

Moving Onwards:

Female Migrants, Gender Issues and Sustainable Development in Papua New Guinea: Rural and Urban Differences

By Dr. Alfred Faiteli

*Demography & Population Studies,
ESG, UPNG*



AIM OF PRESENTATION

To shed some light on the understanding of

- *Migration Issues*
- *Female Migrants*
- *Gender Issues*
- *Sustainable Development*
- *Data Availability & Analysis - in PNG*

Focus

- *Urban and Rural Areas*

MISCONCEPTION

In PNG, migration many times is viewed in a negative way. Migrants are commonly perceived to be:

- *Poor, illiterate or semi-illiterate*
- *Mostly unskilled and semi-skilled*
- *Reside in squatter settlements*
- *Reside in ethnic clusters*
- *Cause law and order problems in cities*
- *Cause ethnic clashes in cities*
- *Engaged in the informal sector*
- *Engaged in black-market activities*
- *Are mostly men (young men)*

- *This is changing in PNG!*

IN REALITY

Migrants in PNG (like anywhere else) are PEOPLE (Papua New Guineans) just like you and me. That includes:

- Men
 - Women
 - Young Men
 - Young Women
 - Boys
 - Girls
 - Children
 - Everyone
-
- Challenge: *We need to know how many people exactly are moving, where they are going, why they are moving there, when they are moving, do they intend to return? Yes/No – Why?*

ESSENCE OF MY PRESENTATION

Highlight the significance of Migration (as a process) in achieving a better livelihood that is sustainable (development)

This involves:

Understanding or appreciating how:

- Migration can be used as a *driver* or *catalyst* in achieving human and economic development

In this case - the context of *Female Migrants*

(their experiences, risks, vulnerabilities, disparities and opportunities they face at the source and/or place of destination) – how these affect their livelihoods

WOMEN IN PNG

Women make up almost half (48%) of the 7.3 million people of PNG (Census, 2011). Of these, 15% live in urban areas (85% rural dwellers)

In traditional societies/rural areas:

- Women were considered to play an important role in maintaining the status of men
- Clear division of labour between men and women
- Women mostly involved in activities related to home, food production (agriculture), care of families etc
- Men responsible for protection of family/community

Social structure changing:

- Male-female relations changing - affecting dominance, power, responsibilities, and brings about certain risks, vulnerabilities, disparities as well as opportunities for both men and women
- Issues such bride price, gender-based violence, rape, child marriage, incest etc – are emerging and are on the increase

CONTD....

Although women in PNG are seen as equal partners in the development of the country (Eight Point Improvement Plan & National Constitution) yet in practice, most women are denied the possibility to equally participate in development (as indicated by almost every human development indicator)

For example:

Education (2016)

- 82% of girls enrolled in primary school – 89% of boys
- 60% of women aged 15+ literate – 65% of men
- Women on average had 4 years of schooling – 5 years for men
- No women in parliament (now)

MIGRATION IN PNG

Many studies have been done on migration in PNG

Past studies provide insights into the complex processes of socioeconomic change in both rural and urban areas

Eg:

- Studies on rural-urban migration revealed how communities have responded to colonialism, capitalism and growing inequalities between the two areas (Curtain, 1980, 1981; Morauta & Ryan, 1982; Connel, 1988; Boyd, 1990, Zimmer, 1990 etc)
- Studies on how migration used as a strategy to diversify and increase incomes, to escape sorcery and other village conflicts and to overcome problems associated with resource scarcity and competition (Curtain 1980, 1981, Gewerts & Errington, 1991; Curry & Koczberski, 1998 etc)
- Gap – theoretically gender is critical yet less understood in the context of migration – traditionally migration theories focus on the causes and effects of migration rather than on who migrates (and why, where, when, how long?) failing to address and understand gender-specific migration experiences

CONCEPTUALISATION

In many rural areas in PNG – rising population and resource scarcity – is a problem – exerted extreme pressure on people!

Therefore – it worthwhile to examine how migration patterns and migration decision-making are adjusting to these pressures

As resource pressure continue to rise, the context of decision-making will change too thus creating new risk and opportunities for migrants and potential migrants - **Female Migrants**

Risk – Migration/Moving (cost, distance, uncertainty, displacement)

Vulnerability – Female (women/girls) – socioeconomic or demographic characteristics of the migrant – illiterate/literate, unskilled/skilled, married/unmarried, children/no children, unemployed/employed, young/old etc

Opportunity/Prospect – Reach destination, safe, employed/income, educated, married, happy, remittances

Disparities – that exist between source and destination(eg. rural-urban areas)

DEMOGRAPHIC TRENDS

Figure 1. Population of PNG by Sex (%)

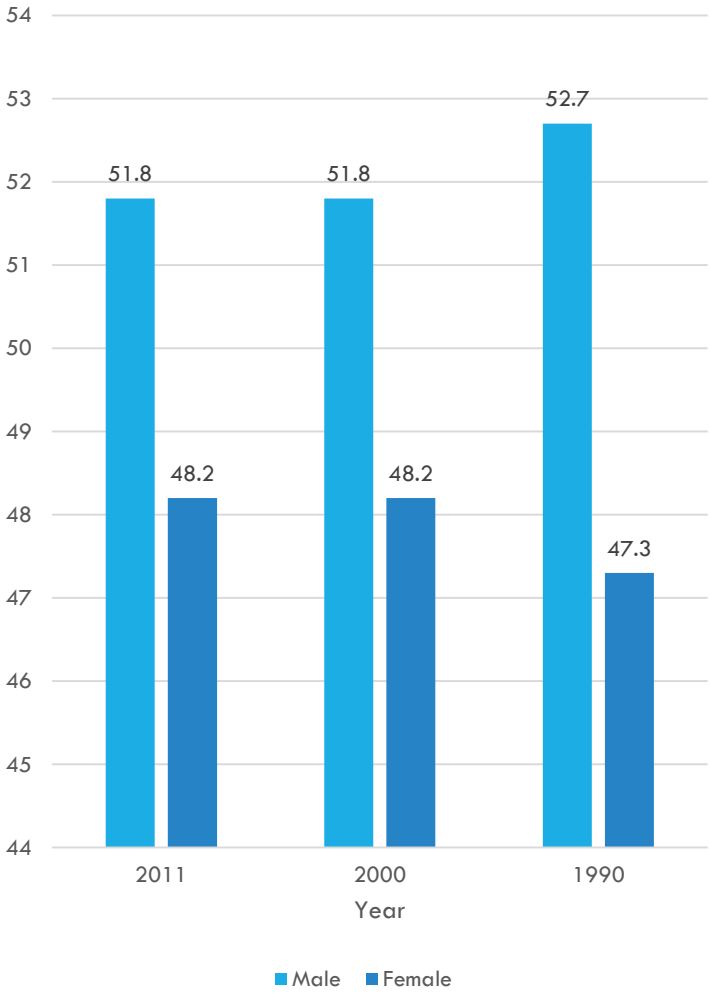
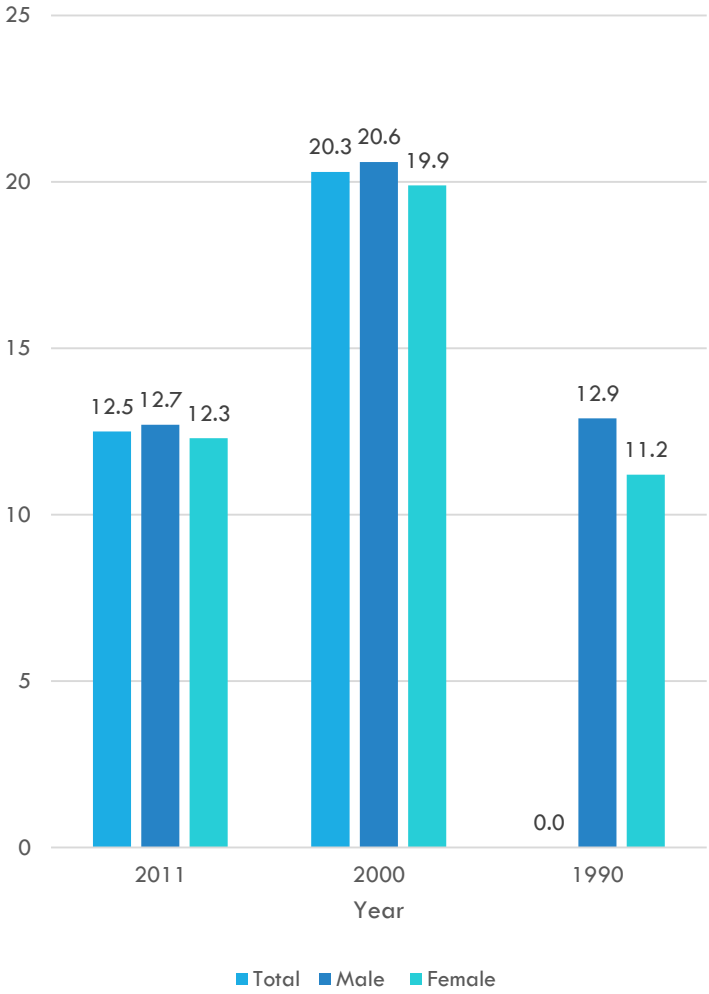


Figure 2. Migrants by Sex (%)



MIGRATION TRENDS

Figure 3. Interprovincial Migrants by Sex (%)

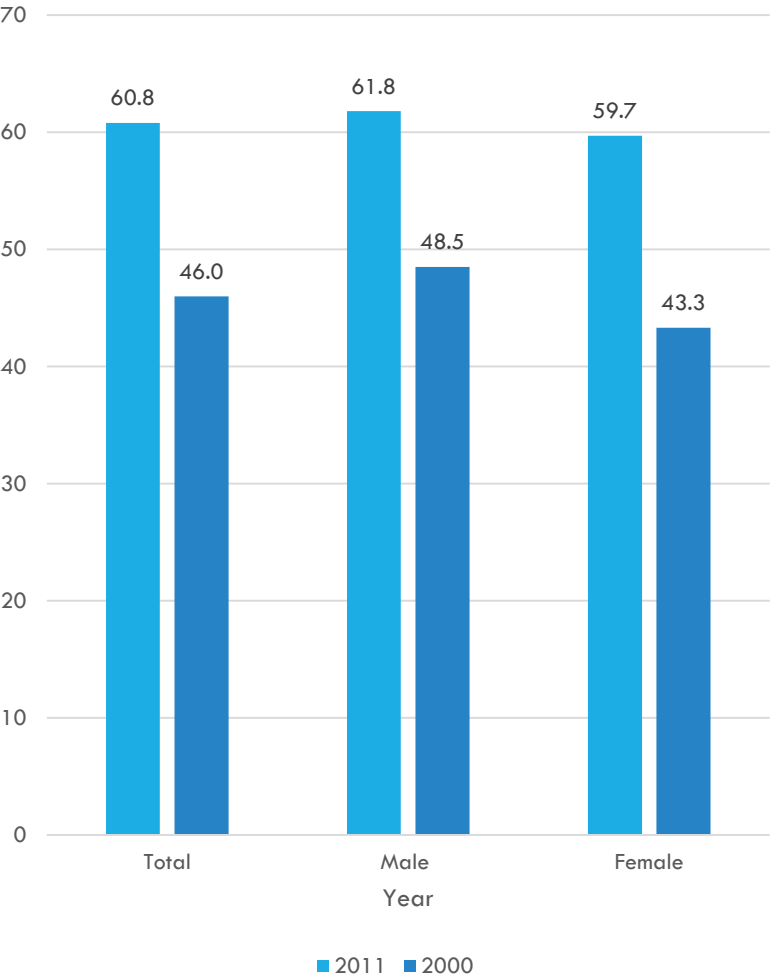
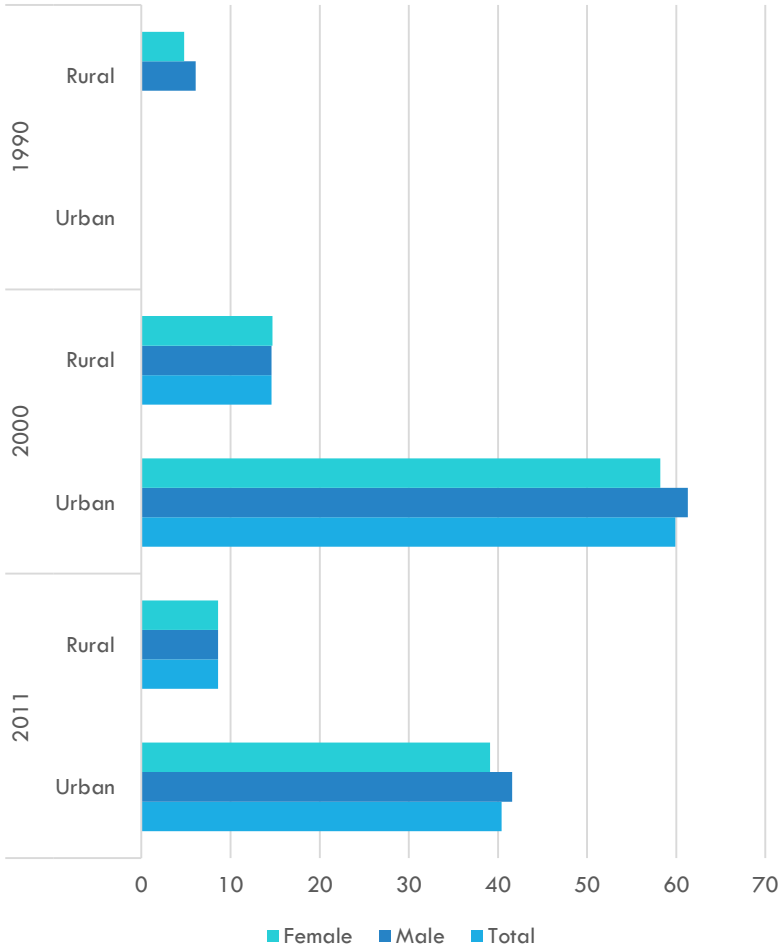


Figure 4. Urban and Rural Migrant Population by Sex (%)



MIGRATION TRENDS

Figure 5. Migrants by Type of Migration and Sector (%)

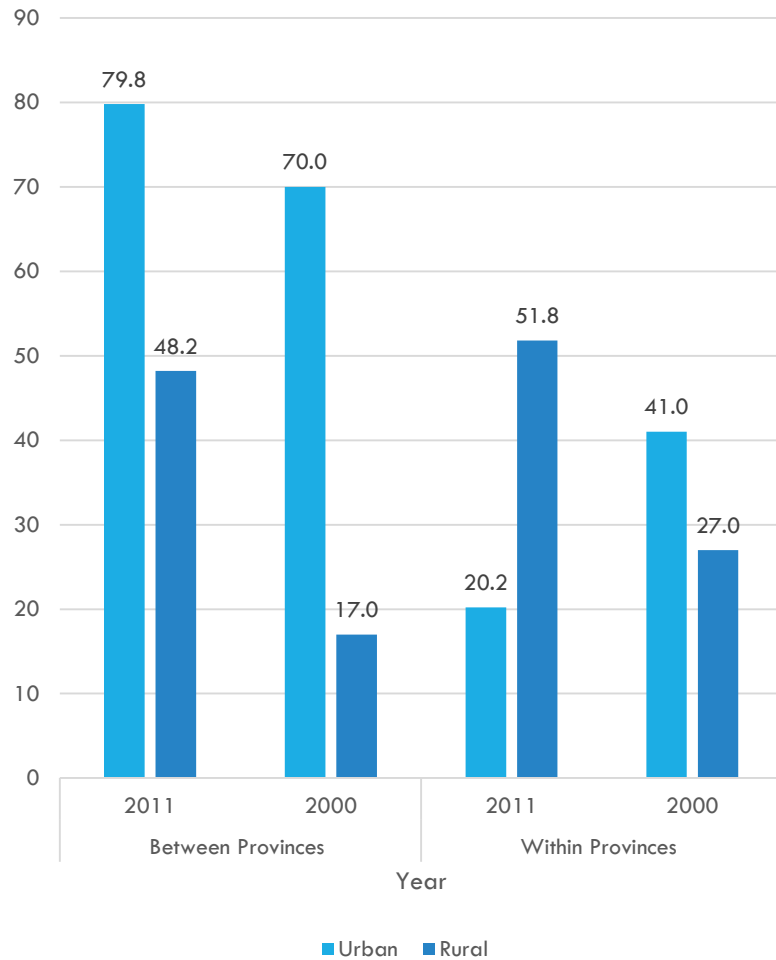
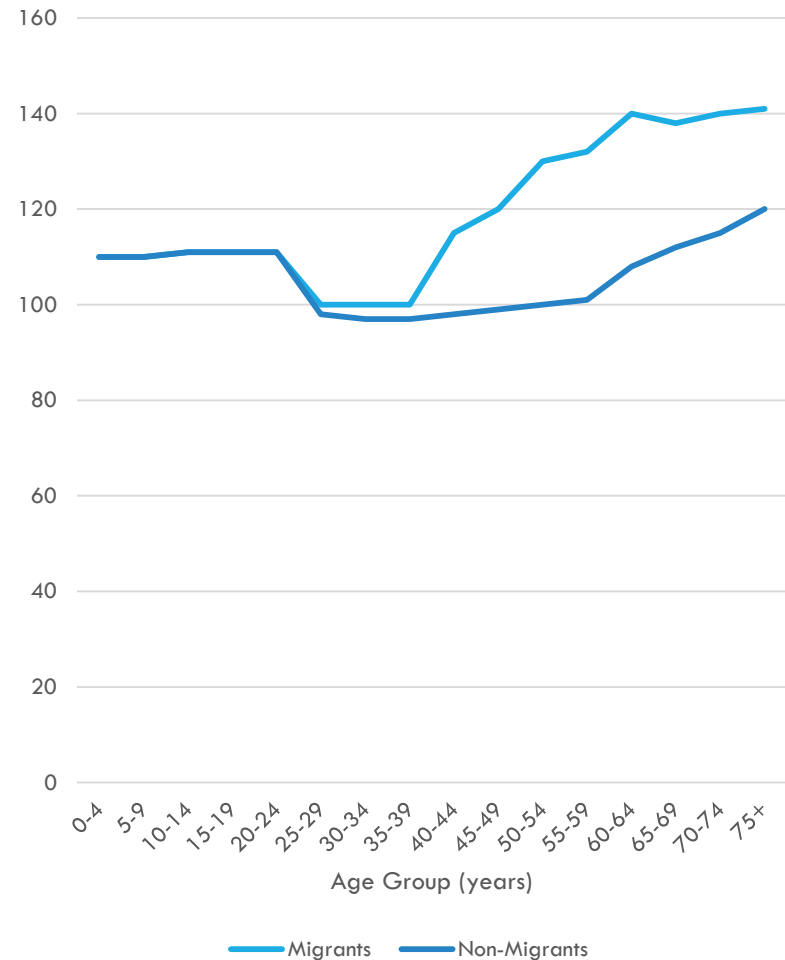


Figure 6. Sex Ratio of Citizen Population by Age and Migration Status, 2011 (%)



MIGRATION AND SDGS

Challenges addressed by SDGs contain many important gender dimensions that relate to migration

Specific actions and solutions are needed to reduce women and girls poverty and insecurity to promote their access to economic and sustainable growth – health, education, employment and justice

Support measures that target harmful gender-related practise, reduce gender discrimination and increase women's choices, decision-making power and participation in economic and social activities that drive development

A handful SDGs have targets that relate directly to migration

- Goal 4: Inclusive and equitable and quality education
- Goal 5: Gender equality and women's empowerment
- Goal 8: Growth and decent work
- Goal 10: Reducing inequalities
- Goal 16: Peaceful societies and justice
- Goal 17: Global Partnership
- Focus on G5, G8, G10 & G17 (targets and challenges)

WOMEN, MIGRATION & 2030 AGENDA

SDGs

- **Goal 5: Gender equality and women's empowerment**
- 5.2 Eliminate all forms of violence against all women and girls
- 5.3 Eliminate all harmful practices against women and girls

Migration Challenges

- GBV may force women and girls to migrate and they may be subject to violence during transit points or at the destination
- Migrant girls are more likely to be trafficked or experience sexual exploitation than boys
- Girls facing these harmful practices such as forced marriage, accusation of sorcery, marriage break-up and GBV may use migration as a means of escape
- Migrant communities may use early marriage as a coping strategy in the face of the girls' insecurity or economic hardship

Goal 8: Growth and decent work

8.5 Achieve full and productive employment and decent work for all women and men

- Limit or bar refugees from employment opportunities
- Migrant spouses may be prevented from working

8.8 Protect labour rights and promote safe and secure working environment for all workers

- Protection of labour rights is particularly important for migrants especially for women and children who are at greater risks of exploitation or abuse

8.10 Strengthen capacity of domestic financial institutions to encourage and expand access to banking, insurance services for all

- Important for women's ability to receive and send remittances

Goal 10: Reducing inequalities

10.7 To facilitate orderly, safe, regular and responsible migration and mobility of people including through the implementation of planned and well manage migration policies

- Target gender-blind - requires gender-lens to meet specific needs of female migrants

Goal 17: Global Partnership

17.18.1 Enhance capacity-building support to developing countries to increase significantly the availability of high quality, timely and reliable data, disaggregated by income, gender, age, race, ethnicity, migratory status, disability, geographical location and other characteristics

Population data must be disaggregated by migratory status (sector and major cities in PNG) to gather a clear picture of migration trends

GENDER NORMS & FEMALE MIGRATION

Men and women migrate for similar and different reasons – education, work, marriage, flee from tribal fights, arguments, natural disasters, shame etc.....

Migration – very much a **gendered** and **cross-cutting** phenomenon

Gender norms and expectations, power relations, unequal rights shape migration choices and decision-making (where to move, why move, who to move with etc...)

Eg. Women usually have less control than men – family decision (Yeoh et al., 2002) - Forced/Involuntary migration – especially for young girls

Gendered expectation may also guide family decisions (Kaiaiaupuni, 2000)

Eg. Women/Girls/Mother/Daughter more likely to send remittance than male relatives

Individual decision to move – women move to escape family control, forced marriage, sorcery, shame (rape, incest, FGM etc) (Temin, et al., 2013)

CONTD...

Migration experiences – girls have less information, less education, fewer options – greater risk of abuse, exploitation and trafficking (UNFPA, 2015)

Migration may change gender and social norms (for migrants and their home communities) – autonomy, self esteem, status, new skills, remittance

Communities – adopt more norms around education, marriage, fertility rates (no. of children), gender roles in household)

Migrants may also face resistance or stigma – re-adjust to home life (Sijapati, 2015)

International migrants - adaptation to liberal communities (London) women's movement outside the home still governed by gender norms from home communities (eg. restriction to women's movement outside the home).

Changes in gender roles for men – women's migration means men take over women's homely responsibilities – usually unpaid work. Norms about productive and domestic work changing - women resistant and men uncooperative to do unpaid domestic and care work (Evans, 2016)

GENDER NORMS & PERCEPTIONS

Gender – key in educational and employment opportunities – open to migrants and non-migrants

In PNG

- Men – natural leaders, decision-makers, bread-winners, provider
- Women – homemakers and carers

In many countries today – gender-stereotypes have come under stress as more women have ventured to higher grounds - gained higher educational qualifications and attained higher-paying professional jobs in greater and increasing numbers

EMPLOYMENT

Marked difference in the labour force participation rate: higher in rural (64%) than urban sector (46%) in 2011.

Labour force participation rate for females in urban sector (38%) lower than rural sector (64%)

Between 2000 and 2011, although there were decreasing labour force participation rates:

Males in both rural and urban areas (70% to 64% and 59% to 53% respectively) - decrease

Females in both rural and urban areas (71% to 64% and 36% to 38% respectively) – decrease & increase

Urban: the only type of employment where there was an overwhelming number of women engaged in than men was 'wage job employment' where female engagement account for 64% to 39% for males

Rural: All employment types were slightly dominated by women except for the 'gardening and fishing for own use' category which was largely dominated by men (70.3%) compared to women (54%)

Of the total citizens who were unemployed (88,000) in 2011

41% were in the urban sector giving an urban unemployment rate of 11% (a decrease of 5% since 2000).

In the rural sector, the rate was low at 2% due to the high non-monetary subsistence activity

More than a quarter of the unemployed in the 2011 census were aged 20-24 years

EDUCATION

Educated women in many developing countries – huge and positive changes both in the private and public sectors

In PNG, the patterns and trends of women in education strongly indicate that education is one of the key contributing factors to impediment in development

Generally, limited or low level of participation of women in educational programs

Low levels of literacy in comparison to men. For example, males (aged 5-29) attending schools was higher (29%, 38%, 43%) than females (28%, 37%, 40%) in all the census years from 1990 to 2011 respectively (NSO, 2011: 49)

This pattern of males higher than females was the same for all other education categories such as *'ever been to school'*, *'ever been to school'*, *'grade 10 highest completed'*, *'grade 12 highest completed'* and *'with qualification'* for both the urban and rural sectors within the same period of time with percentages much higher overall for the urban than the rural sector

Regarding literacy rate, there was a slight increase from 71%, 86% to 89% in the respective census years for urban areas while for the rural areas, there was also an increasing trend but at much lower rates (40%, 52% to 65%) during the 3 census years

In comparison to female literacy rates both in the urban and rural sectors, women in urban areas showed overwhelmingly high percentages than their rural counterparts

The differing trend showed 67%, 83%, 87% for urban women and 36%, 46%, 61% for the rural women; a decreasing but high difference at 31%, 27%, 26% percentages for the respective census years

GENDER NORMS & SOCIOECONOMIC SEGMENTATION

Migrant labour remain segmented by gender norms – culturally influenced (class & ethnicity)

Men

- Men perceived as stronger
- More capable of manual or hard work
- More likely to work in mining, industry, transport, trade and construction
- Men also over-represented in middle-top managerial positions

Women

- Perceived as nurturing/caring – concentrated in ‘feminine’ sectors related to care (health, teaching, cleaning, cooking, hospitality & tourism, service) or entertainment or factory positions
- Gendered laboured opportunities then influence where male migrants and female migrants go to
- Same with education and training institutions (technical – males/non-technical-females etc) – gender-segmented

CONCLUSIONS

- Marked difference in the socioeconomic indicators between men and women in rural and urban areas in PNG show that migration may have trade-offs between the urban-rural areas that have potential for growth & transfer of skills
- Theoretically understanding gender is critical yet less understood in the context of migration – traditionally migration theories focus on the causes and effects of migration rather than on who migrates failing to address and understand gender-specific migration experiences
- Without clear theoretical underpinnings, it becomes difficult to explain, for example, the conditions under which women are more likely to migrate or the predominance of women in certain labour flows or not
- Furthermore, traditional theory fails to help us understand the circumstances that encourage or attract women to become more mobile moving frequently and over longer distances to achieve a better life
- Understanding these conditions and circumstances for both women and men may result in different outcomes (social, economic, cultural, environmental etc) with lessons learnt
- Understanding the related vulnerabilities, risks, difficulties, disparities, opportunities under certain conditions and circumstances may shed more light in understanding migration issues
- Gender and migratory status differentials in rural/urban areas, education, employment etc may provide more and deeper insight into understanding migration issues in the country

KEY MESSAGE

Number of women migration is increasing in PNG

Women now migrate as much as men. Migration data must be disaggregated by sex, age and migration status and by sector and major urban areas in the country

Migration policies must take account of how gender shapes different migrants' needs

Migration can increase women's access to education and economic resources and can improve their autonomy and status

Female migrants are at greater risk of exploitation and abuse including trafficking

Migration can be used as a catalyst to empower and increase women's autonomy and status, participation and accessibility in society (thus experience lower risk of exploitation and abuse)

Although highly skilled women have high rates of migration, many are employed in low skilled-jobs or undermined or unnoticed

Unskilled or semi-skilled female migrants work in less-regulated and less-visible sectors (informal sector/self employed) than male migrants

Most migrant domestic workers are women and adolescent girls

Migration may also create a pathway for female inclusivity in different aspects of society

Migration creates empowerment trade-offs for individual women and girls

These trade-offs (as well as the other factors mentioned above) all matter for gender-equality and are highly relevant for achieving Vision 2050 and SDGs

WAY FORWARD

- Migration in PNG (like at the international level) must be seen, understood and accepted as an 'engine or driver' or 'catalyst' for development
- Female migration (gender-specific migration) in PNG, apart from male-migration must be seen, understood and accepted as an engine or driver or catalyst for development
- Migration in PNG as a catalyst for development must be used to reduce anomalies, vulnerabilities, disparities and risks associated with different people in the development process (eg poor, women, children, disabled etc)
- Population data in PNG must also be analysed or disaggregated by migratory status (apart from other demographic, social and economic variables)
- Migration data in PNG must be given more prominence in terms of its collection and analysis (analysis by sector, major cities in the country)
- More specific research on female migration in PNG must be done to understand this intrinsic relationship between migration and development
- **Work in progress** – programs for each goal and specific targets to be aligned with name of organisation/funding source (for example – Meri Seif Haus/Water Aid (Netball-PNG)/TVET/Just Play/League Bilong Life/ Equal Playing Field (AusGovt)/Early Essential New-Born Program (UNICEF)/WASH/ARV Medication-Catholic Church/**PNG Strategy for Devt of Statistics (PNGSDS – GovPNG) etc**

Development can be achieved by migration (female migration) been used as an engine or driver or catalyst in bringing about improvements in the livelihoods of individuals, families and communities in our country – PNG **leaving No-one Behind** empowered by female migrants - **MOVING ONWARDS.**



THANK YOU!