



# Pacific Women's Leadership

## Scoping Study

A scoping study of women's leadership outside of national politics in Bougainville, Solomon Islands, Tonga, Samoa and Fiji. The study uses a participatory action research approach to examine the leadership roles of women in local government, the pathways of women's leadership, and the opportunities for young women's leadership within civil society organisations.

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## Introduction

The number of women in parliament throughout the Pacific has remained stubbornly low with an increase of only one per cent since the adoption of the Beijing Platform of Action in 1995<sup>i</sup>. Until the most recent Papua New Guinea elections in July 2012, four of the seven countries in the world with no women in national parliament were in the Pacific region<sup>ii</sup>. But is the picture of women's leadership in the Pacific really so gloomy?

This scoping study turns its focus away from the number of women in national parliaments to look at other spaces, both formal and informal, where women's leadership is making itself visible. The study looks into how women are exercising leadership roles in formal but often neglected political spaces like local government and the civil service. The study also considers the role of women in other less formal political but by no means de-politicised spaces, like the private sector, civil society organisations at both national and community level and in the church. By examining these spaces through women's own voices and sharing their analysis of their own stories, positive examples of Pacific women's leadership comes to the fore. In the Solomon Islands for example, despite historically low levels of women in national Parliament, there have been many women with elected experience at the Provincial level. By exploring women's existing experiences of leadership in different domains it is possible to identify new spaces and actions that could further increase Pacific women's potential as leaders.

The purpose of this scoping study is to assist the Pacific Leadership Program (PLP) and the International Women's Development Agency (IWDA) to identify the gaps and strategic entry points for their Women in Leadership programs. It does so not by examining the organisations' existing projects, but by looking at the context of women's leadership in five countries where either one or both organisations work. Women's leadership will be considered from different perspectives with different locations of change including women in local government in the Solomon Islands and Bougainville, women as leaders outside of formal politics in the Solomon Islands, Bougainville, Tonga and Samoa, and opportunities for young women's leadership within one organisation in Fiji.

## Methodology

Ideas of leadership are informed by conceptualisation of power. Feminism has enriched the understanding of power as occurring in diverse locations, both formal and informal where the lines between the personal and political are forever blurred. 'Leadership' and 'power' are two words that come up frequently in the analysis of the scoping study and in the pathways of women's leadership which document women's own stories in their own voices. These are both terms which have been defined in many different ways. Leadership spaces in the Pacific often refer to formal positions of leadership within official institutions or within the family, whereas in this scoping study leadership is understood more broadly as taking place in diverse locations and in fluid, ever changing conceptions of power. This is occasionally a source of tension in the research. The meaning of the word 'power', even more so than the term leadership, is subject to much debate. In this study, we bring a Foucauldian-inspired understanding of power as being fluid, held in some way by everyone although not always to the same degree, and changing. Different Pacific countries have different ways of understanding power and so the study does not impose one definition of power but rather allows each context to define, where appropriate, a manner for understanding it.

The scoping study uses and is influenced by strengths-based approaches that includes appreciative inquiry. This is not an exhaustive study of the topic of women's leadership in the Pacific; it is specific and limited in its scope to the aims as determined by the two partner organisations.

## Research Methods

A mixed-method approach was used drawing on quantitative data already available and by collecting new qualitative data<sup>iii</sup>. Participatory Action Research<sup>iv</sup> was used as the primary methodological approach in the scoping study. It is a participatory and action-orientated approach to examine with Pacific women leaders themselves the opportunities for women's leadership in local-level government and outside of formal politics. The aim was to work with women to share and analyse their own pathways to leadership. Appreciative Inquiry<sup>v</sup> was used in Fiji to study young women's leadership within a single organisation. The research methods include:

- Literature Review
- Situational analysis and case studies of women in local government in the Solomon Islands and Bougainville
- Key Informant Interviews: semi-structured interviews
- Action Research with Women in Civil Service and Civil Society Organisations
- Appreciative Inquiry of Organisations

Action Research will be used as the primary methodological approach in the Pacific Women in Leadership Scoping Study. It will be used as a participatory, action-orientated approach to look at the opportunities for women's leadership in the Pacific in local-level government and across civil society, civil service, business and the church. These components aim to work with women to share and analyse their own pathways to leadership.

An action research approach or orientation allows for reflection on the current situation, on the types of social changes desired and on the social and organisational action that could contribute to enabling these changes. *"Action research is a social process in which professional knowledge, local knowledge, process skills and democratic values are the basis for co-created knowledge and social change"* (Greenwood and Levin, 1998: 93). Action research is concerned with applying lessons learned and information gathered to plan more effective, meaningful interventions, working with local actors to implement and assess the effectiveness of these activities, and making adjustments based the outcomes of these processes.

Appreciative inquiry will be used as one of the methodological approaches in the Pacific Women in Leadership Scoping Study. It will be used to look at the opportunities for young women's leadership within Pacific organisations. The aim of the appreciative inquiry component of the scoping study is to understand practical ways in which organisations can support young women as leaders within organisations and within the broader community. An appreciative inquiry approach is focused on areas where there are innovative activities being developed and where there are some positive outcomes for gender equality and young women's empowerment. It is informed by questions like 'where is the energy on young women's empowerment approaches? What good practice is out there? What makes it work?'

Appreciative inquiry within the Pacific Women in Leadership Scoping Study will look at how organisations can support young women's leadership. The two organisations featured in the research were chosen using three criteria: location either in Fiji or Tonga, willingness to participate in the study, and perceived positive practices in promoting young women's leadership within the

organisation. Working from a basis of appreciative inquiry privileges the research about what is already working for young women's leadership in organisations.

## **Solomon Islands**

The Solomon Islands is a constitutional monarchy. The legislative is the national parliament comprising 50 members. The executive is led by a Prime Minister and a cabinet. Elections are held every four years using a first-past-the-post electoral system.

There are three tiers of government in the Solomon Islands: the national, the provincial, and the local. At the provincial level there are nine Provincial Assemblies. Currently, the third-tier of local government is only really functioning in Honiara City Council. Although the Constitution of the Solomon Islands makes a provision for respecting traditional customary leadership it is not part of the official sub-national structure. Although not officially recognised as such, traditional structures such as at the Council of Chiefs remain, in many places, the principal form of local governance.

A Constitutional review is underway in the Solomon Islands. After significant consultation in all nine Provinces and in Honiara, the draft recommendations are tabled to go before Parliament in September 2012. While the legislative process of review is expected to take time, the review provides an opportunity to advocate for and potentially achieve special measures for women. Further change is ahead, with the withdrawal of Regional Assistance Mission to Solomon Islands (RAMSI) planned for 2013 to be replaced by some form of bi-lateral assistance. This too may offer new funding opportunities for gender equality projects. The next general elections are due to take place in 2014.

This section explores two of the three research questions posed by the Scoping Study, namely, women in local government and the pathways to women's leadership.

### **Local Level Government**

Local level government comprises provincial government and local government including Honiara City Council both of which operate at the sub-national level. The 1978 Constitution of the Solomon Islands makes provision for sub-national government. The legislation for provincial government is the 1997 Provincial Government Act and for local government, the Local Government Act of 1996 with additional legislation for Honiara City Council through the Honiara City Act of 1999. The different tiers of sub-national government come under different national Ministries. The

Provincial Government comes under the Ministry of Provincial Government and Institutional Strengthening. While Honiara City Council and Local Governments fall under the Ministry of Home Affairs. Like the national legislative, elections are held every four years using an electoral system of first-past-the-post.

### **Opportunities for Women's Political Representation**

There are no specific provisions for women's political representation in the Solomon Islands. Since independence only one woman has been elected to Parliament. Hilda Kari was elected as the Member of Parliament for East-Central Guadalcanal Province in 1988. She was re-elected in 1994 and 2001. Before independence, Lily Poznanski was the only woman in the Solomon Islands Legislative Council.

The 2010 Policy Statement by the previous National Coalition Government of Rural Advancement was issued in favour of reserved seats for women. Since it was issued it has not yet been followed up with concrete moves to implement reserved seats for women. Lobbying for temporary special measures (TSM) for women is a key mobilising issue for the women's movement especially through the Constitutional Review process. Legislation has also brought critical actors for women together, for example in the drafting and passing of the Gender Equality and Women in Development Policy and in subsequent work on the Family Protection Bill.

At the provincial level and in Honiara City Council, the situation for women's political representation is somewhat better. In the 2010 elections, six women were elected to Provincial Assemblies and as Counsellors in Honiara City Council. Isabel Province elected two women as Members of the Provincial Assembly (MPAs). Guadalcanal, Makira and Western Provinces all elected one woman to their respective Provincial Assemblies. Honiara City Council elected one woman to the City Council. Since the elections, the woman Member of the Provincial Assembly for Makira and the woman Counsellor for Honiara City Council have resigned leaving only four women elected at the sub-national level. There has already been substantial work on gender equality at the Honiara City Council level by IWDA and the Commonwealth Local Government Forum (CLGF). This experience is well documented in the 2010 Gender and Local Government: A comparative perspective paper. To avoid duplication with this paper, Honiara City Council is not explored in detail.

The presence of women at a sub-national level has a long history. Since independence in 1978, there have been 18 women Members of the Provincial Assemblies (MPAs). Of the 18 women MPAs 11 were elected and seven were appointed. There is information from

unofficial, but reliable informal sources which is cited below. Another limitation of the data is that it does not include details on the total number of MPAs.

<b>Women in Solomon Islands Provincial Government: 1978-2012</b>			
<b>Province</b>	<b>Women Elected</b>	<b>Women Appointed</b>	<b>Total Women in Provincial Councils</b>
Honiara	2	3	5
Western	1	2	3
Guadacanal	1	2	3
Isabel	2	0	2
Makira	1	0	1
Central	1	0	1
Renbel	1	0	1
Malaita	2	0	2
<b>Total</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>18</b>
<i>Source:</i>			
<i>Private Correspondance: Audrey Manu, Ethel Signamanu and Afu'Bili</i>			

Each Provincial Assembly has its own Constitution. The provincial constitutions may provide new opportunities for women's leadership. In the 1980's the women's movement in Guadalcanal Province successfully lobbied for the provincial constitution to reserve a number of appointed seats for women. This was used until the introduction of the 1997 Provincial Government Act which no-longer included appointed seats. This experience is a provincially driven example of reserved seats in the Solomon Islands<sup>vi</sup>. This could inform future provincial and national special measures.

At the local level, there are some spaces for women's leadership in decision-making although these are context specific in nature. In some areas, the Council of Chiefs<sup>vii</sup> comprises a women's representation from the ward level of the National Women's Council. Rural Development Committees (RDC) are now operating in all nine provinces although there is some variation in the operationally of the individual RDC within each province. The composition of their decision-making body requires a women's representative.

### **Working for Women's Leadership**

There are a range of organisations working on women's leadership in the Solomon Islands although few concentrate exclusively on this issue. A complete analysis of all stakeholders working on women's issues in the Solomon Islands is outside the scope of this study. This section is an initial attempt to situate the main organisations and their interests working on women's leadership.

The National Women's Council is the umbrella body for women's organisations in the Solomon Islands and has strong links with the Ministry of Women, Youth, Children and Family Affairs. At a sub-national level, there are Provincial Women's Councils in all provinces and at the ward level there is a focal point for the Women's Council in most parts of the Solomon Islands. At the national level, the Ministry of Women, Youth, Children and Family Affairs is the lead ministry for women and for gender equality. Its 'Gender Equality and Women's Development Policy' is the guiding policy document for those seeking to align work on women's leadership with national priorities. The relevant Outcome for women's leadership is Outcome 3: "Equal participation of men and women in decision making and leadership."

At the provincial level, the Provincial Strengthening project funded by UNDP, UNCDF, the Solomon Islands Government, and RAMSI has included training on gender budgeting and gender planning in its work to build capacity across the Provinces. At the ward level, the World Bank funded Rural Development Project is working in rural areas to build capacity and infrastructure which includes working with women's organisations.

Key local NGOs working specifically with women include *Vois Blong Mere* working with the media, the Family Support Centre working on family violence, and the Young Women's Parliamentary Forum that is based in Parliament and working closely on the temporary special measures (TSM) debate. CLGF is partnering with the UNDP Provincial Strengthening Project to provide leadership training for provincial councillors and has also provided leadership training for Honiara Councillors.

The main donors currently funding women's leadership work or work closely related are AusAID, the World Bank, and the European Union. Key projects working on women's leadership directly include the Secretariat of the Pacific Community (SPC)'s joint project with Equal Rights Trust and the SPC's Regional Rights Resource Team (RRRT) to provide training for advocacy on women's leadership and gender equality across the Solomon Islands. The Ministry of Women also coordinates donors in this sector through the six committees outlined in the GEWD Policy especially that of aid coordination.

## **Pathways of Solomon Island Women's Leadership<sup>viii</sup>**

### **Grinta Tome, Guadalcanal Province**

*"My leadership story begins with my Grandparents, my Grandfather is a community leaders in Tavu, Tasiboko District on Guadalcanal. All the time it was the chiefs and community people coming to the*

house. With those experiences of my upbringing, I developed my interest to participate, to listen and to speak up. The chiefs learned that I could comment on things they didn't expect. Then I developed it some more when I took leadership of a youth group. The villagers learned it was good to have me around. It was lucky when I was the one accepted to high school and I had to live the village to come to Honiara. At high school, it was a church high school one of the biggest responsibilities that one could take was taking up responsibilities in the church called deaconess. I was one of those deaconesses: in this position you are treasured as someone responsible and living a decent life. After leaving school, I was the secretary of the Guadalcanal Council of Women who initiated the Guadalcanal Women's Constitution for the Council. I was the president until 2010. Being a President of Guadalcanal you have to represent the women of Guadalcanal in all gender issues. In 1987-88, I proposed having two reserved seats for the Provincial Council of Guadalcanal. During those times, gender was not known or treated as a priority. We thought that because Guadalcanal is a matrilineal society, then leadership has to include women. We worked with the male provincial assembly members to convince them to accept the idea. We went into the Assembly with the Women's Development Department and you presented your report and recommendations for seats for women. It was quite challenging at first but then seeing the justification and understanding our cultural justification that really put is in a good position. These reserved seats were included in the Provincial Act for Guadalcanal. So they have been reserved seats for women since 1988. During the tensions period from 1998-2002 the Assembly was dissolved. During that time I was one of three women put forward as field peace-makers: representing local women during the cease-fire talks. Since then, the reserved seats for women were always there but the implementation in terms of women identifying and nominating women to take the seats were not. It depends very much on the interest of women taking up a leadership role through the women development desk and the Council of Women Guadalcanal. They need to push for the reinstatement of the women to the reserved seats. In 2010, I contested the seat for north in the national parliamentary elections. There were 13 candidates, I was the only female contestant and I came fifth. Looking at the issues and skills that I have in terms of implementing and meeting the needs of the community, I decided to run. It's a mixture of my interest, my desire, and my belief in my abilities to be a leader. I really the campaign period: putting out the message that you had. It's an opportunity to expose your beliefs and your ideas. I am still interested in standing as a candidate in 2015. At the moment, I am working as a gender and community development and sustainability counsellor for the Guadalcanal Palm Oil Ltd Company."

### **Savina Nongebatu, Choiseul & Western Provinces**

*"I was born in Gizo Hospital in the Western Province in 1969. I grew up in the village and spent my first five years with my Grandmother. When I was six, I came to join my parents in Honiara. Both my parents are teachers and my Dad is now broadcaster. I attended Chung-Wah the private Chinese school that my Mum taught at. It was and is one of the best schools in Honiara. As the eldest child, you are a role model but that comes with duties too. I was the eldest of five children and my responsibilities in the home started when I was quite young. At Primary School I was a Prefect-I didn't really enjoy the role as I was usually quite naughty. Then I went on to Honiara High School. My duties at home and at school played a big part in my life and my parents were very strict. Church played a big role in our lives too. After three years at Honiara High School asked to move to Goldie College in Western Province. Then for my final years in High School, I was sent to New Zealand to study at the Catholic Sacred Girls, Plymouth. I loved it there but the homesickness was too much. For University, I studied economics at the University of the South Pacific but only for one year. After coming back from Fiji, I spent a couple of years managing the family business. Then I attended the Solomon Island College of Higher Education and got my Diploma of Business. My first employment was with the National Bank of the Solomon Islands and then with the New Zealand High Commission. Then in 1995, I had my daughter and decided to be a full-time Mum. Around the same time, my partner and I built our family home. Back then, I just didn't see work as something I needed to do. I assumed my husband would provide for me. Two years later, I decided to go back to work and found job with the Ministry of Agriculture as a Senior Administration Officer. That was in 1998, the year the ethnic tensions began. It was also the same year I started having problems walking. In 2000, I went into hospital and I guess my disability journey started on that operating table. I work up paralysed. I sent to Australia for more treatment and rehabilitation but after two days in Sydney I was told I would never walk again. I spent the next year away from my family in Australia. I was lucky I was rehabilitated there but it was really difficult too. Disability Rights work for me began in 2003/2004. Diana Yates from the Community Rehabilitation Centre kept on pushing me out of the house. She never gave up. She saw potential in me doing work for people living with disabilities in the Solomon Islands. In 2002 my husband left and my family stepped in. My seven-year-old daughter became my primary care giver. It was a physical and emotional journey: I kept asking why me? In 2004, I was elected the President of People with Disabilities Solomon Islands. We were a new organisation and so we had to start from zero. I was thrown*

*into the deep end of the pool learning about disability rights. With the support of many people, I tried to breathe life into the organisation. It was a pretty different kind of leadership for me to learn and I was only three years old in a wheelchair. From 2004-2008, I worked with a Medical Company looking after staff at RAMSI and ran the organisation from my Son's bedroom. Then in 2008, I began working full-time on disability rights. It became much clearer to me where we were heading and what we still needed to do. In 2010 we got our first ever funding from the Disability Rights Fund. It's been quite a journey so far but I gained a lot of personal satisfaction too. This year I was awarded the US International Woman of Courage Award. My disability has made me a stronger person. It has certainly made me much more aware of the work that needs to be done and the roles that many stakeholders need to play towards an inclusive society for all."*

**Julie Haro, Malaita Province<sup>ix</sup>**

*"Mum was someone who really believed in women being empowered. I'm the eldest in my family. My Dad worked for the Ministry of Works and we travelled quite a bit. He was quite strict and we had to follow the rules exactly or there'd be trouble. Reaching Grade 6, we came to Honiara. I went to King George High School and I was Class Captain and later on a Prefect. During my school days, I tried to make the most of it all. I did my Duke of Edinburgh Award (Silver and Bronze). I was Girl Guide too and that took me out of the Solomon Islands for the first time. I never finished High School because of family problems. But if I'm honest my focus at that time was on sports not studying. My first real employment was with the Solomon Islands National Provident Fund. I wanted a post the inspectorate but they wouldn't give it to me because I'm a woman. So I left there and did further studies. I got a job at the front desk of the Mendana Hotel. Then I worked in a logging company quickly getting promoted to accounts. As well as working I continued in the Girl Guides. I applied for a scholarship to go on the 'Ship For World Youth'. This took us by boat from Japan to Australia, Pacific Islands, and to South America. We studied culture, languages and global issues affecting youth. When I came back to the Solomon Islands, I returned to work with the logging company but after what I had learned while away I felt it wasn't right to work for them. So I worked for the Girl Guides then for the Ministry for Women and then again in the private sector. After the tensions, I got a job with my Church, the Church of Melanesia, organising travel and trips to the Solomon Islands. While I was working with the Church, I went looking for a house. I was offered a job managing a real estate company. It took me some time to decide that I really did want to take the job. I prayed about it and it*

*felt right. After two weeks in the job, I got the hang of it and for the first time it felt right. In 2006, I got my diploma in real estate in Australia with sponsorship from my employers. In 2008, I decided to leave and set up my own real estate company. This was the same year I began one of two women on the Chamber of Commerce Board. I started Premier Real Estate in 2009 using a small bank loan and by selling some cars. At the beginning there were three of us, now we have six staff. In 2010, I joined the Solomon Islands Association of Women in Business. In 2011, I opened up Crystal's Café and the Premier Top Up centre. I also became the President of the Solomon Islands Women in Business. This year, I will launch Premier Events. Making money is not enough for me, I want to try and work towards women's empowerment. That's truly satisfying for me."*

## **Examining the Pathways to Women's Leadership in the Solomon Islands**

*"Being a leader is what you do"* said Ella Kauhue, the Vice President of the Solomon Islands National Council of Women<sup>x</sup>. This understanding of leadership focuses on the different actions that women employ to lead others not only in terms of professional positions but also in the home, family and in church. Amongst the women participating in the focus group and interviews there was a striking reluctance to apply the term women's leaders to themselves. Generally leadership seemed to be reserved for those who had high status derived from their work especially in politics, or to those who had important traditional leadership roles, or finally was something that might come with age. Savina suggested that, *"with age I expect to be taken more seriously"*<sup>xi</sup>. The few women who openly agreed that they themselves are women leaders were women like Permanent Secretary Joy Kere and Permanent Secretary Ethel Sigamanu. The idea of leadership being limited to a select few was deeply embedded in the cultural context of the Solomon Islands.

In all the women's pathways, their experiences as young people were very important in the development of leadership skills and as key sites for opportunities for both education and leadership. Most of the women leaders in the focus group and in the one on one interviews spent a great deal of time talking about their families and their responsibilities often as eldest children for looking after others. Outside of the family, the Girl Guides and the Church both came up as formative spaces where young women could further develop leadership skills, find new opportunities, and meet important mentors who would push them to believe in themselves.

Conflict, domestic violence and ill health have affected the lives of many of the women leaders. Difficult experiences shaped these women's lives. The conflict was a key moment for Grinta Tome to take up a highly visible role of peace advocate in Guadalcanal. Family violence shaped some participants views on helping others and empowering women. Becoming a paraplegic was a rebirth in some ways for Savina Nongebatu. The women leaders all turned these difficult experiences into opportunities and seemed as a result of these experiences to become stronger as women leaders.

Many of the women continue to wear many different leadership hats. Their roles as leaders are not confined to one sector. Their careers also seem to criss-cross from the private to the public into civil society and back again. The experiences of Savina Nongebatu brought attention to the very different experiences of individual women but also the importance of access and inclusion of those differences between women. For women with disabilities the access issues are especially challenging in an environment that is often not enabling to people with special needs.

## **Solomon Islands Conclusion**

There are some exciting opportunities to build on existing work to support women's leadership and some emerging opportunities for new support especially at the provincial level in the Solomon Islands. The recommendations for the Solomon Islands are described in the separate recommendations section at the end of the paper.

## **Bougainville**

Bougainville is an Autonomous Region of Papua New Guinea. Its autonomy is enshrined in the 1975 Constitution of Papua New Guinea. From 1988 to 2001, Bougainville was engaged in a civil war for independence from Papua New Guinea. The autonomy of Bougainville was re-affirmed in the Bougainville Peace Agreement of 2000. Women played a significant and recognised role in the peace negotiations<sup>xii</sup>. Since 2004, the Autonomous Region of Bougainville has had its own Constitution, which lays out the structure of government for Bougainville with substantive capacities of independence from the rest of Papua New Guinea. Furthermore, the system of local-level government is distinct from the rest of Papua New Guinea.

The Government of the Autonomous Region of Bougainville comprises the House of Representatives as the legislative body, the

Executive Council led by the President at the executive level, and the Bougainville Courts as the judiciary. The Constitution recognised several levels of political government. Local level government exists in both rural and urban areas through the Council of Elders and the Town Councils respectively. There are also provisions for respecting traditional leadership outlined in the Constitution. Bougainville elections are held every five years using a proportional system of representation.

The Autonomous Region of Bougainville continues to elect members to the National House of Parliament in Port Moresby. There are four seats allocated to Bougainville. One seat for the whole of Bougainville and a further three seats for central, southern and northern Bougainville. The Papua New Guinea elections are planned for June/July 2012.

This section explores two of the Scoping Study's three research questions, namely, women in local government and the pathways to women's leadership.

### **Local Level Government**

The provisions for local level government differ in rural and urban areas. In rural areas the Council of Elders is the elected and administration body for the provision of local services. There are currently 33 Council of Elders and two Town Councils, Buka and Arawa, with a third planned for Buin. The legislation for the Council of Elders is the Bougainville Council of Elders Act 2006. Town Councils are governed by their own constitutions.

The Council of Elders comprises a mixture of elected and appointed members. It is chaired by the representative of the Council of Clans (traditional leaders), a women's representative, a youth representative, a Church representative, and an elected representative from each Village Assembly in its constituency. The Village Assembly plays a key role in this system. The Village Assembly can be either one large village or comprise several smaller hamlets. All eligible members of the village are allowed to vote for their representative to the Council of Elders.

In urban local level government, the composition of the Town Council is similar to that of the Council of Elders. In place of the Village Assembly representatives are ward representatives. The allocated seats include representatives from women, youth, the church but also business and Trade Unions<sup>xiii</sup>.

A review of the system of local level government is underway from 2012-2014. Although at an early stage, it is likely the recommendations for reform will include a middle tier of local level

government, at either the district or regional level, as a forum between the Council of Elders and the House of Representatives.

### **Opportunities for Women's Political Representation**

Bougainville has reserved seats for women in place at all levels of its autonomous government. In the House of Representatives there are three reserved seats for women. These seats are contested in the general elections and comprise almost 10 per cent of the House of Representatives. The women elected to the House of Representatives select among themselves which women will hold the Ministerial post of Minister of Community Development, Women, Youth and Disabilities. In both the Council of Elders and the Town Council there is one reserved seat for women. The women's representative is selected by the women's groups in the Village Assembly or ward. Women's representation has a long history in Bougainville. Since 1975, there have been reserved seats for women in what was then the North Solomon Provincial Government. Having reserved spaces for women in legislation and in practice at both national (House of Representative) and local-level government levels is unique in the Pacific region.

### **Working for Women's Leadership**

There are a range of organisations working on issues affecting women's leadership in Bougainville. The Bougainville Women's Federation is the umbrella body for women's organisations, which will represent women's voices at a local, national and regional level. Once fully established it will be working with women's representatives in local level government, faith based organisations and non-government organisations. There is little coordination of civil society activities or aid coordination in Bougainville. Civil society organisations working on women's leadership include: CARE International working to support women's leadership through the Councils of Elders in the district of Tinputz; Leitana Nehan offering gender training and running Generation Next activities (no radio as yet); the Nazareth Centre for Rehabilitation offering a refuge to survivors of family violence; Hako Women's Collective running sensitisation campaigns and project activities in Hako.

The World Bank has recently carried out a mapping of Women's CSOs in Bougainville, which should be available in July 2012. UNWomen is currently running Bridge training and providing technical support to national women's organisations. CLGF has trained Brenda Tohiana, (city manager for Buka Urban Council) as a trainer and facilitator in gender and leadership specifically relating to local government, and she will be part of a core team of trainers/facilitators coordinating a gender and local government training program for provincial and local level governments led by

the PNG Department of Provincial Government and Local Level Government. The main donors for activities linked to women's leadership are project funding from AusAID, the World Bank with a 6 million kina project to support women's organisations through projects and capacity development, SPSN funding for projects; and FLOW funding from the Netherlands to IWDA.

## **Pathways of Bougainvillean Women's Leadership<sup>xiv</sup>**

### **Agnes Nara**

*"In 1969 I began school and I carried on until Grade 10. I wanted to become a banker and was accepted into a training programme for what was then the New South Wales Bank in Port Moresby. My mother wouldn't let me go so far away. So I applied for teacher training college in Papua New Guinea. Again I was accepted but again my mother wouldn't let me go out of the province. For a while I worked in the supermarket at the Panguna Mine. I decided to go and speak to the local branch manager of the New South Wales Bank. I told him I had been accepted into the trainee programme in Port Moresby. He offered me a position right away in the Kieta Branch. Later on I got married and started a family. I worked at the bank from 1979 until the troubles began in 1986. From 1988 to 1992 I stayed in the village. The Government services were all gone. From 1991 we were under the blockade. I got involved in peace building after I went to a course at the Peace Foundation. There we were taught about people skills and mediation. In 1993, I lived in the Care Centre in the PNG-government controlled area and that's the time we started negotiating for peace dialogue. One of the PNG Defence soldiers belted my sister. I went to the Commander and told him you didn't come here to fight with the women. It is against our culture no other man is allowed to touch a woman. I got involved with Women for Peace and Freedom, one of the first organisations to bring together women from both sides of the conflict. In 1996, I was elected to the Bana District Women's Council and then later we formed the United Bana Women for Peace and Freedom. In 1999, I was invited by the National Council of Women to attend the National Women's Congress in Alotau, Milne Bay Province. During the Interim Bougainville Provincial Government I was a women's representative for South Bougainville. In 2005, I decided to run as a candidate for the women's seat in South Bougainville but I wasn't elected. The following year, the Minister of Women's Affairs of the Autonomous Bougainville Government proposed the creation of a new umbrella organisation for women in Bougainville under the autonomous arrangements. I became the vice-president of the South Bougainville Women's Federation. In 2007, 110 women stood as candidates for the Papua New Guinea elections but only one candidate, Dame Carol Kidu, was*

*elected. I went to the diagnostic workshop of the National Council of Women in Port Moresby to find out why. There, I learnt a lot about campaigning and how to go about campaigning. In 2009, I became the vice-president of the South Bougainville Women's Federation and then president in 2010. I was appointed by the Bougainville Executive Council as a Board member of one of the top decision-making bodies in Bougainville, the Physical Planning Board as the women's representative."*

**Brenda Tohiana<sup>xv</sup>**

*"Some of my happiest times are as a student in the High School. I excelled in school: I was what you'd call an A star student. Looking back I attribute my leadership competencies to school, which was a real training ground in women's leaderships for me. I was even Dux of the school. After High School, I chose to go the University of Technology in Lae and took up business studies majoring in the accounting stream. I was the first Bougainvillean woman to graduate from University. My biggest hurdle was adjusting to living with boys on campus: boys outnumbered us at least ten to one. During my third year, I secured a corporate scholarship. When I graduated I went straight to work with the company that sponsored me. Training-wise, it was actually very interesting in that we had somebody there who was not only training us but also mentoring us. I was working there for one and half years and then I got married. It was a marriage organised by the elders at home. And that's another hurdle because my husband was working for the Bougainville Copper Limited so I had to resign from my job in Port Moresby and relocate to Bougainville. It took me nearly four or five months before I found employment in Arawa. It was like starting all over again. I was requested by my former employers in Port Moresby to work with their Bougainville based cocoa exporting company. This came with real responsibilities. I was managing the administration and accounting sections of the company. In the work environment, that was my training ground in management skills I was there for two years then I decided to start a family. After four or five years of working and raising my family, this job came up with the Arawa Town Council for the position of chief accountant. So I applied. A whole new world began. I suppose there begins my accent to management in the civil service. I was working there right through to May 1990 when the crisis caught up with us and forced to close the office. Everybody was leaving Arawa and we were one of the last families to leave, to relocate to the villages. We came home and toughed it out in the village. In 1992 I was recalled to work with the newly established Buka Town Commission. The Administration of Bougainville was just being re-established in Buka. In 1997, I was promoted to deputy town manager. The town manager really took on the role of grooming me*

for the position of town manager. In 1999 the Bougainville Transitional Government came in to being and I became the town manager for Buka. At the same time, I was acting as a resource person for Leitana Nehan, a women's organisation. I was learning about gender for the first time. I started building my own understanding of gender equity and how to strength our working relationships with me and to accept we are all partners working towards the same common objective. I start to go to training on gender issues and conflict transformation. This re-enforced my management skills. Over the last four or five years, my team has engaged more and more women."

**Sister Lorraine** <sup>xvi</sup>

"On both my parents sides I come from chiefly families. My maternal grandmother was the eldest in the family and she held the birth right of the clan. So I grew up with her. She was a woman of very few words but she did a lot in her life. When I was about ten, she said to me if you want to be a leader first you must know how to work a garden and feed a hundred people. This thought has stayed with me for many years. Being conscious of wanting to do something different really drove me and determined who I am today. I was very active in the Catholic Youth Movement. Being in the Catholic Youth Movement enabled those in leadership to see that I had potential to be a leader. During that time, I did High School long-distance. After that, I did teacher training to teach pre-school and I became a teacher. I was doing that I was also doing business training. I used to help my uncle run his business but all through those years I still wanted to do something different. I was very involved in church activities: prayers, youth retreats and music. I wanted to explore what was calling me to become a sister. I decided to become a Sister in the Order of Nazareth in 1980. I asked the leader of our Order if I could go to a parish and work with women. There the more traditional leaders reminded me of my grandmother: they were blending traditional leadership with church and civil society. In 1986 I went to study at the Institute of Missiology for one year. When I was doing my studies on social justice, I became aware of the injustices of mining affecting the Panguna area as the area that is mainly Catholic. That really set me up for when the crisis came. When the crisis came, my experience from working with the church and with women really helped me. From 1990-93 my task was to mobilise woman for an end to the war. In 1994, I went to Amor Conference of Sisters in the Asia-Pacific. When I got there, it opened up my world. At the conference I was able to meet sisters from all over Asia, many from countries who had been through wars. I connected with them and learnt from them about using people's power not weapons. After I came back, we started an inter-faith group for women. We decided we wanted

*to host an inter-church women's peace forum. By September 1996 we hosted the forum bringing together 700 women. For me those were very challenging years, but when I look back I never saw myself as giving up. I always felt it was my place and my duty to ensure that people had the right to freedom, justice, and information. It's only in the last ten years that I gained respect as part of this landscape of woman leaders. Since 2003, I have found my place in Chabai. I left the Bougainville Inter-church women's forum and I went to Australia for a sabbatical for my own spiritual renewal and skills development in trauma counselling. When I came back I decided to do full time work with the Nazareth Centre for Rehabilitation. The centre provides a refuge for women and their families who are survivors of family violence, youth who are survivors of substance abuse, and working with former combatants for trauma healing. In Bougainville this is the only holistic centre and run a unique programme. It offers spiritual healing, psychological healing, and new social skills for peace building. The centre was built from local materials with its own food gardens. Now I can feed a hundred people."*

### **Examining the Pathways to Women's Leadership in Bougainville**

'You have to move like a river' said Sister Lorraine when we visited her work with the safe houses in Chabai<sup>xvii</sup>. The pathways to positions of women's leadership are diverse and each woman's story is unique. From all the life stories that the women leaders of Bougainville chose to share with us, a strong theme of diverse leadership roles emerged. No women's leader that we spoke to, and none of the six women we documented, had had only one leadership role in one area. All of the women we spoke to had leadership roles across different areas: the church was one common area of women's leadership. School and youth activities too played an important role in these women's lives. Yet others combined careers in the civil service with periods working in the private sector. We were struck by the story from Agnes Bara of her twenty-year-old self striding into the office of her local bank and demanding that they hire her. Such confidence is also common to these women who have not waited for power to be given to them but rather that have taken and created opportunities for themselves often in difficult times. These women's leadership life stories echo the triple role theory of Caroline Moser (1993) that women's lives comprise different roles across productive, reproductive and community management roles<sup>xviii</sup>. These roles are not seen as discrete silos but rather a way of separating out the complex strands of women's responsibilities.

These pathways to women's leadership were in no way given to the women. These women took on these different leadership roles and made them their own. The context they live in is important for understanding how such roles, space and power could be occupied by women. Bougainville is a largely matrilineal society<sup>xix</sup>. Women's responsibilities traditionally include looking after the land, keeping the family history and passing on the family name from the mother's side. This is not to exaggerate the power of women in Bougainville: a matrilineal society is not a matriarchy. However there is definitely pre-existing spaces for women's leadership in both traditional and contemporary Bougainville. Many of the women leaders we met had additional roles as Clan Chiefs which allows them particular privileges.

The conflict in Bougainville lasted from 1988-1996 and its affects can still be seen today in the post-conflict reconstruction of infrastructure and the slow process of reconciliation and healing for traumatised people. For women's leadership in Bougainville the conflict became a space for women to exercise their leadership role in their work for peace. All three women's lives were affected by the conflict. For Brenda it provided new challenges in her work with the Town Council. For Evelyn Banas, President of the Central Bougainville Women's Federation the crisis was the defining moment for her to take on a leadership role in her community, her church and in the internment camp (care centre) where she was held for two years<sup>xx</sup>.

During and after the conflict, national and international forums that brought Bougainvillean women together were important for peace building but also for reconciliation. The solidarity amongst women from both sides of the conflict is a clear product of these reconciliation processes. Its affect can still be felt in the women's movement where women from both sides of the conflict both know each other well and are reconciled to working together. Although there is not perfect harmony on all issues, the women's movement through the Bougainville Women's Federation, the Church, Civil Society, Civil Service and women in politics seem to work together in a supportive manner.

That very solidarity between the women is due in no small part to their shared age. The women leaders that we met were extremely conscious of the fact that most women in leadership positions are aged forty plus. These women themselves identified this as a key issue for them. On the plus side, it means the current women leaders know each other well and generally work well together. On the minus side, there is no group of young women being prepared to take over these leadership roles. The young women themselves

are not homogenous. The so-called 'Lost Generation' currently aged from 25-35 years have had their entire lives and education affected by the conflict and the post-conflict lack of services. Women from this age bracket are described by the women we interviewed in the focus group as being little interested in participating in the women's movement and are not thought to have the leadership skills or experience needed to lead others. In the younger age group of women under 25 years of age, the situation is again different with a high number who have achieved higher levels of education and computer literacy than even the existing women leaders. This brings its own tensions and issues when very young women leaders are working with much older women who themselves are acutely aware of their own lack of formal education.

## **Bougainville Conclusion**

From this analysis of the Bougainvillean system of local-level governance and of the pathways of women leaders, there is clearly space for further intervention by new development actors, especially those who seek to work in coordination to build on the existing efforts to mobilise and support women's leadership. The recommendations for Bougainville are described in the separate recommendations section at the end of the paper.

## **Tonga**

The Kingdom of Tonga is a constitutional monarchy. Recent changes to the constitution meant that in 2010 the Parliament comprised of more elected Members of Parliament than appointed Nobles or appointed Ministers. Women in Tonga have had the right to vote and be Members of Parliament since 1951. Since then, three Tongan women have been elected to Parliament and two women have been appointed to Parliament as Ministers. There is currently only one women in Parliament, the appointed Minister of Education, Youth and Women. Tonga is now the only Pacific Island country that is not a signatory to the CEDAW. Although women's leadership in the parliamentary context has been limited, women are visible in many other spheres. It is in those other spheres of the civil service, the church, the family, education and the private sector that this section seeks to explore.

This section explores one of the Scoping Study's three research questions namely, the pathways to women's leadership. Originally this was designed to explore young women's leadership within organisations however, upon arrival in-country it became clear that this would not be possible as the young woman selected did not

work within the organisation that had been selected but rather was an occasional volunteer with a full-time job elsewhere. It was thus necessary to re-focus this section solely on the pathways of women's leadership and the analysis of those pathways. An additional challenge was when a number of women chose not to have their pathways published. Tonga is a country where the Pacific Leadership Program works but the International Women's Development Agency is not present. The recommendations in this section apply to PLP only.

## **Pathways of Tongan Women's Leadership<sup>xxi</sup>**

### **Emeline Siale Ilolahia**

*"I grew up in a very stable family with strong family connections. My parents were primary school teachers so part of their jobs required us to move around schools at outer islands. Moving around all the time at a young age left me with a sense of not belonging to only one particular place but belong to all places. Most of my childhood was experiences at remote rural community settings with sense of freedom and independence where social boundaries were not necessary to be put in place by my parents compared to the urban life that I now raised my children. It has built a strong sense of self confidence in me at a young age. We moved to Tongatapu on my first year at high school, completed high school and first two years of tertiary education in Tonga. I travelled a bit then continued with my education abroad. It was my last semester that I returned to Tonga when my mother was sick and passed away. Both my parents came from big families so although I was an only girl of three children, we always had a full house of relatives either visiting or staying with us for school. My mother was the eldest in her family and highly regarded in our 'fahu' system and that comes with responsibilities and obligations to her family. She strongly believed that education is the key to her family's development and so made sure that one child from each of her sisters and brothers' family was educated. She provided accommodation, school fees, and daily support and when they completed their education they all got jobs and returned to their family to do the same to their young ones. I was expected to assume those same responsibilities from my mother. There were times when I felt it was more a burden than a blessings but now, in my current role as a mother to a family and a leader of an organization, the importance of maintaining relationships that I learned and assumed from my mother had laid my perspective foundation on how I exercise leadership in my everyday personal and professional life."*

**Kerry Lepa<sup>xxii</sup>**

*"I grew up in a very complicated family, my Mum was a single mum and I didn't know my Father. In fact, for a very long-time I thought my Grandparents were my parents. When I was 12 years old, I realised that my Mum was actually my Mum not my sister. That was one of the things that challenged me most. It made me ask a lot of questions. Who am I? Why am I here? These questions have been driving me. In my life there's been a lot missing and I felt neglected in a lot of ways. But I always saw it as a challenge. I've always believed in myself and had a strong sense of self-worth. I really enjoyed school. I liked joining with us, being part of things. I was a Prefect, on the gardening committee, the magazine committee, and working hard on an academic scholarship. I was nominated by the school to go to Cambodia for the Asia-Pacific Convention on the Rights of the Child. I met a lot of children from all over the world, sharing the hardships that children faced. Hearing those stories made me think that here in Tonga things aren't so bad. After High School, I worked as a community volunteer with the Tonga National Youth Congress. I was really encouraged by my trip to Cambodia. I did a project called Future Farmers. Usually girls aren't involved in farming but I wanted to do something different from what other girls do and challenge that only boys can farm. In 2006, I was the only girl to get a scholarship to study a B.A. Agricultural Sciences at the University of the South Pacific in Samoa. Even at the scholarship interview they asked me "Do you really think we'll give this scholarship to a girl" and I replied that I thought girls could be as successful as boys in this field but have never been given the opportunity. This experience built in motivation to prove myself. Being the only girl on the course from Tonga challenged me but I felt I couldn't give up. I've never forgotten something I heard on a Tonga National Youth Congress leadership course: "a leader is someone who leads people to a place they have never been before". For me this taught me that my leadership applies in my family, youth groups, community, students and work-mates. Today I am a teacher of agricultural sciences for senior level High School. In the future, I want to go on to further study and become an Agronomist here in the Pacific."*

**Lola Koloamtongi<sup>xxiii</sup>**

*"Mine was a broken home. That broken home experience gave me the drive to work very hard. I didn't want to go the same way as my family. My family background strengthened my spiritual life; I was brought up with a Christian upbringing. After High School, I considered training as a secretary but I didn't like that idea much. My father told me about a vacancy for women constables - only the third batch of women constables in Tonga. I became a police*

*constable in 1972. The police force was very disciplined with special police regulations governing behaviour. In 1975 I started my family. It was not easy to be a mother and a constable. Police life started very early in the morning and went on often until late in the evening. There was only one month of maternity leave after which time you had to resume physical duties. I had some early promotions despite it being a very competitive environment. In 1978 I became a First Class Constable. In 1982, I went to New Zealand for further police studies. I became a Commissioned Officer in 1991. It was still very rare for a woman to be an officer. That encouraged me to try even harder. In 1990, I joined the inspectorate commanding men. In 1999, I was made the Commanding Officer in Vava'u. When I left the force, I was a Deputy Police Commander: the first woman to reach that rank. Working as a woman police officer brought a different approach to my work. Male offenders would often tell me things they wouldn't tell a male officer. But being a woman in the police force wasn't easy. The performance appraisals for men and women were the same even if they'd just had a baby. The roles given to women were mainly administrative and that affected their ability to get promotions. There was no channel through which women could express their needs. When I had a leadership role, I made sure that other women got access to trainings. I found that women needed to work much harder than men to get recognised. After I retired, I became a counsellor at the National Centre for Women and Children. I wanted to work support women who'd been abused. Because of my childhood, that's an issue that's very important to me. Another part of my life is my Christian life. In 1987 I became a reader in the Anglican Church. I'm not a Minister, yet."*

## **Examining the Pathways to Women's Leadership in Tonga**

Power in Tongan society is relational and this concept is central to understanding women's leadership in Tonga. This means an individual's power is defined by his or her relationships with others. The stronger the tie to others and the greater number of relations one has, the more power one has. The idea of positive power with others is quite different from common Western definitions of power as power over others through coercion, persuasion or manipulation<sup>xxiv</sup>. The relational nature of Tongan society is supported by four core and common values all of which are relational: respect, reciprocity, loyalty, and commitment<sup>xxv</sup>. The relational idea of power is the fundamental building block for this complex system. Power is a partial translation of the Tongan 'mana' which combines both the idea of power and the sacred. Both women and men have 'mana'. There are clearly observed roles for women

and men in Tongan society. Understanding relational power is central to understanding leadership in a Tongan context<sup>xxvi</sup>.

From this relational concept of power, the traditional system of leadership begins within the family. Dr. Seu'ula Fonua explains, *"Sometimes we pay attention only to women in Parliament or at the top but the real measure of women's participation in leadership is at the level of the family."*<sup>xxvii</sup> With the women engaged in exploring their pathways of leadership through this research, the family was the most common starting point for the women's story telling. Drew Havea described the family as the 'power base' of women, *"in the family women are of high rank. Their power is based on the family. However, they are not always able to translate that to the community and national level."* One important element of traditional family leadership in Tonga is the relationship between brothers and sisters. Eldest sisters, in particular, have special privileges and responsibilities in their families through the 'Fahu' system. Siale touches on this in her pathway to leadership where she talks about the responsibilities for others that being a Fahu can bring. Today the Fahu system is not always respected: gifts of food may no longer be given when brothers neither farm nor fish<sup>xxviii</sup> and even ceremonial gifts may not be forthcoming<sup>xxix</sup>. Like eldest sisters, eldest sons, Ulumotu, also have special responsibilities and privileges for others and these roles differ but are related to those of the Fahu. A large number of the women we encountered held this special status within their family. The role of religion in women's pathways to leadership is also important and was often cited by the women interviewed as being a key source of strength or concrete support through women's church groups or church scholarships.

In recent years, it seems that women's roles have expanded from women's traditional roles under pressure to provide financial support for their families. The addition of economic responsibilities to women's care-giving, domestic and sacred roles has been a substantial change to the traditional roles of women and men. All of the women involved in the research have at least some economic responsibilities for their families. As roles are changing in Tonga due perhaps to factors like the increasing monetisation of society, migration and outside influences, there has been some breakdown of the old system. This has had an impact on some women having no access to bush land because they can no longer rely on male family members to provide it, increasing reports of family violence, and more women being marginalised from society.

Leadership was clearly understood as having vision. For themselves, many of the women interviewed described having a vision for their own lives that involved consciously deciding to break the mould of

what women's roles are and can be. Lola talks about wanting to show that women could be effective police officers while Kerry wanted to show that women could be agricultural scientists when farming had traditionally been seen as a man's role. Their pathways to leadership seemed to be driven by a desire to demonstrate women's potential. For many of the women interviewed, their vision of women's leadership involved engagement and leadership in spaces like the church or the family as well as in their work in politics. For some, the church and family were seen as the most crucial sites for change: Dr Ungatea said "I feel I can make more of a difference in the church rather than going into politics<sup>xxx</sup>."

## Tonga Conclusion

In Tonga the lack of need for capacity development was a commonly heard refrain amongst the people we talked to albeit only in Nukualofa: no one when asked what additional needs they saw for women's leadership cited capacity development. This may be linked to the fact that the majority of the Tongan women that we met had high levels of education attainment including at a tertiary level and were urban based. From our interviews, a few key areas may be worth exploring in more detail in relation to women's leadership. The recommendations for Tonga are described in the country-specific recommendations section at the end of the paper.

## Samoa

Samoa has two levels of government. At the national level, the Parliament (Fono) comprises 49 members, of whom 47 are Matai (of chiefly status). The Prime Minister comes from the ruling party while the Head of State is chosen by Parliament. The ruling party, the Human Rights Protection Party, has been in power for more than thirty years. Women's participation in formal politics has been hampered by the requirement for members of the national and village Fono to be a Matai title-holder: a status which in the past was rarely accorded to women.

At the local level each of the 286 villages continues to operate under its own system of traditional government plus 26 urban local governments. One key feature of the Samoan government system is that each village has considerable autonomy and power in managing their own affairs as their own custom dictates.

The most topical issue on women's leadership in Samoa concerns recent moves for a constitutional amendment for reserved seats for women in the national Fono. In light of this on-going debate, this

section on Samoa will consider women in national politics before looking at opportunities for women's leadership in other areas.

The Samoa research falls out with the methodology developed for the study. It was originally planned that this section would look at the pathways of women's leadership. However, this was dropped prior to arrival in-country at the request of the Pacific Leadership Program. Instead the Samoa section attempts to provide an overview of the current context of women's leadership, to highlight the main issues related to women's leadership that were raised, and to identify some recommendations for further action as suggested by those interviewed. Unlike other country sections, this part of the report has been adapted to some of the needs of the Pacific Gender Equality Initiative consultation for Samoa. Samoa is a country where the Pacific Leadership Program works but the International Women's Development Agency is not present. The recommendations in this section apply to PLP only.

### **Women in Parliament in Samoa**

Samoa women can and do participate in national politics through the Fono if they have Matai title-holder status. Matai status is important for both national and village level political participation. In recent years there has been a significant increase in the number of women who are Matai. From 2001 to 2006, census data shows that the number of women Matai had doubled so that 20 per cent are women<sup>xxxix</sup>. Despite these increases in the number of women Matai, there remain a small number of villages that do not allow women to become Matai.

At the same time as the number of women Matai reached record levels, the number of women in parliament also grew. In 2006, Samoa elected a record number of women into parliament. The 2006 general election and bi-election resulted in five women, 10.2 per cent, being elected into the Fono<sup>xxxix</sup>. However, these electoral gains for the number of women in parliament were not long lasting. In the following election in 2011 only two women, 4.1 per cent, were elected to parliament<sup>xxxix</sup>.

Women parliamentarians have had and continue to have Ministerial responsibilities. For example in 2006, three of the four women elected in the general election held ministerial posts. This meant that women held 23 per cent of all cabinet posts in Health, Communications and Information Technology, and Women, Community and Social Development. Both of the current women parliamentarians have Ministerial responsibilities as the Minister of Justice and the Associate Minister of Women, Community and Social Development.

National policy supports increasing the number of women in politics and in decision-making. The National Policy for Women of Samoa 2010-2015 includes a specific outcome for “*increased participation of women in public life and decision-making*”. The objectives includes creating a data-base of potential women leaders, removing obstacles to female participation in politics, more women on public bodies, and encouraging women into decision-making bodies outside of politics. The National policy objectives are echoed in the findings of the recent Millennium Development Goal (MDG) reporting on MDG 3: Promote Gender Equality and Empower Women. The report noted that the goals on women in parliament were ‘*at risk*’ of not being achieved.

### **Reserved Seats for Women in Parliament in Samoa**

In December 2011, the Prime Minister tabled a constitutional amendment to ensure five reserved seats for women<sup>xxxiv</sup>. If approved the amendment would come into effect only if women did not comprise ten per cent of those elected to the Fono. The constitutional amendment is now at its second reading before parliament and a third and final reading is likely to happen this year. The introduction of the amendment is a critical act for women’s leadership.

Although there is widespread support amongst the women we met for reserved seats, there has been some publically expressed concern that there was a lack of consultation on the matter. Two public forums have taken place to propose alternative ways of implementing reserved seats for women. In March 2012, the civil society forum through SUNGO (Samoa Umbrella for NGOs) proposed an alternative option for implementing reserved seats for women<sup>xxxv</sup>. Despite these efforts, the advanced stage in parliament’s consideration for the proposed constitutional amendment plus the personal support of the Prime Minister means that the amendment is likely to be approved in its current form.

### **Women’s Leadership in the Samoan Civil Service**

Although the number of women in parliament went down in 2011, outside of formal politics, women in Samoa have strong leadership roles particularly in the civil service. The civil service is the largest single employer in Samoa and 54 per cent of its staff are women<sup>xxxvi</sup>. At a senior leadership level there are more women than men: 52 per cent to 48 per cent respectively<sup>xxxvii</sup>. At the CEO level in the 13 Ministries, the number of women CEOs rose from 23 per cent in 2001<sup>xxxviii</sup> to 38 per cent in 2012<sup>xxxix</sup>. A similar progression is visible amongst the heads of statutory bodies in 2001 9.5 per

cent of the heads of statutory bodies were women while in 2009 23 per cent were women<sup>xi</sup>. The strong presence of women in leadership in the civil service has been attributed to women's high levels of educational attainment and women's increasing experience in leadership roles allowing them to access senior management level positions within the government<sup>xli</sup>. Women working at the CEO level in the civil service and women parliamentarians have created the Women in Leadership Advocates (WinLA), as a network for advocacy.

### **Traditional Spaces for Women's Leadership in Samoa**

Samoa's believe that women have a high level of status in their culture and that women's roles within the family are respected and honoured in the fa'a Samoa (Samoa Way). This has led some of the women and men we interviewed to question whether women's leadership is an issue that needs to be addressed in Samoa<sup>xlii</sup>. The national statistics of the number of women in national politics challenge this belief by showing there is a lack of women parliamentarians. In other areas, however, like education and employment the gender gap is less prominent<sup>xliii</sup>. Women and men's leadership in Samoa is deeply embedded in a complex culture of gender relational roles.

Despite the legal equality of opportunity for women and men to become Matai there remains far fewer women Matai than men Matai. Culturally the role of a Matai is generally one held by a man as the chief of the extended family. One of the other key family relationships in Samoa is that between a sister and brother, *feagaiga*. The cultural role of men as Matai is compounded by the cultural role of a sister to support her brother. These two issues come together in the experience of Lemalu Sina Retzlaff Lima being offered a chiefly title. She explained that when she was offered a Matai title she felt it was very important that her brother was offered the opportunity for the Matai title first. Only when it became clear he did not want the title did she feel comfortable accepting it<sup>xliv</sup>. This example is indicative of the complex reality of gender roles and stereotypes that women and men have to navigate in order to change and challenge the status quo so as to enable women to take up the role of Matai. Her experience strongly suggests the deeply held beliefs about men's, especially brothers, formal leadership roles in relation to women's roles outside of formal leadership. The separate roles of women and men are most visible at the village level<sup>xlv</sup>.

Samoa has a system of local government based on traditional structures that predates the modern nation state system<sup>xlvi</sup>. Under

the Village Fono Act (1991), each village governs and administers its own affairs. This gives each village considerable autonomy and allows for significant diversity between the villages in how they govern their affairs. There is, however, a tripartite structure common to all villages. The adults in the village can be sub-divided into three distinct groups: Village Fono, a Council comprising the Matai, the Village of Women, and the Village of Untitled Men. Children and young people comprise a fourth separate group within the village structure. The Village Fono (Council) takes responsibility for the decision-making at the village level. Neither the Village of Women nor the Untitled Men would usually be consulted in the decision-making of the Village Council although they could try indirectly via their own Matai to influence the decisions. The Village Fono was traditionally a male-dominated space. In the past the Matai, all of whom would have been men, arrived and removed their shirts as a sign of not bearing arms. A ribald discussion would then ensue with language considered unsuitable for women's, especially sister's ears<sup>xlvii</sup>. As such, women's participation in such a space would have been seen as extremely inappropriate. Liaison with the national government is through an appointed and rotating Matai who undertakes the role of the Suinuu (Village Representative) and a Suitamatai (Village Women's Representative)<sup>xlviii</sup>. It is important to remember that the villages follow their own customary practice and, as such, is largely separate from the national government.

## **Samoa Conclusions**

Women's leadership in Samoa is in a positive space in some areas. Women hold key leadership positions especially in the civil service and are excelling in education. The recommendations for women's leadership in Samoa are described in the country-specific recommendations section at the end of the paper.

## **Promoting Pacific Young Women Leaders**

The women's movement and civil society organisations are key places of women's leadership. They are key places for inter-generational learning and offer opportunities to engage and promote the next generation of young women leaders in the Pacific. Building on the important consensus developed in the YWCA's *Pacific Young Women's Leadership Strategy* and PLP's study on *Successful Models of Youth Leadership*, this section will look in-depth at how one organisation promoted young women leadership within their own organisation. Building on the momentum of the YWCA Strategy, this section could be useful for other organisations

interested in how they could practically support young women into leadership roles within their own organisations.

An appreciative inquiry over a period of three days was used to analyse the work of femLINKPACIFIC. FemLINKPACIFIC was selected as the organisation to be studied for two reasons: 1) a strong pre-existing relationship with the organisation to ensure access to all meetings, shadowing, and documentation and 2) presence of a young woman, less than 30 years of age who was already in a leadership position from which the organisation could be observed. Adopting this approach involved spending intensive amounts of time, over several days, within the organisation. The primary data comes from a pre-selected young woman within the organisation. This young woman is selected based on their own, and the organisation's, perception that the organisation has promoted them as a leader. The young woman leader was interviewed and shadowed in her work. In addition to analysis of the experience of the individual young woman leader, semi-structured interviews were used with other staff members to learn more about the organisation's structures, space provided for young women's leadership, and the role of senior management in supporting young women's leadership. The final analysis was written up by the researcher to document the pathways for young women's leadership within the organisation.

As an appreciative inquiry, this piece of work is not a critique of the organisation; rather the section focuses exclusively on what is already working well for young women's leadership within femLINKPACIFIC.

### **femLINKPACIFIC**

FemLINKPACIFIC is a non-government organisation that uses community radio and media to *"address the imbalances caused by the traditional decision-making structures which impede women and young women's effective participation, especially from the rural population and the poor, to communicate openly on common matters"*<sup>xlix</sup>. FemLINKPACIFIC was started in 2000 with a strong focus on women, peace and security. The organisation is based in Fiji but also works regionally with partner organisations across the Pacific.

### **Pathway of Young Women's Leadership: Veena Singh Bryar<sup>1</sup>**

*"I think I've always been an old soul. I began working on children's rights issues when I was just a child. I went to primary school next door to an orphanage that gave me an insight into the lives of*

*different children. My Mum worked for Save the Children and I started volunteering there when I was just 11 years old. As well as my Mum, I was mentored at Save the Children by Mereia- in many ways she helped me to become me. I was making decisions even at that young age. I guess I've always expected to be taken seriously. After I finished High School, I began my on-going degree studies. I kept working and volunteering. In 2004/2005, my Mum suggested I apply to participate in the Emerging Leaders Forum (ELF). I got into the program and began a one-year training program for young leaders. Through the ELF program, I met Ana Padarath who was one of those people who taught me to question things, to ask why. In 2006, through Save the Children I got involved on a community radio project by femLINKPACIFIC to highlight children's rights issues and perspectives from children and young people and had my very own youth speak out segment on the radio. At this time I also started working with the Fiji Red Cross to highlight youth and Sexual Reproductive Health and Rights issues through creative means such as puppetry and Theatre. My work began with femLINKPACIFIC as a volunteer with Generation Next, producing radio content on issues affecting young women. I was never comfortable in front of the camera but I enjoyed working on the Youth Speak Out Segment for Generation Next because children and young women's voices are not played enough on the radio here. In 2008, I had the opportunity to be one of the field researchers on a Baseline Report for creating a future free from violence, abuse and exploitation of girl and boys in Fiji by UNICEF through Save the Children. Later on that year, I applied for a policy research position with femLINKPACIFIC and was offered the post mid-2008. Ever since I started working with femLINKPACIFIC Sharon Bhagwan-Rolls has been one of my mentors. We have a great working relationship: she asks for advice and takes on board what you have to say. My husband and I moved to New Caledonia in 2009 and femLINKPACIFIC were supportive of me continuing my work with them from there as a regional correspondent. In 2011, I had a new role with femLINKPACIFIC as the Coordinator of Regional Programmes and Policy, and when necessary as the Officer in Charge. In the Pacific, young women are given leadership roles but too often they are not taken seriously. I think that leadership is about working with others, being a role model, sharing and taking responsibility, and making the final decision. Leadership isn't about age and a leader doesn't have to be a prominent person either."*

### **Young Women's Leadership in femLINKPACIFIC**

FemLINKPACIFIC's aim, structure and work supports spaces for young women's leadership. Working from the point of view of Veena Singh-Bryar the organisation offers opportunities for young women

to be part of the organisation's work and influence its decision-making process.

- 1. Organisational Focus on Young Women:** The organisation's purpose and vision is to ensure that young women in particular are given space and opportunity to be heard. In this way, ensuring young women's leadership is consistent with the organisation's aims and work to make those spaces where young women can be heard into reality. This is enshrined in the femLINKPACIFIC constitution. FemLINKPACIFIC began as a feminist management collective, which encouraged collective decision-making and consultation placing a high value on hearing different voices and opinions including young women's voices.
- 2. Organisation Entry Points for Young Women:** FemLINKPACIFIC's work on Generation Next is both a key part of their activities and a key entry point for young women to volunteer with the organisation. Young women are supported and trained to produce and broadcast content as volunteers for the Generation Next radio station. This gives young women exposure to the organisation and allows the organisation to build up a relationship with a large number of young women over time. This means that young women are an important part of the organisation's core work. It also means the organisation has a built in mechanism for recruiting young women as staff from their extensive pool of young women volunteers.
- 3. Spaces in the organisation for Young Women's Voices:** In the day-to-day running of femLINKPACIFIC there are institutionalised spaces where young women can comment and contribute to how the organisation is run. Young women volunteers can and do participate in a weekly meeting for Generation Next with the producer-director. Veena Singh-Bryar participates in the weekly management meeting. Moreover the femLINKPACIFIC board currently has two young women representatives who are younger than 30 years old. The annual Partners' Meeting includes young women focal points and convenors from the different rural networks. As Veena Singh-Bryar explains, "*young women present are in all of the meetings; taking active roles*".<sup>ii</sup> Ensuring access and participation for young women in these different meetings and forums allows for young women's voices to be heard and taken into account.
- 4. Young Women Working Together:** Young women in the Generation Next program work together as peers: learning together and working together on a regular basis to create program content. This was identified by Veena Singh-Bryar as a '*key support and a site to learn from each other*'.<sup>iii</sup> Peer learning is further institutionalised through bi-annual Young Women's Trainings. Over two weeks, young women come together to learn

about community media training, creating radio programmes, preparing digital stories and to plan for the rest of year with all staff members. This is an important location for networking with other women, working together with other young women, and learning new skills.

- 5. Mentoring Young Women:** One-on-one mentoring is regularly used by the femLINKPACIFIC producer-director Sharon Bhagwan-Rolls, with young women volunteers and staff. This may be unofficial mentoring or as in the case of Veena Singh-Bryar official mentoring. In Veena's pathway of leadership mentoring began at a young age and there seems to have been a number of mentors who have helped her to develop over the years.
- 6. Allowing others to Lead:** In 2008, an organizational review was conducted and the Executive Director, Sharon Bhagwan-Rolls started reviewing roles and responsibilities within femLINKPACIFIC. One key area that Sharon looked at was succession planning: how the organisation could continue working without her at its helm. This was an important time for defining Sharon's own role in both policy and media. At a personal level, Sharon also felt it was important in terms of placing some distance between herself, one of the founders of the organisation, and the organisation's future direction. During a period of ill health, Veena Singh-Bryar, the youngest senior staff member, was made the officer-in-charge sending a clear message that young women are considered to be capable leaders within the organisation.
- 7. Creating Outside Leadership Opportunities for Young Women:** Young women within the organisation are encouraged to speak out on behalf of the organisation at national, regional and international forums and panels. Veena Singh-Bryar described being regularly asked within her capacity as the Coordinator: Regional Programmes and Policy and also by Sharon Bhagwan-Rolls to go on her behalf to present and represent femLINKPACIFIC's work. femLINKPACIFIC is also engaged in the Pacific Young Women's Alliance to promote young women's leadership.

## Conclusion

Outside of national politics, Pacific women are often visible as leaders. The study found that Pacific women from places as far afield as Bougainville and Samoa are leaders in diverse fields including local government, civil service, private business, and civil society.

Leadership in Pacific women's lives does not fit nicely into one category. Few women that we met were only leaders in local government or in business. For most of the women in the study, leadership began at an early age and continues to be expressed across many areas of their lives, for example within their extended family or in their church. These spaces and women's roles within them need to be considered when planning initiatives to support Pacific women leaders.

Local government in Bougainville and the Solomon Islands is already an important entry point for women's political leadership. Both countries have women elected into local government. The example of Bougainville is especially important because it has had its own indigenous special measures in place for women in politics since independence. Their experiences can be used to better understand how women can enter politics and also may be a stepping-stone into other types of leadership.

Across most of the countries, critical women actors are already working together and with certain men, to successfully lobby for policy and legislative reform at national and local levels. This type of work may be carried out discreetly through informal networks as in the Solomon Islands or openly through formal networks as in Samoa with WinLa.

Culture is often cited as a barrier for women's leadership in the Pacific. In some cases, culture does seem to be a real barrier for women and men to support women leaders. But such a view of Pacific cultures may be too rigid to be true in all situations. Many Pacific women do use or see potential to use culture to access spaces of leadership or to gain changes in policy, practice or legislation that substantively support women's rights.

## **Recommendations by country**

### **Potential Pathways for Women's Leadership in the Solomon Islands**

There are some exciting opportunities to build on existing work to support women's leadership and some emerging opportunities for new support especially at the provincial level. Both the International Women's Development Agency and the Pacific Leadership Program work in the Solomon Islands therefore; the recommendations are designed for both organisations unless specifically directed to one of them.

1. **Women in Provincial Government:** our analysis reveals some clear opportunities to support women in provincial level government especially in Guadalcanal Province and potentially in other provinces such as Isabel Province.
  - 1.1. There are already women on the Provincial Council who may benefit from training, capacity development and networking. CLGF has already worked on this type of support to women in Honiara City Council and this could be extended to other provinces.
  - 1.2. Improving the evidence base at the provincial level is important when moving forward. Firstly to track change and improvements. Secondly, to understand what has already been done at Provincial level to support women in leadership. Guadalcanal and Isabel would both be provinces that deserve further attentions. Moreover, in Guadalcanal there is an opportunity to re-instate reserved seats for women.
  - 1.3. Linking up with the work of organisations like the World Bank who already work at the Provincial level could be useful for integrating work with women into existing projects, for example with the Provincial Government Strengthening Project as this could be useful from a political leadership capacity development angle. The existing SPC's women's leadership project with RRRT at the provincial level could also be explored as an area for partnership.
  - 1.4. There seems to be some disconnect between community, provincial and national work on women's leadership possibly due to access issues. Finding ways to make the interesting community and provincial-level work on women's leadership available to national policy makers and national women leaders could be an area to explore in more depth.
  - 1.5. There is a real gap in disaggregated data on the numbers of women working in leadership positions at the provincial and local level. There is a need to improve the evidence base especially for sub-national bodies.
2. **Critical Actors for Women:** At senior levels of government, women are working together to promote policy and legislation that support women's substantive interests, for example on the Gender Equality and Women's Development Policy.
  - 2.1. Women leaders explained how they work with each other and with male champions to achieve change. To date, this has been an informal network. Its success seems to lie in the critical actors' ability to work together and to work strategically within the system. This could be an area for further study as a model for other sectors or an entry point for further leadership support via this network of critical

actors. This would fit well with the Pacific Leadership Program's current activities to support Solomon Island leaders.

- 2.2. The constitutional review and the departure of RAMSI are both crucial changes underway in the Solomon Islands. There is an opportunity to promote women's leadership and financial support for such leadership by supporting established critical actors for women to engage with both the government's constitutional review and bi-lateral donors.
- 2.3. Consider engaging critical actors for women at the local, provincial and urban levels. The support to Honiara City Council is example of working with both male and female critical actors for women to ensure change.

**3. Women, Culture and Leadership:** Cultural barriers on women in politics and even on women as leaders were often cited by those interviewed and in the pathways of women's leadership.

- 3.1. Exploring how women, culture and leadership has already been navigated by women in different sectors, different locations and different ages could be a useful exercise in thinking about how to navigate these issues in the future. For example, building on the work of the Navigating Gender and Culture Solomon Islands Workshops and disseminating these findings could be useful. This recommendation is aimed at the International Women's Development Agency as it builds on their current Gender and Culture Innovations project.
- 3.2. With leadership understood as being linked to position and age, this is a real challenge for supporting young women's leadership. The YWCA Strategy had strong involvement from young women in the Solomon Islands. This could be supported in the future.

### **Potential Pathways for Women's Leadership in Bougainville**

From the analysis of the Bougainvillean system of local-level governance and of the women leaders pathways, there is clearly space for further intervention by new development actors especially those who seek to work in coordination to build on the existing efforts to mobilise and support women's leadership. The following themes for ways to support women leaders comes partly from the women leaders themselves, partly from key Government officials in relevant ministries, and partly from our own analysis. The International Women's Development Agency works in Bougainville while the Pacific Leadership Program does not. For this reason the recommendations below are designed for the International Women's Development Agency.

1. **Women in Politics:** There is space and demand to support women's leadership in both the national and local politics of the Autonomous Region of Bougainville.
  - 1.1. At the local level, the Ministry of Local Government's review process from 2012-14 presents a key opportunity to work to ensure women's leadership and women's issues are given voice in the review process and its recommendations.
  - 1.2. Moreover, there is an opportunity to work with both the Urban and Local Governments through the Town Councils and in the Council of Elders: in particular the administration of Buka Town Council staffed almost entirely by women could be an ideal opportunity to support women in the civil service.
  - 1.3. During our fieldwork, the national Papua New Guinea Elections were just beginning to campaign with at least ten women standing as candidates. An increase on previous years there was a strong call from the women's movement to support and mobilise women candidates for the 2015 House of Representative Elections. Possible options could include Mock Parliament and candidate training.
  - 1.4. Documentation of women's leadership in local government at both rural and urban levels is not currently available.
  - 1.5. Bougainville's unique system of local government is too often invisible in academic work on Papua New Guinea and the Autonomous Region urgently needs more documentation. The special system of reserved seats for women at local and national levels is not well known or well shared with other Pacific countries currently considering the use of temporary special measures.
2. **Women's Organisations:** The small number of women's organisations in Bougainville called for support for capacity development.
  - 2.1. Consider training at different levels for different women: organisational management training, women's leadership training, and the need for functional literacy for women. Sister Lorraine's training in women's leadership and organisational management was regularly cited as a catalyst for change in women's lives. Other sources of training could build on UNWomen's pre-existing work to train accredited Bridge trainers to roll out such training. At the local level, it may be possible to work with critical actors like Brenda Tohiana who have already been trained by the Commonwealth Local Government Forum in supporting gender training for local government structures.
  - 2.2. IWDA's organisational support to the co-founders of Leitana Nehan was also praised as having long lasting effects

on women who now have key leadership roles in UNWomen and in the civil service. Leitana Nehan also offers gender training.

2.3. Core support for Women's Organisations remains a challenge and will continue to be so despite the significant funding available for women's organisations from the World Bank. The Bougainville Women's Federation is one organisation that has identified core funding support and capacity development as key needs.

2.4. Coordination and documentation of women's leadership activities is needed.

**3. Young Women's Leadership:** In Bougainville a two-pronged strategy to engaged young women's leadership is needed.

**3.1.** Firstly one which seeks to reach out to the 'lost generation' to better understand their needs in terms of women's leadership.

**3.2.** Secondly, working with young women under 25 years of age who themselves have different needs from the 'lost generation'. Although our interaction with young women leaders was not the focus for this part of the scoping study, a few areas emerged from our discussions with Leitana Nehan: i.e. the need for training and opportunities to engage with women through the media, especially the radio.

## Potential Pathways for Women's Leadership in Tonga

From interviews, a few key areas may be worth exploring in more detail in relation to women's leadership in Tonga. It should be noted that in Tonga even more so than elsewhere, status matters. The people we met all held some kind of privileged status either through education, profession, the church or through traditional family structures. The findings should not be taken as representative of the whole of Tonga nor of the needs of all Tongan women. The preservation of traditional culture and the need for all actions to support women to be in-line with Tongan culture was stressed repeatedly by most of the Tongans we encountered. Moreover the recommendations below were all made by Tongans themselves. This was important as it seemed that only local solutions would be likely to gain traction and support. The recommendations are designed for the Pacific Leadership Program as they work in Tonga while the International Women's Development Agency does not.

4. **Evidence Base:** There seems to be a lack of evidence that women's political representation makes a clear difference for women and for the general community.

- 4.1. Developing the evidence base was seen as a key way forward in encouraging changes to cultural practices which have seen few women in national political positions.
- 4.2. At the national level, one way forward could be to document the effects of women's leadership at a Ministerial level. One suggestion was to document the leadership of the current female Minister of Education to demonstrate the positive impact of having a woman in this role.
- 4.3. Other leaders, for example the church, could also be published and used as case-studies for advocacy.
5. **Local-Level Advocacy on issues of concern to women:** At a local level, it may be interesting to consider how women's voices may concretely affect change on issues like street lighting. This type of research could be a crucial advocacy tool in the next local elections.
6. **Work within gender and culture:** those interviewed suggested working within existing power structures to tackle issues like domestic violence, land laws and health issues. There was a real sense from those interviewed that working within, not challenging cultural roles and gender stereotypes was the way forward.
7. **Young People:** The need to reach young people was also highlighted through on-going work with Youth Parliaments, the possibilities of inter-generational mentoring, and the work of the National Youth Congress could be explored.

### Potential Pathways for Women's Leadership in Samoa

Women's leadership in Samoa is in a positive space in some areas. Women hold key leadership positions especially in the civil service and are excelling in education. The recommendations are designed for the Pacific Leadership Program as they work in Samoa while the International Women's Development Agency does not.

8. **Women in Parliament:** The relatively low numbers of women in parliament is likely to be improved by the introduction of reserved seats for women.
  - 8.1. This may be an ideal opportunity to re-launch the Parliamentary Women's Caucus; in addition this would complement rather than duplicate the activities planned by UNDP-UN Women.
9. **Men As Critical Actors for Women:** The role of the male Prime Minister in pushing for TSMs is in itself interesting in its potential to be replicated, especially in other Pacific Island Countries where there are no women in parliament.

10. **Networks for Women:**
  - 10.1. Women themselves are organised into an impressive number of networks. Networks such as WinLA may be a key entry point for legislative changes or providing support to women leaders in the Civil Service.
  - 10.2. Other networks like the Samoan Association of Women Graduates, and the Pan-Pacific South East Asian Association could also be entry points to working with women leaders.
11. **Work in Partnership with other Leadership Programs:** This should be done in collaboration with the proposal from UNDP-UN Women for the project of strengthening national commitment to women in leadership and decision-making. With the implementation of reserved seats, the 2016 elections are likely to increase the number of women in parliament.
12. **Improve the Evidence Base:** Finally, there were strong calls to improve the knowledge base on understanding women's roles and effectiveness in politics, documenting views on women's leadership to create a better understanding of the leadership roles of Samoan women and to understand the increase in the number of women Matai.

## Encouraging Young Women's Leadership in Pacific Organisations

FemLINKPACIFIC's aim, structure and work support spaces for young women's leadership. Working from the point of view Veena Singh Bryar the organisation offers opportunities for young women to be part of the organisation's work and influence its decision-making. The positive opportunities for leadership that Veena Singh Bryar noted within femLINKPACIFIC may be useful to other organisations when considering how to practically encourage and support young women into leadership roles. From the specific experience of Veena Singh Byrar, the following suggestions have been drawn put and may be useful to other organisations.

8. **Organisational Focus on Young Women:** Ensure that young women's leadership is consistent with the organisation's aims and work to make those spaces where young women can be heard into reality.
9. **Create Organisation Entry Points for Young Women:** Give young women exposure to the organisation and allows the organisation to build up a relationship with a large number of young women over time.
10. **Secure Spaces in the organisation for Young Women's Voices:** Ensuring access and participation for young women in these different meetings and forum allows for young women's voices to be heard and taken into account.

11. **Young Women Working Together:** Young women working together as peers was a '*key support and a site to learn from each other*<sup>iiii</sup>.' This is an important location for networking with other women, working together with other young women, and learning new skills.
12. **Mentoring Young Women:** Encourage young women to have professional mentors both inside and outside the organisations. These can become crucial sites for inter-generational learning about leadership.
13. **Allowing others to Lead:** Send a clear message that young women are considered to be capable leaders within the organisation. In the Pacific, where a number of women's organisations have one leader over a significant period of time, succession planning becomes important.
14. **Creating Outside Leadership Opportunities for Young Women:** Young women within organisations should be encouraged to speak out on behalf of the organisation at national, regional and international forums and panels. The Pacific Young Women's Alliance is an important space to promote young women's leadership.

## List of People and Organisations Consulted

### **Bougainville:**

Hon. Rose Pirehi, Minister for Community Development, Women, Youth and Disability  
Hon. Joseph Nopei, Minister for Local-Level Government  
Leslie Tseraha, Division of Planning and Aid Coordination  
Brenda Tohiana, Buka Town Council  
Marilyn Havini, Bougainville Women's Federation  
Agnes Titus, UNWomen  
Hona Holan, President North Bougainville Women's Federation  
Agnes Nara, President South Bougainville Women's Federation  
Evelyn Banas, President Central Bougainville Women's Federation  
Dorcas Gano, President Hako Women's Collective  
Ruthy Sawa, Treasurer Hako Women's Collective  
Marion Jacka, Regional Programme Manager CARE  
Donna Pearson, Senior Project Officer CARE  
Lousia Amani, Co-founder of Lukota Fafini Association  
Mary Poni, Women's Representatives from Council of Elders Selau/Suir Districts  
Cecila Kamit, Clan Chief of Council of Elders, Nua District  
Jipoarh Hilia, Cluster Leader of Bougainville Health Programme  
Skolastica Raren, Special Desk for Women in North Bougainville  
Joanne Nanoari, Ministry of Community Development, Women, Youth and Disability  
Sister Lorraine Garasu, Order of the Sisters of Nazareth, Chabai  
Bianca Carwinn, Leitana Nehan  
Brenda Lambert, Leitana Nehan

### **Solomon Islands:**

Joy Kere, Ministry of Foreign Affairs  
Ethel Sigamanu, Ministry of Women, Youth and Sports  
Hon. Ilyn SuluKonina, Guadalcanal Provincial Council  
Audrey Manu, UNWomen Solomon Islands  
Louisa Gibbs, AusAID  
Siddhartha Chakrabartu, AusAID  
Emele Duituturaga, RAMSI  
Grinta Tome, Guadalcanal  
Val Stanley, Oxfam Australia  
Savina Nongebatu, People with Disabilities Solomon Islands  
Ella Kauhue, National Council of Women  
Julie Haro, Solomon Islands Women in Business Association  
Jenta Tau, YWCA Solomon Islands  
Janka Geckova, United Nations Capital Development Fund  
Bernadette Laure, Guadalcanal Women's Resource Centre  
Ruby Awa, RRRT Solomon Islands  
Nancy Legua, Ministry of Provincial Government

**Tonga:**

Emeline Siala Ilohahia, Civil Society Forum of Tonga  
Vanessa Lolohea, Tonga National Youth Congress  
Dr. Ungatea Kata, Tupa Tertiary Institute  
AusAID: Greta and Talusa  
Drew Havea, Tonga National Youth Congress  
Dr. Seu'ula Fonua, University of South Pacific  
Ofa Guttenbeil-Likiliki, Women and Children's Crisis Centre  
Emele Latu, Civil Society Forum Tonga  
Lola Koloamtongi, Tonga National Centre for Women and Children  
Kerry Lepa, Teacher  
Elisvia Finau, TukuTonua Ki Langi Group  
Tupou Ate, TukuTonua Ki Langi Group  
Kalaheli Tettley, TukuTonua Ki Langi Group  
Letisa Lotoa, TukuTonua Ki Langi Group  
Fahiva Tokolalu, TukuTonua Ki Langi Group  
Mafi, Uaaivaka, TukuTonua Ki Langi Group  
Hepi Kanongala'a, TukuTonua Ki Langi Group  
Fanga Fangu, TukuTonua Ki Langi Group  
Lute Finau, TukuTonua Ki Langi Group  
Vika Otukolo, TukuTonua Ki Langi Group  
Meleldesi Ofamo'ori, TukuTonua Ki Langi Group  
Muna Tawlaki, TukuTonua Ki Langi Group  
Funaki Malamala, TukuTonua Ki Langi Group

**Samoa:**

Hon. Fiame Naomi Mata'afa, Minister for Justice  
Prof. Le'apai Asofou So'o, National University of Samoa  
Lemalu Sina Retzlaff Lima, Leadership Samoa Board  
Luagalau Foisagaasina Eteuati Shon, National University of Samoa  
Papalii Dr. Viopapa Annandale Atherton, Pan-Pacific and South East Asian Women's Association  
Manu Samoa Christine Sa'aga, NZAID  
Suisala Mele Maulaivao, UNWomen Samoa  
Asenati Lesa-Tuiletufuga, AusAID Samoa  
Misileti Masoa-Satuala, AusAID Samoa  
Frances Sutherland, AusAID Samoa  
Louisa Apelu, Division of Women in the Ministry of Women, Community and Social Development  
Roina Vavatau, SUNGO  
Nanai Sovala Agaiua, Community Centre for Sustainable Development Programme  
Angharad Toma, Division of Youth in the Ministry of Women, Community and Social Development  
Phaedra Moors, Leadership Samoa  
Daryl Mapu, Samoa Office of the Electoral Commission  
Alberta Malielegaoi, Women in Business Development Inc. Samoa  
Ane L. Moananu, Samoa Chamber of Commerce

**Fiji:**

Naeemah Khan, Pacific Leadership Program  
Emily Miller, International Women's Development Agency  
Megan Praeger, Commonwealth Local Government Forum Pacific  
Rita Taphorn, UNWomen Pacific  
Janette Bolenga, UNWomen Pacific  
Virisila Buadromo, Fiji Women's' Rights Movement  
Tara Chetty, Fiji Women's' Rights Movement  
Charmaine Rodrigues, UNDP  
Joanne Lee Kunatuba, Pacific Island Forum Secretariat  
Naomi Navoce, Pacific Disability Forum  
Sarah Goulding, AusAid  
Sharon Bhagwan-Rolls, femLINKpacific  
Veena Singh-Bryar, femLINKpacific

## Endnotes

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- <sup>i</sup> For thirteen years, 1995-2011, the levels of women in parliament in the Pacific rose one per cent from average of 2.5 per cent women in parliament in the Pacific (excluding New Zealand, Australia and the French Territories) to 3.5 per cent contrasting poorly with the global average of women in parliament which over the same time period increased from 11.3 per cent to 19.5 per cent. International Parliamentary Union (2012) *Women in Parliament Database*. <http://www.ipu.org/wmn-e/classif.htm>
- <sup>ii</sup> International Parliamentary Union (2012) *Women in Parliament Database*. <http://www.ipu.org/wmn-e/classif.htm>
- <sup>iii</sup> Field Work was carried out in the five countries from 14 May 2012 to 18 June 2012. The team of researchers was led by Isadora Quay in the Solomon Islands and Samoa the research was carried out with Naeemah Khan, in Bougainville with Emily Miller, in Tonga with Merewalesi NaliatiKau, and in Fiji with both Emily Miller and Naeemah Khan.
- <sup>iv</sup> An action research approach or orientation allows for reflection on the current situation, on the types of social changes desired and on the social and organisational action that could contribute to enabling these changes. "Action research is a social process in which professional knowledge, local knowledge, process skills and democratic values are the basis for co-created knowledge and social change" (Greenwood and Levin, 1998: 93).
- <sup>v</sup> An appreciative inquiry approach is focused on areas where there are innovative activities being developed and where there are some positive outcomes for gender equality and young women's empowerment. It is informed by questions like 'where is the energy on young women's empowerment approaches? What good practice is out there? What makes it work?'. Elements of an appreciate inquiry approach can illuminate these questions.
- <sup>vi</sup> Under the Honiara City Council Act, women may still be appointed onto the Honiara City Council Council.
- <sup>vii</sup> Traditional village level leadership comprising of heads of families.
- <sup>viii</sup> Solomon Islands Pathways of Women's Leadership Focus Group, 30 May 2012
- <sup>ix</sup> Pending final review
- <sup>x</sup> Solomon Islands Pathways of Women's Leadership Focus Group, 30 May 2012
- <sup>xi</sup> Solomon Islands Pathways of Women's Leadership Focus Group, 30 May 2012
- <sup>xii</sup> Andy Carl and Sister Lorraine Garru ed. (2002) "Weaving consensus: The Papua New Guinea - Bougainville peace process". *Accord*. Issue 12.
- <sup>xiii</sup> Kokopau is considered a continuation of Buka town despite being on the main island.
- <sup>xiv</sup> Bougainville Pathways of Women's Leadership Focus Group, 21-22 May 2012
- <sup>xv</sup> Bougainville Pathways of Women's Leadership Interview, 24 May 2012
- <sup>xvi</sup> Bougainville Pathways of Women's Leadership Interview, 26 May 2012
- <sup>xvii</sup> Field Visit to Chabai, 24 May 2012
- <sup>xviii</sup> Moser, Caroline (1993) *Gender Planning and Development: Theory, Practice and Training*. Routledge, London.
- <sup>xix</sup> Garasu, Lorraine (2002) "The Role of Women in Promoting Peace and Reconciliation" pp. 28-31 *Weaving Consensus: the Papua New Guinea-Bougainville Peace Process*. Accord Conciliation Resources. Issue 12.
- <sup>xx</sup> Garasu, Lorraine (2002) "The Role of Women in Promoting Peace and Reconciliation" pp. 28-31 *Weaving Consensus: the Papua New Guinea-Bougainville Peace Process*. Accord Conciliation Resources. Issue 12.
- <sup>xxi</sup> Tonga Pathways of Women's Leadership Focus Group, 6 June 2012
- <sup>xxii</sup> Tonga Pathways of Women's Leadership Interview, 7 June 2012
- <sup>xxiii</sup> Pending Final Review
- <sup>xxiv</sup> Lukes, Steven (1974) *Power: A Radical View*. London. Macmillian Press
- <sup>xxv</sup> Tonga Interview with Seu'ula Fonua, 7 June 2012
- <sup>xxvi</sup> Tonga Interview with Seu'ula Fonua, 7 June 2012
- <sup>xxvii</sup> Tonga Interview with Seu'ula Fonua, 7 June 2012
- <sup>xxviii</sup> Tonga Interview with Drew Havea, 6 June 2012
- <sup>xxix</sup> Tonga Focus Group TukuTonua Ki Langi Group, 7 June 2012

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- xxx Tonga Interview with Dr. Ungatea Kata, 5 June 2012
- xxxi Government of Samoa Report on the Status of Women 2009 pp 22
- xxxii Samoa Office of the Electoral Commission. The figures posted by the International Parliamentary Union for the 2006 Samoa General Election were inaccurate and are in the process of being changed.
- xxxiii International Parliamentary Union (2012) *Women in Parliament Database*.  
<http://www.ipu.org/wmn-e/classif.htm>
- xxxiv Samoa Constitutional Amendment Bill 2011
- xxxv SUNGO Submission on Constitutional Amendment 2012
- xxxvi Statistical data on the Samoan Public Service from the Samoan Public Service Commission. Data correct as per 19 June 2012
- xxxvii Senior Level Executives as defined by the Public Service Commission comprises contract Level Senior Executives of Government Ministries includes all Assistant Chief Executive Officer's and other contract officers. Statistical data on the Samoan Public Service from the Samoan Public Service Commission. Data correct as per 19 June 2012
- xxxviii Government of Samoa Report on the Status of Women 2009 pp 28-29
- xxxix Statistical data on the Samoan Public Service from the Samoan Public Service Commission. Data correct as per 19 June 2012
- xl Government of Samoa Report on the Status of Women 2009 pp 28-29
- xli Government of Samoa Report on the Status of Women 2009 pp 28-29 and confirmed in field interviews
- xlii Samoa Interview with Manu Samoa Christine Sa'aga of NZAID, 11 June 2012
- xliii Samoa Millennium Development Goals Report 2010
- xliv Samoa Interview with Lemalu Sina Retzlaff Lima, 12 June 2012
- xlv Samoa Interview with Luagalau Foisagaasina Eteuati Shon, National University of Samoa, 15 June 2012
- xlvi Country Profile: Samoa. The Local Government System in Samoa, Commonwealth Local Government Forum, 2012
- xlvii Samoa Interview with Prof. Le'apai Asofou So'o, 12 June 2012
- xlviii Samoa Interview with Angharad Toma, Division of Youth in the Ministry of Women, Community and Social Development, 15 June 2012
- xliv femLINKpacific Constitution 29 March 2011
- <sup>1</sup> Pending Final Review
- li Fiji Interview with Veena Singh-Bryar, 18 May 2012
- lii Fiji Interview with Veena Singh-Bryar, 18 June 2012
- liii Fiji Interview with Veena Singh-Bryar, 18 June 2012