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Social perspectives of different age and gender groups in selected communities in Western Highlands, Jiwaka and Madang Provinces, in PNG

Kylie McKenna, Lorelle Tekopiri Yakam,
Philip Gibbs, John Ezekiel Toimb & John Ulno

Abstract

Divine Word University (DWU) and HORIZONT3000 are working together to identify the social perspectives of different age and gender groups in six communities from three provinces of Papua New Guinea (PNG). Four broad themes structure the analysis: 1) marginalization and exclusion; 2) influence of modernization on culture and traditions; 3) violence in the community and families; and 4) intergenerational conflict. In January 2020, a pilot study was undertaken in Ambullua, Jiwaka Province, to determine whether a large-scale research project as planned in the authors' original research project is feasible. Semi-structured interviews, focus group discussions, children's activities, questionnaires and close-ended interview questions were used. In total, 99 participants were involved in this pilot project, comprising 26 children and 73 adults. The paper documents stories of hope and safety among children and adults in Ambullua, but also feelings of fear, marginalisation, and changing cultures and traditions. The data collection instruments used in this research project generated rare data from a remote community in PNG that will be of interest to a range of audiences (e.g. the community, Government agencies and non-government organisations). The paper concludes with the authors' fieldwork reflections and the next steps for this study.

Keywords: Inequality; modernization; decision-making; children; conflict

Introduction

Divine Word University (DWU) and HORIZONT3000 are working together to identify the social perspectives of different age and gender groups in six communities from three provinces of Papua New Guinea (PNG). Four broad themes structure the analysis:

- Marginalization and exclusion
- Influence of modernization on culture and traditions
- Violence in the community and families
- Intergenerational conflict.

In January 2020, a pilot study was undertaken in Ambullua, Jiwaka Province, to determine whether a large-scale research project as planned in the original research project is feasible. If it is feasible, this pilot study can act as a guide in planning for and executing the large-scale research proposal in the three different provinces.

Fieldwork activities conducted in Ambullua were co-designed by Lorelle Tekopiri Yakam and Fr Philip Gibbs, and facilitated by Kylie McKenna and two researchers from Ambullua, John Ulno and John Ezekiel. Semi-structured interviews, focus group discussions, children's activities, questionnaires and close-ended interview questions were used to achieve the following project objectives:

- Define the dynamics of marginalization and exclusion of groups or people, young and old, who suffer from marginalization and forms of violence in the communities
- Review the potential and actual resources available to address the risks to family and community life
- Determine the participants' perception of modernization and its influence on culture and traditional governance and order
- Document peace-building capacities and initiatives in the families and communities
- Explore the hopes and expectations of the participants in the communities
- Understand how the participants are addressing their own issues locally
- Identify the stakeholders and decision makers in the community and review to what extent they work together successfully



Figure 1: Ambullua residents gifting the research team garden produce

This summary report documents the fieldwork activities and findings. We also reflect on the strengths and weaknesses of the data collection instruments used and conclude with a proposal on next steps. Incorporated in the report are quotes and photos to illustrate the many powerful stories we heard during our visit to Ambullua. We sincerely thank the community for participating in this research.

About Ambullua

Ambullua is a remote community located in upper Jimi District, Jiwaka Province, in the Highlands Region of PNG. Comprising four tribal groups, the population of Ambullua is approximately 7000. Ambullua is almost entirely reliant on the Catholic Church for basic services, with minimal government or donor assistance.



Figure 2: The view towards the health centre, Ambullua

The journey to Ambullua from the nearest urban centre, Mt Hagen, is illustrative of the many challenges experienced by the remoteness of this community. One of Ambullua's few pieces of infrastructure is an airstrip for small planes. Yet flights carrying important cargo such as, medical supplies and transport for the sick and injured, have become infrequent.

The research team too, intended to fly into Ambullua, but were unable due to aircraft maintenance delays. The only alternative entry into Ambullua is by car and then on foot – a two-day trek along a rugged mountainous track, badly damaged by landslides and heavy rain.

On our trek to Ambullua, we were met with the traditional greeting for visitors, “aiyooo, aiyooo”, along with a tight embrace. Some women and men broke down in tears upon meeting us – tears of grief, concern about our safety, and perhaps the shock of seeing visitors on a path rarely travelled by ‘outsiders’. We passed children playing homemade games, and were gifted various food items such as, red pandanus, sugar fruit and a pig's foot! Generous young men carried our bags without expectation of payment and helped us to balance our way across log bridges towering above fast running rivers.

The absence of a road network connecting Ambullua to surrounding communities and urban centres results in few income generating opportunities. We saw women walking 4-6 hours per day across slippery rocks carrying heavy *bilums* (string bags) containing vegetables to a small market. A *bilum* of produce will perhaps generate only PGK1-2 due to a very limited cash economy.

This was a common story we heard once we arrived in Ambullua. While families have plentiful garden produce and pigs to sell, their community is largely isolated. This has critical impacts on people of all ages, but a dominant concern is the ability of parents to raise school fees for their children. A powerful finding of this research is that children as young as 4 are worried they might miss-out on an education because of school fees.

Despite the remoteness and limited number of services available in Ambullua, the community is experiencing numerous social and cultural changes associated with modernization such as, the use of money instead of pigs as bride price and strained relationships between the older and younger generations.

Following an introduction to the fieldwork activities and data collection instruments used in this project, the remainder of this report documents stories of hope and adversity among children and adults of Ambullua.



Figure 3: Children playing on a homemade snooker table on the way to Ambullua (Photo: Fr Andrew Falat)

Fieldwork activities

In total, 99 participants were involved in this pilot project. Participants comprised of children, residents, church and women leaders, village court officials, health workers, teachers and members of the general public.



26 children participated in this project



73 adults participated in this project

The following five data collection instruments were used.

Children's activities



26 participants took part in the children's activities



Gender disaggregation:

Female: 5 Male: 21

Two kinds of activities were used with children according to their age group. Children aged 4-10yrs were asked (with parental/guardian consent) to draw, individually, a place in their community where they feel safe. In contrast, children in the age range 11-17yrs were distributed into three small groups and asked to draw a collective map of Ambullua, documenting the community's key services and infrastructure. The facilitators then asked the children to mark places in the community where they feel safe with a 'smile face' (☺) and places where they feel unsafe with an 'unhappy face' (☹). A discussion was then held on why the children feel unsafe in certain areas, as well as their ideas for making these places more secure. Four children were then invited to participate in a 10minute, one-to-one interview with the aim of capturing the children's stories in greater depth.

Focus group discussions



47 participants took part in 4 focus group discussions



Gender disaggregation:

Female: 12

Male: 35

The following questions were used as a guide for the focus group discussions:

- How are decisions about community matters made in Ambullua?

- What changes have you observed with the culture and traditions of Ambullua? Are the changes positive or negative? Why?
- How would you describe the relationship between the older generation and the young ones in Ambullua today?
- What do you expect from your community, government, family, friends and leaders? What do they expect from you?
- What kind of services are available in your community and who provides them?
- If a child or person is beaten or abused, what does the community do?
- How is peace maintained in the community?
- Are there any widows, orphans or people living with disabilities here? If so, how does the community care for them or treat them?

Semi-structured, one-to-one adult interviews



4 one-to-one adult interviews were conducted



Gender disaggregation:

Female:

2 Male: 2

Interviewees were asked the same questions as the above focus group discussions, with the aim of capturing more in-depth, individual stories on the project's broad themes.

Questionnaires

12 participants took part in the questionnaires



Gender disaggregation:

Female: 4

Male: 8

Hard-copy questionnaires were distributed to key stakeholders in the community such as, teachers, village court officials and health care workers. The questionnaire comprises: socio-demographic information, close-ended and open-ended questions on the broad themes of the project. The questionnaire was completed in English, and definitions of key terms (e.g. marginalization and modernization) were provided at the beginning of the questionnaire. All 12 questionnaires distributed were returned and required approximately 40mins to complete.

Close-ended statements for adults and older people



10 participants took part in responding to the close-ended statements for adults and older people. This instrument did not ask participants to indicate their gender.

A hard-copy table (see Appendix 1) comprising 11 statements, adapted from the Menzies School of Health Research (2017, p.81-82) program developed by the Menzies School of Health Research, were distributed. Participants were asked to respond to the statements by selecting 'not true', 'sometimes true', and 'always true'. All 10 copies of the table distributed were returned and required approximately 8mins to complete.

Voices of children

Drawings by our youngest research participants illustrated feelings of safety in their houses and at church. Most children also incorporated features of Ambullua's natural environment into their drawings such as, mountains, flowers and the river. Three children integrated the household toilet in their drawings, while 2 children drew a fishpond.



Louis, 8yrs

I like my house the best because it is the best house. I drew the toilet because I go there to get relief. That's why I highlight it. I want to be the best person. I want to be a working person to look after people.

Our youngest interviewee was Nancy, 4yrs old. Remarkably, for a child of such a young age, Nancy shared her concerns about school fees as a potential obstacle to her dream of being educated. Upon hearing this, Nancy's parents broke down in tears – shocked and saddened that she holds this worry.



Nancy, 4yrs

I love school because I want to get educated to become a teacher. I will work hard. I will have to get a lot of knowledge. Nothing will stop me from getting educated but the school fees are too high.

The group drawings of Ambullua documented the following key places where children feel safe:

- School
- Church
- Airstrip
- Home (private houses)
- *Haus sick* (health centre)
- Village



Figure 4: Map of Ambullua showing the airstrip, health centre, school and church as safe. Unsafe areas include the river and bridge.

One child said that the airstrip is a safe place “because we don’t have access to other services, so we need this. It brings cargo to the community”. Another highlighted the importance of Ambullua’s health centre by explaining that, “when we are sick, we can go there for medication, so it is safe for us”.

In contrast, key areas where the children feel unsafe and marked with an ‘unhappy face’ include:

- Bridge
- River
- Playing field
- The bush
- Road



Figure 5: Map of Ambullua showing the airstrip, health centre, school, church and road as safe. The playing field is highlighted as unsafe.

To attend school, some children need to cross a fast-flowing river each day. Bridges in the area, like other remote communities in PNG, are made of narrow tree logs. Rainfall makes these logs slippery. At times, the log bridges are completely washed away, or the road is badly damaged, and the children are unable to attend school.

The journey to school

We don't attend school regularly. Sometimes there is floods and landslides and bad weather.

Photo: David Michael Kolma on the banks of a fast-flowing river crossed by children on their way to school.



When asked if the children have ideas as to how the bridge could be made safer, they suggested the construction of an iron foot bridge. The children acknowledged however, the limited road network servicing Ambullua, making it impossible to transport iron into the community. As an alternative, they suggested strengthening the bridges with additional logs, ropes and bamboo, and to ensure that bridges are replaced as they start to deteriorate or when safety issues are reported.

The playing field was also noted as unsafe. Ambullua has two key areas for children to play - a large muddy grass area behind the school and a rocky basketball court near the church. The children hope the mud and rocks could be cleared by volunteers, but one child said, "some people are too lazy to take part in volunteering. But they can be motivated through money, gifts or an award".

The playing field

Most of the time we get injuries from the stones and mud, so we don't like the playing field.



When the children were asked if they have opportunities to share ideas for making Ambullua a safer community, the response was negative. Anna, a 16yr old girl said:

The village leaders won't listen to us even if we try. They think they are wise people, so they won't listen to children. There is a barrier of fear between older people and children that needs to change. The elders are scared of listening to children.

In follow-up interviews, children spoke of their aspirations for an education and their love of school. Yet, like Nancy (above), they are worried about school fees and the remoteness of Ambullua. As Demek, 13yrs old, explains:

I'm in grade 2. I like school the best. I love to get knowledge. English is my favourite subject. I want to be a teacher because I love teachers teaching students. The hardest thing is the school fees. There

is no regular income. My biggest wish is to have school fees and a good road network.

Two boys also spoke of missing school at least one day per week to look after their younger siblings. Bus, a 13yr old boy, said: “I cook the food and feed them while my parents are in the garden. I spend 4 days at school and 1 day off to look after the smaller ones”.



Figure 6: Ambullua Primary School

Voices of adults

Access to basic services in Ambullua

Most basic services in Ambullua are provided by the Catholic Church. Participants strongly emphasise the lack of government contributions which, impacts on their sense of belonging to PNG. The main resources available in Ambullua include:

- Airstrip
- Health Centre
- School
- Church
- Digicel tower

In terms of extending this list, the establishment of a road network is seen as the biggest priority as it is crucial for access to income generating opportunities. For example, women in Ambullua are able to make gardens and raise pigs, but they cannot access a market. Without livelihood opportunities, parents fear they will be unable to pay school fees for their children to support their future. There is also an eagerness for more attention from donors and non-government organisations to fill the gap in government services. Needs include, assistance for people living with disabilities, and education and training for school leavers. As one participant said:

Income is very low. We have a lot of school leavers who completed grade 10 or 12 but cannot go to tertiary institutions. Are there services available to help young people go for tertiary education (Focus Group 4)?

Although Ambullua has a functioning health centre, it is not adequately equipped to respond to emergencies. Some villagers also need to walk long distances to access the healthcare. This is having severe impacts on women experiencing difficulties during childbirth.



Lucy, 35yrs

We have lost a lot of women and babies already and it is very painful and difficult. We do have a small aid post, but the supply is not enough. When there is complication, we are in an awkward position. In most cases, people carry the women over and, on the way, sometimes the baby dies, or the mother, or both.

Hopes for an easier life

There are strong hopes for a better life in Ambullua and greater attention from all levels of government is seen as the key avenue to realising this. Participants expect the government to maintain and extend the basic services established in Ambullua by the Catholic Church. Yet these expectations are largely unfulfilled. This causes particular disappointment during election-time when leaders make promises that are rarely delivered. As the following quotes illustrate:

Every election time, candidates come promising services – especially a road. But they go away and it's not given. I'm emotional because my great grandparents have been waiting for so long and my children might be too (Focus Group 2).

We expect more from leaders at all levels. Every year they come around and make campaign. We treat them like very special people but when they get in power nothing happens. The same thing happened since independence (Focus Group 4).

During our research visit to Ambullua, it was common to hear adults say that their children are dealing with the same struggles and limited services as their grandparents – little has changed.



Chief Simon Tumau Agia

My father brought the first missionary – in 1952 the station was established. Since then I have seen nothing done and I'm very, very concerned. The clothes I'm wearing are bought from children at second-hand stores. But since then, I have not seen anything done, any government services. I'm very concerned and emotional about my grandchildren. What will their life be like?

Chief Simon is holding a newspaper image of the first missionary to arrive in Ambullua

This has given rise to feelings of neglect from the national government. As one participant said:

Since independence, nothing from the government to show from this time. We depend on the church, so we feel we don't belong to the government (Focus Group 4).

Marginalization and exclusion

Women, children, young people, the elderly and people living with disabilities are the groups seen as most vulnerable to social exclusion in Ambullua. Other groups include those who are seen as troublemakers such as, individuals who consume drugs frequently. Yet, not everyone sees inequality as a problem in Ambullua. Three questionnaire respondents for example, said that there are no marginalized individuals in the community.

Those who do see marginalization and exclusion as an issue in Ambullua, attribute it to status inequalities based on level of education and income. Other factors identified as contributing to marginalisation include traditional beliefs, gender and age, values and customs that separate certain individuals from society, and tribal fighting.

Decision-making in a male-dominated society

Community-level decision-making is mostly done by adult males. For instance, only 2 questionnaire respondents felt that all adults participate in decision-making. Despite a lack of diversity, the key decision-makers (village leaders, village court offices, Parish Priest, and Ward Councillor) are largely perceived to collaborate effectively and are attributed to maintaining peace in the community.

Forums for decision-making vary according to the type of issue being negotiated, and between whom. For example, if there is an issue between two tribes that can be agreed between themselves, it will remain at that level (Focus Group 1). When agreement cannot be reached, the matter can be taken to the village court (Focus Group 1). For issues that affect the whole community such as, the arrival of a visitor or responding to a health crisis, village leaders will gather the whole community in a common place and communicate any decisions that have been made (Focus Group 2, 3, 4).

Regarding the extent of women's involvement in community-level decision-making, there are diverse views. Firstly, although it is argued that women should speak in public, they must be aware of beliefs and customs when speaking. Only one questionnaire respondent felt that women are provided sufficient opportunities to be involved in decision-making. Further, while several male participants feel that women and girls should be more involved in community decision-making, it is recognised that some men still look down on women as subordinate. For example, although girls in Ambullua can attend school, they are often obstructed by the community from attaining a higher level of education as they get older (Focus Group 3).

Young people are also seen to be largely excluded from community-level decision-making. Yet, they can occasionally speak at public gatherings or present their ideas to community leaders. Some participants say that children should be allowed to air their views at home from the age of 5. Education, youth groups, church, obedience to parents and leaders, volunteering and taking part in informal business are considered opportunities for young people to develop leadership qualities. However, 3 male questionnaire respondents said there are limited opportunities for young people to grow in Ambullua, particularly due to restricted access to education and difficulties in paying school fees.

People living with disabilities, widows and orphans

We see them around the community and we really feel for them, but we have nothing to give. The church tells us to provide food and clothes, but we have nothing to give and that's the problem (Focus Group 1).

Involving people living with disabilities (PLWD) in decision-making is seen as a challenge for the community. While a majority of participants agree that PLWD have rights and should be involved in decision-making, there are concerns about their ability to contribute effectively. For example, some participants expressed opposition to involving PLWD in decision-making due to concerns about their intellectual capabilities.

There are thought to be 'a lot' of people in Ambullua who are widows and orphans. Immediate families of these individuals are expected to provide them with assistance. Minimal assistance is delivered by church prayer groups in the form of counselling, clothing and food (Focus Group 1). Yet the participants are not aware of any other assistance provided by government agencies or non-government organisations.

The Church is recognised as vocal in encouraging members of the community to look after individuals which may need special assistance. But many participants express sadness that they do not have enough resources to share, as they too are struggling to provide for their families. For example, 6 of 10 respondents to the close-ended statements indicate that their family doesn't always have enough food (see Appendix 1).

Influence of modernization on culture and traditions

Perspectives on the degree to which modernization has influenced culture and traditions in Ambullua vary. For example, 5 questionnaire respondents indicate modernization *has not* had any effects, whereas 7 say that it *has* had numerous impacts.

Modernization is embraced differently by different groups and individuals in the community. It is not seen by respondents as fully understood by the older generation, and by those who are either illiterate or ill informed. It is perceived that with modernization comes infrastructure, development, service delivery, knowledge (such as basic rights) and opportunities for further education. Participants consider the remoteness of Ambullua as a considerable hindrance to modernization.

The influence of modernization is largely seen by participants as positive, attributing it to development, access to services and information. However, 7 out of the 12 participants emphasize the negative impacts of modernization, connecting it to the loss of culture, traditional beliefs and practices.

Changes in the bride price and loss of ‘sing-sing’ practices

One cultural tradition changing in Ambullua is the bride price. Traditionally, the bride price was paid using shells, feathers and pigs, but people are now exchanging money and clothes. The more recent emphasis on currency is difficult for families without a reliable source of income. Failure to pay bride price does not stop marriages from going ahead, yet not fulfilling this custom is associated with likelihood of divorce. As one participant said:

It contributes to divorce. When couples don't have enough for bride price. The church tries to solve it but a lot of couples break up because of this (Focus Group 1).

An additional change perceived to be altering relationships in Ambullua is the disappearance of *sing-sing* practices. As one focus group participant explains:

When the young woman is dating a young man, the parents used to make a fire and there would be a *sing-sing* and whoever sings the best would get the woman. It's not happening now (Focus Group 3).

Unwanted pregnancies and a lack of discipline are linked to the loss of this tradition.

Sing-sing

The sing-sing has gone now. It is not happening anymore. It is not good. When it used to happen, there was discipline. Now it has gone. We used to have dancing, now we have unwanted pregnancy (Focus Group 2).



One focus group participant attributed the loss of *sing-sing* practices to previous generations which failed to train their children in these traditions once the missionaries arrived in Ambullua and began providing basic services (Focus Group 4).

Mobile phones and traditional greetings

The introduction of mobile phones and the establishment of a Digicel tower have transformed village-village communication. As one participant explains:

People used to go village to village but now people are using mobile phones. With introduction of mobile phones, it makes communications very fast and to communicate a message (Focus Group 3).

Despite the introduction of telecommunications technology, the traditional way of greeting people in Ambullua continues today: “when a visitor comes we say aiyoo, aiyoo!” (Focus Group 3).

Violence

The majority (11) of questionnaire respondents say that they have either experienced or witnessed violence within their community. The main victims of violence identified by the participants are women and children, followed by the elderly, PLWD, and people living with potentially fatal illnesses. Men are also seen as victims of violence.

The following factors are identified as the primary causes of violence:

- Consuming alcohol and drugs
- Stealing
- Lack of mutual respect
- Adultery
- The mindset and attitude of individuals
- Polygamy
- Mismanagement of services
- Traditional beliefs and values
- Divorce
- Modernization
- Tribal conflict and ‘payback violence’

Child abuse and violence against women

Child abuse and violence against women is seen as common in Ambullua. While this is often thought of as a private matter to be resolved within the immediate family, the community might also intervene. For example, if violence is directed towards a woman thought to have made a ‘mistake’ (e.g. not looking after their children or committing adultery), the community will not interfere. If no ‘mistake’ has been made, the community might interfere (Focus Group 2). Similarly, if a child is beaten, community leaders will ask the parents if the child has done something wrong (e.g. not attend school). “If no mistake, the community will say it is abuse and must stop. When a child is not attending school, it is understood that they will blame the children” (Focus Group 2).

There are several support services available to survivors of violence in Ambullua. Examples listed by participants include:

- Voice for Change (a human rights organisation)
- Counselling by religious groups and community leaders
- Treatment at the health centre
- Government
- Village Court
- Community peace mediation teams

Most participants believe however, that many people in the community are not aware that these services exist.

Conflict resolution and peacebuilding

Village leaders are seen as the primary actors involved in mediation of conflicts within the community. They also play an important role in promoting community awareness on discipline and social harmony.

Compensation, through an exchange of pigs and money, is the predominant practice used to maintain peace in the community. For example, if a conflict arises between two tribes, village court officers will encourage conflicting parties to negotiate an appropriate form of compensation (Focus Group 3). Failure to pay the agreed compensation is likely to prolong the conflict. Finding money for compensation is challenging because although many people have pigs in Ambullua, few have a regular income.

Although compensation is usually negotiated between men, women play a crucial role in providing the resources exchanged such as, raising and selling pigs.



Martha, 56yrs

Women play a major role in the community in terms of food, pigs, money. When there is conflict, men usually make decisions, but they don't usually have these things. So, we play a major role in maintaining peace.

For income we are involved in the selling of pigs – we look after pigs and sell when buyers come. But because of the road network, only pigs bring in money.

In the absence of pigs and money, women can also be given as compensation through arranged marriages or bride exchange. As one participant explains:

Sometimes women are used as compensation to keep the peace. If they look for pigs and money and that is not enough, they force women to get married to someone she doesn't love in the other tribe to maintain the peace (Focus Group 4).

Intergenerational conflict

There is general agreement among participants that there is some misunderstanding between the older and younger generation in Ambullua. For instance, the younger generation have adopted and developed interests for modern lifestyle practices, while the older generation are seen to hold on to traditional beliefs. This affects communication between the two generations. However, some participants believe that there is a positive relationship between the two, where they learn from and help one another.

Issues associated with the generational gap in Ambullua include:

- The concern for maintaining traditional beliefs
- Jealousy between the two generations
- The younger generation undermining the leadership and wisdom of the older generation, and the introduction of education and the empowerment that comes with it

The strained relationships between the younger and older generation is seen as different to in the past when “senior people in the community used to be respected but not anymore” (Focus Group 3). Older focus group participants shared their feelings of being disrespected and not listened to by young people. Older people feel blamed for having failed to “set the foundation for a good life” (Focus Group 1) yet acknowledge the frustration of young people due to a lack of education and job opportunities. Others argue that drug use among young people is the main cause of conflict within families and disrespect for elders (Focus Group 3, 4).

Fieldwork reflections

Overall the research team was satisfied with the outcomes of the fieldwork. Some reflections of what worked well included:

- Involvement of two local persons on the research team was necessary for the translation of fieldwork activities and participant recruitment.
- Having children draw collective maps of Ambullua clearly illustrated areas where the children feel safe/unsafe.
- Multiple data collection instruments enabled the researchers to include 99 participants in a very short visit.

What needed amending:

- Focus group participants were intended to be divided according to age-groups (18-26; 27-54; 55-70+). This did not occur for two reasons, Firstly, many people in Ambullua did not know their precise age. Second, some people walked far distances to attend the focus groups and their arrival at the venue was unpredictable.
- Due to logistical challenges in accessing Ambullua, the research visit was shorter than planned. This reduced the number of individual interviews conducted.
- While an additional female-only focus group was held to increase women's participation, greater attention is needed to include an equal number of male and female research participants.

Next step options

There are two next step options for this project.

Option 1: Following feedback from HORIZONT3000, we circulate a printed final report to the community and digital copies to other stakeholders for wider dissemination.

Option 2: Expand the project to include communities in other provinces (Madang and Western Highlands) as per the original project proposal submitted to HORIZONT3000.

The research team believe the data collection instruments used in Ambullua generated rare data from a remote community in PNG that will be of interest to a range of audiences (e.g. the community, Government agencies and non-government organisations). It is worth noting that despite the significant logistical challenges in accessing Ambullua, the project was implemented under budget. To address the aforementioned weaknesses of the pilot project, and to further strengthen its capacity building potential, an extended project would benefit from increasing the size of the research team to include more postgraduate students from Divine Word University, and by extending the duration of the fieldwork visit.

Our immediate next steps are to:

- Share the draft pilot project report with HORIZONT3000 for feedback
- Discuss the idea of expanding the project to one or more additional provinces with Archbishop Douglas Young. This meeting will help determine if there are other communities involved in the "Community Conversations" programs that would like to participate
- Revise the draft pilot project report and disseminate final report to HORIZONT3000, the community and other stakeholders.

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About the authors

Associate Professor Kylie McKenna is Director, Centre for Social Research, Divine Word University

Ms Lorelle Tekopiri Yakam is Graduate Researcher, Postgraduate Research Centre, Divine Word University

Professor Fr Philip Gibbs is Deputy President, Divine Word University

Mr John Ezekiel Toimb is Assistant Research Officer, Governance and Service Delivery Sectoral Committee, Consultative Implementation & Monitoring Council

Mr John Ulno is a secondary school teacher in Jiwaka Province, Papua New Guinea.

Appendix 1 Close-ended statements (N=10)**Table 1 Adapted from the program developed by Menzies School of Health Research (2017, p.81-82).**

Statements	Not true	Some-times true	Always true
My family doesn't always have enough food.	3	6	1
There is violence toward me by my spouse.	2	6	2
There is violence between other family members.		6	4
My older children are a lot of trouble (fighting, hitting parents, disobedient).	3	6	1
Everyone helps with cleaning, working, cooking at my home.	6	3	1
My children are well looked-after.	4	6	
I am worried about drinking or drugs in my family. [1 nil response]	1	5	3
My children all get a fair share (of money, support); no one misses out.	6	4	
In my family everyone is respected.		8	2
When my partner and I disagree, we talk it over.	1	8	1
When there is fighting or trouble in the family, our family members get together and talk about what to do.		2	8

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