealing with the cause, the real factor behind...thank you.

M: Thank you so much, I am really happy with the interview...Thank you very much!.....

ANNEX 9: INTERVIEW WITH DR. JAN JAWORSKI

(I started recording the interview after having been talking for a while, that is why it starts like this)

Maria: K50000! You can do a lot in the community.

(00:0020) Jaworski: Money is really destructing our people. Again we will come to this same conclusion that our people would need counsellors. Army of counsellors. I don't know how otherwise it can be done, because in the classes, teaching to the people in the classes, there is no results of it. For this reason we organize not only conferences but workshops, that the people will bring the issue and they just talk out together and they try to find their own solutions to the problems. We try to organize community conversation. To bring the whole community and somehow influence them. Picture the problems through drama or movies, sometimes we can show some movies, on the threatening stories. Because traditional, informal way of education was in the telling of stories. If the parents wanted to educate their children in something, they were telling stories. Telling stories is very in the system...as a part of their education. Not a direct correction, what so ever. So telling stories could bring attention of the people and through telling stories or drama the people could find out their own problem. And then, finding out the problem, they would discuss, what is causing the problem. The causes of the problems and then they can try to find out what would be the solution to the problem. So it could be kind of a democratic way of discussing the problems. And then, so they only have to implement the resolutions. So this kind of community conversation, we started already in 2007 but it crippled. We seized for sometime, we want to recover now, in the tribe I am talking now. It's next to Mingende.

M: Because you were talking about Nauro-Gor actually, which is considered a success story somehow right?

(00:02:41) J: Well Yah.

M: What is your opinion, because I was talking to some of your community police members and they explained me how the community wrote some laws publicly rejecting sorcery accusations, and they confirmed there have not been accusations since then.

(00:02: 50) J: Yah, people are happy about it, but since I am from the back end of the story, so I am not too happy because we could achieve according to my mind, much more than we achieved in eight years. Now is the 9th year, sorry, sorry. But people are still very strong through traditional leadership. If the traditional leadership is recognized as a decent, then the people would follow, somehow traditional leaders, and we were very lucky at the beginning to have a good traditional leader in charge of this organization. It was Joe Bruno, the son of the also traditional leaders, Bruno,

Papa Bruno. He was really good, educated man, with some vision for the future, for the development of the tribe. He himself was a very hardworking man and making himself into the idea. Unfortunately, after two years he gave up because he needed to go searching for money. We were not able to pay to him as much as he gets from the place he is working. And all other leaders were not so successful, but generally speaking, we did something. At least we reduced violence. Definitely we reduced violence that was caused by elections every five years. Means clan fights because within the tribe that they were fighting with each other for over thirty years like they say themselves. Since then, since the organization came into existence, it was in 2005, this tribal fights or clans fights ceased. Also we don't have proper statistics, of course, but somehow the violence also was reduced through their own community-based laws and the existence of the community policing. But there are ups and downs in this working of community policing. Now we have newly elected executive and hope seems to be a very good one. And people are again on fire somehow to do something for the community, for the whole tribe.

M: For example, since the organisation was established, it hasn't been allowed to accuse anybody of sorcery or witchcraft?

(00:06:03) J: Yah, that is true, but you know I feel different sometimes. So there were some accusations but it extinguished soon enough that didn't come to the incident of torture. But accusations, there were some in this time.

M: And if that happens, would the community police give a fine to the person who accused?

(00:06:30) J: O yah, that is within the community police, community-based law. It is something that people themselves worked out. Not just imposed from outside but well really necessary to say about in the very beginning so. In 2002, there was election time, I was there for six months, and I was already parish priest in Yomba Gor. And I could see how the campaign is going. There was a lot of drinking, there were campaign houses, shouting and singing at night, the young people too. I said to my Catechist, listen there will be tribal fight again. The community experience tribal fight every five years related to the elections. And it happened that I went to Barcelona that time in a conference. When I came back after one month, there was no people because the tribal happened or clans fight. And they demolished 200 houses or whatever number. They demolished the primary school, second biggest Catholic school in the diocese. They robbed something from the church. They robbed the priest house and so on. And there were no people that was the most important. There were no people. So afterwards, they started gathering slowly, one after another. And in 2005 I said to my parish council: 'there will be next election in 2007, if you will not start doing the campaign now, 2 years before the election, it will happen. They will be on fire because of the campaign and then again there will be tribal fight. So the chairman said, 'ok so we need to call traditional leaders'. Well I said, 'if traditional leaders also you have to call pastors', because there were different denominations in the area. And it happened that we called them on during

Christmas time. It was the first meeting. And then we said to the leaders, if we do not do something now, then another tribal fight will happen. Then more people will die out of the place. And for our people dying outside of their own original place, it means much more than for European. And also many children are dying because of hunger starvation, many children don't go school for years sometimes because of the tribal fight because the people, parents cannot afford the school fees. That time it was obligatory. And some limitation including AIDS would be on increase, many people are not coming back because who is able to experience tribal fight and lose all the property every 5 years? Can you see any person like this? So the people were really influenced by our presentation and they say ok, so we need to work on the community-based law. We need to, first of all, have another meeting in one month time. And in the second meeting, one month later, already some leaders told, we need to bring about our own community-based law. And they started working and after next two months, the community-based law was ready. So the people themselves made this community-based law for such behaviour, such fine, such a tendency. So also included sanguma tortures, calling sanguma another person. They find out that, this would be more today on skin, today on feelings. You know that, once they will know that such a behaviour is causing such a fine, they will restrict somehow of the bad behaviour. But it didn't work.

M: It didn't? Why? I really thought it did!

(00:11:19) J: No it didn't work. We were surprised actually. The people themselves, they were greatly surprised that it didn't work. Because for us, if I write some things, some orders on the paper and will send it, I think the paper has power in itself to do it. The same was actually when we approached the community. The people thought that community-based law, once they will make it, it would work by itself. But it didn't and we were surprised and we went to PPC here in Kundiawa and we asked for some policemen to secure our community-based law. But the policeman said, 'no, I cannot sacrifice a couple of policemen because I am short of them'. So you have to elect your own young people and we will train them as community policing. And it happened, actually after two courses, 64 community police were trained. And they started to patrol, to make patrols, and check, giving fines from all kinds of misbehaviour. And after three weeks, one of the main chief, traditional leader, papa Bruno came to me and told me, 'Father, community-based law is working'. I asked him, why did you find out that it is working? He said, cherries on the coffee trees are getting red. So what do you think about it? That before, they were never red and they supposed to pick up the red ones. But why didn't get red on that?

M: Because there was no chance, not enough time, because there was violence?

(00:13:11) J: No

M: No?

(00:13:13) J: No, because there was theft. They were stealing from each other. It was a vicious cycle. Vicious cycle of theft, one from the other and from the other came to person who started it. So they broke the vicious cycle of evil. And this was the beginning of our, actually our organization and somehow good mood from the people, because it showed the people that they can do something of their own. They don't need to secure the law by outside police or other laws or whatever. And on top of it, the gardens produced more food, they didn't need to go to the neighbours to steal from them. In the community-based law, it was forbidden to open market in the morning because they used to go to the market place in the morning and they were sitting until evening time, playing cards and other evil, for our people. They are playing cards: not playing cards from amusement but playing cards, gambling. So they were losing money, usually losing money. I don't know who is winning the money in the gambling. But simply their losing was causing domestic violence as well. But they were starving because they didn't go to the garden to cultivate their gardens. So short of food that they had to steal. So everything was broke down from this vicious cycle. And that was the example that, community-based law, but combined with community policing, of course.

M: And why do you think in this community, the community itself decided to implement these laws and in other communities it doesn't happen? What is the difference? Do you know?

(00:15:17) J: Well they try, the other, well our idea was that, this is supposed to become a model community. And, in fact, it became, because of good opinion from people of bad name, because now we had bad name, after these few decades of permanent fights and stealing from others. So people of bad name, they became people of good name. And the other people could see that there is some good progress in the community. So by resonance, actually it happened that other communities took some example, and even our member, former member, Joe Mek Teine, tried to organize some other communities in the district, in the similar. But unfortunately, he is missing the point that first of all, they need to be provided structures of the community. He wanted to impose from above creating community policing by itself and it doesn't work. There has to be structures of the community with the traditional leaders still plays and recover somehow authority of traditional leaders because our people are still, as I mentioned to you,...in the tradition very strongly, sitting in the tradition. So they have it in their memory and in their genes. The authority plays in the traditional leaders. But we need to help them to recover traditional leadership, the authority of the traditional leadership. So what we want actually, over these years, is somehow to recover the traditional leadership. And other communities are learning from us. Slowly, but they are learning.

M: So you did become an example actually!

(00:17:24) J: Yah, the whole situation became an example. And all the tribe, organization, I would say so. That we became an example and definitely concerning sanguma and tortures, didn't ever happen over this time. There were some accusations but soon enough after the accusation,

community policing is intervening and taking the actions, including imprisonment for short time. So it was good action of community policing. The problem for us raised, this is another long time problem, big problem, that at the beginning, the community policing is supposed to be under the traditional leadership or leadership of our organization. In order to, somehow, to keep this situation that the community policing will be under leadership, we control the money they receive. Because it is through money that we can educate the people. So all the money community policing is earning is supposed to come to our account, and we, as leadership, we suppose to divide it or decide who is getting how much. But in this situation, right from the beginning was weakened and after few months we decided ok, 90% will remain on our account and 10% will go to the individuals then 75% and then 50%. It came to 25% supposed to come to our account, the organization account. And the remaining money, 75% will be divided between those policemen. But money is kind of a strong, strong tool and strong something to keep our community policing under the leadership. It's now the way actually we can control them.

M: I see... I met two policemen, we met two policemen from the Gor community in the Banz workshop.

(00:20:00) J: Wow, you attended this workshop

M: Yes

(00:20:04)J: How was it?

M: It was very good. I think it was very good.

(00:20:08)J: Ok there were some policemen...

M: Ojen and then Willie.

(00:20:15) J: O Willie Kerenga but Willie Kerenga is newly selected policeman, newly trained. But he is an educated man, he is helping me now very much.

M: And then I don't remember the name of... well, Paul was there.

(00:20:29)J: Beno, Beno Daka was there and Paul the chairman, the recent chairman. And this is also, I am hoping very much from this kind of executive in our newly elected. So what about this policemen, what did they tell you?

M: I was really excited when I knew that they were policemen from Gor because I had read about the case and I was very impressed, you know. So, I went to talk to them and I was wondering if they were paid or they were working under volunteer basis.

(00:21:15)J: Not really, voluntary basis but they are paid allowances. According to our MOU, MOU between communities policing. Between police and the government, they are supposed to be paid by Chimbu government some allowances on monthly basis. But it never happened, never happened regularly. But it was MOU they signed out on 2006. So it was one limitation. But instead, we were

giving some money to uniform them and to provide some courses, upgrading them and so. But they are getting occasionally some allowances for some actions. Especially during elections, but this money again is supposed to be coming, all money, supposed to come in our account and the leadership of the organization of the tribe is supposed to decide who is getting how much. In order to keep the people under the leadership, otherwise they will be out of control. And they will do whatever they want. And organize was one, also almost fighting with us because it was first mistake during the first election in 2007. Our PPC (Police Commander) knew of that; actually all the former PPCs knew that, it was our decision that all money coming for the community policing is supposed to come in our account. But they changed PPCs, during the elections somehow and the new PPC, Joseph Tondop, he didn't know exactly about this arrangement. And our community policing every men, every policemen, supposed to get K2100 for their service, to secure elections in different areas. And I, being at the hospital and I got a call in the afternoon that the police are waiting for me because they are ready to distribute envelopes with cash money to each individual. And I said, no, you cannot do it because, we have an arrangement that all the money supposed to come to our account. But this however, community policing were, all standing and waiting for the money, cash money. They didn't know because they were told already they are getting the money. And do not try to tell Chimbu men that you are not giving this money. Can you imagine the tension? You know. PPC delegated this, to us, to Joe Bruno and to me, to deal with our community policing. Can you imagine this one? And Oigen is the tallest from them. He was almost getting into fight with us. But we settled down and the arrangement was that, half of the money would be paid cash to individuals and half of the money will be given to us and we will deposit the money for the organization. And it happened. In fact it happened that they got K1100 and we got K1000 only. But anyway, what did they do with this money? What could you imagine what our Chimbu men can do with K1100? Is it good enough money, because they are people from the bush? How many years, 9 years 8 years ago. K1100 it was money for a bush man, like....but what could they do with K1100, sixty men? So it was almost K70000. 1100 per one and 64 men, K70000. So they hired dyna, big truck, they went to Goroka because it was alcohol ban here in Chimbu and they had three days drinking session and womanizing themselves. And they met some debts and asking us afterwards to credit them something. So we give them some more money because they had to pay some debts. It was a development you see. So only the money we recover today were money we deposited that time. So it is what money do for our people. You cannot imagine. There is no saving, especially for men. Once they have money, they have to spend immediately the money. You give those 10000, they will spend 10000. You want to save for them, you have to get into a big fight.

M: Because I guess the community police cars...Do you have cars?

(00:26:49)J: One car at the moment.

M: One car but with K70000 you can get another one, right?

(00:26:54)J: Oh yes. Or but maybe not, because with these car accidents these days. But, of course, you can do much more. You can build almost houses for each one. Because you needed K1000 to buy roofing iron is enough for a good decent house, semi-permanent house. You can do a lot. So what I am saying that, it is not my vision I am not satisfied in this 8 years because I told to Joe Bruno

that by five, seven years all people are supposed to have good decent houses. And somehow, electricity and water supply definitely. Nothing happened like this until now. There was some water supply but they chopped the pipes and it is after a couple of months now and it is not working. You need a lot of education, a lot of education, a lot of counselling. Army of counsellors.

M: Thank you for that, I was so hopeful about the Gor story. I see that there has been some progress but yet...

(00:28:08)J: Yah, it is some progress, definitely. There was some kind of evaluation of our organization last year. If you wish I can give you but it is not to my expectation the results of this evaluation. It was a quite an extensive evaluation made by an independent person from Australia who came here and spent two weeks. So he says, well to his mind, the person made an evaluation in many other communities in Africa and in Asia. And he said, he never experienced such level of community like it is in here. And he said well, whatever happened, he said achievement it is, the achievements compared to the communities surrounding. But if he could evaluate from this money put that into the development in this organization. The achievement should be much bigger. Because this money in other communities like in Asia or in Africa, would procure much more development than in our setting. And that is the truth.

M: And then you think the solution is, education, counselling?

(00:29:38)J: No, education is, specifically. Education because counsellors, we will never get an army of counsellors. How can you train counsellors? We have family resource centre and here we have four or five counsellors. Whether they are doing their job, nobody controls them. The counsellors would need counsellors. And the counsellors of counsellors would need counsellors here. So education, and now maybe exposure of our people to different cultures and open like the reason that we went to Poland was to search for the place to send our staff to open their minds. To show them other ways. Our politicians will tell you we are very rich country, we have abundance of money but they have abundance of money in their own pockets. But when it comes to ordinary Papua New Guinean, they are very poor of money. And they don't know how to use their money properly. And who is going to teach them how to use money? What is the difference between using money for your benefit and for your family's benefit and what is the difference in how to spend the money? Simple things for you because you are told when you are 5 or 6 years because you started to save some little coins, didn't you? But it does not happen here.

M: And you receive enough support from the government?

(00:31:35)J: Well what kind of support? Well promises yes, a lot of promises we receive. That's last year we had the meeting with the Governor. Governor of Chimbu and made lots of promises and until now, it is one year over and no one of the promises to support our organization, that would be really model organization for others, None is fulfilled.

(00:32:15) J: But I don't complain about governments, because we would have other non-government organization, Caritas Australia is helping us. This is the most important support for us. And for over six years, seven years, since 2007. We have great support from Caritas Australia.

Financially we are not able to digest all this money. It's easy to throw money to the people but what will happen, like the community police. I told you the example, that will be just opposite to your expectations. So you need to first digest whether you can show this money to the people. They will be happy to have money but to be just for food and amusement.

M: But one of the things that it's surprising me here, is that people when they need support, they automatically turn to the NGOs and the International Organizations and they don't think that the government will help. Probably because the government never helps, what's the reality?

(00:32:27)J: I don't know what is the reality with the government, until now it's very little help of the government. Concerning our organization, they signed out the MOU as I mentioned to you between police and there is very little outcome of it.

M: Ok, thank you for this, the case of Gor. I was really enthusiastic and now I am a bit sad about it....but it's ok, reality is reality, what can you do?

(00:33:56)J: You need to have another point of view too. When you are there, you ask the people in Gor, they are really happy about the organization because they have peace. And bit peaceful conditions to live and at least it's secure. They will tell you that they can walk, even women can walk alone. I don't know whether, it is still now happened that they can walk at dark and night alone. But there is no many rapes like it was before, so definitely something happens.

M: Ok what do you think if we move to the cases of sorcery-related violence that you have handled here, or that you are still handling? Could you tell me a little bit on that? Because I can't imagine. How are these cases coming to the hospital, what is the reaction?

(00:34:55)J: What happens in the hospital is only the very tip of the iceberg because they are victims that they were able to run away or secured by close family members. Usually, others perhaps remained or were tortured till they died. So very few, in fact. Recently, we experienced a drop in the number of those cases tortured and people who come. Maybe because of mass media and the people are afraid and scared of it. But still, our police are not reacting. It was two months ago when we had a case and we reported to the police and no reaction from the police. No policemen came to have a chat or review the case with the victim. So they didn't show any interest.

M: Why is that, lack of resources or...?

(00:36:09) J: That's what they claim, that's lack of resources, that they have no men power, adequate. Maybe somehow it is true.

M: You said it is the tip of the ice berg, what kind of situations you face when you have one of the survivors coming?

(00:36:33) J: Usually, the people are really depressed. Because it is not only that they are physically victimized but psychologically as well. And it is kind of a social death for the person. Even their own close relatives in the families, they are burning them to this extent. They are only one or two, they are really risking their life and coming together with the victim, because it is the risk of their own lives as well. So you will not find in surrounding environment some people caring for these victims.

M: What would be the procedure that the hospital has to follow?

(00:37:28) J: We used to write medical reports and deliver either through the family members if they are around or even personally to the police homicide office. And then now I think with the response of the police, usually policemen some years ago, they were coming and reviewing each case and taking it into their own hands. But for some years now nothing happened like this. We deliver the medical reports and no reaction from the police side.

M: So the police action has decreased...

(00:38:10)J: Definitely.

M: We were talking about lack of resources before, but do you think this lack of reaction from the police is also encouraged because they also believe?

(00:38:24)J: I am pretty sure about it, yah. I am pretty sure that is, but well they also belief in existence of *sanguma* before. It is not the case but there were more responsible to the office. And now perhaps kind of an anarchy happens among the policemen and they don't feel responsible what they do and suppose to do.

M: And how is the belief of the people regarding *sanguma*?

(00:39:11)J: It's very common, it's no doubt. Almost everyone believes here. Well depends how you threat this belief because in every religion you belief in evil spirits. So somehow it's understandable to me at least. That there is existence of evil spirits and what they do actually, claiming that person is possessed by evil spirits. It seems that it is work of the evil spirit. But whether person accused of *sanguma* is an evil or there is someone else behind this evil or representing evil. This is different matter. Usually the person who is accused of *sanguma* is quite innocent person. Well I think so

from my observations at least and it is causing a lot of injustice. Because they are afraid in the community not to break from the accusation to not to participate in accusing of the torturing. Because if you not then you will be accused also of *sanguma* for cooperation. So there are definite permanent threat, so they join the people who accuse someone of *sanguma*. Also a vicious cycle. I can show you the pictures of few hundred people torturing one women including police man. And little children present too in Mendi. Have you seen this?

M: I have seen a couple of pictures from Fr. Phil and he actually introduced me to a sister. Sr. Cathy. And then she told me, she was a witness, so she was explaining a little bit what happened, how the crowd, some of them were trying to stop it and all that. She is the woman who survived, ok! What can doctors do, what can medical staff do to prevent this?

(00:41:49)J: We can do quite a lot if you want. First of all, in the hospital that it will not happen, hospital compound, that it will not happen that the accusation of *sanguma*. Usually when this claim for *sanguma* accusation arising. When a person is dying and somehow causes of death are unexpected and also not known to the people. So they can easily search for the causes of death or sickness. So the doctor can provide good information first of all, and tell that it is something related to medical problems. But quite often happens that medical staff or the nursing staff or doctors can say, 'you go to your place to find out problem in traditional way'. Traditional way, very often it means to find out someone who, who could cause your problem or your sickness. And this is the problem, instead we should tell 'ok, this is coming because of bacteria and other mere causes'. Or sometimes misbehaviour of a person who become sick. Like myself I try to remember when Joe Mek Teine's brother died, Alphonse Teine. We went together with, Fr. Luke Apa and Fr. Valentine Tuanik because they started to accuse, which was his own cousin, John Gende. And we wanted to stop this accusation and we went and I said, this Alphonse, he caused the death by himself because he was failed. He suffered from chest pain for three weeks and he didn't come to the doctor. It was perhaps the beginning of heart attack and he died of heart attack and so why to cause other people dying because you conceive that is the cause of his death. And they stopped because Joe Mek Teine and said 'yes, we knew. Don't search for any *sanguma* anymore'. So sometimes you can stop it but very quiet somehow of strong standing.

M: So correct diagnose...

(00:44:44) J: That would help. And to drop the explanation to the family even they don't understand everything but once a doctor or nurse with good reputation, we explain to the people. The people will try their best to understand and to cease from searching of the other causes. Definitely I am very much convinced about.

M: Is there any ability that the medical staff could have on educating the community about it...

(00:45:13)J: Well, of course yes. But our access to the communities far in the bushes is very limited. And now we restored the so-called outreach and our doctors are going to the bush and to the health centres. Not so far to the bushes, but at least to the health centre. Definitely, it would improve our relationship and education as well because they are obliged to provide some education at the same time. Definitely, that was supposed to be done for a long time.

M: For medical staff, is there any other thing done or that you could do to put down these accusations and tortures and deaths?

(00:46:01) J: So again we try to get in the family and explain to the family the cause of solving the problem of sickness or of death. It is the best we can do. And sometimes, if it's possible, you can go further and explain to the extended family. It happened here, some years ago. That a young woman, 21, she died of AIDS. There was a little child left behind. And I went to visit my friend, Fr. Valentine, Actually it was *haus krai* and people were crying for the deceased in the neighbourhood. So I asked: 'who are they crying for?' and he said, 'this young woman who died in the hospital'. So immediately came to my mind that, I should go and perhaps tell, at least, the close relatives of the causes of death. I did, but instead of telling the mother who was present and her brother, who was a lawyer. They asked me to tell immediately the whole crying community. There were over hundreds of them. Well I said, 'whatever will happen will happen, but I have to tell them', so that they will not accuse someone innocent and torture and then kill. And then I did it in fact. And I saw that, maybe they will leach... but no, the brother was a lawyer. Actually the brother of minister Kerenga. He thanked me for this information and he promised that they will not search for other evil causes of death. So somehow it worked. But fortunately it was that they were crying here in Kundiawa. If it would have happened in the bush, who knows what could have happened.

M: So again lack of resources?

(00:48:14)J: Yah, lack of resources. You will need to follow every case you serve and...

M: yes, it is impossible. And in that conference in Moresby, there was one medical team, because they divided the people in several teams to see what recommendations were done. And I remember, correct me if I am mistaken Monica, that the medical team came up with the recommendation of rewarding the doctors that could give a very good diagnose and that could avoid diagnose of 'go and resolve it in your own way'. Do you think that would work?

(00:49:00)J: of course yah, definitely.

M: Is there anything else you think could be done and it's not done?

(00:49:14)J: Again, strong law and the police that will do their job. It was in the time of Australian administration that they cease all these kind of things. There were not so visible like they are now. And because our police are not working, I gave you the examples. They are not daring to come to

even review the case or interview the victim. They are reluctant. So they don't do their job, their duties. Law and policing, like in United Naro-Gor, this is community-based law and community policing that has to be, hand by hand. This is another way. Everywhere. It is not only here. In each country, there has to be somehow law clear enough to the people to follow and that will secure or somehow look after the law that will implemented. This would be the starting point, plus education, plus good explanation by medical staff. Not only doctors, but our people have great respect to the nurses as well. It would be enough for the nurses to explain, at least that should be their duties: to explain from the medical point of view. A part of the conviction, person convictions, and they can believe in this *sanguma*. I myself I can somehow belief in existence of evil spirits as well, I don't deny the existence of *sanguma*, but what will you do with the problem? This is important. You cannot put all to the fire, what we used to say. We as medical staff, we can often do it.

M: Ok, I am very happy with everything you said, I don't know if Monica wants to ask something or you want to say something?

(00:51:39) J: Yah but what is your idea about *sanguma*? What can somehow diminish, among the people, this conviction? Not so much conviction but the way they react to it (question to Monica Paulus)

Monica: Like they belief is *sanguma* and it is already there so, it's like we cannot change that.

(00:52:00) J: No, it would be in vain to change.

(00:52:08) Monica: It's all about the act towards others when they accuse them, when they torture them, kill them and all this, it is really not right. Like they are trying to take the law into their own hands and they are trying to justify it.

(00:52:24) J: They search for justice, but their way of searching for justice is injustice. Creating more injustice on top. They have to be informed about the vicious cycles of injustices they are in. But it's not enough, there needs to be strong law and strong police and police doing their duties.

(00:52:51) Monica: I also support what Father is saying because with so many cases going to the police is like, because right at the back of their mind they also belief in it. They turn not to put out their work as a policeman as to perform their duties. They turn to support the idea of their belief. So they couldn't do a lot of arrest because they quickly put a judgement on someone who is accused, already like he is blamed for. So they see them as if they possess it so that they deserve what they are going through.

(00:53:33)J: In fact, they are not policemen but ordinary people sitting in the police office. So perhaps the formation of the police are lacking somehow. They are supposed to be trained to become good policemen to do their duties. And they are not able to do it because their beliefs

overlap somehow and stimulate them that they will not perform as they are expected to perform. A lot of work, more than it was thirty years ago when I came. True, true.

M: Well some things are getting better/

(00:54:25)J: Well, of course yah, some things.....but, again when we come to young people it is our treasure, young people. What would you do with this treasure? You waste this treasure. 10 to 30% of young people graduates from high schools, they can get jobs or they can go higher to the tertiary education. 70 to 90% are left without any future. This is our treasure. I told it two years ago in Chimbu, this Monetary, how do you call this meeting....MC meeting. I told in public that it is a crime what we are doing with our treasure. It is a crime because in a couple of years they will turn against the community. Under the name of going back to tumbuna time, tumbunas time, fore fathers time. They will demolish everything because these structures in tumbunas time were not existing. And they don't have any understanding of what was in the tumbunas time. The tumbunas were isolated from each other and clans from clans were isolated. And there was a lot of violence, of different violence but it was violence. A lot of threat, they were living in permanent fear of *sanguma* because it was something that the leaders could also manipulate the people to keep them underneath, yah. But what about the future? If you will not do something for the treasure of our country, young people. There is 40% of people from 0 to 16 years old, it is exactly 42%. That's a lot. This is something like, almost 3 million people now. And they have no future.

M: Can I ask you for a personal favour, could you tell me something positive?

(00:57:00)J: You have to go to lower ground and just start climbing up. Well the people themselves are really a treasure here because this is something I value very much. They are happy people with very little things. You go to European people, they need to accumulate a lot of things and they think that they will be happier, which is not true. They are happy with nothing and they can share from nothing about everything. From the little they have, they can share everything. It is really beautiful, I think it is very Christian as well, at the same time. Even though they are different in their Christian groups in here, but it is very common for our people, so it is really something you can very value among our people.

M: At least I keep a bit of hope...

(00:58:00)J: It is something we can build on from here. But people need help, what I am saying is that our people need help, it is this army of counsellors. You yourself will find out. You know, you need lots of counsellors. Monica said, almost every person would need a counsellor because the confusion is so great. So great confusion. It is not confusion for us, like in Poland, we suffer some confusion because now we came into contact with the Western world that have developed so

much, especially after the Second World War. Your parents experienced that after the death of Franco. I remember Franco in 72, and he died. I was travelling somewhere, I got the message in the bus that he died. And I thought, 'maybe something could happen in Spain'. So it's 40 years now, and a great development. You opened your borders and some achievement. But it's a change of culture, you are still Europeans. The culture is a Christian culture and you could migrate to other parts of Europe, even during Franco's time. And you can find yourself European, but for our people, it's the change of civilizations. It's much greater, change and confusion of course. It's change of civilization because from stone civilization they jumped to modern civilization. And the money, the money is incredible. How to explain that money should be treated as something, as a tool, not something you dream and aim for the possession? How can you do it? Monica is it not true about money? It is something. For me, it is painful, almost in all of my homilies I try to explain something about money, but I feel useless. Of course you can explain but once you come to the money and people want to have this money...

M: We do want to have money also...

(01:00:20)F: Yah, but we are better in controlling these emotions, our people are really, looking at their behaviour, they don't control their emotions and they are truthful to me, their emotions. Over generations we used to put masks on our emotions. We are able to stand behind the mask. For our people it's even tougher. They are good actors, beautiful actors. They can perform any drama you want immediately. But concerning emotions, they are not able to put masks and separate from their emotions. And this is the case for violence, domestic violence among others.

M: Well there is hope, still a lot of work to do....

(01:02:14)F: They are human beings, there is hope in them.....Until I am breathing, I hope. How it is in Spanish that hope is the last thing you lose?

M: 'La esperanza es lo último que se pierde'

So I thank you so much...

ANNEX 10: INTERVIEW WITH JOSEPHINE ADVENT

0:18

M: Could you introduce yourself, please?

J: My name is Josephine Advent. I am a principal legal officer with the Department of Justice and Attorney General, specifically attached with the legal policy and governance branch. The Department of Justice comprises 17 different branches and there are 3 legal officers. Our officer is more responsible for policy initiatives for the minister for justice, and drafting laws and policy initiatives in the area of criminal justice. And so, sorcery is under criminal justice.

01.08

M: Could you elaborate a little on the mechanisms the government has in place to deal with sorcery-related violence?

J: The Criminal Code specifically talks about wilful murder and all other crimes. In the past, when a crime relating to sorcery killing was committed, like if someone was accused of sorcery and was killed, nothing was done and people used that excuse to commit the crime knowing that they would escape from the full force of the law. From sorcery-related killings that appeared in the media and other unaccounted killings in the rural areas, there were international pressures on the government and the NGOs came publicly in media that the government decided to have a review of the Sorcery Act. The Sorcery Act was in existence but the former minister for justice issued a terms of reference to the Law Review Commission and that reference was to review the sorcery law and other related laws. Those terms of reference were conducted and nationwide consultation was done and there were recommendations sent to the government. One of the recommendations was to repeal the Sorcery Act. Although the sorcery act was there, it recognises good sorcery as well as bad sorcery so it sort of legitimized sorcery on one end and on the other end was condemning sorcery. Thus, it was a conflicting legislation in itself. When they recommended for the Act to be repealed, certain provisions were to be retained. And they were the ones dealing with sorcery accusations, the actual killing would not take place but just accusing a sorcerer was the recommendation and the National Executive Council (NEC) submission was presented. However, NEC decided that it was proper to do away with the Sorcery Act, just repeal it and get it off the books. And so that was it. They repealed the Sorcery Act 1971 and introduced a provision in the Criminal Code and it is Section 229 (a) which says that “if you kill someone of accusation on the account of sorcery, you are guilty of wilful murder and the penalty is death.” So that was the provision which was inserted, so meaning that enough is enough. If people cannot respect other people’s lives, they decided that the charges will be executed. The provision was included in the criminal law and was passed by the parliament last year. Of course, that was not a perfect solution but that was what the government decided because higher the penalty the cases would minimise but it has to be tested first. We have not laid charges under that provision but when we do, we’ll see the impact on people whether there would be deterrence or not. Right now people are still

killing. Recently there was a case in Madang where a whole village was destroyed and a number of lives were lost who were accused of sorcery, and police intervened and arrested more than 100 people and charged them but they did not use the Criminal Code, the new amendment on the provision of sorcery. They used other provisions in the Criminal Code like wilful murder, but it is still not being used.

5:35

M: Why do cases don't get reported?

J: From my own view, I would say that it is mainly in fear of retaliation from the community or even from the perpetrators. That is because the government services do not reach the bulk of the population, the basic services like policing, so who would go into it and arrest people. So people feel that it is not proper to go and get the police because they know that police would not turn up in that place. And even, if they turn up, the perpetrators are long gone. And after the police leave, they will kill these people. So they live in isolated communities and things like that happen in very isolated areas. Even if it happened in urban areas, we have these very strong tribal grouping and they would protect their own kind and if they see that the victim is from a weaker clan or a weaker family, of course they would not retaliate with the stronger community who has become the perpetrator. So they are in fear of their lives. In these areas, people take the law into their own hands and there is no protection from the government.

8:00

M: What are the difficulties for women especially those in remote areas?

J: We have a court system that is the National Court, District Court and Village Court. The village court is at the LLG level and covers a population of 100 – 1000 people and involves 20 to 30 villages. Normally these people go to the village courts. The rest would be very hard because the villages are scattered and people live far apart because of the rugged mountains etc. So it is very hard to access justice at that level. People living close to the court areas are fortunate but others have to walk days and hours to the court areas or spend money to travel to report their matters. So social justice is not present in those communities. The people living around town areas and places where road links are better, they have access to the justice systems. However, at those levels they have ward councillors and village leaders who help to resolve problems at the community level. Most times they mediate on sorcery killings or even general accusations and if the leaders agreed for a killing, then it is done and nobody stops it. They all listen to this particular person. So the accessing justice is challenging and we are trying to address that issue by putting in a number of village courts and also increase the number of women magistrates. The reason to have more women magistrates is because in village court there are more men and women do not feel comfortable to go to them to report and now that some women are magistrates, women start to come out more to report and when seeing that we want to boost the number of women magistrates. It is quite a long way to go but we are doing our part to eventually get it done.

11:26

M: What are the other initiatives that are being taken by the government after the repeal of the Sorcery Act and the new offence in the Criminal Code?

J: The first initiative is as mentioned above and the second one is that we are now training village court officials to see that if there is a particular case involving sorcery and there is a killing taking place, we are training them that it is a matter beyond their jurisdiction and it is a criminal matter which they should not be dealing with. We encouraged them and trained them to refer those types of matters straight to the police. That's one area in which the department of justice is working. The other area which is the restorative justice where we want communities to be responsible for their own actions and mediate and accept that if a person has committed a crime, both parties, the victim and the perpetrators, the families and the clan have to mediate with them and say that "the person has committed something wrong and should have faced the full force of law but how can you help to re-integrate or accept this person back into the society and you don't retaliate for what he has committed." So that is restorative justice and the branch was recently initiated in the Department of Justice in 2012 by our secretary Dr Kalinoe and it's in its early stages, but we have seen some improvements. We are coordinating at the national level. In the past, it was fragmented or dismantled due to different people working here and did not know what restorative justice was. Now we are coordinating here, but we still have a long way to go.

14:04

M: Do you think the compensation culture in Papua New Guinea prevents people from going to formal justice?

J: In most societies where there is stronger tribal grouping, they would accept payment rather than the person going to court's criminal processes. They would say, "what would one man's life worth than us benefiting from the offence, i.e. compensation. They always go for compensation even if it is rape. They don't consider the girl's or the woman's right and others such as the trauma involved. They would say, "Let's mediate this, we want compensation." It's not the person (victim) benefiting, but it is the tribe benefiting. In some parts of the country, they want justice to prevail. They would want to prosecute the matter through the justice system. They would want compensation but still they want to take it up to court. It varies in different provinces. I think it depends on the cultural background. Some societies are more advanced in terms of thinking and others are more traditional and so they still resort to traditional ways like compensation and the advanced ones resort to the formal court system. 16.06

16:10

M: What about the lack of accountability for perpetrators and the general impunity for this kind of crimes? How do you see it?

J: Most people put their blame on someone else. They don't think like "I killed that person and I should be responsible because it's me, it was my choice to have joined this group to carry out that

offence, like rape or killing.” It is personal responsibility and most people want to escape that and they like to blame out people or came up with excuses for their own actions. That involves mindset. If people become responsible for their own actions, we would have been changed. If people are not willing to change their mindset, like the text in the Bible that sin starts with physical thinking and people commit sin just by planning it in the mind. We have a very long way to go in changing mindsets. It is the individual mindset, you cannot change the individual’s mindset, and they have to change themselves. We can take them through a process of transformation in mindsets by positive programs that would have impact on individuals at the communities. Programs can be targeted at family units, because it all starts at homes. If we have innovative programs targeting families, that is where all things start and prevention will start to take shape at that time. You cannot be able to change an adult because he already has the power of choice. My opinion is that the government or the civil societies create programs that could target families and how to live good families and how to up-bring the children and teach them on fatherhood, responsibilities of fathers and how they play their role in a family. And for mothers, how they should be mothers and play their roles within the family. If that does not happen in the community, then we are breeding a child who would be a problem in the society. It all goes back to the family; the foundation is there.

19:32

M: Do you think that the department of justice could do more to prosecute the perpetrators?

J: My branch is responsible for other areas of the law and the prosecution is done by the other branch, which is the office of the public prosecutor and the public solicitors are the defenders. In my office, we are 3 legal officers and there are other officers who are responsible for community interventions but the three legal officers I am attached with have much do to on policy work. We draft legislations, we lobby or advice the government on what best can be done to address particular issues. The other officers provide advice on things that are commercial in nature and the other law office acts for the state on claims by and against the state. So there are three separate offices who deal with different areas of law. The right officer to prosecute is the Public Prosecutor’s Office, but we can initiate in terms of programs and work with partners like NGOs to implement certain programs when it comes to law implementation.

21:14

M: How do you see the ongoing initiative of the Justice Department?

J: It is an excellent avenue where we discuss specific matters and be able to assist our communities in implementation. We are all working in isolation but if we can work together like in the National Plan which gives us a road map on where we should go for assistance for implementing and partnership because such requires collaboration and dialoguing. That would be good and I would be happy to work with organizations to implement what we have to implement.

22:14

M: Could you point out what recommendations came out from the legal group?

J: One of the recommendations was to review the repealed Sorcery Act and bring back provisions that were initially recommended to be kept like sorcery accusation. The other recommendation was training for paralegal and volunteers. Paralegal and village court officials, they are service providers who have a basic understanding of the law because they are the ones to bring the law to their community using their own leadership influence. The other one would be teaching legal education in schools to the younger population because the youths are the ones associated with all criminal activities, because they would know that if they do something which is not right they would face consequences, so it was a good resolution which came about to give the basic understanding to the young students in schools as part of their personal development program.

23:45

M: What were the expectations of this workshop?

J: My expectation was that all government departments were here participating, but there were only three representatives, but if people of my level came, they would go back and provide advice to the respective departments. I would expect more people from the government to come because we are the ones to advise the government and the government help the NGOs to do their part. And when they start to do the work, the government comes in again and complains, but we want collaboration and this is the start for the work. If recommendations were to come to me, I would discuss this with my superiors and bring it to the NEC and again it is up to the different agencies for the implementation. We can't do everything but I could take it up to that level.

25:40

M: And if approved, are they going to endorse it?

J: Yes, if we put the right or positive words. The secretary for justice was the one who wanted this and he wanted to take the lead and so he would take it to that level. I am a technical officer but if I take it to him, he will do it.

28:06

M: Would you like to say a last and meaningful word?

J: If we see ourselves as agents of change, individually we would have some impact in the society. Whether you are a health worker or teacher or community leader or a councillor, if you do your part, just a simple part, and if you say that this is your responsibility, there would be change. But if we say that it is the government or others, nothing will happen. So it is seeing ourselves as agents of change in the society, it would help address social violence in this country.

ANNEX 11: INTERVIEW WITH KAMANE WAUGA

10:39

M: Could you please introduce yourself?

K: My name is Kamane Waugla and currently I am working with Oxfam International working under a program called 'Elimination of Violence Against Women'. There are two components for this program and the first one is on providing service delivery for survivors of gender based violence and or domestic violence. The focus of the first component is service delivery to clients, those who survived from the problems of domestic violence and all other gender-based violence.

The second one is called the 'Highlands Human Rights Defenders Network'. This is a program that is more focused on sorcery. We are looking at all the issues and concepts of sorcery. For us as this project it is a brand new project. For this project, we are trying to learn the trends and what sorcery is and how it takes its form, how it affects the people and how people suffer from it. That is pretty much studying the subject.

Apart from the study we also aim to support the survivors, people who have been accused of sorcery and those who have been tagged as sorcerers. Most people who come to the project after getting into it, they come as clients to seek the support that the project is offering. Through the Highlands Human Rights Defender's network, the project is supporting three partners. Those are: 'Kup Women for Peace' in Simbu province, 'Voice for Change' in the Jiwaka province, and 'KAFE Settlers Women Association' in Goroka, Eastern Highlands Province.

We are supporting the three partners with funding. There are two specific areas that we support them with. The first one is direct funding to the organization for staff operations and the second one is directly for clients, which is the service based that the three partners are providing. The first service they provide is called RRT which is Rapid Response Team. The idea behind that is to get the police, the partners, the community stakeholders and the community leaders who are aware of the project on the particular service that we aim to do throughout the project. That is to get the police and concerned authorities to respond to sorcery accusations, tortures following accusations. This is step taken by the community to torture one of their own community members who has been accused as a sorcerer. When that happens, a lot of things happen. People get burned, people get thrown over cliffs, people get axed, and whatever scary things you can think of. During that time, we aim to get the police to respond when these things happen. This is because in the past we only get reports only after the people were dead. When the tortures and killings were going on, no one reported and there was no response. So through this RRT component of the project we hope to respond as much as we can to reports that we get on accusations and tortures.

Another important work that the three partners provide is counselling. Counselling in this case is a very important tool especially for those who have been traumatized, and those who don't know the basic rights and who don't know the society and what's there for them and the services they can get from the society. So through counselling we opt to install the dignity back into the survivors telling them that they are not alone and what happened to them is not their fault and they have the rights that they shouldn't be touched, raped, tortured, and highlight other important things through counselling. It is a critical step, which is the first thing that we provide to the client.

Time and space is provided for the counsellor and the client to go through this counselling. That is a very important thing that is poorly understood in Papua New Guinea. No one knows what counselling is. We have a lot of counsellors who claim themselves to be counsellors but they misunderstand the idea of what counselling is. We also have bush counsellors where some people give their time to listen to the problems of others, which is a basic thing.

There is another service that the three partners provide and it is paralegal support to the clients. In light of all the violence against women and the violence that we see and hear about, one of the sad parts in this country is the actual access to justice by complainants, by victims or by survivors of violence. To access to justice in PNG, it is a very expensive exercise where we have different mechanism to access justice. We have the formal courts and the village court, which is a local/community-based where they have the mediations for peace to be restored in the community. There are different actors who claim to provide justice to those who have been abused. So, through the paralegal programs, we aim to have the service available to the mothers and women who work through violence whether it is household or community level. We hope that the legal support that we give through the partners is to create a path for survivors of violence and abuse where they can access justice. That is a very difficult thing to do but we aim to support it.

We do RRT, then we do counselling to identify the care that we can give to them and from there we go into paralegal because most people see that when something is broken they want to go to justice and that is what we provide.

And as for the serious cases, especially with the sorcery cases where the people are seriously being tortured, these are clients that can't be sent back to their place. So what we do with them is that we provide them repatriation. For example, if a woman from the New Guinea Islands was married to a man from the Highlands, who has been in a very abusive relationship or is never given money to look after the family, through the service that is provided by the partners, they actually assess the situation and they make a judgement on the client's will whether they can be able to repatriate this client back to her own place. The most famous repatriation cases are the sorcery ones. These are people who have been tortured or who have escaped from torture and when they come to us we repatriate them. Sometimes we send them to a new place. When we place them in a new place, there is a long term monitoring and case management. We monitor where they are and how they are progressing with their life. Most of the sorcery accused are women. They are in their 30s or 40s. Most of the clients are women who have been married into the community and once they were accused and tortured, the best thing we do is to repatriate them back to their place of origin. That is what we do in the repatriation work. There are different cases that we working on to assess and support them through the different services that the partners provide.

Another area that I would like to touch on with the partners is the case management. People think that we only respond to a case or a client when the incident happens or when something bad happens. The partners monitor each and every one that come to their door. It is a case management with clients. The most important part with the projects is the learning component. For sorcery, there is not been any intervention yet at a large scale. As a project, we hope to learn a lot from the work that we are doing. We hope to understand more on how sorcery functions. Sorcery is a big world: here in the Highlands we have sorcery and *glassman* and all those

things about sorcery. When you go down to the coast, they have all the different forms that they take. When we talk about sorcery in general it is confusing. I can talk about sorcery here in Simbu and walk over to Goroka where it is a different understanding all together. So for the sorcery project, we are trying to establish that understanding though we have interviews and studies going on for sorcery. We are trying to come up with the understanding of what is the real reason behind someone being accused. Is it because someone wants a piece of land or was jealous because he/she did not share a piece of pork meat during the bride price ceremony. It is complex when you try to find out because all is blurry and you can't see well. So we just want to bring that out through the project. In order to do that, a lot of data has been collected and given to the partners especially when they come in contact with the survivors or come in contact with the perpetrators. The time of contact is a critical time because you are actually getting into experience the real thing that is happening. So we want to document as much as possible. We have to document all of the cases. We want to have a variety of information on how we can study this. The underlying thing behind this is to break the trend between the belief in sorcery and the accusations. These accusations based on economic intentions or jealousy and stuff. There is no superstitious war going on where someone turns into an animal in the night and chew someone's heart out. These are all the misunderstandings that we get out from sorcery. One of the aims over the time is to establish the understanding on what the sorcery consists on, especially in the Highlands.

29:45

M: This project is 9 months old and, as you told me the money is given to the organisations quarterly. I imagine there is regular monitoring for this funding. Can you explain it a bit, please?

K: Monitoring would be on a quarterly basis after the end of each funding. When the time is up, results for the money invested are collected. The money was given to them and the number of clients that they served. How many did they serve? What were their organizational needs that were not considered? Apart from the money that was used on serving the clients, the critical part that Oxfam does is the capacity building. Our approach to the capacity building is not one of training. We do it on consultative activity. We go to them and discuss with them of their problems, we spend a lot of time and provide the service that we want them to receive. We just don't give money blindly to them. We are at their back on the day to day cases, while the partners are going around collecting data. If they come to a case which is unique, we meet and discuss and plan for it. The EAW program has been around for 4 – 5 years. There are things that need to be corrected like the partner has to have the signature of the client receiving the money, for example, or to come back and write the receipts for the money spent. As part of the capacity building, we work along with them to see how they are performing and using the money in the right way and reporting properly. So Oxfam might not be here for the next 20 – 30 years but when it is here it has to help the partners to carry on with the work and Oxfam has to provide what it can as part of the capacity building. We talk about capacity building, we talk about the development of organizations. After giving them the money I have to be there to provide technical assistance and be there with them once in a week and after the quarter, I go to collect the funding report from them.

35:05

M: Do they appreciate that?

K: It depends on the individual. The ones that I have gone, it is mixed. When we first came to work with them, we didn't know each other so we had to talk and they talk high because they knew everything. They appreciate that we gave them the time. I told the partners that I was a good guy and the partners can come to me. I gave them the space so that they feel free to approach me. That was my approach to building relationship with the partners. I have received complaints and sometimes I don't give them much directions, but I work along with them. We were all learning and it was quite interesting to work in this kind of environment trying to respond while listening to a serious issue.

38:19

M: How did Oxfam realize that this work needed support?

K: With the partners; they are only responding to sorcery with the capacity there. In the past in Simbu only there were sorcery accusations and killing. Because the Kup Women for Peace were at the community level, they were much more exposed to these. As a local group, they have taken up the sorcery issue. It was there that they held a meeting with other organizations from Jiwaka and Eastern Highlands. They had a meeting some time ago. It was during a training that gave them insights on human rights. They were excited because they were already doing this without knowing that these things were already written by the United Nations. That's when they formed the Human Rights Defender's group. Since they started the group in 2011, they were sort of disorganized because they had no money. When the clients came to the mothers, they did not know where to go to help the clients. Nothing happened but they were just operating at their level until someone from Oxfam came and was doing research to carry out the livelihood and WASH program in Simbu. While the officers were on the ground working with the communities they hear things like, *"yesterday they killed this guy because of sorcery, next week they will kill the other one because,"* so the talks went around like a day-to-day normal conversation. And the story was coming out strong so that they wanted to find out what it was actually happening. So they sent someone to find out more. From there we were serious by actually putting up a project. When the woman that were tortured in Mt. Hagen was put up in the media, which was something that took the attention of Oxfam who had done research and lucky that it came in to help. We tried to seek donors and they agreed to become development partners. It was in September 2013 that Oxfam funded it as a project and we are in operation for 9 months now.

44:33

M: Once Oxfam decides to start the program to overcome sorcery and witchcraft-related violence, how do you get started?

K: Oxfam has its own project management or staff management programs. With the project on RRT and so on, our mothers gathered the ideas that they would respond to the cases after all these silly

things have happened. How about changing the situation and how about responding to the cases to prevent the bad things from happening? Every time they went to the police, the police had a common problem and it was that they did not have fuel for car or they had shortage of manpower, or they don't help you either. There was no change of getting help from the law enforcement agencies. Then the mothers discussed among themselves saying, "when will we make these guys to respond?" So that's how RRT came to be. Then the issue of repatriation, after helping them, they can't send them back to their place. If we send them back, we will send them to die so we have to send them somewhere and we have to look after them. These are problems that the government should do for its people. We don't seem to get help from the government so these ideas came about at the mothers' discussions. So we call them together and stayed with them and put all these stuff together in a logical framework. What we want to see, we put them into activities and draw up outputs and by the end of the week we come up with a plan. And in the following week we put them into a proposal. Then we market it to the donors who put some money to get this thing going. Most of the activities that we have with the partners stemmed out from the work that they (the mothers) had been doing, not in the light of sorcery, but in terms of violence against women and children and how they would respond because that is their natural need. I heard that they have been working before they introduced the sorcery thing.

48:25

M: What is the assessment / evaluation?

K: It is not a critical analysis to get into the facts, but just from the observation level to get in the details for the number of people who were tortured. They try to find out how many of them were old, middle age or young or the women before they were raped, etc. We will just evaluate the project depending on the project's life. When we come to the end of the program or project the evaluation is done and that when everyone is present and again talk about what happened, what was a success and which ones were the failures. After the workshop, we documented what we wanted. Because it is a continuing project, we do not go into in-depth evaluation. The project evaluation on this is a participatory approach which will take us to the next cycle. It will help us to see where we went wrong and where we succeeded. But by the end of 2015, which will be the end of the project where we will do a project completion evaluation which is going to be very technical with consultants and all these guys coming up.

51:15

M: But at this stage, how are the impressions? Are they positive?

K: Yes, when I first came in I was thinking 'wow! Some crazy people trying to solve this sorcery'. I was very interested in getting the project going when I first came in after meeting those people who have been accused and tortured. You have a meeting with them and come out exhausted. How can I help them? We have this project, but the problem that they come with is huge. How can you help someone who just came out from being tortured who could have died? Here we are talking about this problem but how do you help them. These survivors gave me insights to the

other side of life. When they come to us for help and after we helped they go and sometime later return and thank us. Through this project we want to make the people know that there are some people whom they can go to for help. The best is for me is that the mothers do not have a place to go, even to their own families, because some get tortured by their own children and husband. How can someone do that? That's crazy...you can't have your son murder you just for the sake of gossips and stuffs... so actually we are coming in contact with the mothers and provide avenues for them. They know that we can help them. I think we have done a good job and that's what we can do. With the repatriation cases, we travel together and go to these places and they break into crying because they are going to leave their families now.

When we first came in there was a big doubt among the donors, the management and so-called advisors and so-called big guys up there. "Who are you guys trying to serve? Where are the clients?" This is a demand-driven sort of thing. You can't write the demand out but you know it is there. So that was the initial argument which was there when we were trying to put up this project. After nine months now, we are bit of more than we can chew. Now the clients and the stakeholders think that we have solutions for everything. They look at us as with hope. We tell them that it is not what they think, but just trying to help them But they say that we were doing the Lord's work. So the big thing is that we just put ourselves there so that they come to us to get help, especially those who are tortured. Imagine who went around, the partners went around, the mothers went around when the cases were chaotic. There are people with huge problems in their lives who have nowhere to go. These are people who have been tortured. These are the people who have been in the cycle of domestic violence. They have no way to break that cycle. One of the partners tried to break that cycle when one of the husband was taken to the law and was put in prison and he confessed that he will never do that again. He said, "I didn't know that I was breaking the law." The poor woman would have gone through the cycle and have died in there. These things inspire me to move on. I am only saying the good stuffs here but there are a lot of bad stuffs.

61:21

M: Tell me a little bit on the challenges?

K: There is a whole lot of challenges, people have their own challenges, I have my own challenges, and my boss has his own challenges. I can't understand why there is a challenge. There is a mixture of challenges that we have. It is because of the different point of view or different opinions of how things should be.

The first challenge is on the resources in this work. Our government does not contribute one cent to this work. On sorcery and domestic violence in the country, there is very little government investment in these areas.

The other challenge is the security of our mothers who are out there providing the human rights defender services to help someone else and who can we protect the mothers? Every time they respond to a case, their security is at stake. Who knows what could happen along the road, the car might run into an accident because another vehicle was drunk so these are all security concerns.

For me capacity is a big challenge. We are talking about all these big things. There are big issues that need to be finished and move on. A vehicle is a resource and everyone talks about vehicle.

They said that the project was going to get a vehicle but there is no vehicle. Without the vehicle it is very challenging. Instead of responding we are wasting our time trying to organize a vehicle. Sometimes we don't respond to the case because there is no vehicle. We might have the fuel money but there is no vehicle to move out there. Just a vehicle that you can use to respond to a call and you can save a life. If you don't respond because of no vehicle, you might get the call next morning that the poor woman died. So the big problem with this work is on resources.

The other sad aspect with challenges that we have is the poor response that we are getting from the government. These are both the law enforcing body and the big building that they call themselves government. It is too much to ask but as NGO organizations, we are very limited with resources. There are a lot of things we would like to do, but we couldn't do because we have constraint in our capacity. They have the courts, the police and all the power that is with them but they are not doing anything. When you try to get them to do it, they look at you as an enemy. You become frustrated but then you got to go the other way around like buying a half dozen beer and give it to him to go and see him in his office. There's a lot of challenge in that area. The big challenge now is that there is poor response by the government and that's where the real challenge is, what is making us more frustrated.

67:41

M: It is sad. It seems that you could set a price for a person's life. Have you calculated how much is the price to save the life of a person accused of sorcery in the Highlands?

K: We got cases of people who are run over by vehicles on the highway. While the life has been lost, the truck owner asks "is my vehicle ok?" Here the vehicles cost more than the life and that's a more common saying along the highway. So if you are responding to sorcery cases, the mothers have the heart to go out and help other people. That would be their strength and they go out to help any person along the way. In PNG we are a nation of a thousand tribes and we mind our own business and keep to our own family, keep to our own tribes and I can watch someone else beaten and stay back and say he is not from my tribe or he is not related to me, that's he's problem, I just go and see. We really don't go out and extend ourselves to help others as we would do within our family and our tribe. If I watch someone dying out there, they see me as a weak tribesman. But the mothers have the passion to go out and help. The mothers go to the police station to ask the police to go to rescue someone, they would swear at the police and rush them up and that is the part I really like. How much is a life especially in the highlands.

71:05

M: Can I ask you how much budget was allocated to the sorcery project for the one year project?

K: The total budget received from the donor is K9 hundred thousand something. From the K900 000, two thirds were distributed among the partners, apart from the partners we have the operations costs and stuffs, all the capacity development work and all the equipment and all that. So the two thirds went to the partners and one third was for the Oxfam office work like myself who

is going to get paid. That's from the donor. For Oxfam itself, what it does is that we have our own fundraising activities. We had nothing for the sorcery case problems so AusAid fully funded the projects for this one.

73:04

M: So, 2/3 of K900 000 divided into 3 partners... each partner got K200 000?

K: No, not K200.000. They got K78.000 and that was for the operations and specific services that they provide say counselling and repatriation.

73:55

M: Could you break up these numbers for me a little bit?

K: I would not be so sure about that. But it was K78000 times 3 is like K200000 plus. That would be the direct grants to partners. Then the capacity building and the workshops and meetings that we had to put all of them under one roof, so that would be another K200 000 and there's another K100 000 plus more were put aside for capacity building work with the partners. Of course everyone meets to budget and decides what amount to go to what kind of activities. Then there are certain project activities like repatriation. I can't trust my partners enough to give them all the money. I got to be critical on how I spend the money, to put up guidelines, so if I give you all that money, I am not going to collect any data from you guys. If I put the protocol and guidelines, I hold you accountable to me so that I collect all the details from you before the money is released. It is all that accountability mechanism in place. I cannot just give them all the money to the partners and tell them to go and preach what they want to preach. We got to be very sensitive to the message that they are communicating. So I have to be there at the first place to know the message on what actually they are talking about. The right stuff, not their individual opinions. We have to be there physically to know what's going on. We give them the trust to go out and do it. We can't be there every day so we have the control mechanism in place where some are some money left over for certain activities that we would anticipate certain outcome for these activities. The particular area of money is quite interesting.

77:49

M: Would you like to say something else I did not ask you? Maybe send a message of Hope???

K: To all mothers, daughters and our sisters. It is not your fault that the things are happening to you. I know all the suffering the women are going through and it is something that I can't comprehend, which I can't really be in that situation. There are a bunch of strong women in PNG that I can view them. Though there are all these problems that they face in their lives, they must know that they are not alone. There are others all around them especially Papua New Guineans. They should look at each other for help. They can find common ground to express and to help each other. I am saying this because there is really nothing out there to be a woman and to be a Papua New Guinean both from the private and public life and formal and informal life. As being a Papua

New Guinean man, I admire my PNG women that you guys are living in this environment at this time. You can wake up each day and walk through this each day and do what you do. Despite this, we are not saying that there are others out there who are waking up each day to go out and help people who are in need, so to the mothers and females of this country, with the problem and the trouble you are going through, you are not alone, if we look out to people around us, we can find some common grounds where we can help each other as Papua New Guineans.

ANNEX 12: INTERVIEW WITH LILLY BE'SOER

M: Do you want to introduce yourself briefly?

L: My name is Lilly, I am the leader for the organization Voice For Change, currently we have eight (8) people working for the organization and we have currently about three (3) programs. One of them is economic empowerment for rural women, second is education on violence against women and the third is like responding to sorcery-related violence as well as domestic violence.

This small organization is based in the Jiwaka province of Papua New Guinea. The organization started when I faced a lot of similar women who have been internally displaced, when my husband's village a tribal war went on for more than seventeen (17) years, we have lost all our resources and what we worked for. And so, we moved to a new location where we are now. With these experiences and also I have been deserted by my husband with six (6) children to take care of. These experiences had made me to start up the organization and try to help women in similar situations.

Currently, the programs that we are working on are like the link between women being economically empowered that gives them the sense of financial security as well as information and training and linking women to market outlets with a bit of resources, money and to know their rights, supporting with paralegal support. When they know their Human Rights then they are able to move on despite the situations they are in. That's why we have the two programs, which support each other. Under the women's economic empowerment program, we support the women to grow food crops, because in our society in the Highlands, women don't own the land but can access the land so that's one advantage where we are helping a lot of women who have been deserted by husbands having more than one wife who pay attention to the latest and the first and second wives with many children are not cared for. But they can access the land so we provide training and information so that they can be able to grow vegetables, food crops and be able to sell them and with the income they can sustain the household.

With the advocacy program, the office receives about one to two women victims daily. Now we are getting more women accused of sorcery who have been beaten and tortured. We seemed to receive about three victims in a week in our office and we believe there are more out there. As more become aware of what is being done, there would be more people coming to our office. It is an indication of a need for the support services. At the moment, the organizations, the churches are responding to these issues for violence against women on sorcery, but it's not properly coordinated but done on an ad-hoc basis. And this issue hasn't been given much attention regarding the sorcery-based violence as well as the gender-based violence. There have been some initiatives and some approaches taken, but it happened at the provincial and national level but it did not come down to the level where majority of the people are. We feel that there has to be a continuous education on the human rights, on ending violence against women, building safer homes and building a safer community which needs a long term approach. Education has to be ongoing because from our work it has indicated that most of the men that we have worked with have never understood the human rights. They know that there are certain human rights but they

don't know them and they don't really understand the gender relationship, the gender power relationship that we have and so the people that we trained indicated that they were trained on upbringing but not to listen to the women, not to help the women, not to follow the women's advice so this is like passed on from fathers to sons and it's continuing to be passed on. So the kind of training that we need is a long-term education on Human Rights, gender based violence, on sorcery-related and it has to be ongoing.

Also the services that are provided to the victims, the survivors. In the area that we are working, there are very limited services. We are taking victims to the police stations, but even the women who are badly injured, they are asked to go to the hospital to get a medical report before they come to the police station. Some policemen have arrested some perpetrators but their wives are withdrawing the cases and the police are not willing to help and police said they tried to help but the women went and withdrew the cases. However, there are more cases where women are being threatened and there is no support because it costs money to get support. These are some of the underlying causes that have never been understood well and no proper support is given to women. To obtain medical report to take the perpetrator to court also involves money. Most women come here and we refer them to the village courts. At the village court, the victim had to pay for the summons and had to pay for the court fine. Normally the perpetrator, the man would say 'ask the woman to pay for the court fee because it is the woman who takes me to court.' In most cases the woman could not afford to take the case to court. Even the village courts are not honoured or respected in many cases. Decisions are handed down at the village court to pay compensation, but it is not done and the woman had to go to the village court again to get a village court order and this order is not honoured. The order has to go to the police station and there the case has to be registered, the woman has to bring money to the police station and bring about K20.00 for the police to refuel the car to go and apprehend the perpetrator. But if the perpetrator is not there and to go again the second time it requires another lot of money.

While working with the women, we see that for women to have access to the justice system is a big problem. We haven't seen any women going up to the district court level yet. Most of the cases we are referring to the village courts. So there are a lot of things the women had to go through and so firstly the woman has to have money or support of the family to take the husband to court. Most of the lower court systems are not gender-conscious because they look at them as they are just women. Sometimes, a lot of decisions are biased. In regard to sorcery cases, they don't want to talk about it and they don't want to mediate too. People are not willing to come and witness or support the victim. A lot of the people in the rural area need to understand that there is new law in place and people who named them as sorcerers had to be dealt with. Those who are torturing people had to be dealt with. If the perpetrators face full justice, we will see some changes. The educated people and all the people hardly talk about sorcery-related tortures. When there is a death or when someone felt sick, this issue comes up and a lot of people are silently tortured and people don't talk about it.

The community that we are working with had revealed the need for counselling, for reconciliation, for peace mediation to resettle them, reintegrate them back into the community, they want more education on the Sorcery Act, the new sorcery law, they want more education on Human Rights

and gender-based violence and so it's a process that needs a lot of time to work with this community to really understand so the community has to make a change for themselves. In the past there were a lot of issues on the violence against women: talks at the provincial and national level but there was never any proper coordination and implementation from those levels down to the district and communities. So there is still a big gap and the majority of the people do not know what is really happening. Now we hear of the new Sorcery Act but not many people are aware of it.

M: How is violence against women here in the Highlands?

L: I have not seen violence against women when I was growing up. That time I saw my mother and father had certain roles. Both of them were working and brought food home. They helped each other and I had never seen my father hitting my mother in my lifetime. The women performed their roles and men performed their roles and the girls followed their mother and the boys followed their father. They were taught skills of making gardens, staking their bananas, their sugarcane and drainage for our gardens. The mother taught the girls how to make gardens and how to take care. Each one was performing a different role and when they came home, everybody brought food. The difference I see now is that most of the men are not performing their roles as a father. They are getting more than one wife, but when I was growing up, I saw only the leader getting an extra wife. The leader was responsible and he had to lead in all the community activities. He had wives who were supporting each other and the husband, not the co-wives fighting like we see here.

In the culture here, the value that women were placed in my forefathers' time has diminished. In our recent baseline survey, for domestic violence many people see that it is not violating the Human Rights. They see that it is acceptable for a man to beat the wife. Therefore, you see on the roadside, market place and at home, domestic violence or wife beating is common and it is accepted as a norm in our society and nobody does anything about it. They feel that it is acceptable for men to punch the wife and because the husband had to hit the woman to teach her a lesson. So it's come to a stage where domestic violence against women is accepted. At the village court it is said she was paid a bride price and she did a wrong so she deserves a punch. At the police station, it is seen as a husband and wife fighting. When we want to charge the husband, the wife comes next day and withdraws the case and we are kind of wasting our time. So violence against women is accepted as a norm and there are not many support services that the victim can access.

M: Do women accept this as normal?

L: I think women are not accepting this as normal. They are trying to bring these cases to the court, or they go to the immediate church leaders or councillors or leaders in the community and they tell them that this issue that they are getting beaten, or they go to the church pastor or go to the family. The family tries to negotiate, mediate for peace. The man can pay compensation and settle that way. This is normally done here. Most of the family domestic violence cases are now mediated among the family members, the church, the leaders and some serious cases are taken to

the village court but some of the decisions at the village courts take time and are costly too. If a woman is coming to a village court, she has to meet all other costs as well. Some strong ones go as far as the village court and maybe a few make it to the district courts.

M: What do women need to be completely empowered to stand up against violence?

L: I think for the women to be empowered to stand up, first these support services have to be strengthened where a woman can get paralegal support, and because of the many hurdles the woman go through. Women are being threatened, if they want to take the husband to court, if she was paid a bride price. Since it is money, the support services need to be strengthened. The paralegal part of that, the health part of that is needed to pursue justice. The medical report need to be provided, paralegal support is to be there, and when all the support services are available there, the women feel comfortable.

I feel that support services need to be strengthened for the women, as well as information and training, she has to know her legal rights, she has to know where she has to get the information and she has to have the support of her family. Because she is a woman, she was paid a bride price she does not deserve to be punched.

All this information has to be long term and it has to start from institutions, it has to start from the schools, from churches, and all other institutions that it is wrong to hit a woman and if the support services are there, she can go in and get the support.

I think nobody wants to be punched. Nobody wants to be kicked around. But it's because the support services are not there. Women need information and if they need information, where can they get the information? Somebody has to help them through. Women have been living through with all this and they have lost confidence because nothing has been done about it. They have grown up in an environment where it is ok for a woman to be beaten, it is ok for a wife that was paid bride price to do all the work and the man says 'I paid you the bride price, you do everything,' and he walks out of the house. And the woman has to do everything, the work that once was shared is done only by woman when the man walks out. So all these support mechanisms, the awareness and education programs have to be ongoing for the women to understand their rights, to have this information and be able to use them.

M: What is the problem behind the sorcery-related violence?

L: The problem with the sorcery-related cases in the Highlands is that it is a belief that is so ingrained and so deeply rooted. It's the belief that makes the people think that somebody has practiced sorcery because of unusual behaviour or saying something that is not normal to them so they start to abuse, torture and do evil things to other people. It is fun that when there is a death, they torture women, not men. In that community that we are doing the consultation they said, no men was tortured, abused or being beaten for practicing sorcery. It's women they target, so the community is targeting the women.

We have also experienced that it is the jealousy in the community that if somebody is trying to be well off or if somebody is progressing in life they try to put him back. They mobilize the young men in the community to damage them and send them away. This has been happening and people hardly talk about it. It is an ongoing problem and in some instances people are killed. They murder people but they keep quiet about it.

So “Voice for Change” is talking about and attending to sorcery cases. We are trying to attend to sorcery cases saying ‘you have the right not to be beaten or accused of sorcery’ and now people are starting to come in. We have received people whose hands have been cut off, they have been badly tortured with irons, knives and with anything. They have totally lost their complete livelihood, they were branded as sorcerers, branding their children as sorcerers, and they are pushed out of the community. The whole family, especially the mother and children. In one case, a man married more than one wife, supported his second wife and branded the first wife and her children as sorcerers and he removed them. So I think they are using the word ‘sorcery’ to do a lot of damages.

M: I see that you are working as a Rapid Response Team.

L: When we receive sorcery-related or women abused in violence, the counsellors attend to them. We provide them tea and talk to them and see if they needed medical attention, we take them to the hospital and when we come back, the counsellor counsels them and helps them to settle down. We allow them to talk about their plan whether to take the case to court or have peace mediation at home. We are so careful and listen to the victim’s view on what she wants to do. If the victim wants to take the case to court, a peace mediator helps them with court papers. We help them to get the summons and they are delivered to the perpetrator. If they want the case to be mediated and should be kind of a warning, we normally write a letter and follow up with the peace mediator and village councillor about the case that needs to be mediated and the victim after the mediation comes back and tells us about what happened in the mediation. From there, a letter is sent to the perpetrator telling him that if the resolution of the mediation is breached, we’ll go to the next level.

In sorcery cases, it’s not one person but a group of people, so in many cases you don’t see all of them turning for the court case. Only one or two will turn up. This process prolongs and it is very time consuming and costly and we work along with them.

M: You have any mechanism to act before the torture happens?

L: We were called three times since we started and the staff went out to rescue two families. If they are in danger, they call us and our staff goes into the location to rescue them. Because of our work with the community, the organization gained some respect. The last rescue was done by two of our staffs, Brenda and Sheena. The people fled and they took the accused to the next traditional boundary where they left them safe there. This is what we did in three locations where we did not call the police but used our local network and local leaders to rescue them. This is something that came out of our community consultation. And they want us to set up a community rescue team. According to our consultation, there needs to be a rescue team in place because sorcery accusation

happens every time when there is a death. When there is a death, there is something happening like people are being tortured so if we have a rescue team or community police in place, they can intervene quickly and rescue the people. However, this can be done through proper training and support mechanisms in place and everybody can know that this is wrong, the rescuing team will rescue them and you will be charged for it. You cannot go and set up a rescue team when nobody knows because everybody thinks that sorcery should be removed and shouldn't be in the community. We have a good leader who has gone through such work in his small clan and get his sub-clan to discuss on sorcery-related violence and violence against women. Also discuss with his clan on issues of growing marijuana and homebrew beer. It took him a long time to go through this process without any support but with little support from Voice for Change. We trained him on human rights and ending violence against women and he was able to get his community through. Many people wanted sorcerers out and others wanted them to remain. They voted and 47 men declared that they will stop accusing and torturing women for sorcery. And 3 people remained saying they do not want sorcerers in the community. This is an initiative taken by the community itself. They want to make their community a better place and so these are the communities we want to support. This step was taken by the people themselves because they have attended Human Rights courses and they now know that do harm to somebody, then it is like violating human rights. So they now feel that they should have a rescue team, training on human rights, and the new law. When the community understands all these, they may come up with some possible solutions to the issues.

M: How can they come up with a happy ending?

L: When we were doing the community consultation, they suggested for training on the law on sorcery and how they can use the law. They make recommendation for ongoing trainings and support from the community to make changes. They also want training on gender-based violence and also asked for a rescue team to be set up. They want the government to give money directly to the community so as to make changes happen. Because accusations of sorcery are made on women, the women wanted that they be empowered. Thus, they wanted some training so that they may know the human rights, the impacts of sorcery and other issues affecting women so that these will create solidarity among all women. They wanted community police to be in place and the churches to preach about good spirit and more importantly they wanted a safe house in the community so that when anything happens they can go into the safe house. They feel that they need these things and it is the community that should come together to make the decision on it.

Since there have been so many accusations, torturing and displacements done by sorcery, the women made recommendations for counselling for both perpetrators and victims. They want real forgiveness to take place. This would enable them to make peace or reconcile and re-integrate them back to the community.

M: What are challenges you face regarding the sorcery-related cases?

L: The big challenges we face are that these cases are going too far, people are being murdered, people have been buried alive and people have been tortured. The main challenge is the absence of police presence and we want police to do their work. If the police were here on the ground apprehending all the perpetrators and getting them behind bars and are prosecuted, we would probably see some changes. The police have to work with the community to address these issues. Even if the community comes up with good initiatives to make some changes, there are some people who always don't listen to what others say and break the laws. The people would do unbelievable things but the biggest challenge is the police presence at the time of these issues.

The other thing is about the law enforcers who are to stand firm and they have to understand the impacts of sorcery-related issues. They have to make commitment to honour the law and understand the Human Rights. They have to prosecute perpetrators properly and do fair judgements. When these are in place, the victims will know the service teams there where they can take refuge. It is about time now that people have to speak about what is not right. Some people are saying that "you are protecting all the sorcerers and they will kill all the good people in the community". There are lots of confusions. So challenge is that how the law can be reinforced at the village level.

M: As I understand, the law is that you will face death penalty for murdering / torturing someone for sorcery, but there is no other law, right?

L: The new law is that if you kill somebody that is plain murder so the murderer is charged for murdering. The previous law was to persecute the sorcerer but they have removed the Sorcery Act already and so now if you kill somebody for practicing sorcery, it is plain murder.

M: I heard from people that are reluctant to take a sorcerer to court because if there is no evidence and the sorcerer will walk away killing the people in the community. Is that correct?

L: That's what everyone else is saying. They are saying that the new law is now protecting the sorcerers. The number of sorcerers will increase and they will be killing a lot of people but we don't know how it is being done and it's a belief. When I talk to people in the community, they said in the past it was a belief but now when Christianity came and if someone is dying then it is the will of God. So we have to tell people that it is only a belief and no real sorcery.

M: What is your plan to work towards it?

L: To address this issue, I was at the national consultation but I don't see any connection to the provincial, district, and down to the community level. There is still a gap. I am really thinking how these gaps can be filled so that we can be able to work. Things are happening at the community level and the community came up with some suggestions and the Voice for Change wants to take these suggestions. We are working with three communities where the leaders want to make changes and they don't want to believe in sorcery. We are trying to work with these communities.

When there is an accusation, it is seen that these accusations are done by family members. So whatever approach we are taking has to be from really down there, the families and sub-clans to really understand. So now each of the communities wanted to reduce the different kinds of violence and reducing all contributing factors to violence like young people growing marijuana and production of homebrewed beer and to find out the cause of these things in the community. So they want to come up with some commitments. These commitments need to be reaffirmed and we need to work closely with them. And the police need to work along with them. If someone breaks the law then the police should intervene and apprehend the one who broke the law and so we have to work along with the community.

M: Could you explain to me a little bit the structure of your approach when working at the community-level?

L: We are looking the clan structure for the communities that we identified to work with. We are looking at the three ward councillors, who have sub clans, and down to smaller clans and down to family units. In many cases, actions don't come from outside but from within the family or clan. We want to have all the leaders from the smaller clan groups with a sub-clan to be trained properly and all families to be trained for them to understand the human rights and the laws that they have in the community. The leader from within the clan will have to be responsible because leaders from other clans would not cross the traditional boundary to do that. The leaders are to be in the core group and if there are serious cases arising they have to be the ones to address it. If someone is to be apprehended for breaking the law, the leader from within the same smaller clan has the ultimate right to do that, leaders from other clans do not have that power.

It is a complex thing but we have to identify the right people and that's what we are doing now. We are asking the leaders to identify the structure and from within the smaller clan who could be the spokesman or who is able to make the changes. We are trying to have a core group and that group will be empowered to implement the group's commitment. It is complicated but that is something we will work towards to see....

M: So, do you see as a main solution a bottom-up approach?

L: Most of the things are done at the policy level but it is not taken down to the grassroots level and they don't feel anything. That's where the issue is. If these people are given the chance to explore the issues and how the issues are affecting them, the community would think about it. And also it does not happen overnight. It is a continuous thing that requires more consultation. We have to take them on board, they are not observers and we are just facilitating. Talk to them or ask them "this is your community, what do you want for you and your children?" We have to be providing what they don't know. Because of the high rate of illiteracy rate in the country, most people are not aware of what's happening.

As we were facilitating on the gender issues, the women's rights and the important roles the women had played in the community, the leaders said it was their first time to hear of these things.

They never knew these things before. When they were given this information, they started to realize and wanted to do something different in their homes. Some leaders want to take on responsibilities and roles performed by women. The same information is to be given to women, the whole community, continue with consultation and to discuss on change stories that may help to change.

People don't know what's happening in Port Moresby. We have to give the space to talk about it and related to themselves.

M: If you were to make three wishes, what could those 3 wishes be?

L: My experience of being with the women and being a victim of these situations, I feel that if there is an opportunity to empower women economically and with information, they have the tremendous power to move forward. So my first wish is that women to be empowered economically and with information, (training, knowledge and skills).

The second wish would be that the community that we are trying to work with are empowered to see the changes they want to see.

My third wish is that there is collaboration with the government and with the police. Also with the service providers and the enforcing agencies. And the collaborations needs to be strengthened.

M: If you could send a message of hope, what would you say?

L: Women of Papua New Guinea have tremendous strength, and despite the situations they are in they have been able to move on in life and if they are given support, they are ready to move.

M: Is there any other thing that I did not ask you and you would like to say?

L: The way our government operates, there is no proper planning, no consultation and they don't know what the people really want. A lot of money is coming into our country from our resources but no proper planning. The women issues in the country are escalating and violence against women issues increasing. The police and magistrates need to be empowered so that they can influence decisions made at the community level. However, generally there is lack of support for the PNG women.

At the grassroots level we see 2 to 3 women coming to our office every week who have been badly bruised, badly beaten, deserted and weak. These are the indications that there is a big problem in this country. Women are the foundation and the source of everything. They care, they protect, and they take part in community activities and church activities. They have a very important role to play to make sure that the family unit is functioning. And if these very people (women) come to our office, 2 to 3 bruised and beaten women, we have a very big issue. The women in Papua New Guinea are not taken care of properly of their needs, of their rights, of their protections and this

indicated that we have a big problem. This is talking from experience of women coming to the office on a daily basis of 2 to 3 women coming to our office.

The gender-based violence has been talked for some time but we haven't touched the root cause of it. The service providers or organizations do not properly address these issues. If a woman is affected, that means that it's the household that's being affected.

ANNEX 13: INTERVIEW WITH MARY KINI

00:42

M: Could you introduce yourself, please?

MK: My name is Mary Kini and I am from Papua New Guinea, I am from one of the provinces called Simbu province. I come from Kerowagi district and reside in my village Kup. I am a Human Rights Defender; I worked for Kup Women's for Peace for over 14 years as a coordinator. Later I was appointed as secretariat for the Highlands Human Right Defenders and I have worked for one year and I am still occupying this position.

01:29

M: Can you explain a little bit on the Human Rights Defender's Network in the Highlands?

MK: The Highlands Human Rights Defenders started in March, 2011. We had a workshop with a United Nations (UN) woman in Goroka, Eastern Highlands Province. The workshop comprised of all the Highlands Women leaders of all the organizations in the Highlands. We were put together by Christina Sanros, the advisor for Human Rights in the country. The national office helped to conduct the workshop in Goroka. That was where all the Highlands regional women came together. We started the organization when we met in Goroka at the workshop. We called it "Highlands Human Rights Defender Movement."

02:38

M: Was there a big network to set up their Human Rights Defenders Movement?

MK: Of course, it was really a big net for the seven (7) Highlands' Provinces. Well, Kup women worked for Kup Women for Peace and I worked in my own area trying to prevent conflict. However, when there is a major problem to be settled, I feel that as an individual, we did not have enough strength so for media purposes, advocacy and others, we have to work together as a team. We have a strong feeling that through networking all the women can come together to support each other. Because we really felt the need, we have to do that.

03:47

M: Can you tell the benefits of the network that was established?

MK: When the network started, the two women came and put us on the ground with some information. He trained us and told us where to go and what kind of actions to take. But we actually did not get off the ground because of some needs in terms of funding. Because we are used to doing volunteer work and did all kinds of activities so we continued. To really start our work, we needed to put ourselves together. When I and Monica were invited to go to conferences, gatherings, courses or other trainings, for instance, we were sent to Nepal on a job training. Also we normally have time out after all that we have been doing on a one-to-one defender's work. So,

in Nepal, we had a three months course and realized that we had tried to do this sort of work but we needed to expose ourselves. There, we developed an action plan under the guidance of the facilitator Matilda who works in Nepal. We put our action plan on a website with the help from Matilda. Again, we were called to attend a conference in Australia. The conference was on Sorcery. Monica and I became very famous. While going around we sought help, assistance. We really needed to have a start-up project which would enable us to network together and build on. Thereby we really were vocal and tried our best to do presentations in the conference and asked around to raise some money and bring it back to start our project. And so when we were in Canberra at the conference on Sorcery, people were really impressed with our presentations and a media guy supported us with some documentaries. We also convinced AusAid and through their OXFAM Australia, through their office in Moresby, funded us and now we are able to work on the project: the sorcery project and the Human Rights Defenders in the Highlands. Not all the Highlands provinces received funding but only Goroka (KAFE), Simbu (Kup Women's Peace) and Jiwaka (Voice for Change). They funded these three projects in the Highlands as their pilot project and now we are almost one year now. This funding was to defend the people who were accused of sorcery, which was the purpose for the funding, but we also work on the Ending Violence Against Women (EVAW) program.

8:39

M: Could you explain to me a little on your work on Sorcery-related violence?

MK: Sorcery-related violence is a big issue in the Highlands and it's a cultural norm especially in Simbu and when you talk about all the Highlands provinces, sorcery is something where you don't expect something to happen but it happens. When there is a death, could be a natural death or ones that are related to some other disease, but every person has belief in it and most people are being accused and tortured. Mostly the women are targeted. Now the small children too being accused of sorcery. Some old men and leaders are accused too. Mostly it happens in their homes and people you know of will accused you of sorcery. You would not expect them to say it but they say it. They use excuses sometimes for instance, if two old couples who don't have children but have a big portion of land, they can be accused of being sorcerers, tortured very badly, send them out of the village and get their land. It is a very strong custom to have belief in sorcery. About 80% – 87% of the total population live in the remote areas where there is no road linkage, and people are very isolated. More people in these places are being tortured and killed. Sorcery-related killings tolls higher in the highlands. Some cases are report but some not.

11:01

M: Are women more vulnerable than men to be accused?

MK: Yes, in many cases, more vulnerable than men. Sometimes it's men too with their partners. Sometimes a man is accused and his wife also. There are rare cases for men but in most cases women are accused... women of different age groups, (old women, middle aged and young girls too).

11:36

M: Do you know why women are more affected?

MK: I wouldn't give you a right answer for that, however in most cases women are being attacked and I believe that women are weaker to fight back, talk back or to defend themselves and the men have the muscles (strength) to fight back to defend themselves. But for women it is to suppress them and accuse them of sorcery.

12:25

M: Could you please briefly explain your way of work before and after the funding from Oxfam?

MK: We have four components in our Kup Women Peace (KWP) structure. During the 15 years I was coordinator for this group, we divided the funding according to the four components. The four components were: Human Rights/gender, livelihood, health and sanitation, and law and justice. We had a bit of funding, which we used for trainings on law and justice in the community, conducted trainings for youths; we trained the young women to be strong women leaders in the future. The funding that we had was not for repatriation or to use it to respond to cases. We didn't have much funds for this, but we had other activities that were connected to our program and these kind of approaches were to save lives and to help people accused of sorcery. We used own ideas to save lives, move them around and bring them out of the risk areas. To move them around, we contacted and used women leaders in other locations and did the work in the night. At that time there were no mobile phones so we had to send words using our own kids and through some of the trusted mothers that we will be moving around in the night to visit them. Sometimes, they were taken to a certain location where we can take on from there. We had our own local ways of attending to our clients. We normally give them counselling but not repatriating them.

15:44

M: You went to the conference in Canberra after the training here and you got funding from Oxfam and...

MK: Yes we got funding from Oxfam but they unlike AusAid, they facilitated the programs in these three provinces' women organizations. Oxfam facilitated the funding and we got a portion of that funding for Rapid Response. We also got a bit of funding for repatriation and relocation so we have repatriated some of our clients to outside provinces or within Simbu province and sometimes to nearby villages or back to their home areas. That worked well and I appreciated it and thought we should have done that earlier. We really struggled to expose the issue of sorcery because it was a cultural norm we found it hard to talk publicly about it but eventually we made it. We went into media and we are now really talking and the government is realizing it now and came up with the Sorcery Act. Now we are doing something to our clients and I am feeling so great.

In the past 14 years, I could have done something. Some of the good ones have died. At that time there was no funding and there was no proper information on how I can help them. We did something but very little and many were killed, most of them were killed.

Now when we got the funding, we have repatriated more people by sending them to neighbouring provinces, nearby villages or taking women out from marriages and sending them back to their parents. These are great things we did and I am really pleased with the funding from AusAid through Oxfam Australia.

19:01

M: Is this funding enough?

MK: To be honest, we had a lot of clients and we had to divide the funding among clients and we receive funding quarterly but due to the influx of clients, it does not seem too much. Then I think back to my own country when I get funding from outside donors to help the ones that are living in this country facing all these problems and my question is “what is the PNG government doing to look into these people’s problems?” The government can come to terms where they provide 50% of the funding and the other 50% from the donors. With such a deal we can be able to help our people here, which I strongly feel about. We are serving the citizens of this country from funding overseas donors, mainly Australia, and we feel that we should get something from the PNG government also to help those who are in need.

20:36

M: Are there many lives lost because of little funding?

MK: Yes, we lost a lot of lives and I have a list in my office of all the ones we could not save. We have struggled to ask for funding to repatriate people. Since the donor funding was made available on a quarterly basis, sometimes due to processes it takes a little to come through, and then some sorcery cases around that time are unattended and some lives are lost. We cannot go in to rescue them on time, or inform the police to go there because there is no money to buy fuel for the police car. We can’t reach the accused because we have no money to transport us or the police. So we have people who have been killed.

21:47

M: Because funding wasn’t available?!!

MK: No, because the people didn’t have fuel for their cars to go to the site. When we have money, we ask the police to come and take the fuel money from us and go to the site and of course they do come and go to the site. We used the policemen a lot. The Task Force Commander in Kerowagi with his policemen and the rest of the police in Simbu province are called to help to rescue a lot of sorcery accused people. For ourselves, we don’t have a car so it’s difficult for us to go out when we get a phone call from our contact person when something is happening. We cannot go out there without a car because it’s quite a distance.

23:00

M: What is the process between the focal point and your office?

MK: In the Simbu province with the Kup Women for Peace project dealing with this Human Rights Defender Network, we have four districts where we have the focal points. These people are very strong and they go around in their area and hear or see whatever accusation is made who any torture that is going to happen. Each one of them was given a phone with their credits and batteries fixed. Sometimes we send them credits as soon as we receive miss calls from them. When they give miss calls, we definitely know that there is something wrong so we send them credits and they call back and tell us. They monitor the case. If they see that a case becomes so serious and they call us and we call the police. For the police, we have a special task force team for this work where we can contact them when there is a case. We inform the police about the situation. That's how we communicate. We give the police fuel money and the police go to the site and the people could not do anything in the presence of the police. The police rescue the person or family and bring them to us.

When they are given to us, we do the action plan of where to put them and give them counselling. Then we look for a safer place to stay. We give them a house for a week and if they acquired serious injury, we take them to the hospital to be examined, treated and obtain a medical report and take it to the police station where the case is registered. The police handle the case but we still follow up on the client. After the case is heard, we consult the victim and find a place to stay but if they want to go back to the village, we call for a mediation in order to resettle them again. If the victim was badly injured or the victim's life was at risk, we repatriate them to another province or another place where the victim's relatives are and they go there to settle with them. So it's all about their opinion and follow whatever they want to do.

27:07

M: Can you briefly explain the concept of repatriation?

MK: The concept is that if a situation is tense and the people are going to attack them, we take the person, family or group out of the situation. We take them elsewhere away from the village and away from being harmed. When getting into a situation like that people really like to discuss and they go wild and attack, so we make attempts to get the victims away from that kind of thing. So the concept of repatriation is very good because we take them out of the situation and save them from being killed. We put them in another place where the victims don't see any of their accusers. The people at the village cannot do anything when the victims are taken away. With the repatriation funds, we send away the victim by road or plane to another place. They stay in those places for some years so long as they live. And they are safe. Sometimes if they want to come back upon receipt of invitation from their leaders, they do so but otherwise they live happily on the other side. They are no longer accused because they are not living in their village. When the people in the village get back to normal, the victims are living on the other side happy.

30:06

M: For repatriation cases, how much budget do you have?

MK: Not much. It depends on the budget and it also depends on the clients. We normally receive about K6.667 quarterly for repatriation purposes. If I have four victims to be repatriated, then that money is not enough. Of the four victims, I have to attend to two and leave the other two at a safe place and repatriate the first two. I have to meet their air fare and give them money about K1.000 to start up their life there because the victim is new to that place and new to the people so she has to use the money to start her life there. So it depends on the number of clients and amount of money available on our desk. It is a tough and hard life for them to get settled when they go without clothes or anything else. So now with limited funds, I have other people waiting for me at the queue so I had to really minimize the cost for one victim. Sometimes, I feel that I am not helping them at all because that person has to go and I really need to save the life of that person or family. When there are a good number of people to be repatriated, the cost rises and I have a budget for one person but if other family members are going with them, it is very expensive.

32:40

M: How much would be the cost of a repatriation?

MK: It depends. For instance, an 8-year-old girl was repatriated to Maprik in East Sepik province by Monica and the cost was up to K10, 000. She was going to be looked after by a Nun and was going to stay there and the cost included the airfare. For her to be raised at the orphanage centre, it involves costs as well. We need to deposit some money for her into the institution until she reaches an age where she can do something for herself. It depends on the kind of situation, however it is adjustable but then we do not have good money set aside for this particular case. With that we can really make a person settled. Repatriation leads to settlement and to settle a person, you need to purchase a piece of land and on that land the person need to build a home. From there they move on. So for one person, it's K10.000 or more.

34:19

M: How much was the funding from Oxfam for the whole year?

MK: For the repatriation or for quick response activities was K20.000– K26.000 for the whole year. That's for one year but when we divide that money on a quarterly basis, it is about K6, 667.00 per quarter. Sometimes we don't have any cases but when we have cases, we normally have a good number of cases to cater for all that we need more money to add onto the budget that we have.

35:23

M: How much money is actually required to go into a village to save a victim and put her in a safe place?

MK: For the repatriation to take effect, we give K200.00 for fuel depending on the distance as well. We provide police with lunch so that they go with strength. We provided them with mobile credits for communication. If the location is close by a K50.00 is given for fuel, K20.00 worth of mobile credits, and K30.00 for lunch. But if they were to go up to Porgera, K400.00 is given to them where

they monitor the case and apprehend the perpetrator. To apprehend the perpetrator, it involves money. It takes time and it is very costly to hunt down the perpetrator but we just give them money to go and take the victim from the village. We use the other money to repatriate them. Since we do not have a safe house available we sometimes put them in my house or Angela's house or in one of our relative's house where it is safe. We normally provide a kind of accommodation and food for them while staying for a week, or two or 2 – 3 months. This is less expensive than putting them in a Guest House where costs are involved.

38:28

M: So I understand that you try to minimize the cost a lot?!!

MK: It involves risks. We are likely to be attacked also for looking after these people. They think that we are one of them or we are the same kind trying to harbour them in our homes. Most times when I have clients in my house I make sure to lock the door. We make sure that we are safe and they are safe as well.

39:19

M: Do you ever suffer for your life or your security?

MK: I risked my life many times. One time I was trying to save someone's life in Kup. Some media people came along and asked if there was any recent sorcery case and I told them that there was one sorcery case at Kup. There was a woman accused of sorcery and she was very frightened and called the names of a lot of people in Kup and now many people at Kup were at risk. So we went to that place to interview the woman and to get more information. I and Monica took the journalist from Sydney Morning Herald to that location. I asked them if we could go with police but they disagreed. As being locals, we know the situations well and insisted that we go with police but they still did not like the idea so we went. When we got there, a person came and attacked me. He must have a reason for something that happened long time ago but at the same time there was pressure building up in that area. So that person came with a stick and hit me and broke my arm. As of that date to this day, this is the seventh year; I am not using my hand to do gardening. My left arm was broken and I don't do laundry or cooking. I am a farmer and I used to do a lot of gardening but now I am not doing much. Since we are in the frontline, people come and argue with us when we go to save lives. So as being a Human Rights Defender, my life/security is not guaranteed.

41:49

M: Why do you continue to do it?

MK: I continue to do it because I feel for it. And if I leave it, there is no one else that can help. For me, I am used to these situations. My husband practiced polygamy, and my brother was killed in a tribal fight and I also lost my stepfather in a tribal fight. So being a victim myself, I feel that I can help others. I know that they feel the same as I do. Despite these risks, I always step in to help people.

42:47

M: Why did you decide to become part of it and work for women and peace?

MK: In my life, I have faced a lot of problems with my husband and as I have mentioned earlier, I have lost my loved ones during the tribal fights. Their deaths were caused and not through natural deaths. I still bear the pain and the more I think of it, the more I want to put myself into supporting/helping others. When I see women in trouble, I step in to help because I experienced the same problems. I feel much about the orphans because my brother left four children and I am raising them with my own kids. So I feel what they feel. I fit into their shoes. It's really a hard life without a good job and struggling to raise our kids and also the children left by the father. Put them in schools with my kids and I am really struggling. You know, I feel the kind of struggle a mother can go through. So the same applies to other women who have problems so when I see them coming, I stay around to help them out. It also helps me to grow stronger. When I have problems, I can help myself and can help others too. That's why I stay and find to defend the rights of many people. I really love my job too.

45:21

M: What are the solutions you envisioned for sorcery-related violence?

MK: I strongly believe and feel that in the Highlands, it's a cultural norm and people take on board these kinds of things and it has been there for some time. It's really hard to get them out of their minds. It's passed on. When children play around they observe people talking about sorcery and in the night when they hear a flying fox flying over the house, older people would say, "that is sorcery or *sanguma*, what's happening around the house. You hear this flying fox flying around the house? What are they looking for?" So it is like they are passing on the message. With that, the belief is also passed on. But we could change that. We can change the attitudes and the mindsets of the people. We can take the belief too out from them only if the government put in places a law and makes it effective. They are now working on a Sorcery Act, but if it can become a bill and be passed out like a law, the people will respect and fear the law and will be punished if they talk about sorcery or kill someone. When there is a murder, they talk about sorcery and murder together. People only see the outer part and murder someone for sorcery but murder it does not carry weight if someone is killed for sorcery. Sometimes after killing, the dead body is thrown into the river but no one reports. It's because that person was murdered for sorcery. They do not consider the lost part of it and it is something that is needed to be separated. If we accuse someone for murder because he murdered, the people will come to understand. So we need to make media awareness and more lobbies for the government to really come up with the law. Then information can be disseminated to the community by doing more awareness. I think it will make the people understand.

48:35

M: So then you see it as double work: to put up a law and to do community awareness?

MK: They should concentrate on this one for sorcery cases because they haven't talked much and there was media going around but they haven't reached the communities. They have to walk into

the bush and engage the local NGOs on the ground like the churches, the ward councillors, the stakeholders and everyone. This needs massive awareness and the message to reach the very last person behind the ridges. It is the government's responsibility to look into this because we are trying to do something for the citizens. As Human Rights Defenders, we are struggling year after year. For 14 years, I have done some things with the government and now it's about time the government should step in. Yes, from the top level, the laws can be made and at the awareness has to reach the village level. The people do not know about the law and the constitution is not known by the people. It's only heard in Port Moresby or in the town centres of Papua New Guinea. However, the bulk of the population living in the rural areas needs to understand the laws and other information.

50:41

M: If you could ask for three wishes to make your work on sorcery-related violence more effective, what would they be?

MK: I wish that there is no more sorcery killing. I really wish that they shouldn't talk about sorcery and kill people because killing people is taking away someone's life when I don't have the authority to do so. Deaths should happen naturally, not someone taking another's life. My other wish would be that there should be respect among the citizens. The citizens' respect should be encountered within the authorities. If the law is weak then there would still be killings. For instance, if there is a killing for sorcery, I want to take the matter to the court because they have taken away a life. I want the perpetrator to be subject to justice to be justified. However, my attempts do not work on many occasions. That's because the system contradicts. I wish the law is very strong and the court systems are strong in this country. And I wish there are no briberies and corruptions going on within the judiciary body. This really happens when a perpetrator is taken to court and he walks out of the courtroom or released from the jailhouse maybe because he has bribed. Therefore, it is in contradiction to the law. Once again my second wish is that the law is very strong and tough in this country. There should be respect among the authorities and the citizens. By doing that, the victim's families are happy and the perpetrator is justified. People like me would be satisfied and the victim's families are satisfied. Thirdly, I wish that all the people are equipped with the right information. They should be aware of the law in this country and further information on Human Rights and gender because not many people understand Human Rights and gender. If that is the case, how do they understand each other, for example, if a policeman does not understand the Human Rights so well, then how will he prosecute? If someone in the village does not know anything about Human Rights, how will he respect other people? Therefore, I believe that any information that is available should be let known to the citizens. Only then, they will know what is right and what is wrong. So it should be part of the government's priority to disseminate information.

I have been working for 14 years and the above are my three wishes and I believe that in the future, we hope to see changes in this country.

57:55

M: I would like you to send a hopeful message ...would you like to do that?

MK: Over the years I have been working on Human Rights and working with people on the ground trying to make someone's life to be happy. That was my main goal. I feel that they should be happy as I am happy. My message is that' "it's our right to be happy and everyone has to be happy. Happiness is one thing that is missing in our communities and society. Thus, one person's life needs to be respected and if we don't do that everything will turn out to be different." In the community there are many issues like hatred and problems that needed to be addressed but if there is peace and harmony in the community, the important thing to practice is respect and love in the community, and persons like me would not be struggling to save someone's life. I believe in these two words, love and respect and only if we practice them in the community we will have a peaceful society.

Dealing with violence is what we don't like to deal with, but it's happening so we need to look into the underlying causes but the greater ones are love and respect and if we love and respect, all these problems will be minimized. When we talk about love and respect, it's all about knowing yourself and knowing the people around you.

61:24

M: *Is there anything else you would like to say, Mary*

MK: To conclude the interview, I would like to say that I strongly believe in the kind of work that I do and I have seen so many good things. I have helped a lot of people who come to my office or in my community. When they come, they are in a terrible situation but when we help them out, they feel great. After being repatriated or given treatment and come back with a happy face, I feel satisfied. I am strengthened and encouraged by the their smiles and I feel proud about the myself and the work that I did to help them and thus I feel that I should be continuing with this good work of helping other people but sometimes there are loop holes where we lack funding to do these good work. We just hope the government of this country recognizes this work and we could be able to have a network with the government and the NGOs. In the future if we happen to work together, we will fill in the gap.

ANNEX 14: INTERVIEW WITH MIRANDA FORSYTH

Maria: Could you introduce yourself and maybe explain a little bit about yourself and then how you ended up involved in this project?

(00:02:04) M: Ok I am Miranda Forsyth, I am an academic at the ANU. Currently I am at the State, Society and Governance in Melanesia project. That's part of the College of Asia and the Pacific. And I first got interest in witchcraft and sorcery issues in Melanesia when I was living in Vanuatu. That was back in 2001 and I first of all, was involved in a prosecution of a sorcery-related killing in Vanuatu. And that got me interested in the topic and as a criminal law lecturer, because I was a Criminal Law Lecturer in Vanuatu at that time. Then I started thinking about that topic and the issues that it raised for the State Criminal Justice System in terms of defences for example, and then also for a long time I've been interested in their relationship between the way that the customary justice system works and its interaction with the State Criminal Justice System. And so, the issue of sorcery and sorcery-related violence was really relevant to that. Then, fast track, a couple of years ago I moved from Vanuatu to the ANU, to Canberra. And I was having a discussion with a colleague of mine, Richard Eves, and talking about the fact that the belief in sorcery is very profound in Vanuatu and has a whole lot of developmental ramifications. So, for example, people feel uncomfortable about starting up a new business or becoming too successful because then they are afraid that's going to make them a target for sorcery. And so, I was saying that, this seems to me to be a real issue but that nobody has been paying any attention to it. And whenever I have sort of try to bring it up in a development context, then people have to just laughed at me and said, you know, that is some silly superstition. Whereas I see it as it has really profound impacts on people's lives. So we were having that conversation and then we thought, well, he said, 'it's the same thing in Papua New Guinea'. And so we thought, we will organize a conference and see, what other people have got to say about that. And that conference was scheduled for June 2013, and we started preparations for that conference a year before, because you have to get all of the funding and get the speakers and so forth. And so we were starting to get everything ready and then in January 2013 there were some very highly publicised graphic murders in Papua New Guinea, of suspected witches. And that issue then just went completely viral on Internet. There were the images that have photograph ...were being circulated. And there was suddenly a lot of interest in the subject, from a whole range of different people. So that meant that, the conference that we held in June became a much bigger event than we had initially thought it was going to be. And then at the same time we were contacted by representatives of the Family and Sexual Action Violence Committee, FSVAC, in Papua New Guinea, and they said, 'well it's all very well doing a conference in Canberra, but really the conference should be held in Papua New Guinea, which is where the real problem is, and that's where people need to be thinking about these issues'. So we said, 'yes, that's a great idea. That's really true, can we assist in getting such a conference together?' And so that then led to the formation of a committee. A conference development committee with a whole range of different people, including representatives at the University of Goroka. And so we decided that we would have the conference at the University of Goroka later on in that year. And it ends up being in December of that year. So yah, that conference then happened, the outcome statement from that

conference was then, approved by the Committee, was then endorsed and made public by the Department of Justice and Attorney General, earlier on this month (May 2014). And then, in June, so that's next month, we are planning a stakeholder implementation meeting to try to take, some of the suggestions that were made at the Goroka conference and actually see how it can be implemented and the whole process move forward.

M: Your background is and, as we could see in the program of the conference in Goroka, there were some discussions about what are the legal measures that need to be taken forward. And, if I'm not mistaken there is this, constitutional law reform group. Could you explain me this a little bit?

(00:07:26) M: So the Constitutional Law Reform Commission, having been working on the issue of sorcery and witchcraft, because in Papua New Guinea there is, there was a Sorcery Act, 1971. And the Sorcery Act provided that there were some offences of sorcery and also provided a particular defence, for murder that takes places in the context of a belief in sorcery. However, that defence is very limited. It's like a modified provocation defence and, in reality, it hasn't being used. In reality as well, most of the offences in the Sorcery Act have only being used, a handful of times. So although there was a lot of focus on the Sorcery Act, the Act in reality hasn't really being used in practice for a variety of reasons. I suppose from a legal perspective, it's also important to realize that people were saying, well the Sorcery Act, it justifies people taking the law into their own hands and killing suspected witches and sorcerers. But, in fact, as I said, the defence isn't used. And then there is also the issue of sentencing. And where, as previously, the courts up until probably the mid-2000s, did, in fact, take a belief in sorcery into account in mitigating sentences. Since then, for the past ten years, at least, there has been a real change in the ideas of the judiciary about how they should treat sorcery-related murders. And now, in fact it's considered to be an aggravating feature. So the courts have been trying to send the message, through higher and higher sentences, to say, no you shouldn't be engaging in this sort of violent response to belief in sorcery and witchcraft. So there has been, people have been sentenced to life imprisonment as a result of sorcery-related murders. So the idea that, the Sorcery Act, in some way, permitted the court to take a less strict approach towards this type of murders is just simply not correct. So, the Constitutional Law Reform Committee has done a number of reports over the years, looking at the issue of sorcery-related violence. And, in particular, looking at the question of whether or not the Sorcery Act should be repealed and if so what it should be replaced with. And so, there were some discussions about that, and they have recommended that it be repealed. And the government did in fact repeal that Act late last year in May. The question is, "what should it be replaced with? Should there be any offences of sorcery? Should there be any defences in any circumstances?" So those are the questions that are still really live issues at the moment.

M: Ok, so these live issues are taking any shape or is it still very blurry at this point? Is there any initial work towards them, maybe?

(00:11:03)M: To be honest, I don't know. I am going to find that out when we have this meeting in June. So I'll be interested to see what they are going to be doing. The members of the Constitutional Law Reform Committee will be there, and so looking forward to finding that out.

M: Perfect. It's really interesting actually what you have said, because the international community put a lot of pressure and really highlighted the importance of repealing the Sorcery Act. You think that was something that was misread by the international community, because you said that it wasn't used so much and it didn't really have the strength?

(00:11:46) M: Yes, I mean, that's the question. I don't think repealing the Act will make any difference. So yes, I think that sorcery act was misread. I think also that, the problem of sorcery-related violence is a social problem. There is a lot of underlying factors that have led to that. There are problems with the provision of health services, problems with the provision of education services and there is no quick fix. So there is this sort of problems, so focusing just on the repeal of legislation as if that is going to solve the problem, I think that is misguided. I think that there needs to be a far more holistic approach taken. And that's certainly being the approach that is now being worked upon by a number of organizations in Papua New Guinea. So that's great.

M: With the repeal of the Sorcery Act, it came also the strengthening of the death penalty, right? And many Human Rights Defenders and organizations have said that actually it is gone be counter-productive for the work that they are trying to do...can you explain it a little bit?

(00:13:00)M: So yes, my opinion also is that the death penalty is problematic in this context, well in every context. That it sends the message that in fact, violence can be justified in certain circumstances. However I understand that, this is one measure that the government is undertaking and hopefully there will be some review of the effectiveness of the death penalty either way. Of what will have been any negative consequences, and what will have been any positive consequences a couple of years down the track. So I think that, so long as that review is done, then that's the most important way of dealing with that.

M: I would like to know your opinion because one of the outcomes that came out from the conference last June, was that there are a lot of differences regarding sorcery and witchcraft beliefs across the region. And, in a country like Papua New Guinea, where the cultural context is so diverse, what would be the better way to approach the solutions from the legal point of view because, maybe the different contexts require different approaches. Would a nationwide strategy really work or would be better to take it from like local implementation plans?

(00:16:23)M: I think absolutely, it has to be a local response primarily. And so, it obviously these issues are multi layered. So they come from community fractures, community breakdown and that's also compounded then by various different failures of government at different levels to provide services. And so, the solutions need to come from all of those different levels. So there is a

lot that can be done at a community level, in terms of better mediation strategies, better for example, huge policing strategies. But there is also a need for the State to intervene, for example through the village courts. They have obviously got a really large role to play in that area. And so, if you like the village courts, they are both: a State institution, but then they are also adapted at a local context. So that bridges that State-local gap if you like. Also it is clear that, at times, there is a need for a really strong police presence. So again, you have to have the state involved in that. So, I suppose one of the things that we have been thinking about is not saying, 'ok, just one big national strategy' but trying to think about how can the different groups of people and groups of stakeholders who are working on these issues be better linked together, so that they can support each other. How can the village, at the very local community level be supported by village courts, be support by district courts, be supported by state, be supported by the hospitals? So those are the kinds of issues that we have been looking at. In terms of a legal solution, some sort of, I think, there is possibly a place for some provisions in the criminal legislations that do criminalize certain types of sorcery or witchcraft practices. So people who are clearly exploiting other people's fear of them in order to obtain profits....I think that there is really a lot of argument as to whether or not that could be a useful offence and that could be at the national level.

M: I saw that you have an article that is about the relationships between the state systems and the non-state systems, and it talks a little bit about mediation and other local mechanisms. Could you expand a bit more on what customary systems are in place in Papua New Guinea?

(00:20:00)M: So, I mean for me Papua New Guinean is a new context. So in Vanuatu there, I know a lot about the way in which disputes are handled at the local level. And there is often, there will be a chief, and then, there will be other important leaders of the community and people will sit down and discuss issues and arrive at a solution that often involves the payment of compensation. I am not so familiar with how it is in Papua New Guinea. From what I have heard though there are similar sorts of structures that occur. Where community leaders mediates disputes, there is one initiative in Gor, where this has been developed to the extent that, there is being community-by-laws if like written down that have even outlaw the use of violence for cases of sorcery and witchcraft, and those have been then enforced by some local police. So that was given as an example of a really useful way of approaching the issue. And to my knowledge, there hasn't been any other exact case studies like that. But I can't imagine that these processes don't happen elsewhere. It is just that, I haven't personally come across them. Also the churches like for example the Catholic Church, has been working on what they call, a 5 path strategy. They have been trying to make sure that, as soon as there is a suspicious death, then the pastor gets in there, starts talking with people, starts calming down any sort of talk about sorcery or witchcraft and they have got a number of different strategies to do that. Providing for example medical explanations of the cause of death, making sure that, there is a strong person in the family who is able to stand up and say 'no, we are not gone start making accusations', and so forth. So those are the two initiatives that I know of that have really tried at the local level to deal with the problem. But there needs to be more research into, what are the other strategies that are being developed or are being used.

Sorcery and witchcraft only leads to violence in certain pockets of Papua New Guinea and also in Vanuatu, so there are other places where there are these accusations, there are these beliefs but they are not leading to that type of violence. And so the question is, well, 'what are other these communities doing? Are they using compensation for example? Are there other mechanisms?' I still don't know the answers to that.

M: Sorcery and witchcraft-related violence can be seen many times as a part of the great levels of gender-based violence that Papua New Guinea experiences. Did you address that when you organised the first conference or you were thinking more of sorcery and witchcraft beliefs as impediment for development?

(00:27:18)M: Yah, the initial conference was not about violence. The initial conference was all of the negative social implications of the belief in sorcery and witchcraft. And so, that's got to do with jealousy, with economic development, for example, people won't go and see doctors because they think it's a result of black magic, for example, so they need to be cured in other ways. And then they leave it till too late to go to the hospital. So there is a whole range of ways in which that belief impacts upon development concerns. And so, that was originally, what we were interested in. Then with the result of all of these highly publicised killings in PNG, that was what people in PNG wanted to focus on. The people who we then organized the conference with or who then organized the conference in Goroka, they said 'no, the focus should be on overcoming the violence, on cutting that link between sorcery beliefs and violence'. In terms of the relationship with gender-based violence, there is a lot of people who say, 'o yah, sorcery and witchcraft it's about gender'. In fact they are, it depends on the part of PNG that you are in and the part of Vanuatu or Solomon Islands that you are in. In some places the targets, the witches or sorcerers are men and in some places there are women. And so it's not simple, you can't just say, it's about violence against women because the examples that we just had in Madang there were seven men killed, who were all accused of being *Sanguma* men. So it's not, it's not necessarily a gendered issue. Although of course, there are a lot of gender elements to it as well. So when women are targeted, then they are often, because they are already more socially vulnerable, then they can be impacted even more than when men are the targets. So and there are places in Papua New Guinea as well, where it is very much a gendered type of belief and it plays out in particular gendered ways. So again, with Melanesia in general, you can't make any one concrete statement. It's about looking at that particular place. But that was why, we had an initial broad focus and then it was narrowed down. Also just focusing on violence, one of the big questions in framing the discussions over these is, 'do you focus on the underlying beliefs or do you focus just on the negative consequences of those beliefs and the negative social consequences of those beliefs?' Can you separate the two of them out?' And that's really difficult and so we have had a lot of problems trying to think around that. Trying to think that, how do we frame these questions? So focusing on the violence, was one way of trying to just break off a little bit of the issue, but I would also agree that one of the reasons that I am interested in sorcery and witchcraft is not, because it's just one particular issue, it's because, it is in a way, a bit of an insight into a whole lot of different other law and order issues or issues about modernity and so forth in Melanesia. So once you start sort of scratching away at it, then, you realize that 'oh yes, it shows insights into economic development, it shows insights into children

prudential issues'. There is a whole range of different ways in which it opens up different perspectives. So that's why again, we thought it was a useful focus.

M: Actually, there is a lot of literature about this modernity of witchcraft because some strategies to fight against this violence defend that with modernity, with education, globalization and so forth, these beliefs will end up disappearing. But there are other authors that actually say that they don't. They just adapt to the new circumstances. What do you think?

(00:3215) M: Oh, that seems to be very clearly the case in Melanesia, that no modernity has got rid of these problems. In fact, these problems arise when there are social stresses. And social stresses coming from globalization, from changes in socioeconomic, yah are all range of socioeconomic facts. In particular, previously there wasn't a lot of differentiation in communities, but now, with the cash economy, then they can pay a lot and so it very much seems to be associated with jealousy. When some people are being able to be successful and have nice cars and nice houses and so forth then they are the ones who are often targeted. So yah, I would say that, we can't just bluntly assume 'oh yes, with progress these beliefs will go away'. Sure that happened in the West, but over centuries. So the sort of changes that, countries in Melanesia are going through now. They have only been doing that for a much shorter period of time.

M: Ok. Is there anything else that I didn't ask you and you would like to say?

M: Not actually.

M: Ok so I am done with it. Thank you so much.

ANNEX 15: INTERVIEW WITH MONICA PAULUS

00:20

M: Monica, could you tell me how you started doing this?

MWS: I started doing this work when I saw women being tortured and other such things. I also believed in sorcery and I didn't take it seriously when I looked at it. But when I saw that women were being tortured and beaten which was inhuman, I stood up and started to help others. Then, something happened, they tortured and killed one of my cousin sisters and a cousin of mine. That motivated me to do it and so I became so vocal on this thing. I came out and started helping others. That's a very slow process. Once when you talk about sorcery, people already have negative thoughts about you. They think that you are trying to support the bad people in the community. Those people who were considered as stigmatized, marginalized and thrown out of the community that we wanted to support and there was not much support.

02:29

M: What difficulties did you encounter?

MWS: The work that I do is a voluntary work and we do not have the funds to do it but we have the heart to do it. The work requires money and I do not have a paid job or a business to support the work that I do. But it was out of the good heart that I had to do it and that was the difficult part. The other thing is that we do not get support from the government and from our immediate families. They think that we are doing the work that people do not want to talk about in the community. The issue that surrounds the community is that they have the right to chase someone out of the community, to torture and to kill. With this kind of people, we don't get support from the community. The most important thing that was lacking is the justice side of it. We don't see justice done in most of the work that we do. Maybe they believe in sorcery too. And if a case is reported to the police, they think at the back of their minds that it is ok to kill someone performing sorcery and they deserve to be tortured or killed.

5:19

M: How is this changing when the community that were against you are now coming to you?

MWS: With the number of clients increasing and receiving community support, it depends on the individual communities we go to. Those who needed help have supported us and those who don't went against us. So it balances the equation... one is against and another is supporting us. Sometimes it depends on the kind of issue at a certain time.

6:26

M: What situations do you encounter?

MWS: There are people who support me and there are people who go against me. When I come across to people who were against me, they do not want to talk to me. They turn and walked away thinking that what I did was wrong. When I was a beginner, I did not have the inner strength to tell them that what I was doing was for the good of the people in the community. However, later when I gained inner strength I was telling them that what I was doing was for the good of everyone. Now I realize that when people talk about Sorcery (*sanguma in Pidgin*) it is for the Simbu province and being a Simbu, any person from Simbu has a tag on because he/she belongs to Simbu. When someone goes to another province, that person is already considered to be a *sanguma* because he/she has the tag. People from other countries think that Papua New Guineans are sorcerers because there are a lot of issues about sorcery killings in the country. Whether we like it or not, the tag is on us.

9:37

M: I would like you to talk about gender-based violence in PNG.

MWS: It is a social issue that is affecting a lot of families. Seeing gender violence from all forms i.e. financially, emotionally, physically and sexually, it affects all homes in Papua New Guinea. Many people will think that having gender-based violence in families is a normal way of life in Papua New Guinea, but seeing the seriousness in a case when someone is badly beaten, tortured, punched, axed, or chopped, they said that is violence but they normally forget about the emotional side of it. And many people think that it is a normal thing to do when it comes to polygamy practices and so on. They think they have the right to get married to many wives but they forget that the wife is emotionally being tortured; emotionally being hurt and many think that is ok for a woman to go through death, and it's ok for them but the way I see it is that it is like tearing the women apart. Another thing is about marginalized people in PNG, they are unable to sustain their daily living. These people are being stressed and they put it out in the streets where one sees a lot of violence. That's why we have poverty, because the government cannot distribute the funds fairly to the people. We can talk about services, but the people are to be looked after financially too. The Papua New Guinean government can also apply the system that is in Australia where they have the *dole* system.

13:04

M: Is sorcery-related violence a big problem in Papua New Guinea?

MWS: Sorcery-related problems are very big in Papua New Guinea especially in Simbu and in the Highlands where those you rely upon become violent and turn against you. The way they do it is inhuman. They torture, penetrate the victim's body with red hot iron, and they kill them. It is really a big problem because it is done by immediate family members. Where else would the victim go for help when the very own people who the victim relies on for protection are the one that would do it.

14:09

M: Why is this affecting more women than men in the Highlands?

MWS: I think it could be because of the social structure in the society, thus women are more vulnerable to be attacked than men. Maybe because men are strong to fight back or talk back and the women are weak. Another reason could be that we have a patriarchal society where men have the power to inherit the parents' lands and other stuff when the women (girls) go out to marry leaving their parents and relatives and live their lives with the husband's people and therefore in this event their support and security are reduced. When the husband of this woman dies, she becomes defenceless and that's the time people start accusing her for sorcery.

15:59

M: What does the government do to alleviate this?

MWS: I see that the government is now trying to come in to help but from a different angle like introducing the Sorcery Repeal Act. The important thing the government should do is to come down and see the kind of work that the Human Rights Defenders are doing. They have to assess the problems, and see our challenges because we have a lot of challenges with the police. We have reported the cases to the police but there is no justice done. If the Sorcery Repeal Act is to be effective, who could be the ones to enforce it? So the government has to change the focus and look at it from the other way. If the government is really trying to help, then they could finance the groups, organizations and individuals who are already on the ground trying to address these problems. They can support them with funds and resources.

17:53

M: What are the exact works the Human Rights Defenders are doing?

MWS: The Human Rights Defenders group was formed in March 2011 when women's groups who were doing women's rights issues in the Highlands came together to become one voice to address these issues. When we saw that working individually in the provinces, districts or communities was not enough, we decided to come together to form this group to address women's issues from this level.

The actual work we are doing now is that our main focus is on the sorcery-related violence. Peace building because of tribal fighting is one of the biggest problems in the Highlands' provinces, also working on gender-based violence, and police brutality is one issue being recently identified and we are working along with. Police are the people that we should go to when there is a problem or issue and if they treat us this way, whom shall we go to? The state is there to protect us but if they are more violent then, who is the next person that we can turn to? They got to have some patience and we got to work closely with them. For us to work together, the police have to know what they are doing.

20:05

M: What are your strategies on sorcery-related violence?

MWS: We have the Rapid Response Team (RRT) and in Simbu we have the Kup Women for Peace who is spearheading in these programs and other organizations like YWCA for the Catholic Church, a peace team, a women's association and CDA. Then, we identified vocal people in the districts. We have six districts but due to lack of funds we are covering only four districts. The district vocal people coordinate programs at the district level. When there is a talk on torturing, killing or witch-hunt, and as soon as the district vocal person knows about it, she quickly calls the Human Rights Defender in the province. The Human Rights Defenders notify the police and provide fuel and lunch money for them to go out to rescue the victims out there at the district. So the district vocal person, the police and the Human Rights Defender are a team working together to save lives. The purpose of this is to SAVE LIVES. We do not want to hear about the killings after being tortured. This is not a success story, the success story is getting someone out and save her life. That is the most important thing that we should talk about rather than talking about someone who is tortured or killed. We want to talk about and look at the positive side and talk about how we should work to save lives.

22:30

M: Can you talk a little about the success stories?

MWS: We had a case in early March in the Kamte district in the Sinasina Yongomul of Simbu province. There were two men and women locked up in a house whom they were trying to torture and kill. Our district vocal person she went in to see it and she informed us and we called the police. We gave all the information of the exact location to the police to go and rescue them. Meanwhile, the people at the location were so busy talking and focused on the torturing and were surprised to see the policemen running and kicking the door opened and took these people out and save their lives. That was one of our success stories. This is what we really want to see in most of the cases. When people are about to kill someone and you save that life is a success story.

23:57

M: Can you tell me another one?

MWS: The other one was a local intervention when we had no funds. I was around and already engaged in this work when a 10-year-old girl was locked up in a house and they were questioning her. I knew that a bad thing was going to happen, so I called the police and used the boys in the community to take the girl out and that was how we saved the girl's life. That was with the community support.

25:00

M: She had to be repatriated?

MWS: She was repatriated with the help of the Family Life Care in Goroka, Fr. Ryan in Goroka and Bishop. The Catholic Church was really helpful at that time. We sought funds from sources that helped to repatriate her to the place where she is living now.

25:52

M: How is coordination in this work?

MWS: To have a coordinated team is good in order to work together. In other cases when coming across to urgent matters, you have another way of doing things to quickly respond and save someone's life. You do things the way you can. When coming to work in a team, different people have different views and ideas of doing things. This is another challenge because you want to do things using what way you think is best and fast but other people come in with different ideas.

27:08

M: If you could ask for an ideal situation regarding resources needed for your work, what would that be?

MWS: We would need other resources but we really need a Safe House. This is because I had hosted clients in my house. Clara, Mary and everyone else who do this work will say the same thing. We all hosted clients in our homes and it involves danger and thus we all need a safe house which is very important.

The other need we have is the increase in the funds that we are having. Because when you are dealing with sorcery-related problems, it is not one person but a family or sometimes an extended family, so considering the cost of catering for these people... when you are moving the woman, you are moving the whole household.

When you are repatriating them, they are leaving their land, their homes, and their properties. So to settle them in another place it is a very difficult thing. We need another strategy in place to work on. When we have repatriated someone to another province, we seemed to forget them but there needs to be a follow-up to see what they are doing, how they are doing and so on. That is because we took them from the place that they love, the land that they cultivate, the people that they relate to and put them in a world totally different. And not forgetting that they go with the stigma and discrimination, because of the new technologies and the introduction of mobile phones, regardless of what happens where is already known by people anywhere. So it is difficult for people to go and live there because the story is already told there before they get there. **30:57**

(The interview is interrupted)

FOLLOW-UP OF THE FIRST INTERVIEW (1 month later)

1:39

M: Could you explain to me the options or the solutions that you envision to work with the community? The ones that you told me before...

M2K: Sorcery-related violence in Papua New Guinea. Different provinces have different forms of sorcery and witchcraft. The one in the Highlands or in the Simbu province is called SANGUMA. The way of attacking women and men now showed that the trend in the past has changed. The cases in the past were not serious but now probably due to exposure, the way they are torturing women is really worse. There are lots of abuses in it too. What we are trying to do is that with the funding from Oxfam, we came up with the idea of setting up the Rapid Response Team, which worked very well. Using the Rapid Response Team, we saved a lot of lives by directing the police to the right location after getting a call from the district vocal person about someone who was just going to be tortured, killed or burned. However, before establishing the Rapid Response Team, police had to reach the location after the torturing or killing, which was not good. The other thing that I was thinking about is that most sorcery-related cases happen within families or clans so it would be a good thing to get into family units to discuss and solve these issues. Start from the family unit up to the sub-clan and then up to the clan. So when you talk about sorcery-related violence, it's not from the big tribe but it is usually from the clans or sub-clans. In a tribal fight, it's the fight between two big clans or tribes, but sorcery cases are within immediate families or sub-clans. Thus, it is better to work in the small groups, either the family unit or clan.

5:27

M: What can you do to solve those issues in the little group, family or clan?

M2K: It is about identifying the main characters or ring leaders. In such a case, it's not everyone who rushes to do these things but it's always someone who is at the back and has influence on the people so it is better to identify those people and give them counselling because they were the perpetrators and their mindset have been full of evil ways. Then talk to them about what they feel and think because they have gone through bad experiences in such a case where they had tortured a woman who was their close friend whom they shared food with or did other things. In one way or the other these were their relatives, so this is the way to work with them.

6:46

M: If someone is accused once, how does this affect their life?

M2K: Once you are accused or stigmatized, you are already out of the community because everyone sees you as a bad person. Now you are seen as an evil person and when something happens you are blamed for it and you feel that you are with it and will live with it and pass it onto your children and it goes on. It's really a bad thing because you feel that it is always with you.

7:44

M: I would like you to talk, only if you like, about the situation that you are in now?

M2K: I was once accused of that over my father's death and I lived with that and I tried to go away. But when I tried to run away, it goes with me and if I go somewhere and try to settle there, people there will talk among themselves saying that she was the one who did this and that or in my case they would say she did that to her father. I went away and try to stay there but I felt that I could not live because the story went with me about who I am and the way they pictured me. While being there, I witnessed a woman being stoned to death over sorcery accusations. Then I thought that they would also do such a thing to me in a different place like this and I decided to come back and start helping on this kind of work. So that had brought me back here. That's how I get myself involved in this work and try to go out and help other women who are victims like me.

9:31

M: How is this job that you are doing affecting your life?

M2K: The job that I am doing is very risky because the people have belief in sorcery. So to change their mindset is very hard. They have a right to their belief but they do not have the right to attack, torture or kill anyone. It is very dangerous. If someone is sick then they will quickly put the blame on you. So for me, it is very risky doing this work. I feel that if I don't do it then, who will do it? With that thought, I continue to do what I am doing.

10:49

M: *So you sometimes feel like quitting?*

M2K: Yes, sometimes I feel like quitting when I see other women being badly tortured and I get traumatized. When being traumatized, some of the strengths are being reduced and I feel like withdrawing my strength from it. Sometimes, I feel like quitting because I don't get the support from the government. The government should look into the women on the ground who are trying to address these cross-cutting issues like sorcery-related violence, domestic violence and others. They should try and identify these things and help us.

12:08

M: *What is your situation now because I see that you are involved in other important issues?*

M2K: One of the issues apart from sorcery-related problem is that of police brutality. In one case, police stoned a boy to death. The case was unattended for two years. When we saw that it was like that, we help the deceased's father to uncover the case and now the case is before the court. This is also putting me at risk because the case involved a couple of policemen. The police who did that are the most powerful body in the province who go around to finish all the problems and other issues. They do a lot of good work and they are good people but for abusing human rights, they have to be brought before justice. So the police are many and I feel that I am putting my life and the lives of my colleagues at risk. The difficult part is that, if a case like that is brought before the court and the case is adjourned or pending the policemen are still going around with guns

performing duty unless they are found guilty and get suspended. So that's the fear and the risky part of it.

12:13:

M: When you tell people that your job is risky, I don't think people will understand what you mean. What does it mean to you practically?

M2K: Yes, when we tell people that the work is risky, they wouldn't believe us because they physically do not see someone pointing a gun at me. But like I said earlier, a policeman is not terminated or suspended right when they commit a crime. They will still perform their normal duties carrying their firearms and go around in the police vehicle until they are found guilty. Sometimes they will just come and attack you even if you don't do any wrong and so that is the risky part of it.

15:50

M: Since the case is now brought to the court, can you explain what is going to happen?

M2K: The policeman who was responsible for the case dropped it. In the follow-up another policeman took the case up. They called the case "coronach court" because the person is missing. When the case is brought before the judge, the judge will call for the witnesses and interview them. After collecting information from the witnesses, the judge will see if the policemen are guilty of murder. If they are guilty the team from Mt. Hagen will come in to arrest the policemen.

17:02

M: While this process is going on, people know that you are the one pushing the case, right?

M2K: Yes, policeman to policeman communication is there and sometimes we go with the clients who are from the village who have no money and they don't know whom to see and where to go. At first, we did not know that it would be that risky and thought it would be the best way to help them and we follow up with them. We went to the first investigator and work around to get things together. Now that they could be arrested and brought to court it is when we realized that it is risky.

17:53

M: Why is it so risky for you?

M2K: It is risky for me because I was the one behind this case and I was the case manager and followed up on the case. I am trying to make it happen by talking at the human rights level in the light of the UN talks and things like that to push the case forward. However, these policemen associated with the case are the very policemen whom we have been working with in the rapid response cases. They already know us as Human Rights Defenders....well, living in Kundiawa town is like a small village and people know who you are and where you live and what you do. That made it

harder for us. They know that as Human Rights Defenders, we are doing this work that made it very risky for us.

19:13

M: So your movements are restricted?

M2K: That's right. I can't move around in the night and I don't go to places where they are likely to instigate trouble. Anything could happen if the policemen are convicted because they work for bread to be on the table for their family and you know it is easy to remove someone and move on with life. And so it is really risky for me.

19:57

M: What about your house...because they know where you live?

M2K: Yes, they know where I live. It's not that they would come and attack but maybe they might come with a plan so it is better to be prepared to avoid it before anything could happen. You wouldn't know why and how they are coming. They might be drunk and come with a plan. Like there was a case where a young girl was coming from Lae University in a police car and the policemen forced the girl to hold a carton of beer and they took a photo of her holding the beer carton. They used that as evidence when they had the court case. If the policemen can do that using their power, do something to make you feel guilty, they would also use their powers to take away someone and would walk out freely. That is putting a lot of fear in me because I have seen it happen.

21:21

M: So can you leave town while this is happening?

M2K: For a court case, it takes a very long time and you might not know when a thing would happen. So it is better to be prepared than to avoid all these troubles. I have in mind to move in and out and live in other place and the people would not know exactly where I am staying. The police unit in Kundiawa that I am talking about is the very powerful unit. They can do anything and they can still walk on.

22:23:

M: How many calls for assistance did you receive?

M2K: We did not receive a lot of clients when there was no funding from Oxfam. But when we have the funding, many people came closer to us. And we support them with the funds we receive from Oxfam. Some of the clients really want to come and go out. When they realized that our work was exposed and funding came in, we received a lot of clients.

24:07

M: How's your day when have phone calls coming from many other people while you are attending to one or two clients already?

M2K: Like in a case when trying to take someone to the police station to put up a report and someone else comes and says her house is burned down after accusing her and says she does not have a place to stay. Then I received other calls coming from different people for different reasons. Now it's tiring when you have a lot of clients unlike in the past there were only a few or less clients. There is actually a need for help. In some cases, they need immediate response. Then we explain that they should go for referral and you don't see them but another time you see them again. They asked for their case to be heard. In a case where a wife comes running to us and says she was beaten severely by her husband and would like to get the police and arrest him but the next day she comes and says that she cannot do it because he is the bread winner. Sometimes in the streets, people come to us just because they see us they want us to help but they really don't need help. For some women, it is very risky and so they would hardly come to us in public. But they do call us by phone or come quietly to us and tell us their problem. She would tell us that she couldn't come to us in public because if her husband sees it, it would be a worse thing for them. When I see people coming to us in numbers, I feel that these people know where to go for help. There are other avenues they would go to like the welfare office, community office and the police station but they come to us because maybe they have trusted someone who could really help. When I see people coming to me, I feel that they come to me because they trust me so I find ways to help them. They should have gone to the other avenues but they come to me because they see something special in me even if I don't have the resources to help them.

28:31

M: *What do you think about the National Action Plan that you mentioned when you talked about the conference you attended in Moresby?*

M2K: For me it's like any other meetings that we have with the good action plans and the ideas which we always bring up. It will take a long time before we see the outcome of the action plan. The action plan that was developed in Moresby was good and I like it, but is it really workable? Do they really see the ones who are in need? Now, how do we help those in need? We can look at the other plans after that.

Secondly, I want to say that all the plans are for Moresby and are there in Moresby, but most of the women about 80% live in the rural areas. How will these women access the services that we talk about? Only those who access the services will continue to access it. So the rural women will always miss out. Then it becomes a problem or an issue where the government will talk about it but the women will always be missing out in the rural areas.

30:51

M: *How do you envision a perfect solution, when you have a bottom up approach at the local level and a top down planning in Moresby?*

M2K: The implementing part is at the grassroots or village level. The policy making is done at the national level. Everyone is doing something good to address the same issue, which is violence against women. However, we have to look at who is already doing what on the ground and work up. When looking at the policies, they are very good and are going to be there but, are they going to work for everyone? They have written so many policies but the policies were never applied.

32:21

M: Do you think that for the policies to be workable, they really have to look at the people on the ground?

M2K: Yes, if the policies are to work, the policies have to target the officers who are public servants and officers in companies where they should have workplace policies on zero tolerance on violence against women. They have something in place to make them accountable. They shouldn't be contributing to increase the problems but they should work to minimize the problems.

33:13

M: Do you think the conference in Moresby had all the people expected to be there or were there some people missing?

M2K: Yes, there were some people missing who I think should have been there at the conference. Most of the participants were the policy makers and there were not many implementers on the ground doing actual work. The ideas that they contributed was like "you think it would happen" but the actual people who have identified issues and possible solutions were not there. If the people on the ground were there should have come up with the issues and the solution on the ground, which they have been dealing with. The policy was all about referrals and networking etc. We should also look at a province as a pilot project where they have been involved in addressing these issues and people on the ground. If we have tried it and if it is working then the work is strengthened.

35:15

M: What is the support that you need?

M2K: The government of this country really needs to identify all the stakeholders in each province who are actively involved in doing this work. Then they could come in to support them with funds to boost the work. We do not have to depend on the donors because they will be here today and gone tomorrow and the work will not be sustained. That would lead us to a lot of problems. Therefore the government should look into the work that we are doing and support us with funds.

36:33

M: In case you want to say something on accountability and lack of accountability here?

M2K: When the police are so reluctant in this kind of violence, we really want to seek justice. When there is justice, the community, the police and all of us working together to address these issues.

That would also send a word to the people in the community that if someone does an offence in this regard, he/she will be arrested. If you commit a crime and go to court, the court offers justice by giving orders that restrict you from doing the things that you used to do. If a man beats his wife and is taken to court, the court restricts him from abusing his wife maybe for six (6) months and in the six months, the man has to change his mindset and abstain from hitting his wife and if he does not, he will be jailed. It is good to take the matter to the police but then it should be taken before the ward councillor and the councillor tell the man to go to court and get punished for committing the crime. It has to be with all kinds of violence: domestic violence, sorcery-related violence etc. The law is just there to guide you and give directions where to go. Many people in this country think that going to court is bad, but I think we should go to court for justice to prevail. Many people think that going to court is like you have committed a crime but it's not that.

40:48

M: Is there any hopeful message you want to send?

M2K: It needs everyone to address these issues, domestic violence or all other violence. We need to work together. All of us should be doing the work together rather than to become spectators. We cannot identify someone as a perpetrator and let him go, but we have to take him in and work with that person. We also need to work with a victim. In one way or another, everyone has to work together. We need the levels of government and the people who are occupying big positions to work together to solve these issues. Working together and helping one another is the way forward to address an issue.

ANNEX 16: INTERVIEW WITH PHILIP GIBBS

M. Maybe, you could start by introducing yourself a little bit.

P. 1:09

Ok, I am Philip Gibbs. I was born in New Zealand many years ago and I came to Papua New Guinea 41 years ago as a student. After that I went and studied, I was ordained priest and I came back again and I have been working as a priest here in different capacities here in Papua New Guinea. Somewhere along the line, I picked up a post grad degree in Anthropology and I have a Doctorate in Theology. I was five years in Rome doing that. Yeah, and so I am engaged in all sorts of work from research to pastoral work to monitoring students to teaching different things. 2:03

M. Ah, within all these jobs that you are taking up, you are focusing quite a lot on sorcery and witchcraft issues. Can you explain what you do and why?

P. 2:22

Well, the witchcraft problem came up when I was talking to some people in Simbu and they told me some people had been burnt and had died and that was ten years ago, I suppose. I wasn't really aware of that being much of a problem before that but then I followed up and I decided to check it out how often that sort of thing happens and I found – I went to the police station, I went to the homicide people and found that it was quite frequent in Simbu, in the Highlands. And then we organized a workshop at the Melanesian Institute and Dr Jan Jaworski came and gave us also figures and examples of this sort of people that come to him having been tortured as witches. And when I heard that I just felt, well, I just can't ignore it. I can't just pretend that it's going on somewhere else and maybe there's something I'd like to find out more about it in case there is something that we can do about it. And so, that led me then to ask more questions wherever I went and I found that it was spreading. It was based in Simbu Province but then was spreading out to other provinces in Papua New Guinea. Other places where the highlanders tend to congregate in some of the towns and so then I met other people who were concerned too and so since then I've been trying to work with them and finding ways to try to reduce this horror that we are confronting these days. 4:14

M. Okay, perfect! And why this sort of violence called your attention more than any other kind of violence in Papua New Guinea?

P. 4:27

Yeah, Papua New Guinea in some ways it does have a lot of violence, physical violence, emotional violence and things that wouldn't be tolerated in some other countries today, but I think some of the forms of violence like for instances tribal warfare that are experienced being a parish priest in the Highlands province. I experienced that sort of warfare. Domestic violence, we have usually women who are hurt in domestic violence coming with broken arms and there was one I remember, the leg was cut off and we took her to the hospital and she had her leg amputated.

That sort of violence was all around, but then this witchcraft violence seem to be - not only more horrific in this sort of torture that people are going through, but also it seemed to me like it shouldn't happen - if there's something wrong, that shouldn't happen. I can understand when someone gets drunk and hits someone else and his brother hits someone else and tribal fight starts. But then I still find it difficult when someone gets accused of being a witch when someone dies and then they are tortured in order to get the so-called 'truth out of them' to get them to admit that they were a witch. I just find that as being absurd and I guess that's the reason why I do focus on that sort of violence rather than the other. I don't ignore the other and then in my work I try to do what I can with men particularly to try to find man who would be peacemakers and not men who would be involved in violence especially domestic violence. 6:26

M. This could be a difficult question to answer in a sense that Papua New Guinea is known as a Christian country, but witchcraft and sorcery beliefs are very strong. You, as a priest, dealing with the spiritual side of the people of Papua New Guinea, how would you describe this situation?

P. 7:04

I think I would – if you are talking about Papua New Guineans being Christian and yet getting involved in witchcraft. I point back to what was going on in Christian Europe in the medieval times and why was there witchcraft in so-called Christian Europe in the 12th, 13th, 14th centuries and even later. Somehow, the two can go together and not be totally contradictory. But the contradiction is, there are contradictions, and that's what we try to build on these days. With our awareness in essence we are saying that it is not okay to hurt someone, to kill someone, not so much focusing on their beliefs. Maybe they believe that there are witches all over the place. Well, that doesn't matter too much because like in many countries in the world, people believe there are all sorts of spirit beings around including Christians. But when that's a reason to go and harm someone, and I would say the Christians, well there is also a commandment that says, "you shall not kill". So, and that includes hitting someone too or hurting them. So, in that way, there is a contradiction but before Europe went through the enlightenment and the scientific revolution, there were perhaps living in a world-view that is quite similar to what we are living in here. 8:37

M. So, do you think it's compatible?

P. 8:43

I think is the beliefs in spirit beings are somewhat compatible with Christian belief. Christian belief talks about angels, talks about Satan, talks about good and evil. In some extent, yes, but when it comes to harming other people, if you look at the gospels, Jesus might have cast out demons from people but he never hurt anyone. And so, in that way it's not compatible with that sort of harming of other person. So I would've to refer back to the scriptures that say, well, if you look at the biblical times in the biblical world-view, it may be similar to what we've got now where you have

them bringing people to Jesus where people possessed by evil spirits and ask him to cast out spirits, okay fine, but he didn't hurt them and this is the difference.9:31

M. Do you think the situation in Papua New Guinea is comparable to what has happened in Europe in the 15th, 16th century and/or should we learn from that situation or the circumstances are completely different?

P. 10:06

I think I haven't done an in-depth study of the European history. My history in New Zealand is a very shallow one. Our family is only been five generations in New Zealand. So, I haven't done an in-depth study of what was the situation that caused witchcraft to arise in Europe. Some of the Anthropologists like Marwick talk about the "strain gauge" and different things like that, that's based more on the African experience and you find it coming up all over the world, in the Americas and the Africa today especially and so on. There are common features like for instances, beliefs, beliefs in spirit beings, beliefs in something more than just a material world around us. I think there are commonalities in social stresses where people are experiencing social tensions in the society and rapid social change. Some of those things are the sort of world-view that people have. I think they are probably comparable with what you find in other places. And so, what does it mean? I don't think it necessarily means that Papua New Guineans have to become like Europeans. That I think that in some way, very quickly they have to come to terms with a world-view that can be very harmful. And I think this is one of the things we're trying to do now at the workshops and thinking is not to try and say well, you 've got to make the so-called adventures that Europe made in thinking with enlightenment and so on. But this sort of thinking, is it really helpful today? In what ways is it helpful and in what ways it is not? So that they, in turn, can make that movement that change, that is necessary in order to have a more healthy view of life and death, really. 12:13

M. Well, according to you, these things happen all around the world. Also you have been here for so long and working close with people and seeing all these violence also, so what do you think about the media that goes around the international community about the horrors of Papua New Guinea and how backwards they are?

P. 12:56

Well, I think unfortunately peace work and reconciliation and forgiveness and things like that don't make good headlines in newspapers, but burning witches does and so it is easy to have an out-of-balanced view. Like for example, there have been cases of witchcraft killings poured out in the newspapers and many of them have been from Simbu. Well, in Simbu Province there is probably about 5000 people every year who die but there would be less than 100 cases where there would be any real sort of violence associated with the funeral, with accusations where there would be violence as a result of that. So what about the other 4900 funerals that ended moaning their loved one and burying them? That doesn't make headlines but the other one does, and so I think we

need to be aware of that and perhaps it's difficult for people overseas when they see these headlines and think that everyone in Papua New Guinea is involved in this sort of thing, which is not true. And the majority of Papua New Guineans feel that this sort of thing is horrific. They would not want to take part in this sort of thing at all. Many of them don't think like that but that doesn't make news, does it? And so, we hear the negative side of things and fortunately some people, when they come, they are able to express the good side too. And there's much more good happening in Papua New Guinea than bad. There's much more peace work going on than war or violence. There is that violence, but if you want to look at the cross-section of society and people's lives, there is more people putting up with other people, forgiving other people, doing good things for other people and never doing harm. And it would be nice if would make headlines, but it doesn't. 15:10

M. I think you are right. I see there is a lot of people working for peace too. Could you explain what you, as Philip Gibbs, do and may be what the Catholic Church does in relation to alleviating sorcery and witchcraft-related violence?

P. 15:38

Okay! What's Philip Gibbs doing? Philip Gibbs is trying to be present to some people who have been hurt and really harmed, tortured, having been accused of witchcraft. So, where I discover someone like that, I try to go and see them and I try to find what ways there are to help them to be safe and help to receive the attention, perhaps medical attention or something like that. Then there's a prevention type of work and for that we are trying to run some workshops in areas where people might be at risk and so. We usually work through the church there and get the church leaders together and have them arranged for a workshop and I'll come along with a structure, but basically I try to get people involved in the workshop with the different topics that will take, like for example, the case of how reliable is evidence that's taken out of someone under duress, under torture. Now people often say, 'but they admitted it', but then I ask some: 'well, in under what circumstances did they admit it?', and then people realize that they confessed under torture, under duress. Well, you have to confront people with that and then we act that out and we try to make workshops very active so that people will eventually, they maybe decide that they can be an advocate against this sort of thing. And we found a number of people who want to do that. I also try to film occasionally with permission. Try to film workshops or film people who've got an opinion on this so that we can circulate the opinions more widely. I can't be everywhere, but we can make lots of DVDs and then they can use them somewhere else and then I always try to include questions, discussion questions so that it's not a DVD for entertainment, it's a DVD as a discussion starter. If I am able to be there or someone else who is knowledgeable like Bishop Anton Bal is present, then that's good, because then we can bring up really practical examples. The Catholic church here in Papua New Guinea has taken quite a strong stance and the Catholic bishops from the Highlands where – this is mostly occurring in the Highlands, they got together a year ago and they met for a few days and came up with a very strong statement that was to be read in all churches. And they said, anyone who gets involved in this is excommunicated. You cannot receive

communion in the churches until you 've paid recompense and you've made for it and said sorry. Ah, so that was a very strong stand that they took and many people remember that, and it was a bit of a wakeup call for many people. That was just the Catholic church and it hasn't been taken up so much for some of other churches yet, but people like Bishop is inviting the leaders from other churches to come to the workshops that he's running so that we can hopefully reach the others as well because there are some who are into deliverance ministries and things like these, casting out evil spirits and they are kind of at risk of succumbing to thinking that's not really healthy these days, and so we usually refer to biblical examples where like, I said before, where Jesus cast out evil spirits but he didn't harm people and then that's how it makes sense to people. And then also as a church, we are trying to be involved in a wider movement, which involves NGO's and involves the Justice Department and involves many people both within Papua New Guinea and outside of Papua New Guinea. We were trying to have an integrated approach to dealing with this, so it will involve a lot of different people, the police, the law and order, the health, education – all these different aspects are important to somehow work together to be able to make a more healthy and safe places for people here.20:14

M. How easy it that to put all these elements together?

P. 20:15

To put all these elements together is not easy. We've had a number of workshops and meetings and they've been very good, there's been a lot of good input and a lot of hard work that goes into it, but it's not easy. People have all sorts of commitments. It's hard to get people together at the right time, it's hard to just get that sort of people organized, it is not easy in Papua New Guinea for various reasons: whether it would be transport, or whether it would be finances or whether it would be just people overly committed and having three things to do on the same day. That's what happens here, in the land of the unexpected. 21:07

M. How effective is the work that you and the churches have been doing?

P. 21:20

It's hard to say at this point. It's hard to say how effective the work that we are doing is. I have seen some cases where people say that having had the workshops, having discussed, there have been no more witch accusations and violence in that particular community, so they have decided this is something that they want to have in their community. We can point to some communities that will say that and I found that when I go back to the Enga province where this idea has just started to move in. We've had the workshop there and people now say, 'well after the workshop, there was a lot of talk and now people are not talking about it, it's gone right down'. So that's encouraging, but it's certainly not the end of it at all. It is a long hard road to go, but I think that we can point into different communities now who are prepared to say 'we don't want to have that sort of thing happening to us'. We don't want our sisters, our mothers to ever have to undergo that sort of experience, because it's usually women and sometimes men. And I am encouraged by that and I am also encouraged by the fact that there are a number of people who stand up and say, we

are Human Rights Defenders. We have people who are going to try and find safe houses for people. The sisters, for instance, in the Southern Highlands and in other places and right here in Mt Hagen where we are at the moment, the sisters looked after a survivor for three weeks after she was badly injured, having being accused of witchcraft. They hid her and looked after her and fed her and gave her medical attention until she could be evacuated. So, yes all these different measures I think are helping in some way or another.

M. Okay. Which one do you think it is the best approach to go forward with the issue of sorcery and witchcraft-related violence?

P. 23:40

I think it's not for individuals. We have somehow got to work together on it. The more people that we can get involved and get committed to doing something about it, the better. Now, people have different ideas, so we've got to discuss it. We've got to share our ideas about how we can deal with it. For instance, someone might say 'well, it's a law and order problem, so we should get the police involved'. Other people will say 'well, it's a problem that the nurses and the doctors don't tell us the reason, the medical explanations why a person died, so we should get them involved'. Other people will say 'well, it's a matter of free education; we've got to educate people and with education then people will not think about these sorts of things and they will look for scientific reasons why people suffer misfortune, harm and death and so on. And so we have to introduce it in the curriculum in the schools' or whatsoever, and there are other people who will say, 'it's a religious problem, and that's something to do with belief and so we've got to deal with it on that level'. And other people will say 'well, we've got to deal with it throughout the Justice Department and so', like the Papua New Guinean government now has said that they are going to execute the death penalty on people who are convicted of killing people accused of sorcery. All these things have to work together and yet, at the bottom of it all, there needs to be a clarification of ideas because sometimes we talk about victims and we are talking at completely cross purposes as to who the victims are. Many Papua New Guineans, when we talk about victims, they think it's the person that the witch killed. And you will find people from outside the Human Rights oriented people will say, 'no, the victim is the person who has been accused of being a sorcerer and then is being mistreated by the community or banished from the community or something'. So you are focusing on two very different people in terms of who the victim is, and there are all sorts of things that need to be clarified. I think, another thing that needs to happen is to have people who are really committed to doing something about it and that's where I think the Church is very important: to try to help people to be motivated and not to just say 'well, it's a problem for someone else'. It's not a problem for someone else, it's our problem. 26:24

M. I find it interesting your affirmation '*beliefs are beliefs but is the violence arising from these beliefs what we want to deal with*'. Is that Philip Gibbs' opinion or the Church's opinion?

P.28:05

Just give me a minute to think about that.

In the answer to your question, I think that both of those points of you are important. And I think in one way or another, the leadership in the Church is trying to confront both of those issues - both of those questions: the question of the belief and the question of violence. In some ways, it doesn't really matter what a person believes. We can accept what they believe, but to try and get across the point that you don't harm someone, that it's not okay to hurt someone. But then, of course many of those people who are doing this, they feel they are doing something good. They are doing something moral for relieving the society if someone who is dangerous to the society, because they've killed someone and they might kill someone again and they have caused some misfortune, and therefore, they are going to relieve their community and their society of someone who will be causing the misfortune in the future. And so, they will see as a virtuous thing what they are doing, and somehow we have to counter that with beliefs in terms of a fence when we are talking with people. So that you've got this fence around your head, well, the fence in Papua New Guinea is important and people will know about a fence, because if the fence has got a hole in it, the pig will come into the garden and ruin the garden. So people maintain their fences to keep the pigs out of their gardens, so they don't ruin their gardens. Well, if we've got a fence, a 'belief-fence' or a 'faith-fence' on the part of the Christians, that will stop this sort of thinking, hurting us and hurting the community through us. Well, then we don't have to get involved in hurting another person. That sort of belief is there to support us in doing good to someone and not being afraid of the so-called harm (witchcraft) that person has caused. It's that fear that is personified. I call a witch a personification of fear, as sometimes it is the way I like to think about it. And I think, when people have that strong faith or a strong belief, they can be insulated from that sort of fear of this other person doing harm to them. They can feel a certain security whereas if they have this hole in the fence, the pig can come inside. If they have this doubt and this fear, then their mind can be all messed up in thinking 'well, we've got to deal with this situation and we can kill someone, we can torture them and we can do all sorts of things to them'. That's where I see the two coming together. I don't know if that explained it. 31:31

M. Yes, I think so. Is it that if someone's belief in God or faith is strong, that comforts the person and prevents the sorcery and witchcraft accusations from arising

P. 31:52

Yes, I think where a person's belief is stronger - belief as a Christian, for instance, in the power of God, to put oneself under the power of God then that can protect one from these doubts and these fears that will make you open to thinking that you are being harmed by this person or that the community is being harmed by this person, yeah. 32:24

(Interview interrupted because of heavy rain – Continued next day)

M. What is your opinion regarding dealing with the belief or with the violence, then?

P. 1:17

In terms of belief and violence I think that we have to try to counter the violence and stop the violence as much as possible, but unfortunately the violence is often connected or tied to the belief because sometimes and quite often people who are accusing someone of witchcraft or trying to do harm to a person who they think is a witch are in fact trying to defend themselves and their community. They have this belief that this person is a danger to the community, that they have killed someone who had caused some sort of harm in the community. And so, they believe that one way to try to ensure the health of the community is to get rid of this person, and therefore the violence occurs whether it be the physical violence or whether it be the violence in banishing a person, so that they can't come back, or trying to teach him/her a lesson and tell him/her, 'don't do that again'. So you've got the violence but, what is promoting the violence? It's not always just some young men who are high on marijuana. It is often portrayed in the popular literature. I think it is a lot of real belief behind it and we have to try to understand that, and I think because of that we have to work not only to try to stop the violence but we have to try to work with people's beliefs as well. And that might mean accepting beliefs and working with that, and that could mean trying to help people to come to a different form of belief that would not promote and support such violence. 3:10

M. Could you tell me the motivations behind these accusations or the balance between the ones caused by a genuine belief and the ones caused by a hidden agenda?

P. 3:29

Well, I think every case is different and you would have a genuine belief from some people that violence has occurred because this accused witch has done something bad and also there are other factors involved, like jealousy, for instance, that are in place. So maybe, this person has got a nice garden and a nice house and people get jealous of them for that, so that stirs up this hate feeling which then becomes a way of thinking of making this person a scapegoat when some sort of something bad happens. And so, every case is different. I think there will be genuine beliefs that this person is an evil person and they got evil spirit in them that's going to cause harm to the community, and you've got this other cases with hidden agendas that are probably operating at the same time. And it is hard to say any particular percentage, but there is no doubt they are operating. 4:38

M. From what you have done, I see that you try to deal with both sides: victims and perpetrators. Is this because at the end of the day, your objective is to bring that person back to the community and to make sure the community accepts them back?

P. 5:03

Yes, you are correct. I would like to see that the community would realize that what they did was wrong and that there could have been some of sort of reconciliation and that person could eventually come to the community, but that very seldom happens. And that some of the cases that I dealt with, even though we try to find ways to speak to both sides, speak to the person who has been accused, tortured and banished, go and talk to the community. Still many people in the

community, they would always come and say 'but she admitted it' (usually she). And, and then you have to ask them then, under what circumstances that she admitted, was she being tortured and admitted?' 'Yes, we had to torture the truth out of her'. And to try to counter that sort of logic is really difficult and people still feel threaten. And in my experience, I find one of the few things that does help is the strong Christian belief, which connects as a counter weight to this other form of belief. And so, I find that in the Christian community, and in the Catholic community, in some places it worked. There are still people who are afraid of this sort of thing but there are other people who have stood up and said, I am now a Christian, I strongly believe in my faith in God and Jesus Christ and I am not goanna let this other sort of thing bother me. And that I have seen as being effective but it's difficult to see it on a community level. And it would be wonderful to see the whole community to say that and to be able to say, we're not going to have anything more to do with this witchcraft business. We are a Christian community now and so that's not going to be considered now and if anybody wants to talk about it, then you can go somewhere else. I believe it has happened in some communities like the Nauro-Gor community. I believe it is one and it's true I think for the last three or four years there have been no witchcraft accusations. I see it now in the community in Enga now where people have said, as a community, there will be no more accusations like this. We think that there might be this person or that person, there might be witches but we are not going to entertain those sorts of beliefs anymore. And so you get for instance, the woman with the Legion of Mary, they will invite that person to come and join the group. To come and be part of the group as a form of protection for that person and also as a form of trying to reunite the community there in a sense of wanting to do something that is constructive rather than destructive. 7:44

M. How important is it when you are trying to bring reconciliation, to address the side of the perpetrator?

P. 8:10

Well, I think you have to be careful in the use of the term perpetrator and victim because very often from a Papua New Guinean perspective, the perpetrator is the person they are accusing of being a witch and the victim is the sick person that is killed by the witch. Now, if you twist it around, and take the more western type of logic and the more modern view of things, then you will see the person who is accused wrongly of being a witch is the victim and the people who are going to torture that person or are causing sickness to the person are called the perpetrators, but it depends very much on what sort of logic and what perspective you are starting off from. And that makes a big difference. That having been said, I think it's important to speak to both sides if we are going to get anywhere. And so, I try to understand where the people who are doing accusations, the people who are doing the torturing or whatever, we try to understand where they are coming from. We got to enter into that logic and deal with them with that logic. We can't just say, 'oh, you stupid and you believe so wrong', and then they are going to listen to you. So you've got to somehow enter into that logic, try to understand it and then work with that. But I don't usually use the term victim or perpetrator because those terms are too ambiguous.9:32.

M. You have seen some communities actually taking the steps forward and rejecting the sanguma tok and accusations, so what is the correct approach when you are talking about results? What do you think it would work best?

P. 10:22

It's hard for me to say what would work best whether you start from the top of the top with laws, or whether you start at the grassroots with people. My intuition says 'do both and you might have some people operating at different levels'. I think the fact that the government had changed the law or removed or they say they repealed the Sorcery Act, did have an effect on people. People do say, 'oh, we don't have that back up anymore', because it was presumed that through the Sorcery Act, that you would get a lesser penalty because you are acting and thinking that it was sorcery rather than playing a right murder. So I think that there has been some sort of effect on people by the law change and that's important. And it's important that people at the top, like, for instance, the police commissioner, like the Bishop, like other people who people look up to, say something. And for example, recently the bishop of Enga, he added another promise to people's baptismal promises where people had their baptism when they renew those promises every year at Easter. They say, 'do you reject Satan?' "yes", 'do you reject Satan's lies?', "yes" he added a third or the fourth one, which was 'and do you reject *sanguma* thinking?, this sorcery thinking and the action that associate it with it?', and the people said 'yes, we do reject it'. So he was introducing that right from the top as a bishop, so that was important. But also the common roots, the people of the grassroots level, the common people in the community, they still have got their own thinking and feeling, and so it's important to work with them too and it depends who is going to do it. It has to be done on the local language, I think, and has to be done by people that they trust and respect that they are prepared to listen to. And definitely, you are not going to get the chief of police or the bishop being able to go and sit down in every community, so that means, I think, training people who are able to have skills to go into the communities and to try to lead workshops and lead discussions and that's one of the things that bishop Anton Bal is doing down in Simbu and bishop Te Maarsen before him was trying at the pastoral center: to bring people together and to train them so they could be leaders at the community so that if this sort of talk came up in the community, that they would have ideas and they would have methods to be able to counter that sort of talk that's coming up. And for instance, bishop Bal will say this is all about '*oli tok*', 'they just saying, they just saying' and so it's a circle of people saying that something is happening and there is no real foundation to it, but one person says it and another person says it and another person says it and they pass it on forever. Well, to train people how to present that to the community is very important and that's where these sorts of workshops are important for local leaders and local representatives. 13:47

M. Good. What do you think of the National Action Plan in relation to that?

P. 14:06

That National Action Plan against sorcery accusations and violence, I think it is a wonderful move because it's really the first time that people have tried to get together to form an integral plan which involves health, which involves education, which involves law and justice sector, which

involves the churches and NGOs and other groups as well. It's trying to bring them all together. It's still too early to see how effective it's going to be. It's a wonderful attempt by a lot of good meaning, well-meaning people to try to do something about what they perceive as a real problem, as a real issue in Papua New Guinean society today, especially following those dramatic episodes where Leniata was burnt alive and another woman had her head chopped off in Bougainville, Helen. That sort of crimes, brought people to the point where they said, 'we've got to do something about it'. So that's the initiative that is involving Canberra, it's involving the university there, is involving people in Port Moresby and other places around Papua New Guinea. I think it is a very good initiative and I like to support it. 15:20

M. You said that, in order to move forward, you need to get people who are really committed and you connected that with the Church. I think the Church could do a bit more, because I see the Church has a great influence over Papua New Guineans. What do you think?

P. 16:29

In terms of the church helping to move things forward, and I said you need committed people, I think that the Christian faith is one contribution towards commitment and it is part of people's Christian commitment. It is also a commitment to advocate and to work against that sort of violence then, I think that's constructive but quite honestly I think that the church here in Papua New Guinea does have a lot of influence. Not just the Catholic Church, but all the churches. They do have a lot of influence and I think more could be done in this area of belief and in terms of the violence that you've seen around us. There have been valid attempts by church people to try and stop that sort of thing. I heard just last week - there was a torture case last week in one of the provinces near here. And the people opposed were all members of the church and they opposed it until their own lives were in danger and then they backed off because people were threatening to kill them and they unfortunately, the person was being blamed and was being tortured. But those, it was the youth leader who took the leadership role, young man in the community and said, 'No, we don't want this at all'. He was committed against it and he was committed it against it in the future too. So I do see that as a real opportunity to find people, but it doesn't have to be churches or Christian believers because you find people in NGO, and non-government organizations that don't have any particular strong church affiliations although pretty well everyone in Papua New Guinea does belong to a church in one way or another. But whether that's what's motivating them or whether it's their real concern for human beings, the humanitarian concern for their fellow human beings that's motivating them, of course is another matter. But whatever it is, I don't mind if it's Christian belief, I don't mind if it's a humanitarian concern or just a love for our brothers and sisters that motivates people to say, 'I want to do something about it'. But in the actual circumstances, it not so easy. Like when sister went to try to stop them in Mendi when they were torturing someone and they came at her with red-hot iron and started threatening to burn her and in fact she did get a scar on her hand from being burnt and so she realized that she wasn't going to be able to do anything. Bishop Henk Te Maarsssen one time, there was a person tied to a tree with wire and he went over and he tried to untie the wires and they said, 'Bishop! If you continue to do that, we will cut that person's throat, we will kill him'. So what was the bishop to do? Was he to continue to release that person or was he to back off? Cause if he continues to release that person,

they said they will cut his throat, the person's throat, not the bishop's throat, the person who was accused. So the bishop had to back off. He took the advice of people around him, some of the Christian people around him said, 'bishop, it's best that you back off because they mean what they say'. And so he had to back off and they continued to torture the person. Later on, that person didn't die and he was able then minister to the person later on. So, the actual circumstance, it was nice to think about it in the abstract, but when you get into the actual real situations, it can become quite difficult. 20:25

M. What is the role of the international community since this has been a problem for some years now?

P. 21:20

Well, in terms of the international community and Papua New Guinea, I think always the international community has got to respect Papua New Guinea because it is a sovereign country and they have to respect Papua New Guinea as a sovereign country. But we are all part of common humanity and so I think wherever you are whether people are killing one another, in Syria or whether people are doing it in Sri Lanka or wherever it is, sometimes the international community has to take a stand and try to have influence in finding a peaceful solution to the difficulty. And so, I think it is good that the international community can put pressure on Papua New Guinea. For instance, through some of the organizations like Amnesty International or Human Rights Watch and so on. And the important one is the UPR (Universal Periodic Review) that is done by the United Nations and through the Human Rights Commission in Geneva. That happens every four years and there was a strong recommendation coming out from the UPR (Universal Periodic Review) that Papua New Guinea has to do something about this issue. And that's where it's coming at the level of the United Nations. And so, they put a lot of pressure country, not just Papua New Guinea. They put pressure on whoever needs to, they have to, whether they are from Africa or Australia or wherever. But this was one particular issue that came in the Universal Periodic Review. So, I think it's good that they can exert some pressure in this area as long as they do respect people and that's where sometimes I think the media has to be responsible in terms of not trying to portray all Papua New Guineans as potential torturers and killers and that sort of thing, because that's not true. There is a minority of course that is causing problems and we have to try to find a way to deal with it. 23:19

P. What about the ability or inability of understanding this reality? 23:32

Yeah, the ability to understand this all phenomenon, I think it is quite complex, it's very complex, it's cultural, it's religious, it's personal, there are many dimensions to it. And I think it's good for people from Europe to try to understand that in many ways: this sort of world-view and thinking that the people are immersed in here is very much a pre-scientific, pre-enlightenment type of the world-view, more biblical in many ways that what you find with the biblical world-view of the world in the New Testament. It could be more similar to that here, than say, the modern, urban, western type of world-view. And so, if anyone really wants to go into it further to say anything meaningful, I think they have to try to understand where people are coming from, not necessary to accept it, but to be able to understand it I think, then we can work with them constructively. 24:45

M. Do you want to talk a little bit about the Enga Province, the Katambi project?

P. 25:11

Yeah, the Katambi project, Katambi means Life “Let there be Life” in the Enga language of the Enga Province. The Katambi – Let there be Life project is the one that I am working on at the moment. There seems to be an absence of real data. People were just making guesses as to how many accusations there were, what accusations were about and so on. And they are often associated with guess. At a funeral is when these accusations most often occur. So, we’ve got people in the communities around an area of about 12,000 people, who are monitoring now any death in the community whether it would be a tiny baby or whether it would be an old person who is 90 years old, and everything in between. And they all operate with their own mobile phones and they have a code system to send in a text to a central person who is coordinating it about who died and what age they are, and the reason for their death, and whether there’s any talk about sorcery or not, and if so, what. They have sent these coded text messages into this coordinator and he enters them into a book. And then, every month or two months, I go out there and we get together and we try and look at the results, what’s happening with it. We got eight people who are recorders who are out in their own communities and so, hopefully, by the end of the year, we have a much clear idea of, in that community, how many people have died, what sort of people died, under what circumstances and was there talk about sorcery or was there any action associated with it, how often, how much were to, etc. Those sorts of questions we hope to be able to respond to with a more evidence-based research, say after one year. Hopefully we’ll go for another year. If it works, maybe we can expand it to other areas, so that we can get more accurate information on what is happening. And also as part of that, I think those people who are monitoring the situation are also very much aware that they are trying to be advocates. They are not associating that so much with the recording because they are trying to be scientific and then record things objectively, but I know all of them personally are against it having witnessed three very awful situations in their own communities in the last two years where three people have died and several have been tortured and injured and badly, and they don’t want to see that to happen. So yes, it’s in a way, it’s involving the communities to start monitoring what’s going on. And hopefully, will be a pilot project that can happen in other places as well. 28:19

M. What three things you would wish towards a better solution of the situation in Papua New Guinea regarding witchcraft and violence?

P. 28:58

Em.....Are you asking me for three wishes?

Ah.....Ok!

Yes, what would I wish for? Personally, I would wish for more time to be able to devote to this sort of thing. I find that I am just squeezing in this sort of work that I like to do in this area and squeezing it in between other commitments and I wish that I had more time to be able devote it to it because I think that it’s a very important thing. I don’t think it’s going to end in a hurry. I don’t. We can’t wish it away. That’s impossible, so there would be one wish from my personal point of

view. I would wish that the people who are concerned about it could come together more and could work together more in a coordinated way and we would make progress in that area. We talked before about that initiative that's bringing together different groups to work against sorcery accusations and violence. I would wish that, that could actually make a difference, that it could actually come together. At the moment, they are still talking about it. There is a lot of talk and it does involve people who are there, who are working in the communities, who are doing wonderful work, rescuing people who are accused and so on, but there is a lot of people who are also talking and I wish that we could talk to action and to committed action. And this would be my second wish. And I think my third wish would be that many of these people who have been banished from their communities and were so hurt, that they could somehow be reconciled with their families. A mother who has been sent away, accused and sent away from her community and she wants to be reunited with her children. She wishes she could be reunited with them but she can't. I wish that, that could somehow happen. I remember once striving with someone who had been tortured and accused and we drove upper road and she looked across the other side of the mountain and she just said, "that's home." And she said it in such a nostalgic way that she knew she couldn't go there because it was too dangerous to go there. And then that's where she'd lived, that's where her house was, that's where her children lived but she said "home" and realizing that at that time, it was impossible. So my wish is that one day it will be possible for people like her to be able to return home. It's not going to be easy, but well, we always can be motivated by these sorts of wishes, I guess. 32:11

M. Ok, I am very satisfied with the interview, however there is more to be asked but this would be enough for now. Is there any other thing of importance that you would like to mention?

P. 32:54

I will just say that I think this whole issue is a very complex issue, both philosophically, both personally and in the dynamics, in the communities and it's very complex and there is no simple answer to it, and so we have to be very patient and very discerning to try to continue to do something about it and not to give up and not to be discouraged because there will be more situations where people are accused and are hurt and can't think 'well, oh, we tried to do something and we failed'. No! I think we have to keep on going and no matter what form of violence it is, this is one form of violence but there are other forms of violence, and that takes away our common humanity and as we hurt one another we somehow, to me it's reducing the quality of life in our world. And wherever it's happening, and I just would like this quality of life wherever it is to be better and so it's a matter of working together towards that. That's about all I can think of really.

34:23

M. Thank you very much for the interview.

ANNEX 17: INTERVIEW WITH SISTER LORRAINE GARASU

0:23

M: Could you introduce yourself?

SL: My name is Sr. Lorraine Garasu and I am from Bougainville. Bougainville is an autonomous island within Papua New Guinea.

0:45

M: What do you do in Bougainville?

SL: What I was doing in Bougainville was that in the past my work was with women, doing community development work to improve their livelihoods. During the Bougainville crisis, I also worked with women, mobilized them and worked towards ending the violence, the conflict, the war in Bougainville. After the war, my work was to help women in families and communities to restore their lives. Thirteen years ago, my Order, the “Congregation of the Sisters of Nazareth” which is a Catholic Church’s congregation. It was started in Bougainville and we live in Bougainville. We also work in other parts of Papua New Guinea and in the Solomon Islands. After the conflict in Bougainville, we built a rehabilitation centre, which was to provide refuge for women, children, victims or survivors of the sexual violence. Secondly, healing of people who have been traumatized after the crisis and we also worked with young men and women (youths) who were suffering from substance abuse, using drug and alcohol, (drug is the marijuana). That’s what I have been doing in Bougainville. Currently, I am the director of the Nazareth Centre for rehabilitation. The centre house has a couple of projects and firstly it is the women’s house, the safe house. We have one safe house in Buka Island, North Bougainville and one in Central, and we are building another one in South Bougainville. We also accommodate the juvenile program – children going through courts and being charged. Now we are reaching completion of the centre for them to stay and rehabilitate and have their education. We also have programs for women like care and counselling, and women accessing protection from the courts against their husbands who are perpetrators and any other men who were perpetrators to them. We also do skills development for our survivors, so that when they return to their families, they may have a life skill. We found out that women who did not have skills were being dependent on their abusive husbands. So we try to help them break that circle through the education that we provide or processes that we designed for the rehabilitation. This will help them to be independent from whoever is abusing them in their lives. We do the same thing with the young people, so that they may break the circle of addiction so that they may become better people and become more skilful in their lives.

The other program that we do is community mobilization. Because of the 10 years of conflict in Bougainville, we are trying to help communities rebuild their lives, rebuild their social systems, provide human security. I do a lot of work with women Human Rights Defenders. I help them how to mobilize, organize and advocate all those things. We try to help people rethink on what their rights are, and what are their responsibilities. What are the responsibilities related to their rights.

How people can think about themselves and help them with human security, which may enable them to rethink about needs. Human Rights in the Melanesian way and understanding, we were never taught about rights but we were taught about human needs. One has to become skilful around human needs. We were taught to cook when we were children, we were taught to carry firewood, bring water which was not child labour but that was a way to teach children that if they are going to eat, drink clean water, sleep well or have shelter, then you must have the skills to provide or to make those things happen in your life. That's what we are teaching people and that's what I am doing in Bougainville.

07:17

M: For how many years have you been doing that?

SL: My work in the community was Social Work or pastoral care of the people is about 32 years. I worked very much with women, empowering women and teaching them how to become Human Rights Defenders. One of the education we give is on women peace and security and how they should rethink on human security. We teach them about empowerment rights, membership rights and survival rights and protection rights. The rights come under those categories. So it is all about the human being and keeping the human being safe. The women can also educate their families about the rights. Rights are things, which help to make your life become bearable, liveable, and it makes the survivors as human beings.

8:56

M: Regarding sorcery-related violence, what support do you give?

SL: When women and children are involved we provide refuge for the period of time when they were taken away from their villages. We provide refuge, we provide care and counselling. I am in my own way, I am a peace builder, and so if there are mediations or negotiations, I try to work with the local mediators. I work with the peace mediators by coaching them and to facilitate those processes to resolve the conflict or the issue.

10:11

M: In you work with women, were there any sorcery-related violence?

SL: In Bougainville we don't really have it like in the Highlands of Papua New Guinea. We might have a few because last year we had one and this year we had two incidents we are working on. If we can intervene to provide help, we can help. We normally work with local mediators and councillors because we don't have money to do these work, but we do it in a way that it does not cost us any money.

10:24

M: How do you do that?

SL: We use the traditional systems. There are systems within our society, within our culture that take care of those things. If that is sorcery-related, that may have been instigated by land disputes or other ways and see that the issues become very complex, I have people who have been trained so we provide the kind of help. Mainly we are sort of coach and mentors or we work along with the local peace builders. In that way, we do not take the responsibility away from them.

12:18

M: Simbu has an action plan in place to carry out. How do you do it in your case?

SL: If they are using the local resources, it should work. Like in Bougainville, we are using our local resources and we are working along what we know and we have a process in place on how we do the intervention. We are doing similar things like in Simbu. When people die we make sure that people are buried and provide counselling and care when people are ready.

13:58

M: What are your processes?

SL: Our process starts by getting to understand the case. Why did it happen? Was it driven by something? For example, in a recent case where a woman was killed last month, we had to work hard to find out if it was really sorcery-related. At the beginning there was some talk about sorcery, blaming the woman for sorcery, but when we looked at the case properly by asking questions and more investigations, we found out that it was over land, land dispute. We had the intervention. I sent a group there to do counselling with the school children and teachers because the woman was a school teacher because she was chopped in front of the school children and teachers. We also provided counselling to the relatives of the perpetrator because they were very destroyed. Then we provided counselling for the husband and children of the woman who died. In the first visit, we did not have counselling with the relatives of the woman but we are planning to have our second visit to have counselling with the relatives of the woman who died. Then we'll go and work with the families of the perpetrator because they got their houses burnt by the relatives of the women.

16:05

M: It seems that the consequences of the violence are huge...

SL: This is a new trend. In the past, people didn't kill over sorcery. Sorcery is what people talked about. It is part of our culture, it is part of our society. When I was growing up, this is how I understood sorcery, it is more to do with protection of yourself and protection of your land and protection of your properties and so on. It wasn't about killing people. Now, the thinking has changed. I am only talking about the place where I come from, am not talking about the rest of Papua New Guinea.

17:01

M: Why do you think this understanding has changed so much?

SL: What has changed is that during the crisis, many sorcerers were killed or people suspected of sorcery or people suspected of practicing sorcery and witchcraft. They were killed during the crisis and that mentality stands today.... If they know that there's a sorcerer somewhere you go and kill the sorcerer. However, in the past it never happened that way. You don't know what's in the mind of the people unless you talk to them. We can only assume on why they do it...but to me, I see that some of the killings really happen out of jealousy. And people use sorcery as an excuse to kill.

18:13

M: In the highlands these interventions require a lot of money, how does it work for you?

SL: When incidents happen in distant places, we have to pay for transport, for accommodation and allowances, so it costs money. I have spent about K3.000 on this one case.

19:09

M: You are funded by??

SL: We use our own money from the rehabilitation centre. We don't have a funding donor, like in the Highlands they have OXFAM funding. Last year, in another incident where a woman was killed and we had to help 19 people evacuate them from Bougainville and still today we owe K10.000. All that is money is from our fundraising. Because there were funds from Amnesty International. But the funds were not enough you know, move people and settle them properly. And to do all the logistics for moving people and that from within. It was very hard. So now we still owe that money. But, so what? We did something to help someone, so leave it like that.

M: Does it happen that sometimes lives are lost because there are not enough resources?

(00:1:10) SL: Yes, like for example, the teacher that I was talking about. The woman who died a month ago. She would be alive today but because she died of loss of blood. There was no transportation to take her quickly from where it happened to the health centre, the nearest health centre, so then she died of loss of blood. So it's transportation, communication, all those things. When it happens in the village or in the rural area it's very hard because of transportation, communication. Even if there is transport, there are sometimes where you still need to have the means to move the transport, which is the money.

M: How do you think this workshop and this Action Plan that is being put together will actually help?

(00:02:00) SL: In many ways yes, it will help. For example, the care and counselling, setting up the proper systems to train counsellors and to train counsellors who are specialized in that area. Or to

train existing counsellors in specialized areas like trauma counselling and things like that is important. And getting systems within government like health, education, police, courts. Working together to address that issue, I think in many ways will help. Yes it will definitely.

M: Do you think the government will endorse it?

(00:02:46)L: Well it is important to continue to advocate with the government, talk with the government, find who people are in government systems that will understand, that will hear you and understand what you are saying. That's the only way to make it happen. So for example you have people like Ume, they will work to make that happen. So that's good. That's why it's good to do a National Action Plan.

M: To be honest, I think, the meeting you had and these last days and the previous meetings like the one in Goroka are really promising, as they bring so many experts and key people together...

(00:03:27) SL: Yes, it's important to bring key people together so that key people can talk about how to address this as a country. Not just as Chimbu addressing, Bougainville addressing it. But to add everyone, getting together and working together to address it, because it is a national issue.

M: It is a national issue, but in each area the situation is different, right?

(00:3:55) SL: Yah that's true but it is still a national issue because it is the citizens of the country who are affected.

M: If you could ask for three wishes, in order to make your work easier or in order to be able to save more lives, what would you ask for?

(00:4:24) SL: I don't live to wish, but one is like, for example, in my work, I need a communication system that works for me, because not every area in Bougainville is accessible by communication. It's true, Digicel is there but where I live, we don't pick up Digicel. This Digicel reception, or finding the network is very hard. Even by e-mail or things like that, mobile or something. You have to find a spot to stand and sit to access internet or to access the mobile. So that's for me one problem. My other problem is transportation to mobilise, to organize. Like for example, if I need to go and respond quickly to the situation, I need to go down there myself to make an assessment. And to find out whether people will be ready for interventions like care and counselling or mediation or things like that. Because sometimes working with people who are not educated enough, they wouldn't understand what you are trying to do. So going there myself to make the assessment to see what needs to be done, is another thing. So transportation, then money to move the transportation. Money to move, the communication and then also the money to look after the

people. And if you are going to relocate them somewhere else, then money to do all that so all those things. It is not easy.

M: And who should get involved, where this money should come from?

(00:06:00) SL: Well it should come from the government because it is the citizens of the country who are affected. It is all about social welfare, social protection, it's all about that. It's about the lives of the people. It's about social security also. All those things.

M: I am really happy with interview. Thank you very much. Is there anything else that I didn't ask you and you would like to say?

(00:06:44) SL: No

M: Ok. Do you have a message, like maybe a couple of sentences of something that you would like to say?

(00:06:51)L: No, for me it is just that. My message to the people is that we need to end this kind of violence. For me it's uncalled for. We should not use sorcery as an excuse to kill because we are unhappy with someone or we are in disagreement with someone and things like that. We should not use it as an excuse to kill.

M: Thank you very much for your time and knowledge...I admire the work you do...thank you...

ANNEX 18: INTERVIEW WITH UME WAINETTI

(13'52")

00:14

M: Would you like to introduce yourself?

U: I am Ume Wanetti. I am the National Program coordinator for Family and Sexual Violence in Papua New Guinea.

00:36

M: Can you explain a little on the progress of the workshop, how is Family & Sexual Violence involved in this?

U: The reason why Family and Sexual Violence Action Committee decided to get involved in the issue of sorcery-related violence is because more and more women were being abused and murdered. We usually deal with gender-based violence and we realized that women who are being targeted were marginalized women, either they lived on their own, have no husbands or husbands could not protect them and they were targeted. So, we got involved because it falls into the areas of work that we are involved in, which is the Rights of Women.

2:02

M: Probably the FSVAC is the biggest network that gives support to women in this country?

U: The family and Sexual Violence Committee has a network covering all the provinces. We have provincial FASVCs in the 20 provinces and now we have two new provinces so that's 22 provinces. Committee members consist of people from key organizations, and we not only work for survivors but also we work with perpetrators. And also people who have advocacy programs at the community level.

3:06

M: How crucial is your presence on the ground?

U: The presence of advocacy on the ground is very important. We have individuals with a passion to stand up for the rights of women. There are women who are very simple, but have the guts to stand up and demand that their rights to be protected and the rights of other women be protected as well. As I have said in my presentation: we have the passion, but we need the skills, we have never been trained to do this sort of work. We need to get formal trainings to improve our skills for counselling, paralegal and attending to people who are badly injured. Well, we don't have those skills but have the passion to stand up and say that enough is enough.

4:32

M: What could be the thing that could really make a difference?

U: We have targeted focus areas for service provision. When we started, there was no services for survivors. We concentrated on advocacy and service provision. We have also pushed in for legislative changes. Legislation changes means that services would also be provided in certain ways. We also pushed for men's involvement to help in this work because Papua New Guinea is a male-dominated society. We have women leadership in four provinces but this is a male-dominated society and so we pushed in for males to take ownership to defend the rights of women.

06:06

M: What are the successes you could highlight in working with women?

U: One of the successes so far is that the government is taking ownership, when we see police coming out to do things, the department of health taking responsibility on treatments, and village courts coming on board. We have magisterial services being taken to protect women. Finally, we have the actual legislation put in place by the government to protect women and children. We didn't struggle like many other countries to push for this legislation. We had three laws passed which were Family Protection and the trafficking laws and the sorcery law that went through. The other legislation passed was on sexual violence.

07:35

M: Do you see correspondence between what is being legislated and what is being implemented?

U: Putting legislation in place is one thing and enforcing it is another thing and that is why a lot of work is being done by the police force for the rights of women and children.

08:07

M: In general terms, I know it is difficult to generalise so much, but if you had to describe Papua New Guinean women, what would you say?

U: There are a lot of strong women in Papua New Guinea and it depends on what category you are looking at. I could be abused but continue to be very strong to provide for my family. That does not mean that I am not living in an abusive situation. So, a lot of women are standing up and fighting for the rights of other women when they themselves are suffering. Some strong women who are strong for the rights of other women while they are suffering. One of the contributing factors is that sometimes we blame ourselves by saying "this is my fault, maybe I should be a better mother or a better wife."

09:49

M: Do you think the situation of women will improve in the future?

U: I think there will be a lot of changes. In the last three years, we have seen changes. There were people coming in and women coming in. We did not have women walking away from marriages like we are seeing them doing now, from abusive relationships. We got high rates of reporting because of advocacy, but we got to work hard to provide services for them.

10:30

M: What is the main challenge in this area?

U: I think the main challenge is that, they need to know that they have to work to make the changes happen. If you wait for another person to do it for you, it is not going to happen. We need women at certain levels to advocate for these changes. Gender equality policy, what can it do to help us? You have to influence the women in the public service to change their attitudes towards the treatment of women. This is because they are dealing with policies and other things and they need to advocate on women's behalf if you are to change to attitudes for the role of women in this country. I move forward but I need to reach back and bring the others with me. That's what it is about, and that is the biggest challenge we have.

11:51

M: what is the thing that you love more from your job?

U: When I see a woman, I help and she is happy that she has come out of violence and she makes a life for herself. It makes me feel content.

12:20

M: Regarding this workshop, how do you assess it?

U: I think we achieved something, because the government is willing to take it forward, for me that is an achievement.

12:37

M: Could you estimate when these recommendations and suggestions will be implemented?

U: It is a thing for us to push for a date and have the NEC for their decision, and how it is going to go on from there that is another thing. It will depend on how positive the government is on that.

13:10

M: Is there anything else that you would like to say?

U: We are making a dent, but I think we still have a long way to go, especially in the areas of sorcery accusation and violence.

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Burnt alive

Young mum accused of sorcery thrown into fire

By JAMES APA GUMUNO
A YOUNG mother of a baby girl was burnt alive in front of a crowd in Mt Hagen, Western Highlands, yesterday.

Relatives of a boy she was accused of killing through sorcery, tortured her with a hot iron rod, stripped her naked, tied up her hands and legs and threw her into the fire.

Police and hospital staff who arrived at the scene could not save her. They later took her body away in an ambulance.

The mother of one, identified as Kepar Leniata, 20, from Paiala in Forgera district, Enga, was married to a man from Laigam. Their daughter is only eight months old.

Provincial police commander Supt Kaiglo Ambene condemned the killing, saying police were treating the case as murder and would charge those responsible.

• Turn to Page 8



Revenge killing ... People watching as a young woman is burnt to death at Warakum road junction in Mt Hagen yesterday morning. The woman, a mother of an eight-month-old girl, was tortured and killed by relatives of a boy she was accused of killing through sorcery. - Nationalpic by JAMES APA GUMUNO

INSIDE



Schools to get subsidies soon
- page 2



Five killed in Solomons quake
- page 18



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Court ousts petition

By ADRIAN MATHIAS
AN election petition against Goilala MP Daniel Mona has been dismissed after petitioner Mathew Poia failed to plead relevant material facts in the Court of Disputed Returns in Port Moresby.

Poia, a former Goilala MP, alleged illegal and irregular practices during the 2012 elections by the officers of the Electoral Commission.

He filed the petition on Aug 28 last year on five grounds of illegal and irregular practices during counting at Taurama Army Barracks in the National Capital District by Electoral Commission officers.

Poia was represented by lawyer Brian Lakakit of Lakakit and Associates Lawyers.

He alleged that Electoral Commission officials - Theodore Maia (assistant returning officer), Charles Anama (presiding officer), Frank Aputi (counting official), Tasecy Moran (presiding officer), Frank Avaut (counting official), Albert Karo (counting official), Lawrence Aputi (presiding officer), Allan Fasi (counting official) and Jim-

my Wawin (driver) - all from Woitape LLG, were in possession of unused and used ballot papers for Goilala open seat and Central provincial seat prior to the counting of ballot papers at Taurama barracks on July 12.

There was no allegation against Mona as all five grounds of the petition were attributed to the Electoral Commission and its officials.

Justice David Maliku found no material facts to necessitate a trial.

Ruling against the petition, Maliku said Poia did not plead material facts to demonstrate that the illegal practices he alleged had affected the 2012 election results in Goilala open electorate.

"I find that the petitioner failed to plead sufficient and material facts to substantiate his allegation in the petition," Maliku said.

"Therefore, the petition falls short of the strict requirement of section 208 (a) of the organic law on national and local level government elections."

He said the consequences of these were that it rendered the



The supporters of Goilala MP Daniel Mona carrying him on their shoulders after an election petition against him was dismissed yesterday. - Nationalpic by ADRIAN MATHIAS

whole petition incompetent and must therefore be dismissed in its entirety.

He also ordered the petitioner to pay the costs of the proceeding.

Police arrest son over father's death

By ELLEN TIAMU
THE son of a PMV owner in Lae has been arrested by police in relation to the owner's death at their home in Bumbu settlement.

Lae metropolitan commander Supl Iven Lakatani said yesterday the son was arrested on Monday and locked up pending investigation.

A resident at the settlement said the PMV owner died during a confrontation with his son, who was allegedly drunk.

Lakatani said a post-mortem would be conducted to ascertain the cause of death.

The man, from Morobe Patrol post, owns PMV buses that operate the Lae-Malahang-Bumayong route. Lakatani also reported

that a man was shot dead at Second Seven in Bumayong last Thursday after he and four others allegedly stole a vehicle and used it to rob a store at Hunter near Malahang.

He said Guard Dog security personnel were alerted and pursued the five armed suspects towards Malahang and Bumayong.

Police detectives who were at Second Seven at the time, intercepted the vehicle, but the men abandoned the vehicle and made off on foot.

Policemen pursued them into the settlement area but the suspects turned and shot at them.

One of the suspects was shot dead while the others are at large. Police are continuing investigations.



Mt Hagen hospital staff covering the burnt body of a woman with a plastic bag at Warakum road junction yesterday. - Nationalpic by JAMES APA GUMUNO

Mum burnt alive on sorcery claims

● From Page 1
Ambane said police knew those involved and would arrest them soon.

Head bishop of Gut Nius Lutheran church David Piso also condemned the killing, saying taking a life was against the teachings of the Bible and the laws of the country.

"Sorcery and sorcery-related killings are growing and the government needs to come up with a law to stop such practice," he said.

Piso said many innocent and helpless people had been killed and tortured.

Witnesses in Enga and Southern Highlands told *The National* yesterday that the relatives of the boy stripped the woman before marching her to the Warakum road junction at about 5am.

They tied her legs and arms and threw her into a pile of burning tyres.

The relatives, from Muritaka in Laigam district spared the lives of two other women from Gumine in Chimbu as they had also been accused of sorcery.

Police rescued one of the women but the other was still missing.

Sources said the two women admitted that they practised sorcery but did not kill the boy.

They blamed Leniata who later admitted to the boy's relatives that she killed him.

The relatives then tortured the woman in her house with a hot iron rod, burning her all over her body before taking her to the main road, stripping and burning her.

Police said the boy had been complaining of pains in the stomach and chest and was taken to the Mt Hagen hospital on Tuesday morning. He died in the afternoon.

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By RAMCY WAMA

A TRAGIC and brutal sorcery-related murder took place in full view of hundreds of onlookers in a Mount Hagen City suburb in Western Highlands Province yesterday morning.

The relatives of a six-year-old boy doused petrol on a woman whom they had suspected of killing the boy with sorcery and burnt her alive.

The torture and brutal murder of a mother of two provided a

photo opportunity for many of the onlookers, including school children, who crowded around and took photos of the woman being consumed alive by the fire.

The perpetrators tied the woman up with rope, drenched her with petrol, placed her on top of a heap of rubbish then placed used tyres over her before setting her alight.

City firemen rushed in their fire tender to the scene around 7am to put the fire but the angry perpetrators and their support-

ers chased them away. Several policemen present at the scene were helpless to do anything to save the women because they were outnumbered by the perpetrators and their supporters.

The victim, who was from Enga Province, was suspected of killing the six-year-old boy through sorcery after he died at the Mount Hagen general hospital on Tuesday.

CONTINUED PAGE 2

Dion petition hearing next week

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MRA showcases PNG mining

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Women beheaded

Armed men mete out gruesome punishment on B'ville

By WINTERFORD TOREAS and ROMULUS MASIU

SORCERY-related killing has again shown its ugly face, this time in Bougainville where two elderly women were be-headed on suspicion of practicing sorcery. The incident occurred at Lopele

Village, in the Bana District of South Bougainville on Thursday around 9pm.

Police confirmed the incident on Friday, describing the killing as 'barbaric and senseless.'

The killing has shocked the people in the district and the region as a whole.

Police who were present at the scene watched helplessly and could not do anything as they were out-numbered by the angry Lopele villagers who were armed with five high-powered firearms, knives and axes.

According to Central Bougainville police chief, Inspector Herman

Birengka, his men were threatened when they went to the area to negotiate the release of the two elderly women who were from Tadorima Village.

"We were helpless. We could not do anything," Insp Birengka said. He also confirmed that the mob burnt down two houses, including

a permanent house at the women's village at Tadorima. They also looted property.

Most of the relatives of the two women victims have since fled the area and police evacuated the rest to safe locations since Tuesday last week.

CONTINUED PAGE 2



Footwork parade. An excellent display of footwork by newly commissioned policemen and women during their commissioning parade and the launching of the RPNGCs Modernisation Program. Story and more Pictures on Page 2, 8 and 9. Picture: TARAMI LEGEI

State to revamp all SOEs - Page 4

Decision on B'ville seat today - Page 6

JICA to launch math text books - Page 12



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Equitable sharing

PAPUA New Guinea is said to be a leader in the corporate world with respect to its laws, policies, agreements or regime on landowner participation in resource developments.

This applies to landowner interests in all aspects of resource development projects, especially shares or interests, business and training opportunities, social services and infrastructure, and disbursement of benefits in mining and petroleum projects.

This is as it should be. Our National Constitution calls for equitable distribution of the nation's wealth to ensure maximum benefits go to the people of PNG who own the resources. Unfortunately, recent corporate history and pronouncements by our leaders indicate that all is not well.

Resource owners have been calling for changes to be made to the current regime, and it appears that the government has realised now that something must be done to correct failings in the current regime in order to restore equity and fairness to all parties, including foreign investors and developers, as well as the government and the seven million people of PNG.

We do not have to look far for any lessons in this regard. The Ronzaville Crisis should and must be a continuous reminder to us all, especially our leaders, that we can't afford a repeat of the same.

The benefits from the development of our natural resources are immense, but the stakes are higher now than what they were before, especially with respect to the damage that uncontrolled resource development projects can bring to the people, their livelihood, their environment, their lives and their future.

PM O'Neill underscored this important message when he took out full page advertisements in our daily newspapers last week on the government's official position on BHP and OK Tedi Mine, especially with respect to PNG Sustainable Development Fund.

PM O'Neill underscored this important message when he took out full page advertisements in our daily newspapers last week on the government's official position on BHP and OK Tedi Mine, especially with respect to PNG Sustainable Development Fund. In retrospect, what happened at Ok Tedi should not have happened, and the Morauta Government must accept responsibility for it. This is how the PM put it, in part: "One of the conditions BHP insisted on was that the Parliament of PNG pass watertight laws that would totally, and forever, grant BHP immunity from criminal and civil court action arising from pollution and other damage caused by the mine's activity."

Today, we publish a story on page 3 about Minister Richard Maru revealing that the government is seriously considering increasing resource owners equity from the current two percent to five percent, describing the current two percent equity as "lousy".

Minister Maru speaks about "the sad tale of Misima mine in Milne Bay that must never be repeated in the country...The mine has left a big hole in the ground and nothing for the Misima people...that is why the government is determined to ensure local landowners receive maximum benefits from any mining project". The PM's message is very clear: "The campaign by vested interests...to portray the government's commitments (on Ok Tedi) as being dangerous, and worse, will not succeed. Not will the desperate attempts to rewrite the history of BHP's management of the mine and the tragic consequences of its management on tens of thousands of innocent Papua New Guineans."

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Police force launch modernisation plans

By **TODAGIA KELOLA**

THE Country's Police Force, the Royal Papua New Guinea Constabulary has embarked on an ambitious modernisation program that will see big changes in all aspects of the force's roles, image and the welfare of its members.

Prime Minister Peter O'Neill launched the program at the Sir John Guise Stadium last Friday.

The launch also coincided with the passing out parade of 32 Cadet Officers who had undergone two years of officer-training courses at the Bomana Police College.

A three-day exhibition was also staged at the indoor stadium to kick start the modernisation program from Friday to Sunday.

All directorates within the

Constabulary had a display at the indoor sport complex.

The Prime Minister was very impressed with the parade, especially the new commissioned officers in their slow and quick march.

At the parade the Prime Minister announced the government's funding of K276 million for the modernisation program which will be disbursed over the next five years from 2013-2015. For 2013, K53 million has been allocated for disbursement for a number of key impact projects.

The RPNCG's modernisation program will see the Constabulary being modernised, but also "getting back to basics" in as far as policing operations are concerned.

The program involves building or rebuilding in some cases, the human as well as

organisational capabilities, capacities, resources and police infrastructure nationwide. The end result of this modernisation program is to enable the Constabulary to be more receptive and responsive to the needs of the public whom they have a duty to protect and serve.

The launch, according to the Police Commissioner Tom Kulunga is intended to achieve five major objectives:

1. To give confidence to the government and people of Papua New Guinea about the commitment, dedication and preparedness to take on the country's law and order challenges;
2. To thank the government and people of PNG for the positive budgetary allocation this year (2013);
3. To reassure the government and people of

PNG of the ability, capability and commitment of police to be effective and efficient in the utilisation of allocated resources in tackling PNG's law and order challenges;

4. To tell the government and people of Papua New Guinea the measures the RPNCG has in place to improve discipline, command and control and boost or improve our overall performance nationwide; and

5. To impress upon members of the Constabulary what is expected of and from them.

One of the features of the modernisation program is the issuing of new police number one uniforms for all regular members of the Constabulary.

These uniforms were paraded during the launch by the Community Policing Officers.

Women beheaded in AROB over sorcery

FROM PAGE 1

The last family was evacuated by Insp Birengka's team on Friday.

According to Insp Birengka, the two women were bashed up and taken captive last Tuesday night by relatives of a former school teacher who passed away a few weeks ago.

"The two women were rounded up and taken to Lopele village after they were suspected of practicing sorcery and blamed for the death of the former teacher, who was from

Lopele village," he told the *Post-Courier*.

After torturing them for three days and nights, they were finally beheaded.

According to a police report, the women were badly assaulted and received deep knife and axe wounds to their bodies.

Insp Birengka said police had tried their very best to intervene and mediate, but things did not work out the way police wanted as the Lopele villagers ruled out any intervention by police or mediation by church representatives and village

leaders within the area.

"We even organised a customary mediation team from Arawa to go and talk with the Lopele villagers but this too was turned down. We managed to collect some knives and axes from the villagers but were threatened and we had to retreat from the area," Insp Birengka said.


He said police had to take a cautious stand since day one and did not want to resort to force as the whole situation could have turned nasty with more lives at stake.

They tried all they could by opting for a peaceful resolution through mediation, but this did not work out.

As a result, the two women were beheaded on the spot and in the presence of the police.

Insp Birengka told *Post-Courier* after returning from Lopele that the villagers had shown utter disregard for law and justice and beheaded the two in the presence of the police.

A very disappointed Insp Birengka blasted his senior officers in Buka.



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Time for leaders to condemn sorcery killings

PAPUA New Guineans do actually live in the 21st Century and use mobile phones, watch television, surf the net and drive to work in cars - we basically have technology at our finger tips. Just like other members of the global community we have become technological beings and respect the rights of others here and abroad to choose and to enjoy all that this world has to offer. After all that is enshrined in our Constitution and the law of the land is explicit in that there must be respect for the dignity of every individual. Respect for the rule of law and the rights of others are pillars of a modern-day democracy and we would like to think Papua New Guinea (PNG) falls under this category.

But when we hear stories of Papua New Guineans being accused of sorcery and burnt alive in a somewhat public spectacle, we recoil with fear and disgust and ask whether we should indeed be proud of ourselves as a nation of individuals who respect our fellow human beings and believe that justice is dispensed in a legally constituted court of law and not a kangaroo court chaired by individuals misled by superstition and trickery.

It is in this light we condemn in the strongest terms possible yesterday's gruesome burning of a woman suspected of sorcery in the Western Highlands capital, Mt Hagen. It is murder and we appeal to the Western Highlands police to immediately arrest and charge the perpetrators, at the top of their list should be the 'witch doctor' who claimed the woman and two others from Gumine, Chimbu Province caused the death of a six-year-old boy. Witch doctors and the so-called 'glass man' are nothing but con artists whose claims to possess magical powers are a sham designed to prey on unsuspecting Papua New Guineans.

Tragically, this is not the first sorcery-related killing in a Highlands province as human rights watchdogs Amnesty International and Human Rights Watch wrote to the PNG Government in 2008 to express concerns at similar killings. Their concerns at that time came on the back of 50 reported deaths in 2008 and the killing of another two in similar circumstances a year later.

The photographing of yesterday's brutal act by the crowd (including school children), without making moves to stop and condemn the murderers' actions, points to a bigger danger of ordinary Papua New Guineans accepting this callous killing as normal and this methodology of dispensing justice as acceptable.

The frequency in the occurrence of this barbaric act warrants the intervention of our political leaders, especially from the Highlands region where there has reportedly been an increase in similar cases in recent years. They must come out condemning this act and appeal to those who witnessed the crime to come forward and give information to police, which would lead to the arrest of the perpetrators.

Work by the PNG Constitutional and Law Reform Commission to repeal the Sorcery Act, which human rights groups believe is a key factor behind the 'prosecution' of alleged sorcerers and witchcraft, should also be fast-tracked and the necessary legislation put to parliament for this archaic law to be abolished once and for all.

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Tsunami warning cancelled

By NELLIE SETEPANO

PAPUA New Guinea received tsunami warnings and alerts yesterday after a major 8.0 magnitude earthquake struck off Solomon Islands. Almost two hours after the warning, the Pacific Tsunami Warning Centre (PTWC) in Hawaii cancelled its warning and watch alerts for warning previously issued for Solomon Islands, Vanuatu, Nauru, PNG, Tuvalu, New Caledonia, Kosrae, Fiji, Kiribati and Wallis and Futuna.

The PTWC also cancelled

the watch previously issued for Marshall Islands, Howland and Baker, Phoenix, Tokelau, Samoa, Kermadec Islands, New Zealand, American Samoa, Tonga, Australia, Niue, Cook Islands, Indonesia, Wake Island, Chuuk, Jarvis Island, Guam, Northern Marianas, Palmyra Island, Yap, Johnston Island, Minamitorishima and Belau. A small tsunami wave measuring 0.9 metres reached parts of the Solomon Islands and watches were in effect as far afield as Hawaii, the PTWC said. According to US Geological Survey the quake

struck at 01:12 GMT near the Santa Cruz Islands in the Solomons, which have been hit by a series of strong tremors over the past week, at a depth of 5.8km.

The quake struck at a very shallow depth of only five kilometres and was located 347km east of Kira Kira in the Solomons. The Centre confirmed a tsunami was generated after the quake.

At approximately 1:16pm, the tsunami caused damages to villages south and west of Lata on the main island of Santa Cruz Islands.

The National Weather Service in Port Moresby issued warnings and alerts for the New Guinea Islands, Milne Bay and Central provinces and the Momase region. Reacting to the alerts, PNG Ports temporarily shut down all its ports in the Northern region at the time of warning. All operations were back to normal after the warning was cancelled. Also Milne Bay's disaster office wasted no time going on air through its provincial NBC station to warn coastal communities and outer islands of the impending tsunami.

Tei: Perpetrators are "uncivilised criminals"

FROM PAGE 1

Relatives of the boy also from Enga, were suspicious of the cause of his death and they sought the assistance of a so-called witch doctor.

The witch doctor reportedly identified the victim, together with two other elderly women from Gumine, Chimbu province, as the ones who had killed the boy through sorcery. Eyewitness Henry Mamp said the relatives rounded up the three women early yesterday morning and interrogated them, using heated iron rods and other weapons.

"They assaulted the three women and asked them to confess. The two women from Gumine blamed the Engan

woman, saying she was the one who had removed the heart of the child and shared it with them," Mr Mamp said. The relatives also assaulted the two women from Chimbu

How can people be so stupid to act in such a barbaric manner ...

Teddy Tei
Highlands Police Commander

then proceeded to bind the Enga woman, doused her with petrol and set her alight. Highlands divisional police

commander Teddy Tei condemned the brutal killing, describing the perpetrators as "uncivilised criminals" who will face the full force of the law. "How can people be so stupid to act in such a barbaric manner on mere suspicion of sorcery?" an angry ACP Tei said.

He said all those responsible will be arrested and charged, including the witch doctor. This is not the first time for a Highlands province to report a sorcery-related killing.

According to Amnesty International (AI), there were more than 50 such deaths in 2008, and in 2009, a 40-year-old man from Unggai-Bena in the Eastern Highlands was hacked to death after a village court found him guilty of sorcery and sentenced him to death. In the same year, a group of

men stripped a woman naked and burnt her alive at the Kerebug rubbish dump outside Mount Hagen after she was accused of witchcraft.

In January 2009, Amnesty International (AI) and Human Rights Watch sent letters to Justice Minister Dr Allan Marat and Police Commissioner Gari Baki expressing concerns about sorcery-related killings. PNG's Constitutional and Law Reform Commission was working to repeal the Sorcery Act, after human rights groups reported an increase in false accusations of sorcery which led to killings.

But it is not known if the commission has completed its work and submitted its recommendations to government.

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Tender closes on Friday 1st March 2013.

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Endorsed by
Leslie Alu
Acting City Manager

16 Post-Courier, Friday, March 1, 2013

feature

www.postcourier.com.pg

The ugly face of sorcery

By DAVID MURI
Features Writer

WE hear of an infinite fire burning to persecute those who commit a slightest of sin in their lives. And according to the Bible, that will happen after the Judgment Day trial to be presided by God alone acting as a sole jury. But in PNG, people are publicly mocked, ridiculed and thrust into raging flames on mere suspicion by maters armed with weapons from machetes to bush knives to red-hot iron rods.

Their crimes? Sorcery. There is no factual evidence if sorcery is actually practiced here in the 21st century, however many people, especially vulnerable women are subjected to sorcery-related atrocities.

The torturers continue to justify their bloodbaths based on findings from kangaroo courts.

The juries behind these "jungle justice" are so-called glassman (witch doctors) whose fabricated verdicts are executed by knife-wielding assessors who madly quench their vengeances on the spot without providing the accused breathing to appeal, or say goodbye to loved ones. Sorcery-related killings are widespread in the Highlands region with Eastern Highlands and Chimbu accounting for the biggest number of casualties.

The year 2009 saw biggest massacres. Former provincial police commanders in these provinces Teddy Tei and Joseph Tondop reported of over 50 killings in their respective provinces. Both men admitted many cases were unaccounted.

These atrocities have attracted international condemnation from Amnesty International.

It has called on the PNG government and its law enforcement agencies to "act now to end the rash" of killings related to allegations of sorcery.

The upsurge saw anxious government moves to review the law on sorcery spearheaded by former Kundiawa-Gembogl MP and chairman of Constitutional Law Reform Commission, Joe Mek Teime.

This review was stalled after Mek Teime's death in April, 2011. Current Attorney General Kerenga Kua announced this week this review paper will be tabled in parliament in the next sitting next month.

While stronger laws are yet to be enacted to curtail the scourge, many innocent people are bleeding daily in the worst cruel scenarios.

The unabated trend continues and has infiltrated Western Highlands, a society that did not value sorcery as a culture.

Indiscriminate killings occur daily in the province's outlying districts but do not receive much limelight due to various factors.

And it is slowly plaguing Mt Hagen city, PNG's third largest metropolis. The burning of young mother Kepari Leniata at the city's populous Warakum suburb is a classic example of a society overridden by sorcery beliefs despite Western influences.

These influences overshadow education and Christianity. Leniata was just 20. She left two infants, one just under eight months old. The poor kids will be scorned for life as people might see them as children of a sorcerer.

Their agonies will be worse than death.

As always, Leniata's brutality was severely condemned by wide range of society including Papua Minister, Peter O'Neill, the US Embassy, the

influential Catholic Church, the Lutheran Church, the United Nations and various sectors of law enforcement agencies including police.

"We add our voice to those of Papua New Guinean religious and civil society leaders who have spoken out against the brutality inflicted upon Ms Leniata," the US embassy said.

"There is no possible justification for this sort of violence. We hope that appropriate resources are devoted to identifying, prosecuting, and punishing those responsible for Ms Leniata's murder."

The burning was also widely reported in overseas media and its disturbing images posted on social networks.

Mt Hagen has been on the spotlight lately for some gruesome killings. Locals are devotedly embracing to a tradition that had never been natural but driven by influences.

Back on Tuesday January 6, 2009, I exclusively reported a similar incident as that of Leniata's at Kerubug Dump on the outskirts of Mt Hagen.

Below was my front page report on the *Post-Courier* the next day headlined "Burnt to death".

She could have been engaged in an extra marital affair, accused of performing sorcery or blamed for passing the HIV/AIDS virus to one of the suspects.

These were suspicions spreading like bushfire at Kerubug Dump in Mt Hagen where a woman was burnt alive, because many say these crimes warrant the death penalty in the Highlands.

The young woman, believed to be between 16 and 20 years of age, was burnt alive after being blind-folded, both her limbs and parts of the abdomen tied to a piece of log and her mouth strapped and gagged with rags.

According to eyewitnesses, a truck loaded with five used truck tyres and firewood drove into the dump site at around 2am yesterday.

Jessie James, 21, of Wabag who lives in the nearby settlement, said the suspects then lined up the tyres, poured petrol over them and the firewood with the woman lying over it and set her ablaze.

"The girl was stripped naked and could not shout for assistance or resist as she was tightly strapped and her mouth gagged," James said.

Highlands divisional commander Simon Kauba said he was lost for words and did not know how to describe the killing.

"I don't know the right words to describe it but its barbaric... can you find the best word to describe such acts which are rampant here?" Mr Kauba said.

He has appealed to the public who may have any knowledge of the planning and execution of the burning to come forward and report to police immediately.

No one, as in many similar cases, has ever been arrested and charged. Most killers are still on the run after persecuting many innocent lives.

Those who perished encountered painful deaths while those survived are traumatised for life.

Then in a space three weeks, two other barbaric killings occurred, this time at Togoba and Ban villages. This is an extract from *Post-Courier* of Tuesday February 10, 2009 titled "Sorcery rears its ugly head again".

A man is recovering at the Mount Hagen General Hospital after his son was burnt to death on Sunday in the

CONTINUE ON PAGE 17

The ugly face of sorcery



A YOUNG woman burnt to death in Mt Hagen last month because of suspicions of sorcery.

FROM PAGE 16

WESTERN Highlands Province after they were accused of practising sorcery. Mount Hagen police station commander Peter Rowari said police were able to save the elderly man but they were unable to do anything for the son whose body was taken to the hospital morgue.

Mr Rowari termed the incident as "very brutal, savage and primitive" and must be condemned in the strongest terms. He said the whole community seemed to have passed judgment on the family and sentenced them to death by burning the son and attempting to kill the father who was eventually saved by the police.

He said terms like "jungle justice" were used by movie directors in movies in today's digital world but this was happening for real in Western Highlands Province. The PSC said the elderly man, Plak Dowa, was alleged to have killed Pora Kunjil by sorcery. The son who was burnt to death was an adult, identified as Anis Plak. He said this is the third recent incident related to sorcery in the Mount Hagen Central area and the whole of Western Highlands Province.

The first incident happened at Togoba where a Chimbu woman married to a Western Highlands man was set alight and the second was the recent burning of a young woman last month at the Kerebug rubbish dump outside the Highlands city. Meanwhile, he said police were investigating the latest incident and hope to make some arrests soon. No culprit has been arrested and successfully prosecuted in these cases either. One year on and I got an early morning call from Ulya, in the Anglimp South Waghi district. I was begged to rush and capture pictures of a woman thrown into scorching flames. The first question I asked the caller was: "Was she accused of sorcery?" And his answer was yes. Here is what I reported in the *Post-Courier* of Wednesday September 1, 2010, after visiting the site and witnessing the best segment of the episode. Because of lack of resistance from relevant authorities on previous reports I accounted the gruesome act with this title "Horrific sorcery killing in WHP" in a desperate attempt to at least to grab some much-needed attention.

Can the government or somebody do something? That is the question citizens in Western Highlands are asking following the death of a woman - killed in the most horrific manner over sorcery allegations on Monday afternoon that left her four children living with relatives in fear.

Their mother was tied with barbed wires, publicly crucified and later burnt to ashes in a village on Monday afternoon.

Reports say their father had so far escaped from the killing as he feared for his own life. The barbaric killing took place at Kontena village in Anglimp sub district. The *Post-Courier* visited the crime scene recently and confirmed the incident.

The woman, a migrant settler from Mt Au, in East Kambia, a remote area in South Waghi, was allegedly accused of killing a young man from the Kuli Nanggen tribe through sorcery. According to relatives of the dead man, the woman confronted him on Sunday over K10 he had borrowed from her three weeks ago. His younger brother Petrus Kume said suspicions were raised when the man complained of severe stomach aches after the woman had left without being repaid. Mr Kume, a councillor and former deputy president in the Anglimp L.L.G, said his brother died early Monday morning. Relatives immediately surrounded the victim's house, captured her and tied her up, using logs and barbed wires and displayed her in public, similar to a crucifixion.

Witnesses say she was badly beaten; her left arm chopped off and went through extensive interrogation before being taken to the roadside where she was burnt alive using petrol, logs and used tires. Mr Kume claimed the woman confessed to placing his brother's heart beside a creek. When the *Post-Courier* visited, only parts of her intestines were covered with raw earth.

It was terrible. Despite all these reports, nothing is done to save the weak. The so-called glassman are as guilty as the executors in these barbaric killings. Many people are victimized out of their superstitious findings. It is not only deaths that lead to such retaliatory killings.

Many are brutalized after being suspected of feeding off the dead. A classical case was in 2007 when a woman was burnt alive using petrol at Koglamp village. She was accused of trespassing the burial site of an airline pilot who died in an Airlink plane crash in West New Britain.

Relatives accused the woman of trying to dig up the corpse. She was dragged from the main road by vigilantes watching over the grave. She died later at Mt Hagen General Hospital from severe beatings and burns.

Strategies are being analysed to eradicate this living syndrome. Even if it is late, it is pleasing to hear a conference is being planned in Canberra in June to look at ways to address the issue. It will be led by Dr Richard Eves, a senior anthropologist at the University of Australia.

Dr Eves told Radio NZ they are keen to map out a research agenda on how to address this problem, adding they wish to develop a research that can actually develop culturally-sensitive and culturally-relevant interventions to address sorcery as a social problem. While these remain rhetorics, more and more people are tormented in the bushes, in their homes and on the streets, with no one to fend for who will end the fear and terror? Someone must intervene for the oppressed, suppressed and depressed. And it must be sooner than later!

Email murid@spp.com.pg for comments and feedbacks on this article.

BSP BEAT

news and information bulletin from BSP

Banking for Students - The new Sumatin Account

BSP has a new bank account designed just for students on the go. The new Sumatin Account will get you up to speed on everything you need for school - textbooks, printing of assignments, and allowances from parents too.

Going to a high school, college or university brings all kinds of expenses. Before you pack your bags for school, ensure you know how you're going to handle your finances by signing up for a new Sumatin Account.

A parent starting your child off right at college doesn't just mean buying him or her the latest laptop. With our Sumatin Account, your son or daughter will be managing their own day-to-day finances. Whether your child will be living at home or at school, choosing the Sumatin Account is an essential step in your child's financial independence.

In this column we'll give you a brief overview of why all students should sign up today for the Sumatin Account.

Accessibility and Affordability

The good news is that the Sumatin Account is actually quite attractive when compared to our traditional Kundu Account. The reason for this is simple: When a student opens their first account, he or she could be a customer for life. This does not mean all accounts are created equal. Student accounts should be measured by accessibility and affordability.

Accessibility: Our Sumatin Account is tailored for Students on the go and provides convenient access to funds via BSP's Electronic Channels - EFTPOS, ATM through the use of the specially designed Sumatin Card and through Mobile and Internet Banking. Internet Banking and a Visa Debit Card will be made available upon student's request. The Sumatin Account is a Transaction Account for Students who can have access to their funds to pay for their day to day needs or to purchase school materials at a reduced cost.

Students can use our Electronic Channels for fund transfers, balance enquires, viewing of transaction history and doing mobile phone top-ups. The main advantage with a nationwide bank like BSP is just that: we have many locations across the country. For many parents, it is critical to find a bank with a presence both at home and on campus. BSP has 41 branches, 275 ATMs and 9600 EFTPOS devices nationwide. Our Mobile and Internet Banking is available 24/7. And if students have issues, we have a Customer Service Centre that is available 24/7 and can be reached on 320 1212, 7030 1212 or by email: servicesbsp@bsp.com.pg

Affordability: This Account is designed as a "pay as you go" transaction account, making it flexible and suitable for students without the inconvenience of having to pay for accumulated month end fees. Some of the features include: Transaction Account with reduced fees, No minimum balance requirement, No monthly maintenance fee, First Deposit of K5.00 and Pay-as-you-go transaction fees.

Standing Order: A parent/guardian can set up a standing order to do periodic payments to the Sumatin Account. For example; a specific amount can be paid into the Sumatin Account each month.

What Students will need to open a Sumatin Account? Valid School ID card, Confirmation letter from School, Current Passport, Birth Certificate, Certificate of Baptism or School certificate. **Who is eligible?** Students between the ages of 15 and 25 years attending Secondary/High School, University/Tertiary, including Overseas/International Students

SPECIAL INTRODUCTORY OFFER: As a special introductory offer, the bank service charge fee will be FREE for airtime phone top-ups via Mobile Banking and ATMs.

ACCOUNT OPENING IN PORT MORESBY: To launch the new Sumatin Account, BSP will be opening accounts for students tomorrow (Saturday March 2nd) at Vision City, Level 2, Paradise Cinema foyer between 10am and 2pm. The first 100 students to open a Sumatin Account will get a MOVIE VOUCHER. Don't forget to come with the required documents. For more information visit our Face Book Page.



Sorcery ordeal

■ Elder women harassed ■ Ten houses burnt down ■ Families interrogated

By DAVID LORNIÉ

TWO sisters who escaped captivity in the Bougainville sorcery murder case have spoken exclusively of

their terrifying ordeal to the *Post-Courier* from their secret hideout. The two, who asked not to be named, were with their families when, at 12.39am, April 2, over 20

armed men entered their house at Tadorima Village, Bana District, and began assaulting them. The sisters' mother was later killed and their auntie, with her

two daughters, are currently being held in an undisclosed location whilst negotiations continue for their release. The situation on the ground is still

tense and negotiators are working hard to achieve the release of the three. The two sisters told of their harrowing ordeal.

CONTINUED PAGE 2

Naru enjoys horse ride

UN keen on youth involvement:

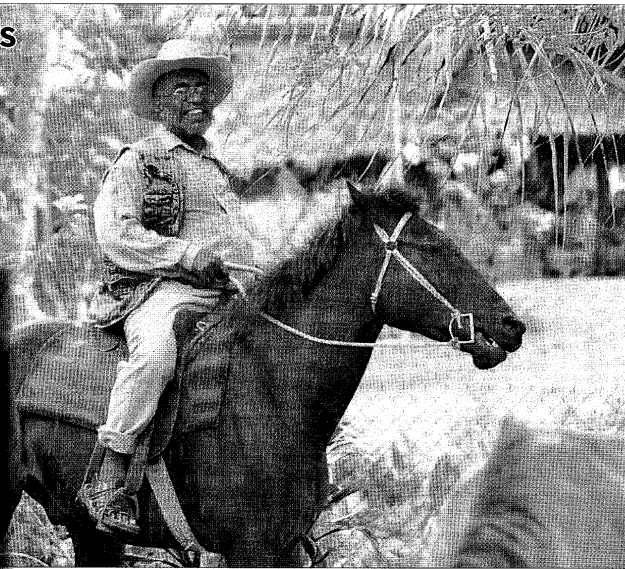
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PNG govt owes ABG K188m:

Page 7

Recovery of firearms:

Page 8



MOROBE Governor Kelly Naru relaxing at his home village Irome outside Lae on his family horse " Kasiga".
 Picture by FRANKO NEBAS

Minister Swire express concerns on women

BRITISH Minister of State and Commonwealth Office Mr Hugo Swire has expressed concern over violent killing of Papua New Guinea women, especially those suspected of practicing sorcery.

Minister Swire, who is in Port Moresby for the Commonwealth Youth Ministers Meeting, met this with Prime Minister Peter O'Neill for bilateral discussions on a number of issues, including violence against woman, gender equality and strengthening relations between the two countries.

This is Minister Swire's first visit to the region and he is excited about it and happy to be staying three days, which is quite a long time in any one spot.

During the discussions, Minister Swire expressed concern about the beheading of the two women in the previous week in Bougainville on suspicions of sorcery.

He asked if sorcery killing is an accepted practice and if the government is doing anything about it, as well as about general violence against women, saying these are human rights violations that is of major concern.

Prime Minister O'Neill told Mr Swire that the government is looking at the issue from the point of view of legislative changes.

CONTINUED PAGE 2

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MEMBER

Spotlight on PNG

THE spotlight has been on Papua New Guinea this week, for both good reasons as well as bad. We are privileged to have been the hosts for several very important conferences and visits by dignitaries from the Pacific region, as well as far afield.

These gatherings include the 8th Commonwealth Youth Ministers Meeting, the 59th PNG-Australia Business Forum and the State Visit by Fiji Interim Prime Minister Commodore Frank Voreqe Bainimarama, accompanied by a high-level trade delegation.

The importance of the Commonwealth Youth Ministers Meeting, with the theme "Young People at the Centre of Sustainable Development", cannot be under-estimated.

As a rapidly developing country, the problems, issues and challenges of young people pose probably one of the greatest development challenges for PNG, but young people also hold untold promises for the future. And this is what we should be focussing on.

That is why this important meeting of the Commonwealth is being held here. We look forward to the outcomes that can set the pace for a youth revolution, not only in PNG but the Commonwealth as well.

The focus of the PNG-Australia Business Forum is infrastructure. It is unfortunate that successive governments since Independence 37 years ago have allowed PNG's transport infrastructure - roads, ports, wharves, airports and airstrips - as well as vital public buildings like hospitals, aid posts, classrooms and teachers' houses to deteriorate into such a state of disrepair that it will take hundreds of billions of kina to fix everything.

The good news is that the O'Neill-Dion Government has made infrastructure as one of its policy development pillars and contributions from our development partners like this important annual forum will help us with this vital agenda.

Another good news for PNG this week is the visit by Fiji PM Bainimarama and his high-powered trade delegation, at the invitation of PM O'Neill who had visited Fiji earlier. This reciprocal State visit underscores the important bilateral relations between the region's two biggest Melanesian states.

But Bainimarama's visit also raised some concerns. British Minister of State and Commonwealth Office, Hugo Swire, questioned the timing of the Fiji PM's visit when the Commonwealth Youth Ministers Meeting was taking place here. He told PM O'Neill that many countries were still concerned about the lack of democratic processes and deferral of elections in Fiji.

PM O'Neill answer is that while most countries turned away from Fiji and adopted an isolationist policy following the military coup, PNG has kept its door open. He said: "The PNG Government decided (then) that it would play the role of the elder brother in the region and assist Bainimarama toward the process of elections."

Minister Swire also raised UK and the Commonwealth concerns with respect to violent killings of women in PNG, especially those related to sorcery and gender equality, among others, that portrays a very bad image for PNG internationally.

The murder of an Australian tourist and pack raper of his girlfriend in Mt Hagen also put the spotlight on PNG. Mr O'Neill and others have condemned the killing.

He wanted to know if women were being given opportunities

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Aid programs a major focus for Govt

By DAVID MURI

THE O'Neill-Dion Government is more focused and committed to a major development agenda than ever before, with a major shift on addressing aid programs among other initiatives.

"We are going to take a major step forward and change the way we do business," Secretary for National Planning and Monitoring Dr Peter Kora said yesterday.

While opening the Government's Medium Term Development Plan (MTDP) review workshop at the National Research Institute (NRI) in Port Moresby, Dr Kora said it was time the Government's priorities were refined and implemented at a bigger scale to have maximum impact.

He told the MTDP review taskforce team and advisors that the 2011-2013 MTDP was the Government's expenditure plan and it was necessary to collect realistic costing and

provide key indicators for programs and projects in each sector.

He said the review team was to identify development aspects for the five-year plan, urging them to do realistic costing that would trickle down in the 2014 development budget.

"A project might have a life span of two years or five years so it is important to look at the project's life cycle and do an assessment accordingly," secretary Kora said.

He also stressed that aid funding to PNG would now take a different approach where minor projects would no longer be entertained.

The PNG Government was focused on major impact projects that would affect the majority of the population in any one place and aid donors spreading funds thinly to small segments of the community would be discouraged.

"If development partners can commit to one major impact project at a time, the PNG Government could do another

and that should help better address development issues in the country," he said.

Dr Kora said it was not economical for an aid donor to support a small water supply project in a remote village of 200 people and asked if they could undertake major projects that could affect a wider section of the community.

He said MTDP was to address major projects and any other plans and projects by any organisation or sector should be a five-year plan and should be adopted under the MTDP for delivery.

He said the review team was an important focus for the Government placing its trust and confidence in the team, which was comprised of senior advisors from the Prime Minister's office, National Planning, Treasury and expert advisors from different sectors within the country and abroad.

Deputy Secretary Joe Kapa also praised the review team for getting the Government's

policies and directives off the ground.

He said the National Executive Council, including Planning Minister Charles Abel really wanted to see changes happen and the MTDP review would set the pace for actual development to take place.

Mr Kapa said: "We are going down to re-engage sectors and you are the experts that can give us a workable plan so we can give meaning to the MTDP review."

The two-day workshop was for advisors and participants to run through the MTDP structure and work out ways to develop a best outcome for PNG.

The team will be travelling to the four regions and NCD starting May 6 and request provincial governors and administrators to have their working teams on the ground to feed the review team on the progress or otherwise of development projects and programs in their respective provinces and districts.

Bill to address violence ICAC Bill defended

FROM PAGE 1

"IN relation to violence against women, I acknowledged that it is a major issue that has its roots in our traditions but a bill is on its way to Parliament as we speak that will address this matter and is very much likely to receive majority support," the Prime Minister said.

On gender issues, Minister Swire expressed concern that with sorcery killing, it is women who are being victimised.

He wanted to know if women were being given opportunities

for job openings and in parliament.

Mr O'Neill said it was taking a while but women were rising to the executive level in the public service and with a number of women heading Public Service departments and there were three women now in parliament, one of them in the Cabinet.

It was suggested that if the Family Protection Bill becomes law, PNG may require technical assistance in devising its implementation strategies.

Minister Swire's portfolio covers a wide region.

PRIME Minister's Chief of Staff Ambassador Isaac Lupari says the Independent Commission Against Corruption (ICAC) Bill was dealt with in the same manner as all other pieces of legislations that go to Parliament.

Mr Lupari was responding to Deputy Opposition Leader Sam Basil's claims which were reported in the *Post-Courier*, saying that the Office of PM was involved in some sinister way in the drafting of the proposed ICAC Bill. He says Mr Basil's comments were irresponsible and had no basis whatsoever.

"Mr Basil should make sure he knows what he is talking about before he issues public statements, particularly when his statements smear reputations," Mr Lupari said.

"As Chief of Staff in the Office of the Prime Minister, I can assure all Papua New Guineans that if Mr Basil had bothered to check with me prior to making his statement to the press, I could have corrected his misconceived views."

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Bad health indices for women and kids

THE rates of under-nutrition in Papua New Guinea are amongst the highest in the Asia-Pacific region, according to the World Health Organisation (WHO).

WHO says 48 percent of PNG children under five years are stunted (50 percent rural; 35 percent urban), indicating a very high public health problem as classified by the WHO.

This applies for children aged 0-6 months; 6-24 months and 24-60 months.

Wasting and underweight rates amongst children under five years are also "very high" according to international standards, with 16.2 percent of children wasted and 20 percent of them underweight.

WHO says compounding wide-spread under-nutrition are micronutrient deficiencies: almost half of all children aged six months to five years are anaemic and a quarter are vitamin A deficient, both indicating a severe public health problem for PNG.

In women, anaemia is a

moderate public health problem at 36 percent in non-pregnant women of child bearing age. Provinces such as the Eastern and Western Highlands, West Sepik, Milne Bay, Morobe and Western province carry a particularly high burden of both under-nutrition and micronutrient deficiencies.

With the adoption of modern lifestyles, especially in urban centers of PNG, the country is now faced with the double burden of malnutrition.

In addition to the high rates of under-nutrition, overweight or obesity and non-communicable diseases are an emerging issue too.

Findings of the 2005 NNS indicate PNG overweight women and men with Body Mass Index of 25.0-29.9kg/m² was 17.4 percent and 16.1 percent respectively.

The prevalence of malnutrition is a key contributor to the unacceptably high rates of infant and maternal mortality.

At 45 deaths per 1,000 live births (2011), PNG has the highest rate of infant mortality in the Pacific. Similarly, the rate of maternal mortality is amongst the highest in the region at 230 deaths per 100,000 live births (2010).

High anaemia rates in women have direct implications on maternal deaths, contributing to 40 percent of perinatal deaths worldwide and the infant is at greater risk of prematurity and low birth weight.

In addition to directly contributing to the burden of morbidity and mortality, malnutrition in children propagates the intergenerational cycle of stunting, by which children who are stunted are at greater risk of becoming stunted adolescents and adults.

Stunted women are more likely to have birth complications and give birth to low birth weight babies, who in turn are at a greater risk of infant death and malnutrition throughout

their lives, placing them at greater risk of developing non-communicable diseases later in life.

This further compounds the impact of malnutrition on productivity and the potential economic development of families, communities and the country.

Addressing the unacceptable rates of malnutrition in women and children in PNG is critical to achieving PNG's targets for the Millennium Development Goals (targets 4 and 5) and reaching the goals outlined in the PNG Development Strategic Plan 2010-2030 and Vision 2050.

Furthermore, scaling up targeted and appropriate nutrition interventions to address malnutrition is essential to the realisation of the National Health Plan 2011-2020, specifically reducing malnutrition in children under 5 years of age; decrease neonatal deaths and morbidity and mortality from non-communicable diseases.

the drum



A MRS MAN IN THE HOUSE

OUR Sports Editor went to the HR office to get a letter of ID for the Aussie High Commission for a visa to travel to Brisbane with the PNG Pukpukus rugby team. Everything went well. It was more a cut and paste job. It was printed and as all good Editors do, he read it but there was something wrong at the end. The HR officer signed off as Mrs and not Mr. He pointed this out and it was quickly changed. Holden took over from Mrs Vagi Garietz and left the Mrs on during the cut and paste. We wonder if he has corrected this on previous letters as Mrs Garietz left PC about a month ago.

RIGHT ON THE MONEY

OUR friends in the Autonomous Region of Bougainville and Southern Highlands Province have already expressed their sentiments regarding Asians doing certain types of business in PNG. Since PNG is not isolated from the world, it supports a Chinese investor to PNG, Mr Wang's view that "Trade store business is not an investment, it is too small to be seen as an investment. This is not real investment. It would only be fair to the locals and investors for the investor to invest in the country through specialised whole sale supply or manufacturing industry while the locals distribute this products at the retail outlets. In that way the investor address capacity areas that the locals may lack, (if there are any) while also providing them business opportunity." Well said, Mr Wang.

PNG-UK TIES

THE ties between PNG and UK and historic and the two countries have built on this to maintain, promote and develop it to fit today's modern shrinking world. This was highlighted by visiting British Minister of State and Commonwealth Office, Hugo Swire, in his meeting with PM Peter O'Neill and on other occasions.

TRADE AND RUGBY LEAGUE

MINISTER Swire: "In 2012, more than 120 million pounds worth of goods from PNG were exported to the UK. Not to mention our import of your finest rugby league players in UK Super League. Distance matters less in the modern world. Species and commodities like tea, coffee, palm oil, shellfish and gold from PNG and the Pacific region are brought and consumed in the UP."

COFFEE AND CHOCOLATE

MINISTER Swire again: "The finest produce from across the globe finds its way to Fortnum and Mason. Her majesty the Queen's Grocer, in Piccadilly, and their shelves are stocked with Papua New Guinean products like coffee and chocolate. Such is their universal appeal that the UK is the second biggest importer of PNG produce in the European Union."

P. ENGEE
thedrum@spp.com.pg

Women terrorised

FROM PAGE 1

"On the day of the incident we heard that people were coming to kill us," said one sister.

"We didn't know why but when they came they said that we practiced sorcery. There were children and babies present."

"The whole family was there. They came with knives, axes, guns. They started threatening us, hitting us with their weapons and breaking the house."

One of the family's male relatives had been blamed for causing a death by sorcery. The attackers terrorised the women in an attempt to force them to give up the accused sorcerer.

"They told us 'get your (relative) and we will let you go'."

But the women did not know the man's location. The beatings continued.

The police arrived outside the house but being outnumbered, they were unable to do anything. They attempted to negotiate with the attackers but the attackers did not yield.

Outnumbered, and fearing for

their safety, the police left the scene.

"Once the police left, everything got worse," said the sister.

"They first attacked the older ladies. They said 'you killed this man'. But we could not talk - (we felt) it was safer to say nothing."

"They started attacking the older women even more then. Everyone was screaming, the kids. We were running around like chickens and dogs - getting beaten."

"It was just continuous," said the sister. "We were going to be killed - all of us, even the babies."

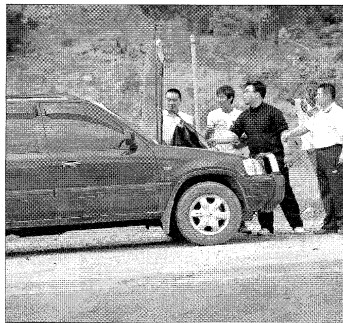
The nightmare continued until 10 in the morning, by which time the sisters' mother, late Helen Rumball, lay bleeding on the floor from multiple wounds.

Then the attackers gathered their victims together and took them outside.

"We were gun-pointed. Then they put flames in our buildings."

Ten family houses were torched.

Car Troubles



WHAT'S worse than having your car cough up to a stop by the freeway? OMG! Your neighbours will see you and soon the story will spread. But our friends here have to move on, so they're at least having a go at fixing the darn machine.

Pioneer CAR ACCESSORIES

<p>Coaxial Speakers 300W 227899</p> <p style="text-align: right; font-weight: bold;">K22.30</p>	<p>Coaxial Speakers 350W 227900</p> <p style="text-align: right; font-weight: bold;">K26.40</p>	<p>Coaxial Speakers 220W 1961</p> <p style="text-align: right; font-weight: bold;">K26.75</p>	<p>Car CD Turner With Front Aux-In 220985</p> <p style="text-align: right; font-weight: bold;">K32.65</p>	<p>Car CD Turner With Front USB, iPod/iPhone Direct Control & Bright White LCD 227896</p> <p style="text-align: right; font-weight: bold;">K41.60</p>	<p>Car CD Turner With Front USB, iPod/iPhone Direct Control & Multi-colour LCD 227897</p> <p style="text-align: right; font-weight: bold;">K59.50</p>
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Sisters tell of escape

By DAVID LORNIÉ

TWO sisters and their families who escaped from their captors into the thick Bougainville jungle, told yesterday of their daring flight.

The sisters were being led from their torched houses with other family members to a nearby village where they were to be interrogated on a charge of sorcery causing the death of a local man.

They decided to attempt an escape after one of their armed captors indicated the sisters' husbands were going to be killed. The sisters and their husbands signalled to each other with facial expressions and eye movements to indicate they would attempt to get away.

"We were at the back (of the line being led) - because of the children we lagged behind," the sisters said. "I spoke to the guards behind me and told them we wanted to drink water."

It was approaching midday and the sun was hot.

"We said the babies, the kids needed a drink."

"I was scared, already we knew we were going to die, because those were the only words from the guard."

The guards allowed the two sisters and their family to stop at the Administration building to use the tap.

Once at the Admin building tap the first family took the opportunity to escape into the jungle. The guards, occupied with the other captives, did not notice.

Shortly afterwards, the second family ran into the bush.

The two families separately forged their way through the rainforest.

"It was a long way through thick jungle and swamps," said the second sister. "Up and down hills, (at times) we fell with our babies."

"We were running, knowing people would follow us."

During their jungle escape they ran through villages but no help was offered.

It was a long way through thick jungle and swamps

...
A SISTER THAT ESCAPED Bougainville

"They were scared and couldn't help us."

The first family emerged from the jungle on the highway. From there they made their way under cover of roadside bush to a relative's area.

They used their mobile phone to text the sister who had escaped after them.

"It was our opportunity to use our mobile phones," said the second sister. "They texted us 'yu stap we' (where are you?). We called them and got their location."

The two families eventually met up and were hidden by relatives in a garden camp. It was about 7pm - they had been in the jungle for around five hours.

Their relatives found a vehicle and the two families taken to a safe haven.

Police recover stolen firearms

By TODAGIA KELOLA

EXCELLENT police work has resulted in the recovery of all firearms that were stolen from the Firearms Registry at Police Headquarters early this week.

Also, arrests will be made soon on the suspects.

This was revealed by the Police Commissioner Toani Kulunga yesterday.

He said since the incident, NCD Police under the command of the Metropolitan Commander Andy Bawa have been working tirelessly around the clock and yesterday they were able to recover all the firearms that were stolen.

A total of 15 handguns, a pump action shotgun and ammunitions were recovered in two separate locations of the city.

Some were located at Morata settlement while the rest were recovered at Five-Mile Ridge

settlement.

"We have very good leads and I believe we will be rounding up suspects soon" said Commissioner Kulunga.

He reported that on initial investigations it was revealed that there were no guards on duty during the early hours of Monday morning, April 15, when the thieves gained entry by breaking through the window of the Community Policing Directorate office which is located on the ground floor of the Police Headquarters building.

They accessed the firearms section by breaking through the main door and stealing the firearms and ammunitions.

He also clarified that it was not an armory that was broken into.

"We do not have an armory here at headquarters."

Two computers from the Community Policing Directorate

were also stolen but were abandoned and later recovered outside the Police Headquarter building.

"The lapse in security at Police Headquarters is currently subject to an internal investigation. I am deeply concerned about what has occurred. This is the first time in the 125 years history of the constabulary that such an incident has taken place. We will investigate this incident thoroughly and ensure that those responsible for the break-in are brought to justice," he said.

"In the meantime, measures are now being taken to beef up the security of our national police headquarters."

Meanwhile, members of the public who have any information on the incident can contact Apollos Terry or Dama Yosia on 7150445 or 76745586 at the CID Break-in squad.



ANDY Bawa (right) with other officers showing the recovered firearms.

Victims of sorcery saga kept safe

By DAVID LORNIÉ

NEGOTIATIONS are continuing for the release of three women being held in an undisclosed location in Bougainville.

The women are currently being kept safe by local veterans who are ensuring no harm comes to them whilst talks continue for their release.

One of the negotiators told this paper that discussions are going forward and there was hope for an early release.

The three women, a mother and two daughters were the victims of a brutal interrogation on sorcery that claimed the life of the older woman's sister.

Her two daughters managed to escape and are currently in hiding.

The interrogators were seeking information on the whereabouts of a relative of the woman who they said had killed a man through sorcery.

They reportedly kept the women

as "bait" to capture the relative.

When the women were taken to the village to be interrogated, the woman's sister Helen Rumbali was left behind on the ground bleeding outside her house the captors had torched.

Her daughters said: "Heavy rain fell and dad put banana leaves to cover her. Villagers walked by and ignored her - they said they were scared (to help)."

Later on the aggrieved captors took late Helen by vehicle to their village for further interrogation.

"Dad came with them and they told him to go but he stayed," the sisters told the *Post-Courier*.

The husband eventually had to leave and his wife was killed, her throat cut.

He was told of his wife's death by a nephew.

One of her daughters said: "They left her in a pool of blood till Friday (three days)."

A negotiating team went into the area and the women are now being cared for whilst their

release is being discussed. The team also arranged for the body of late Helen Rumbali to be released and buried.

A Bougainville Women Community leader involved in current negotiations said late Helen had been an advocate for women's rights as president of the Bana chapter of the Bougainville Women's Federation.

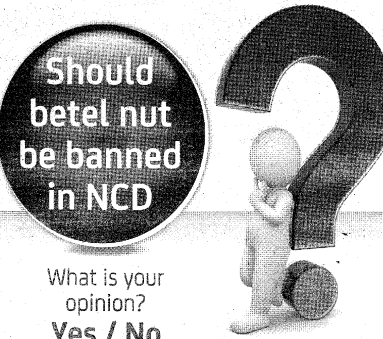
She urged the captors to allow the release of the women being cared for.

"We are talking about human rights," she said. "These women have the right to live to be safe, to be treated in hospital. We are concerned about that. Let them out and let the law take its course."

She said women were a positive influence in the Bougainville region.

"Women are precious in Bougainville. We helped with the peace process and we are in partnership with the men in rebuilding Bougainville."

Text Poll



Should betel nut be banned in NCD
What is your opinion?
Yes / No

Text your opinion to
207



ANNEX 20: DRAFT NATIONAL ACTION PLAN AGAINST SORCERY AND WITCHCRAFT ACCUSATION-RELATED VIOLENCE

Sorcery and Witchcraft Accusation-related violence – Draft National Action Plan

Vision

PNG society is free from sorcery and witchcraft-related violence through strengthened partnerships between relevant stakeholders.

Mission

- To stop accusations leading to sorcery-related violence
- To deal effectively with the perpetrators of violence.
- To address the needs of survivors and to restore security to the communities, within the legal policy frameworks and acceptable values and norms.

Background

In 2013, widespread publicity given to the deaths of two women accused of witchcraft in Papua New Guinea (PNG) drew international and national attention to the problem of sorcery and witchcraft accusation-related violence. In the face of mounting pressure to take action, including the national *haus kra* protest calling for an end to violence against women, the PNG Government responded by repealing the *Sorcery Act 1971* and creating a new provision in the *Criminal Code Act 1974* (Chapter 262). However, there is growing recognition, both within the government and the wider community that these problems cannot be solved solely at a legislative level, and must rather involve a holistic response. This recognition led to a national conversation that has led to this present draft national action plan to provide a concrete foundation for the holistic response.

The first step in the development of the action plan was the holding of a conference titled Sorcery and Witchcraft Accusations: Developing a National Response to Overcome the Violence, in Goroka, PNG, in December 2013. It was convened by the PNG Department of Justice and Attorney General (DJAG), together with the Consultative Implementation and Monitoring Committee, and partners from the Melanesian Institute, the

University of Goroka, State Society and Governance in Melanesia Program (SSGM), and the Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT). The conference followed from an earlier regional conference on the issue hosted by SSGM in Canberra in June 2013.

In the planning stages for the Goroka conference it was decided to focus on breaking the link between sorcery accusations and violence. This was a pragmatic decision that recognised that violence is the most problematic aspect of the beliefs in PNG today. It was also intended to allow some conceptual separation between the beliefs themselves and the violent responses to accusations of sorcery or witchcraft, although there is considerable debate about the extent to which this separation can in fact be made.

The last step was a workshop on 12–13 June 2014 in Port Moresby in which 80 or so participants from a range of government departments and civil society, church and academic institutions drafted this action plan. The plan adopts a comprehensive approach and involves a number of government ministries and their departments, including the Department of Health, the Department of Education, the Royal Papua New Guinea Constabulary, the Department for Community Development and Religion, and DJAG. It also includes a range of non-government organisations, such as Oxfam, the Highlands Human Rights Defenders, the Family and Sexual Violence Action Committee's networks, church organisation networks, and international development partners, such as DFAT and the United Nations.

The problem of violence arising from sorcery and witchcraft accusations was recognised by participants as being symptomatic of a range of social stresses. These include declining health and education services, increased economic disparities as a result of the extractive industries, weakened local governance mechanisms, stresses on land, and population displacement. As such, the problems are tackled in the plan on two levels. On one level, the recommendations aim to treat some of these underlying issues, in particular health services and awareness about legal rights and responsibilities. On the other level, the recommendations are directed towards diminishing the violence that these stresses are causing. Although these responses deal only with the symptoms of the problems, and therefore may be criticised as being superficial, they were considered by participants as necessary to stop and alleviate the human suffering that is currently occurring.

The plan has five core areas: (1) advocacy and communications, (2) medical, (3) legal and protection, (4) care and counselling, and (5) research. Each area contains a few key recommendations and sets out concrete activities to be taken in both the short and medium term to implement the recommendations. The action plan also allocates specific responsibilities to particular departments and organisations, establishes time frames and highlights the resources (human and financial) that are necessary or available to implement them.

The main focus of the plan is to address the violence caused by those who accuse others of sorcery and to encourage people to deal with sorcery accusations through non-violent means. This plan adopts a broad definition of sorcery to mean the belief, and those practices associated with the belief, that one human being is capable of harming another by magical or supernatural means.

The implementation of the plan will be the responsibility of each of the lead agencies that are identified as being responsible for particular activities. Each of the five sections will have a sub-working group/ sub-committee that will be responsible for developing a monitoring and evaluation framework for the section and following up with the implementation process. The plan will have an overall co-ordinating mechanism in the form of the Technical Committee Against Sorcery Accusation-related violence. This Committee will be comprised of representatives of the five different sub-working groups/ sub-committees and will meet at least quarterly. The Committee will also be responsible for developing an overall monitoring and evaluation strategy and a comprehensive review two years after the start of its implementation. The Technical Committee will be responsible to the Human Rights Forum (chaired by DJAG) and will report at each of the Forum's quarterly meetings as a regular item on the agenda.

Five part strategy

1. Care & counselling:

- 5 To support the development of training in counselling programs for a range of service providers
- 6 To improve repatriation and support services for survivors, particularly taking into account people with special needs such as the elderly and disabled.
- 7 To mobilize key stakeholders to ensure coordinated support services for survivors, taking into account the gendered context in which the violence takes place.
- 8 To develop, review, utilise and enforce legislation and other support structures in cases of sorcery accusation-related violence where children are involved (as relatives and survivors)

2. Advocacy/Communications:

- 4 To develop advocacy and awareness materials and messages to counter sorcery-accusation-related violence
- 5 To develop and implement a strategy to ensure the communication of the materials and messages to key stakeholders and the broader public
- 6 To identify and network with organisations and individuals to provide mutual support and assistance

3. Legal and Protection

- 8 To review the repealed *Sorcery Act 1971* and re-enact certain provisions, if any are needed, into relevant pieces of legislation (*Summary Offences Act-1977, Village Courts Act-1989, Evidence Act- 1975, Criminal Code (Amendment) Act 2002, Family Protection Act 2013*).
- 9 To ensure that cases involving sorcery and witchcraft accusation-related violence are dealt with through the criminal justice system.
- 10 Develop mechanisms and awareness to ensure that the general population and service providers know what the law is, who has responsibility and authority to act, and how they can be contacted and mobilized.
- 11 Develop or strengthen mechanisms to protect and support those who take steps to prevent sorcery accusation-related violence and to support targets of this violence, including health workers, community leaders, religious actors, civil society

actors and others.

- 12 Develop a strategy for mediating sorcery and witchcraft-related accusation at community level
- 13 The police in conjunction with the courts to develop an action plan to deal with the current difficulties in arresting and prosecuting perpetrators of sorcery and witchcraft
- 14 National judicial training (including village court magistrates) to be expanded/ strengthened in dealing with sorcery accusations and associated violence

4. Health Sector

- 6 To raise awareness about the issue of sorcery and witchcraft-related violence within the health sector
- 7 Improved explanations about the disease process to patients and their families
- 8 Facilitate access to justice by providing medical evidence of illness and explanations
- 9 Community based awareness raising about public health problems and diagnosis
- 10 To develop and publicise the need for prevention / screening

5. Research

- 2 To develop an evidence-based research framework to address sorcery accusation-related violence
2. To establish a central research hub for networking and collaboration

ACRONYMS

CBO	Community Based Organisation
CIMC	Consultative Implementation and Monitoring Council
DfCD&R	Department for Community Development & Religion
DJAG	Department of Justice and Attorney General
DWU	Divine Word University
FSVAC	Family and Sexual Violence Action Committee
FPA	Family Protection Act
INA	Institute of National Affairs
LPA	Lukautim Pikinini Act
NGO	Non-government Organisation
OPP	Office of the Public Prosecutor
OPS	Office of the Public Solicitor
UOG	University of Goroka

Implementation Plan

1. CARE AND COUNSELLING				
KEY ACTIVITIES	LEAD AGENCY	SUPPORT PARTNERS	RESOURCES	TIMELINE
Objective 1: To support the development of training in counselling programs for a range of service providers				
1.1.1 Establishment of PNG Counsellor's Association	PNG Counselling Association	FSVAC, DfCD &R	To be developed (TBD)	
1.1.2 To lobby all tertiary educational institutes to expand or develop their counselling training programs for teachers, social workers etc, and to utilise the Counselling Best Practice Manual	PNG Counselling Association	FSVAC, Education Department		
1.1.3 Support the accreditation and certification of current counsellors.				
1.1.4 Counselling training Programs to be developed and to include specialised units on gender, family and sexual and sorcery accusation-related violence	National Training Council, Labour Department			
1.1.5 UOG to develop a draft proposal for			PNG	

Objective 2:

To improve repatriation and support services for survivors, particularly taking into account people with special needs such as the elderly and disabled.

1.2.1 Government to support the establishment and regulation of Safe Houses	FSVAC and DJAG	Oxfam, CIMC-FSVAC, UNWOMEN	TBD	2015-2016
1.2.2 Mechanisms to be developed to enable temporary relocation of survivors and their relatives (men, women and children) for safety reasons out of harm's way.	FSVAC and DJAG	, Lukautim Pikinini Act and Family Welfare Office	TBD	2015-2016
1.2.3 Standard operating procedures be developed to enable temporary relocation of survivors and their relatives for safety reasons, and their re-integration into their own community or an alternative community	FSVAC and DJAG	Oxfam, FHI 360	TBD	2015-2016
1.2.4 Strengthen the Peace & Good order networks for ongoing mediation & counselling for those who remain in their current exposure locations.	FSVAC, DJAG	RPNGC, DfCD & R, UNWOMEN	TBD	2015-2016
1.2.5 Develop practice guidelines for Police to ensure the safety of targets of sorcery accusation-related violence and circulate them to all Provincial		DfCD & R and RPNGC		

Police Commanders (PPCs).			TBD	2015-2016
1.2.6 Establishment of MoAs with private enterprises in order to assist in cases of evacuation and repatriation	DJAG	Village courts secretariat		
1.2.7 Establish Emergency trust fund (urgent action) for repatriation or any other life threatening situations such as VAW & sorcery and to be managed by an organisation that can release funds quickly	RPNGC	FSVAC	TBD	2015-2016
			TBD	
	FSVAC	DJAG, DfCDR		
		Oxfam, UNWOMEN	TBD	

	FSVAC			
Objective 3: To improve counselling services for survivors and communities affected by sorcery accusation-related violence.				
1.3.1 Update current directory of counselling service providers	MeriToksavé	FSVAC	TBD	Consolidated list ready by end 2014
1.3.2 Provision of specialised counselling services to assist people who have been affected by sorcery accusation-related violence	FSVAC	PNG Counselling Association	TBD	
1.3.3				
Objective 4: To develop, review, utilise and enforce legislation and other support structures in cases where children are involved (as relatives and survivors)				
1.4.1 Training & gazettal of current child protection officers & volunteer child protection officers (10	DfCD&R	FSVAC, UNICEF,	TBD	2015-2016

days Lukautim Pikinini training)		Save the Children		
1.4.2 Create “child friendly” spaces in safe houses, Family and Sexual Violence units in police stations and family support centres.	DfCD&R, RPNGC	FSVAC, UNICEF, Save the Children	TBD	2015-2016
1.4.3 Develop and formalise the referral pathways between service providers for cases of sorcery accusation-related violence involving children (including police, health service providers, child welfare officers, and child protection officers).				
1.4.4 Publicise and raise awareness about the legal framework around the temporary and permanent care and protection of child survivors of sorcery accusation-related violence	FSVAC	FSVAC, Meri Safe House, Lifeline, Save the Children, Family Voice, RPNGC	TBD	2015-2016
	DJAG	FSVAC, DfCDR	TBD	2015-2016
2 ADVOCACY AND COMMUNICATION				

KEY ACTIVITIES	LEAD AGENCY	SUPPORT PARTNERS	RESOURCES	TIMELINE
Objective 1:				
To develop advocacy and awareness materials and messages to counter sorcery-accusation-related violence				
2.1.1 Formulate and produce informative materials in a variety of formats (print media, social media, theatre productions etc) addressing: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The need to break the link between sorcery accusations and violence • the effects of sorcery accusation-related violence on families, children and communities • the legislation and related penalties • the fact that torture does not lead to reliable confessions • relevant human rights laws and declarations (e.g. 1948 UDHR) 	FSVAC and DJAG	UNOHCHR, DfCDR,	TBD	2015
2.1.2 Identify ways in which materials countering sorcery beliefs, including scientific explanations	Dept of Education	Dept of Higher Education; UoG;	TBD	2015-2016

<p>about causes for sickness, death and misfortune can be integrated into school curriculums at all levels</p> <p>2.1.3 Peer education training in schools to address the issue of cult practices in schools and its possible relevance to sorcery & witchcraft violence</p> <p>2.1.4 Create curriculum units addressing sorcery accusation-related violence and countering sorcery beliefs and incorporate into all trainings for teachers and students.</p>	<p>Dept of Education</p> <p>Department of Education</p>	<p>Department of Health; FSVAC; DJAG</p> <p>FSVAC</p> <p>FSVAC</p>	<p>TBD</p> <p>TBD</p>	
<p>2.1.5 Review existing GBV training materials to include training on sorcery accusation-related violence</p>	<p>FSVAC</p>	<p>DfCDR, DJAG, UNWOMEN</p>	<p>TBD</p>	<p>2015-2016</p>
<p>Objective 2:</p>				

To develop and implement a strategy to ensure the communication of the materials and messages to key stakeholders and the broader public

2.2.1	Development of a joint National Communication Strategy to disseminate key messages for key partners to implement	DJAG and FSVAC	Churches, MI, UOG, CLRC	TBD	Start 2015
2.2.2	Implement the National Communication strategy through a variety of media including social media	FSVAC	Media Association	TBD	
2.2.3	Sensitise news media to make them aware of the need to be careful in how issues of sorcery are reported, in particular to encourage them to report in a way consistent with the National Communication Strategy		Leniata legacy, Media Association		
2.2.4	Targeted workshops in Districts /communities with very key messages that the perpetrators of sorcery violence in the communities are the accusers and not the suspected sorcerers.	DJAG, FSVAC	Human Rights Defenders, Oxfam	TBD	Mid 2015

2.2.4 Churches to take a proactive approach to complement / reinforce government's activities to reduce sorcery-related violence	Father Gibbs to instigate/monitor	CPP, Council of Churches	TBD	
Objective 3:				
To develop a network of organisations and individuals to provide mutual support and assistance				
2.3.1 Strengthen consultation and partnership between the relevant stakeholders at the provincial and district levels through regular meetings.	FSVAC	DfCDR, DPLGA	TBD	ongoing
2.3.2 Networking at the National, Provincial & District level (elected ward members, VCO, PFSVAC, HRD, Oxfam partners, PDfCD) in conjunction with the GBV/FSV network to create a network of champions that can work towards implementing the National Action Plan and collaborate.	FSVAC	Elected ward members, Village Court officers, Provincial FSVAC, Human Rights Defenders, Oxfam partners, PDfCD		

2.3.3 Working committee to finalise the Draft National Action Plan on Sorcery and Witchcraft	Working Committee		TBD	Mid November 2014
2.3.4 DJAG Secretary to endorse the National Action Plan to be submitted to the NEC (Government).	DJAG		TBD	
2.3.4 Secretary Kalinoe on behalf of the Human Rights Forum to establish a Technical Committee Against Sorcery Accusation-related violence and to appoint members to it in order to oversee and monitor the implementation of this plan.	DJAG, Human Rights Forum			End 2014
2.3.5 The Human Rights Forum to create the progress of this national action plan as a standing agenda item for its quarterly meetings	DJAG, Human Rights Forum			End 2014

3 LEGAL & PROTECTION

KEY ACTIVITIES	LEAD AGENCY	SUPPORT PARTNERS	RESOURCES	TIMELINE
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Objective 1

To review the repealed *Sorcery Act 1971* and re-enact certain provisions, if any are needed, into relevant pieces of legislation (*Summary*)

Offences Act-1977, Village Courts Act-1989, Evidence Act- 1975, Criminal Code (Amendment) Act 2002, Family Protection Act 2013).

<p>3.1.1 Gap analysis of what provisions are required to be re-enacted to deal with sorcery accusation-related violence. In particular:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - sorcery accusations - incitement to violence - threats and profiting from fear of sorcery - if and where and how cases of killing and harm through sorcery be dealt with 	DJAG	PPO, CLRC, PSO and FLC	TBD	DJAG to establish a working group by March 2015
3.1.2 Legislative drafting in line with findings of gap analysis	DJAG	Office of the Legislative Counsel, SSGM (ANU), CLRC	TBD	2015
<p>Objective 2:</p> <p>To ensure that cases involving sorcery and witchcraft accusation-related violence are dealt with through the criminal justice system</p>				
3.2.1 Strengthen the public solicitors office and paralegal network to provide legal assistance to survivors to ensure that cases of sorcery accusation violence are investigated and prosecution proceedings instituted, and where appropriate that civil cases are filed.	PSO	DJAG, OHRCHR, CLRC	TBD	2015
3.2.2 Establishment of a working group to develop mechanisms to ensure that cases of sorcery and	OPP	RPNGC, FSVAC, DJAG, CLRC	TBD	2015

witchcraft-related killings are promptly investigated and the perpetrators are brought to justice.				
3.2.3 Development of a checklist for police for use in charging in sorcery-related killings (including a model wording of the charge) to make sure the correct charges are laid and correct evidence is obtained when dealing with perpetrators of sorcery accusation-related violence.	OPP	DJAG, RPNGC	TBD	2015
3.2.4 Establishment of a National Human Rights Commission in line with international standards with a desk on sorcery accusation-related violence with responsibility for the oversight of state actors exercising due diligence in relation to violence arising from accusations of sorcery.	DJAG	UNOHCHR	TBD	2015
3.2.5 Witness and victim protection legislation to be drafted and enabling institutional mechanisms developed.	DJAG	CLRC	TBD	2015
Objective 3: Develop mechanisms and awareness to ensure that the general population and service providers know what the law is, who has responsibility and authority to act, and how they can be contacted and mobilized.				
3.3.1 Develop a training program for paralegals (such as the village courts officials, police and other service	DJAG	Magisterial	TBD	2015

<p>providers) to better allow them to act as entry points into the justice system for cases of sorcery and witchcraft-related violence. This should include the development of a simple flowchart that explains in clear terms: what the law is, what to do in what situations, contact points, basic human rights under the constitution, and also include a communications strategy.</p>		<p>services ANU (SSGM)</p>		
<p>3.3.2 Develop legal literacy programs in schools and amongst the community. This could involve:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a series of legal literacy pamphlets/ radio program/ talk back programs/ facebook and other social media on a range of different topics that provide clear information about the law and people’s rights (particular issues involve interim and permanent protection orders, what to do if village courts do not enforce their orders) • Getting law students and others with some legal knowledge to go into the schools and give guest lectures about human rights and the law as part of the personal development program • Feed into the legal studies program taught in secondary and tertiary schools • Work with teachers training college to get legal literacy into the national curriculum 	<p>DJAG</p>	<p>UNOHCHR , UPNG LEAP program, OPP, Legal Training Institute</p> <p>UoG to develop teaching materials to complement the legal studies syllabus for secondary and tertiary students</p>	<p>TBD</p>	<p>2015</p>

<p>3.3.3 Training program for volunteers (those involved in mediation at the village level, such as ward and committee members, community leaders, chiefs, church leaders) to do mediation below the village courts, raise awareness about the law and social issues related to sorcery accusation violence, direct people to the right places for assistance and disseminate legal information. This network of volunteers could also be used to report on and monitor situations at local levels up to the justice dept.</p>	<p>DJAG</p>	<p>Provincial and Local Level Government Affairs Department; DfCD&R, Church training institutions; Legal Training Institute, Village Court and Land Secretariat, ANU (SSGM)</p>	<p>TBD</p>	<p>2015</p>
<p>3.3.4 Development of an oversight, monitoring and evaluation mechanism for the training program in 3.3.3.</p>	<p>DJAG</p>	<p>DPLGA, Department of National Planning and Monitoring, SSGM (ANU)</p>	<p>TBD</p>	
<p>Objective 4: Develop or strengthen mechanisms to protect and support those who take steps to prevent sorcery accusation-related violence and to support targets of this violence, including health workers, community leaders, religious actors, civil society actors and others.</p>				
<p>3.4.1 Mechanisms, such as rapid response assistance from police, to be developed to protect care-givers, service providers (including health workers), human rights defenders and others who could also be</p>	<p>DJAG, FSVAC</p>	<p>Oxfam, Human Rights Defenders Network</p>		

threatened with violence as a result of the assistance they are providing.				
3.4.2 Organisations and institutions with a history of dealing with sorcery accusation-related violence, such as hospitals and health facilities, to develop preventative mechanisms to protect staff. For example perimeter fencing, security guards, life support training and equipment.	NDoH			2015
Objective 5: Develop a strategy for mediating sorcery and witchcraft-related accusation at community level				
3.5.1 Research into effective community level mediation strategies and interventions that are currently being used (community leaders, elected ward members, clan leaders, church leaders, peace officers, community police etc) to deflect sorcery accusation violence and other types of violence and their potential for expansion into other areas.	UoG	CLRC, DJAG, ANU (SSGM), NRI	TBD	2015
3.5.2 Development of a training package and support programs and mechanisms based on the findings of the research program in 3.4.1	DJAG	CLRC, FSVAC	TBD	2016
Objective 6: The police in conjunction with the courts to develop an action plan to deal with the current difficulties in arresting and prosecuting				

perpetrators of sorcery and witchcraft				
<p>3.6.1 Extension of capacity of existing special units in Police to respond to sorcery and witchcraft cases. Need the ability to move quickly around within Provinces and to mobilise support for a rapid response. This should include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Training on issue of sorcery-related violence for specialized units. - Training on sorcery accusation-related violence and human rights to be integrated into police training curriculum. There is a need to overcome a cultural perspective amongst some police that it is OK to hurt and kill sorcerers. Also, it needs to be stressed that in these cases the police must take a proactive approach. 	RPNGC	UNOHCHR, DJAG, DPLGA	TBD	2015
<p>3.6.2 To raise the issue of sorcery and witchcraft-related issues at the 2015 PPC Conference and for the Commissioner to endorse improving police response in this area as a priority.</p>	RPNGC	DJAG	TBD	2015
<p>3.6.3 Police Commissioner to write a circular on the issue of sorcery accusation-related violence and the police role that sets out:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Rapid response guidelines 	RPNGC	DJAG	TBD	2015

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - witness protection - compensation not being used to derail the criminal process - police complicity with community 				
Objective 7: National judicial training (including village court magistrates) to be expanded/ strengthened in dealing with sorcery accusations and associated violence				
<p>3.7.1 Expansion of national judicial training (including village court justices) training material to include issues on sorcery-related violence and the process of seeking Interim Protection Order (IPOs) by those in imminent danger of sorcery-related violence</p>	<p>DJAG,</p>	<p>National judicial services, Magisterial Services, VCLMS CLRC</p>	<p>TBD</p>	<p>2015</p>
<p>3.7.2 Training on the new materials developed in 3.6.1 and also creation of opportunities to facilitate knowledge-sharing between magistrates and judges about best practices in dealing with sorcery-related issues</p>	<p>DJAG</p>	<p>National judicial services, Magisterial Services, VCLMS CLRC</p>	<p>TBD</p>	<p>2015</p>
<p>3.7.3 Develop a strategy to access funds from local, district and provincial level governments to support the ability of village, magistrates and district courts to deal with sorcery accusation-related violence</p>		<p>VCLMS, DPLGA,</p>		<p>2015</p>

	DJAG	Department of National Planning and Monitoring (DNPM), Magisterial Services	TBD	
4 HEALTH SECTOR				
KEY ACTIVITIES	LEAD AGENCY	SUPPORT PARTNERS	RESOURCES	TIMELINE
Objective 1:				
To raise awareness of the issue of sorcery and witchcraft-related violence within the health sector				
8.1.1 NDoH to create a specific sorcery and witchcraft accusation-related violence desk to respond to this issue 8.1.2 Gender sensitization of all health staff related to the handling of sorcery-related violence cases	NDoH			June 2015 September 2015
Objective 2: Improved explanations about the disease process to patients and their families				
4.2.1 In-service health workers to strengthen their	NDoH	Training Co-ordinators of		2015

knowledge on basic disease processes		Hospital and Provincial health		
4.2.2 Training for health workers in basic counselling techniques including in dealing with the issue of sorcery	FSVAC, NDoH			2015
4.2.3 Creation of confidential counselling areas with materials available about basic disease processes	NDoH, FSVAC			2015
Objective 3:				
Facilitate access to justice by providing medical evidence of illness and explanations				
4.3.1 Training for health workers about correct format of report writing and preparation of medical certificates (diagnosis, death certificates etc), and documentation of follow-up and management of the disease progress.	NDoH			2015
Objective 4:				
Community based awareness raising about public health problems and diagnosis				
4.4.1 Develop promotional material on disease prevention, and common causes of illness causing death (i.e. raise awareness about the biomedical explanations for diseases to overcome the resort to sorcery as an explanation)	NDoH	FSVAC		2015
4.4.2 Distribution of information through radio,	NDoH	FSVAC		2015

awareness campaigns, health thematic days (possibly add it on to the 20 days of activism – one day for sorcery-related violence)				
4.4.3 Scale up programs to support and treat people with drug/alcohol abuse problems	NDoH			ongoing
4.4.4 Regional psychiatric centres to be established to support provincial hospitals in the region	NDoH			ongoing

Objective 5:

To develop and publicise the need for prevention / screening

4.5.1 Upscale preventative health checks and screening for infectious diseases and lifestyle diseases– in combination with increased health promotion about these services	NDoH			
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5 RESEARCH

KEY ACTIVITIES	LEAD AGENCY	SUPPORT PARTNERS	RESOURCES	TIMELINE
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Objective 1: To develop an evidence-based research framework to address sorcery accusation-related violence

<p>5.1. 1 Establish an Evidence-Based research framework to address S&W-related violence in PNG:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The design and implementation of this plan should be carried out in such a way that research is integrated into ongoing developments in this area. • For any plan under any focus group heading, e.g. health, education or law, research applies at every stage of planning, e.g. finding out what has been done before in similar situations elsewhere; needs assessment; risk analysis and mitigation, pilot studies, monitoring and evaluation. • Research is a crosscutting issue that should reflect the research needs of the focus groups. 	<p>UoG</p>	<p>DJAG, NDOH, DfCD&R, FSVAC, Dept Education, ANU (SSGM), NRI, MI, UPNG, DWU, PAU, CLRC, INA</p>	<p>TBD</p>	<p>2015</p>
<p>5.1.2 Identify a number of preliminary research projects in conjunction with key stakeholders and obtain funding to carry these out. Preliminary discussions identify the following as particular relevance:</p> <p>a) Research into effective community level mediation strategies and interventions that are currently being used (community leaders, elected ward members, clan leaders, church leaders, peace officers, community police etc) to deflect sorcery accusation violence and</p>		<p>ANU (SSGM), other tertiary research institutions, CLRC,</p>		<p>At least one funding</p>

<p>other types of violence and their potential for expansion into other areas</p> <p>b) Research to investigate the linkages between the different levels of conflict resolution from village level to the national court system</p> <p>c) Situational analysis of counselling services in this area (Identify different types of counsellors from mediators, human rights defenders, village court official and community peace-officers; What kind of counselling services are being offered? What gaps exist?)</p> <p>d) Research on students being exposed to violence in schools and the effects on their learning outcomes; and research on cult-like practices in schools and their possible relevance to sorcery & witchcraft violence.</p> <p>e) Research into the types of training packages that are required for service providers involved in responding to sorcery accusation-related violence and the best ways to communicate this training</p> <p>f) Research into the motivations of perpetrators of sorcery accusation-related violence and the factors that deter violent responses</p>	UoG	DJAG	TBD	proposal to be developed by start 2015
5.1.3 The development and use of key research methods such as	NRI	UPNG, DWU, PAU, UOG, ANU (SSGM),	TBD	2015

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participatory Action research (PAR) • Innovative Research Approaches • Social Media • Radio • Documentary e.g. Tok Piksa, Pawa Meri, YWCA Tok Back Program, NBC Provincial Based Stations. <p>5.1.4 Development of research ethics</p>		MI		
Objective 2: The establishment of a central research hub for networking and collaboration				
<p>5.2.1 Develop a research hub based at the University of Goroka for networking and collaboration.</p> <p>5.2.2 Develop existing networks such as websites for Academic and Research Institutions and existing networks such as FSVAC and the Committee Against Sorcery Accusation-related violence in order to design and co-ordinate research projects and share the results of research.</p>	<p>UOG</p> <p>UOG</p>	<p>UPNG, DWU, PAU, UOG, ANU (SSGM), MI, CLRC</p> <p>UPNG, DWU, PAU, UOG, ANU (SSGM), MI, CLRC</p>	<p>TBD</p> <p>TBD</p>	<p>2015</p> <p>2015</p>

ANNEX 21: PASTORAL LETTER ON SANGUMA – CATHOLIC BISHOPS HIGHLANDS REGION

Pastoral Letter on Sanguma – Catholic Bishops, Highlands Region, PNG.

“God put all things under Christ’s feet and gave him to the church as a supreme Lord over all things.” (Eph. 1:22)

Brothers and sisters in Christ,

We Catholic Bishops from the Highlands region are sending this letter to all parishes in the PNG Highlands because we want to express our deep concern about a growing problem in our communities. That is, when some people accuse others of using sorcery or sanguma to kill or harm other people. This stems from a modern corruption of some traditional beliefs. When people following such beliefs get involved in torturing innocent people and even killing them, we have not only a crime against humanity, but a serious betrayal of the Gospel, our faith in the supreme Lordship of Christ, and of the liberating work of the church. There is often an issue of justice here also since it is well known that many allegations are based on old grudges and target the weak and vulnerable.

“Satan” and “the Devil” are ways to talk about the reality of the existence of evil forces. In the Bible we read how Jesus ministered to the sick and how he cast out evil spirits (Mat 17: 14-21; Mat 8:28-34). Jesus and his disciples did not torture or kill anyone in dealing with such evil forces. Nor did they accuse anyone of harming or killing other people. When asked who was to blame for a man being blind Jesus taught that neither the blind man nor his parents were responsible for his blindness (Jn 9:1-3). In healing people Jesus sought to bring harmony and joy to the community. Through his death and resurrection, Jesus conquered death (Rom 14:8; 1Thes 4:13-14). When sickness or death come into our community there must be no false allegations such as accusing a person of causing death by stealing the deceased’s heart. We repeat that such allegations are unchristian. As people of faith we should follow the example of Christ in promoting forgiveness and harmony in our communities. If someone dies, in the midst of our tears, we can be comforted by believing that they have returned to the One who gives life.

But now it seems that in some of our communities people are abandoning their Christian faith and believing the talk of diviners or “ol glasman.” We state clearly that this practice of calling on a

diviner or “glasman” and accusing someone, puts trust in powers of evil, a trust that run contrary to our Christian faith, especially when the diviner urges the relatives or supporters of the deceased to acts of violence. We have seen the fruits of this and they are bad fruits indeed (Mat 12:33)! Seeing the fruits of such violence it appears to us that it is actually those who torture and kill innocent people who are the ones succumbing to the forces of evil.

If someone gets sick, don't even talk about sanguma. The only power sanguma has comes from people talking about it and fearing it. Put your faith in God and support the sick person with your presence and with your prayer. If someone dies, you must not talk about sanguma or support anyone who starts with this sort of talk. Do not look for a diviner or glasman. Don't try to find someone to blame. Ultimately, life and death are in the hands of God. Put the deceased person and their family in God's hand and thank God for the life of the person who was part of your life but who has passed away to eternal life.

Parents, do not teach your children to believe in sanguma. Sickesses have their cause and medical doctors can tell you the reason why someone is ill. Care for your bodies and bring sick people quickly to the hospital or health centre. Don't wait until it gets so serious that medicine can no longer help. Doctors and health workers, it is better that you do not talk about sickness having “traditional” causes found in tensions in families and communities. It is true that worry and fear can cause people to get sick, but this is something to settle within the family, or through the village court -- not something to blame on sanguma or an evil spirit.

The problem comes when people's faith weakens, they become fearful, and they forget about what it means to be Christian. We need good upright Christians in the community who can provide leadership in difficult times. Through this letter we want to support and strengthen your faith so that you can in turn help others to follow the right path, and in so doing find justice peace and joy brought by the Holy Spirit (Rom 14:17). You must conquer evil with good (Rom 12:21).

We Bishops challenge our priests, religious brothers and sisters, catechists, and all church leaders and ministers, and we invite other churches too, to join with us in taking a clear, unambiguous, and strong stand against all talk about sanguma and all attempts to lay the blame on anyone, especially at the time of sickness and death.

In the coming months we hope to launch a program of renewal of our faith in the supreme Lordship of Christ. We are convinced that when people have a genuine faith in Jesus Christ, there will be no room for sanguma talk in their lives. In the meantime we urge everyone to read, reflect on, and

pray over these texts, which will help those whose faith is wavering to rediscover the joy of putting their trust in Jesus Christ alone, and not in any other power.

Gen. 1:26	Man and woman made in the image of God
Eph. 1:15-23	Pauls' prayer for the power of the Holy Spirit
Mat 17:14-21	Jesus gave a command and the boy was healed
Rom. 14:13-23	Do not make your brother or sister fall
Rom. 8:31-39	Nothing can separate us from the love of God
Col 2:6-19	Fullness of life in Christ

Archbishop Douglas Young (Mount Hagen)

Bishop Francesco Sarego (Goroka)

Bishop Anton Bal (Kundiawa)

Bishop Arnold Orowae (Wabag)

Bishop Donald Lippert (Mendi)

ANNEX 22: WOKSHOPS ON SORCERY / SANGUMA / WITCHCRAFT PROGRAM

Workshop on Sorcery/Sanguma/Witchcraft

Sangurap Catholic Church, Saturday 6th June 9am – 5pm

Aim: To raise awareness about the issue and to make plans for the Church and community to respond to the increase in sorcery accusations in Central Enga

9am Show film from EMTV “Olsem Wanem”

9.30 Discussion on the film

10am Where are the cases in recent years in Enga?

(Plot the cases on a map and assign names to them)

11am Skul/discuss:

1. Is it the same as *yama*?
2. What if the person admits?
3. Proving guilty or proving innocent?
4. What is the law now? The role of village courts?

12noon (Break/kisim win)

1pm Response of Church

- 5 point plan in Simbu
- What about the “glasman?”
- Linking with other churches

2pm Discuss and plan: What can we do about a person who is “suspect”?

Discuss and plan: What can we do if there is accusation and threatened violence?

3pm Planning: A rapid response team?

How to contact the police?

4pm Summary of the day (filmed?)

5pm Finish.

Note: This is a self-sustaining project. There are no payments of any kind. Supply your own lunch and travel money and come prepared to share your ideas.

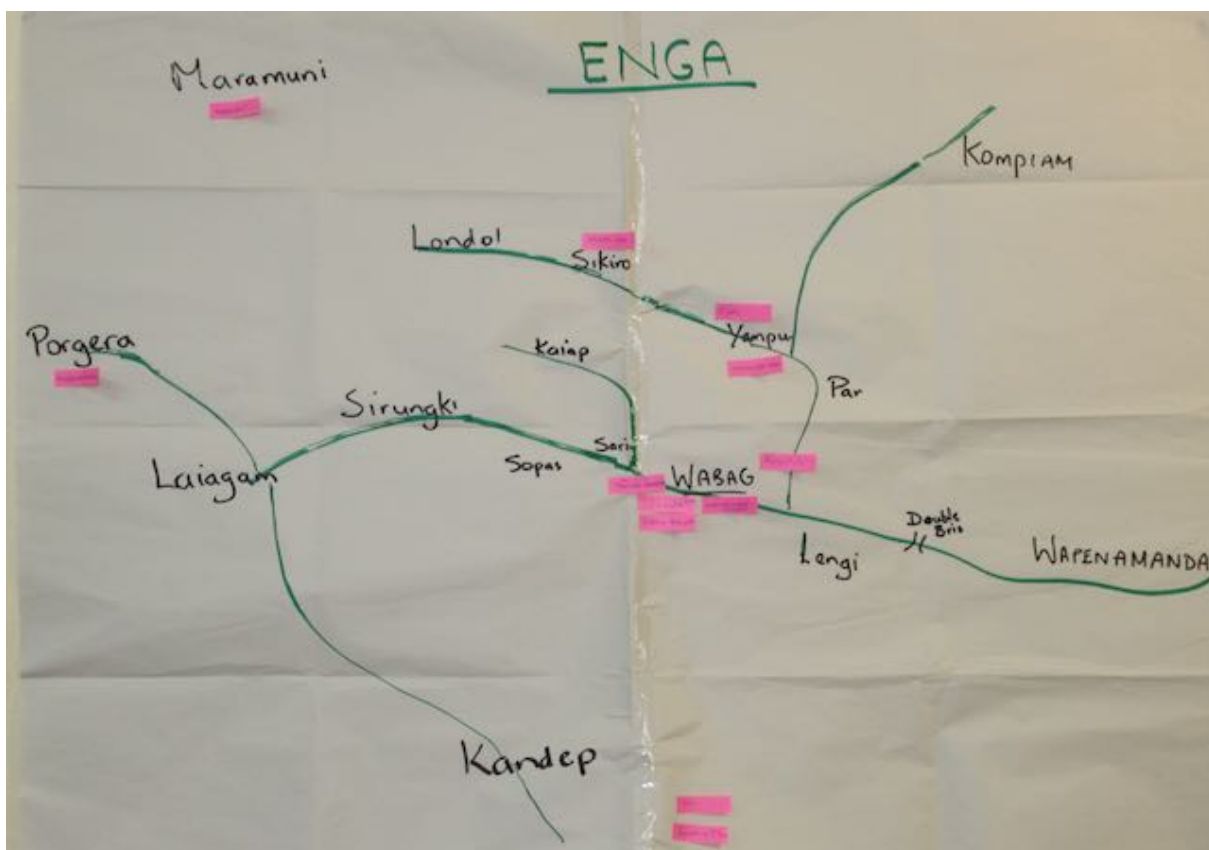
Summary of points from Workshop on Sorcery Accusation Violence

Sangurap, Wabag, 9am – 5pm, 6th June, 2015

Approximately 60 people attended from Sangurap, Sari and Par parishes in Central Enga. Bishop Arnold Orowae was present throughout.

1. Discussion on the film on Sanguma on “Olsem Wanem” (EMTV). Those who watched were very moved by the film. “Sorry” (sadness) and “belhat” (anger) were two of the terms used. Several said that they see no good or constructive outcome (prut) of such violence. They appreciated the courage and openness of the young woman Freida in the first scene, and the nerve and insight of the student Nes Paul in speaking about the situation in Hewa. A number commented on the importance of having Police Commanders involved. The group recommended that more copies be made of the film and circulated around the parishes and communities in Enga.

2. We plotted cases (names on pink stick-ons) of sorcery accusation violence in the past three years in Enga. The attached photo shows the results. This is obviously from a Central Enga perspective because there have been cases in Kandep and Porgera that are not recorded. Participants made a commitment to work so that there will be no more pink stick-ons on the Enga map



3. We discussed issues such as

- the difference between the traditional Enga concept of *yama* and the introduced belief in *sanguma*.
- How reliable is a confession extracted during torture? Torturing the “truth” out of someone.

- the difference between being guilty until proved innocent, or innocent until proved guilty... How would it be possible to prove one's innocence?
- What is the legal situation now after the repeal of the Sorcery Act?

There were several village court magistrates present so on this last point they said that village courts are not supposed to deal with cases of sorcery accusation violence. It should go to a District or National court. However, often the underlying problem is experienced in the community – so somehow it needs to be addressed at the community level. They said that village courts could pass judgement in cases of “sutim tok - bagarapim nem” (defamation). There needs to be more attention given to how best village courts can respond to sorcery accusations.

5. We looked at the 5-point plan from the Catholic Church in Simbu. Participants suggested four more points in addition for Enga.

- Stress that sanguma is a belief is not found in Enga tradition but has been introduced into Enga in recent years.
- We should not violently react against the accused, but rather respond to them in a nonthreatening way and find out the truth of what people are saying about them.
- The Enga values of “forgiving” and “forgetting” are important in this context. This will lessen the urge to look for someone to accuse.
- We should be ready to assist others in times of sickness, death and misfortune, so that they do not need to think of accusing others.

6. We considered the role of “glasman” or diviner. There was a tradition of divination in Enga known as *pepe miningi*, however it seems that generally sorcery accusations in Enga arise spontaneously and not through a formal process of divination. Participants agreed that calling in a “glasman” is already asking for an accusation to be made or confirmed. It is in his interests since a “glasman” will only be paid if he is able to provide clues that will lead to an accusation. Participants agreed that the practice of calling for a “glasman” runs contrary to Christian belief. “Nogut you opim doa na man nogut i kam insait” (You don't want to open the way for bad spirits to enter).

7. We discussed cooperation with other churches. We can generally work with churches such as Lutherans, but it seems that some other churches have an inclination towards discovering and casting out “evil spirits” from people, and this is seen as a potential liability when dealing with sanguma accusations.

The point was made that often the impetus for accusation and violence comes from people who are unchurched. It is not easy to work with such people, who often are under the influence of alcohol or drugs. We need to find ways to work with this.

8. Practical considerations

It was said (by the predominantly male group) that very often it is women who start talk that leads to sorcery accusations. If this is true, then it is important to conduct relevant awareness with women in the community.

The most important way to curb sorcery accusation violence is to reduce the frequency of accusations. Examples were given where sorcery accusations were considered an offence and rules

were established in the community where one could be taken to court for making accusations. This is an important ideal that we can work towards.

The group called for a response team to be formed within each parish.

Such a team would include the parish chairman, at least one magistrate, at least one prominent woman and at least one youth representative. They would liaise with the parish priest.

A representative group from the 3 parishes should organise to meet with the police commander to have an arrangement whereby information on potential or actual violence can be passed on to police for their immediate action. At the diocesan (province) level the team should include Diocesan Caritas Coordinator Peter Pumbu and Bishop Arnold Orowae. The issue of whether police expect to be “paid” (fuel and lunch money) for such action should be brought into the open and discussed.

We spent the last 40 minutes summarising the main points of the day. This was filmed and has been turned into a 20 minute DVD that can be copied and circulated in the parishes. The DVD is only for the Enga Province, as the audio is entirely in the Enga language except for the final points made by Bishop Orowae.

ANNEX 23: REPORT FROM KATAMBI GROUP

Pastor & Businessman's speech eliminates decision for torturing sanguma accused.

That on Saturday, 02nd May 2015, Mirriam Yalyakali, an elderly woman from Yampu of the Kee sub-clan, Takikini major clan went to Wabag to buy some buai and smoke to resell at the road side market in Takawas near Yampu Health Center.

While she was travelling back from Wabag on a 15 seater PMV bus, she felt something unusual coming across to her from inside her. Her heart began to ache. When the bus drove her off at Takawas road junction, she walk a little distance and sat down to rest and felt that her heart was aching so painfully. After a while, she stood up and walked another 100 meters to her small hideout where she use to put her things for sale at the road side market.

Her husband was there and she told him that she was experiencing pain in her heart and breast. Her hideout was a little hut and she covered her face and lied down to ease the pain.

A few moments later, her husband called her and there was no response from her. She lied still. The husband bent over and uncovered her and tried to wake her up but was shocked to see that she was lifeless. He called out some young men nearby and they took her to Yampu health center thinking that she would wake up because her body was still warm.

The medical officers at the health center declared her dead. They took the dead body home and laid her in the hut and started asking questions to find out about the cause of her death.

In the course of their discussions, they secretly accused a woman from the same clan. She has been one of the suspects overtime and some unusual things had happened in the community like missing pork from boiling pots or tightly wrapped packets.

Meanwhile, a selected group of men from the clan went to seek testimony from a ritual expert for sanguma cases. The ritual expert confirmed that her heart was taken by sanguma but he mentioned no names, saying that he has no right to do so and told them that it was their duty to go back and find out who it was because the sanguma was from the same clan or area.

In the late afternoon, it was announced in public by the Kee clansmen that this was a very frightening experience and if they don't take any action now, then many will die. Therefore, they want the culprit to die on the next day, the funeral day of the deceased. They said both will be buried together on the same day.

In the night the dead body was taken to Wabag morgue and the men went to plan their torturing and killing for the next day.

Morning came and it was Sunday, 03rd May 2015. Most people from the community went to church services and went to the funeral after service and the dead body arrived from Wabag morgue just in time.

Relatives and neighbouring clans came to the funeral. A lot of people were there and after people had cried over the dead body, the Kee clansmen invited the Pastor from the Lutheran church to have the funeral service.

There was a heavy rain in the middle of the service and the pastor did not complete the service properly. However, the pastor and the Christians of the Lutheran church took the dead body away for burial.

When the body was taken away, a few people made speeches about people should go into church for death is coming upon everyone and so to on the safe side there is no where else but to the church.

Suddenly, the pastor appeared and just when the last person had ended his speech, he (pastor) told the huge crowd that he would like to make some points just in line with the Gospel he had read earlier. The Gospel was on John 14:1- 6, where it says, "I am the Way, the Truth and the Life."

The pastor shared a story about Jesus is the Way to Heaven and then he asked the public, "What is the road to heaven, who is the source of heaven?" The crowd responded saying "JESUS."

He further asked, "Does the bible talks about any other way to God?" No, they replied. "Then who is Life and is there any other Life?" "No, only in Jesus." The Pastor continued, "When Satan asked permission from God to tempt and to bring disaster to Job, God told Satan that he may do whatever he liked with Job but told him not to touch Job's heart. The heart is where the life is and that heart is only to be touched and taken by God or Jesus. No one else power to take the heart from any man or woman. Satan is no power to touch the heart... satan can go around tempting people to commit sin but he cannot touch the heart."

The Pastor went on, "so is there anybody here who has the power to take someone else's heart? Does the Bible say so? "If not, why are you accusing other people for taking someone's heart and life?"

He added saying, "you people are believing these lies because you don't believe in Jesus. Those people who do not believe in Jesus think that one can take another's heart or life. But Jesus said I am the way to God and there is no other way you can go to God."

"If you have this kind of feeling and you are a church goer, you must not take communion, because you faith in Jesus is too little and you don't even know Jesus and you don't even know your way to God. There is no other way but Jesus."

"So I now appeal to all of you gathered here that there is no sanguma. It is only a trick by satan to grow his kingdom. He wanted us to be divided. He cannot kill but he is giving you the thoughts and is using you."

"I now ask all of you to believe in Jesus and not satan or sanguma. Sanguma is an illusion from satan to trick people into destroying God's people. Remember that and don't talk about sanguma around here. And finally, don't accused people and torture them or kill them, you have no right to kill others and be satan's servant"

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The local businessman from Enga, Mr. Chris Kandenge, owner of MMK Transport was also present at the funeral. Right after the pastor had finished talking, he intervened and said he wanted to add onto what the pastor had said

He said he was informed upon the death of the woman that it was by sanguma. The clansmen had asked him to do post modern on the corpse to find the cause of her death. But Chris did not want to do it and he told the crowd.

“You asked me to do post modern on the corpse because you do not believe in Jesus. It is a believe by heathens. They believe in sanguma and witchcrafts but for people who believe in Jesus, have no fear and they don’t talk about sanguma.”

“Sanguma is for people who do not go to church, it is for people who have weak faiths. Go into the churches and you will not fear what does not exist. I do not fear sanguma because it does not actually exist but it is created by our words. You people create sanguma by talking about it and fearing it.”

“I urge you all to go into the church around here and be with Jesus and you will see and experience that there is not sanguma but only Jesus who controls life. Don’t talk about it and don’t believe that it exist. I am a Christian and I do not believe this.”

Another man made similar remarks.

When these most recognised people had said that it is bad to torture other people for practicing sanguma, the Kee clansmen looked to one another and made signs not to say or do anything in line with their plan to torture the suspect.

They completely stopped it. There was no word after that.

William went to check on it this afternoon but he was told that their plan had be jeopardized by the speech given by the Pastor and Chris Kandenge.

The Katambi Group members were there just to make sure no action is taken against the suspect. We would have stopped them and discouraged them from doing it.

By Philip Maso
Katambi Group

ANNEX 24: SUBMISSIONS TO JUSTICE KASSMAN FOR THE INQUIRY ON THE CASE OF LATE KEPARI LENIATA

Submission to Justice Kassman on the inquiry into the death and circumstances surrounding the murder of Ms. Kepari Leniata.

By the Committee on the Draft National Action Plan on Sorcery and Witchcraft Accusation-related violence in Papua New Guinea

The Committee on the Sorcery and Witchcraft Accusation-related violence - Draft National Action Plan is a joint effort by Government, civil society, and other stakeholders including members of the international community, tasked by the Department of Justice & Attorney General to provide a road map to the Papua New Guinea Government to address violence and killings stemming from sorcery accusations. The main focus of the plan is to address the violence caused by those who accuse others of sorcery.⁹² Upon finalization on 1 December 2014, the Draft National Action Plan will be submitted to the Secretary for the Department of Justice & Attorney General for submission to the National Executive Council for endorsement. The Committee has a vested interest in the inquiry into the death and circumstances surrounding the murder of Ms. Kepari Leniata, as the State's actions on the circumstances around her death sets precedence for the many incidents of sorcery-accusation-related violence around the country.

The public torture and murder of Ms. Kepari Leniata on 6 February 2013 in Mount Hagen shocked the country and the world. The case became a de-facto emblematic case of the violence and killings resulting from sorcery accusations in Papua New Guinea. It exposed serious shortcomings of protection mechanisms, as well as systemic weaknesses in investigation and law and justice mechanisms, which has to date meant that those responsible for the murder of Kepari Leniata have not been held accountable. .

Violence and killings resulting from sorcery and witchcraft accusations are a serious breach of human rights and violate the fundamental right to life, freedom from inhuman treatment and protection of the law guaranteed in the Constitution of Papua New Guinea and international human rights standards to which Papua New Guinea is a State Party. The Committee welcomes Judge Kassman's inquiry into the murder of Ms. Kepari Leniata, as a step towards clarifying the facts surrounding the case with a view to hold relevant State actors accountable, and strengthen responses in the future. The Committee emphasizes the

⁹² The Draft National Action Plan is the result of two National consultations, "Sorcery and Witchcraft Accusations: Developing a National Response to Overcome the Violence" in Goroka, December 2013, and a workshop in June 2014 in Port Moresby with eighty stakeholders from Government, civil society, churches, and academic institutions from around the country.

need to ensure individual criminal accountability by bringing suspected perpetrators to justice in trials that uphold fair trial standards.

Investigation and Prosecution

Accountability for violence related to sorcery accusations is paramount in addressing, deterring, and ending these acts in Papua New Guinea. The State has an obligation to exercise due diligence in investigating and bringing to justice those who commit such acts of violence. This case demonstrates that criminal offences involving sorcery give rise to a range of difficulties police face when investigating and prosecuting perpetrators, such as reluctance of witnesses to give evidence and in some instances complicity and fear on behalf of police officers themselves. This demonstrates that specialised procedures, such as bringing in outside officers, witness protection programs and possibly in camera hearings, are required to deal effectively with such cases.] Ms. Kepari Leniata was reportedly tortured and murdered in front of a crowd of hundreds of people in a public setting. The failure to identify and prosecute suspects undermines public confidence in the law and justice sector.

Gender-based violence

The workshops around the Draft National Action Plan on Sorcery and Witchcraft Accusations related violence revealed that sorcery-accusation-related violence is widespread across Papua New Guinea, and that the majority of victims are vulnerable persons, particularly women and the elderly, with no means of self-defense. Following a visit in March 2012, violence against women was described as a "pervasive phenomenon" by the United Nations Special Rapporteur on Violence against Women, who also found that allegations of sorcery is often used as a pretext to mask abuse of women.⁹³

The State's lack of action in the case of Ms. Kepari Leniata is part of a larger failure to take adequate measures to prevent gender based violence, and protect victims of such violence..

Multi-sector approach

The Draft National Action Plan on sorcery and witchcraft accusation-related violence advances a multi-sectoral approach to addressing this violence and protecting victims and their families, and has five core areas: 1) care and counselling; 2) advocacy and communications; 3) Legal and protection; 4) Health; and 5) Research. The plan also mobilizes a comprehensive approach of Government and non-government actors accordingly.

Multiple State actors hold a responsibility in the investigation of the death of Ms. Leniata. Cooperation by all parties is essential, including thorough investigations by the Royal Papua New Guinea Constabulary, health practitioners, and the office of the Public Solicitor. The failure of the production of a coroners certificate on the body of Ms. Leniata violates Section 7(3) of the Coroners Act 1953.

⁹³ A/HRC/23/49 (2013)

Conclusion

Almost two years have passed since the death of Kepari Leniata. No one has been brought to justice for her murder. Since her death, there have been reports of a number of other killings of individuals following accusations of sorcery and witch-craft. . The Committee on the Draft National Action Plan on Sorcery and Witchcraft Accusations Related Violence welcomes the inquiry by Justice Kassman as a first step towards justice. The Committee recommends that orders be issued to all relevant agencies in the law and justice sector, health services, education sector and other areas, to cooperate and coordinate an effective responses to this and other murders.

Submitted on 4 December 2014 by the following:

The Committee on the Draft National Action Plan on Sorcery and Witchcraft Accusation-related violence consists of: The Department of Justice & Attorney General - Legal Policy & Governance Branch, the Consultative Implementation & Monitoring Council, the University of Goroka, the Catholic Bishops' Conference, the Australian National University, the Australian High Commission, and the United Nations Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights.

National Court Humans Rights Inquiry into events surrounding the death of the late
Kepari Leniata

**Submission from the Commission for Social Concerns of the Catholic Bishops'
Conference of Papua New Guinea/Solomon Islands**

By Fr Philip Gibbs SVD Secretary for the Commission

An understanding of what happened to Kepari Leniata and why may be found by putting her death into the context of similar assaults and deaths in the Highlands. I write with experience of several other cases of sorcery accusations and research into this topic. See Philip Gibbs, "Engendered Violence and Witch-killing in Simbu," In *Engendering Violence in Papua New Guinea*, M. Jolly, C. Stewart, C. Brewer (eds.), pp. 107-136, Canberra: Australian National University E-Press.

<http://epress.anu.edu.au/wp-content/uploads/2012/06/ch032.pdf>

Also see website www.stopsorceryviolence.org and "Teaser" at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jlm0s6guHoU>

The case of Leniata Kepari in Mt Hagen fits with a pattern found in contemporary highlands and in urban communities with Highlands people, particularly from Simbu and Jiwaka. Sorcery beliefs in and around Simbu and Jiwaka hold that the "sanguma" person harbours a malicious spirit inside their body (sometimes said to appear as a small animal inside the body). When the person is sleeping the malicious spirit can emerge and fly around seeking to devour internal organs, eating excreta, or taking animal form to entering graves and to consume body parts of the dead.

1. The majority of the accused are women, usually women with little or no protection. Kepari Leniata is from an isolated valley in the West of the Enga Province. She would have had very few relatives and friends nearby in Mt Hagen.

2. Why the violence and torture? I think there are three main reasons

i. In some cases people believe that the accused has removed vital organs from the person who is sick or dead and that they have hidden those organs somewhere with the intention of eating those organs later. Hence those assaulting the accused asking, "Where did you put it?" "Tell us where you put it." They want to locate the hidden organs and to force the accused to replace them so that the sick or dead person will be restored to health or to life.

ii. In some cases people believe that the accused has killed and will kill again. Thus they want to get rid of the person along with the malicious spirit that dwells inside the person. They think that if they kill the person, it will rid them of a threat.

iii. In some cases (particularly where those assaulting are under the influence of alcohol or drugs), it is a case of sadistic violence.

It is often the case that those who speak up in defence of the one accused are themselves accused and run a serious risk of the same treatment. This may explain the silence of witnesses.

From information provided to Archbishop Young by the lawyer representing relatives of the Late Kepari Leniata, it appears that the case fits point iii above.

3. Having spoken with several women who have been accused of “sanguma”, suffered great violence and survived, a common theme is jealousy. They say that people were jealous of their land, coffee gardens, or comfortable living conditions and that this is a motive behind the accusations.

4. The Catholic Church, while believing in good and evil and the reality of the “spiritual” realm, tries to convince its members not to believe in “sanguma,” to counter the spread of such accusations and particularly to oppose violence associated with belief in sorcery and witchcraft. The Church in the PNG Highlands conducts workshops designed to help people follow this policy.

In May 2013 the Catholic Bishops of the PNG Highlands published a statement on “sanguma” to be read out in all churches. In that statement they say that “When people following such beliefs get involved in torturing innocent people and even killing them, we have not only a crime against humanity, but a serious betrayal of the Gospel, our faith in the supreme Lordship of Christ, and of the liberating work of the church.”

“We state clearly that this practice of calling on a diviner or “glasman” and accusing someone, puts trust in powers of evil, a trust that run contrary to our Christian faith, especially when the diviner urges the relatives or supporters of the deceased to acts of violence. We have seen the fruits of this and they are bad fruits indeed (Mat 12:33)! Seeing the fruits of such violence it appears to us that it is actually those who torture and kill innocent people who are the ones succumbing to the forces of evil.”

A copy of the full statement is attached and it may be found online at <http://tokstret.com/2013/07/27/social-concerns-notes-july-2013/> (at the end of the blog)

I hope that this background information can help us to understand more clearly what happened to Kepari Leniata and why, so as to afford her the dignity of having her own story told and hopefully to prevent similar abuses happening to other innocent people.

