

Poem: HEAR US, The Women of PNG

Hear us, the women of PNG,
Stop the Discrimination and violence against us.
We, Papua New Guinean Women, are ignored,
Undervalued and exploited.

We are hardworking, but where is our reward?
We bear many children
and maternal deaths are all too common.

We are often ill and undernourished
We are frequently beaten and raped
But with little legal redress.

Many of us are illiterate
with little opportunity
to benefit from formal-education.

We women are strong and crucial
in upholding the social and cultural life of PNG.

We must be incorporated
into the emerging social forms
if our society is to survive.

Let the women and men of PNG,
the government and churches listen.

Stop the violence and abuse of women in PNG,

Stop the beatings, the rape and killings.

Educate women to read and write their own lives.
Recognize and value women's roles
and contributions
in every culture,

Share in the child rearing and daily tasks,
share political, economic and social benefits
with us, as equal partners in development.

Listen to us and be with us
in the development of our nation.

©*Linda Passingen, Rabaul 1993*

Poem: My Wife Does Not Work

But then...

Who plants the kaukau?
Who feed the pigs?
Grows and sell the food?
So the family survives

Who does the working?
The cleaning?
The washing?

Who fetches the water?
Looks after the children?
Who nurses the sick?

Whose work provides the time...
for the man to drink, smoke, chews
and play politics with friends?
Who minds the children?
Whose work provides the daily energy...
for the man to earn a wage...
for the children to go to school

Who's labour
unseen
unheard
unpaid
underpaid
unrecognised
unhelped and undervalued
Helps development?

Who dares to say?
"My wife does not work"

Poem: A Reminder 'You are a Girl'

AT HOME

Your mother tells you to...

Sit like a girl
Talk like a girl
Look like a girl
Walk like a girl
Eat like a girl
Dress like a girl
Sleep like a girl
Work like a girl
Dance like a girl
Smile like a girl
No matter where you are
You are constantly reminded
"You are a girl"

AT SCHOOL

Play girl's sports...

Your teacher tells you to
Sit in the girl's area
Do girl's work
Use girl's toilet
Perform girl's dance
Sing girl's parts
Wear girl's uniform
Take girl's subject
Behave like a girl
Sleep in the girl's dormitories
Share girl's stories
Say girl's prayers
Play girl's instruments
Ask permission to go out
No matter where? you are
You are constantly reminded
"You are a girl".

AT WORK

Your boss tells you to...

Dress up like a lady and
Look beautiful
Make tea for everyone
Do the filing and photocopying
Answer the telephone
take minutes and shut up in meetings
Do catering for important meetings
Welcome and entertain the guest.
Be on time for work
Come to work everyday
Take maternity leave without pay
Deduct your pay when your baby is sick
No matter where you are
You are constantly reminded
"You are a girl"

AT HOME

You husband tells you to...

Prepare the evening meal
Stay home when the children are sick
Ask permission before going out
Make sure the home is clean
Do the family's laundry
Gather firewood and fetch water
Entertain friends
Cook and clean after every meal
Grow and harvest vegetable
Make clothes for the children
Shut up and don't complain
No matter where you are
You are constantly reminded
"You are a girl".

From: Beneath Paradise, Volume 1 1998

Poem: WHO AM I? I AM A WOMAN

When I cam out of my mother's womb
Everybody in my family,
Laughing and shouting,
Why?
Because I am a woman

WHO AM I? I AM A WOMAN

I will care for my family,
The county and the world
I will help my mother
I will cook for my family
I will do most of the work for
My family

WHO AM I? I AM A WOMAN

I will help my mother clean the garden
I will keep my home and village clean.
I will carry heavy string bags on my little solid
head.
I will wash my family's clothes

WHO AM I? I AM A WOMAN

I am the flower and the beauty of my family
My father is very proud when he walks beside me
My brothers and sisters are also proud of me
My mother is even more proud than then all,
of them, But she remains quiet because she
is, a woman

WHO AM I? I AM A WOMAN

My extended families are proud of me
I will go to school and earn money for everyone
They are proud that when I get married,
I will combine two different families together
My uncle is the happiest person
Because he will get a bride price out of me.

WHO AM I? I AM A WOMAN

A woman! A Child of God
A woman! God's Image
A woman! I am created out of man's bone
A woman! Man's partner forever
A woman! God's spirit dwells in me

WHO AM I? I AM A WOMAN

A woman! Not to be mistreated
A woman! Not to be sold on the market
A woman! Man have no right to beat me up

WHO AM I? I AM A WOMAN

A woman! I bring joy to the whole family
A woman! I give birth to new life and life
continues
A woman! I am proud of myself,
God created me
A woman

WHO AM I? I AM A WOMAN

I will remain a woman forever

WHO AM I?

A WOMAN....WOMAN....WOMAN....

Lakele Tetac

All of the above poems were taken from the **Gender Training Manual Part 1- Personal Reflection and Change**, printed and published by Help Resources.