

Explaining the outcome of gender quota campaigns in Samoa and Papua New Guinea

Political Science
2014, Vol. 66(1) 63–83
© The Author(s) 2014
Reprints and permissions:
sagepub.co.uk/journalsPermissions.nav
DOI: 10.1177/0032318714531428
pnz.sagepub.com



Kerryn Baker

Abstract

This article explores the factors that contribute to the success or failure of gender quota campaigns through an analysis of two case studies from the Pacific Islands region: Samoa and Papua New Guinea. While Samoa became the first Pacific independent state to implement a parliamentary gender quota in 2013, a campaign for 22 reserved seats in the Papua New Guinea Parliament before the 2012 general election was unsuccessful. Drawing on media analysis and interviews with key players in the gender quota debates in both countries, this article examines why the push for a quota succeeded in Samoa and not in Papua New Guinea. The local, external and structural factors commonly found in gender quota literature can help to explain the divergent outcomes of the gender quota campaigns in these two countries. In particular, I highlight one structural factor – political stability – as fundamental to our understanding of the different outcomes in the two cases.

Keywords

Gender, Pacific, Papua New Guinea, quotas, representation, Samoa

Introduction

In the Pacific Islands region, women are significantly under-represented in the political sphere. Women hold just 3.3 per cent of seats in national legislatures, one of the lowest levels of women's representation in the world. Three Pacific states – the Federated States of Micronesia, Palau and Vanuatu – have no women in their single or lower house of parliament. Outside of the Pacific region, there is only one other state – Qatar – with no women in its legislature.¹

Corresponding author:

Kerryn Baker, State Society and Governance in Melanesia Program, School of International, Political and Strategic Studies, College of Asia and the Pacific, The Australian National University, Acton ACT, Australia.
Email: kerryn.baker@anu.edu.au

-
1. International Parliamentary Union, 'Women in National Parliaments' (1 December 2013), available at: <http://www.ipu.org/wmn-e/classif.htm> (accessed 27 February 2014).

To address the issue of gender imbalance in politics, various countries have sought to increase women's representation through quotas. They generally take one of three forms: legally or constitutionally mandated quotas, which require parties to present a certain proportion of female candidates; party quotas, which are voluntarily adopted by individual parties; and reserved seats, where a certain number of legislative seats are set aside for women.² Over 100 countries have introduced some form of quota to increase the number of women in politics.³

Gender quotas are used at a sub-national level in the Pacific region – notably, in the legislative assemblies of the French Pacific territories and in the Autonomous Region of Bougainville. At the national level, Samoa became the first independent Pacific state to introduce a parliamentary gender quota in 2013, when the Constitution was amended to guarantee a minimum of five women Members of Parliament (MPs). In the lead-up to the 2012 general election in Papua New Guinea, there was a high-profile campaign for the establishment of 22 reserved seats for women. This campaign was ultimately unsuccessful, with the reserved seats not implemented before the election. The two gender quota campaigns have potential lessons for future campaigns in other Pacific Islands states. Furthermore, research into these recent and relatively unknown case studies can add to the academic literature on gender quota adoption. This article explores the factors that contribute to the success or failure of quota campaigns through an analysis of two case studies: Samoa and Papua New Guinea. Both are recent examples of state-level parliamentary quota campaigns in the Pacific Islands region. Both have histories of low levels of women's representation. Crucially, one campaign was successful, while the other failed to institute a gender quota. Drawing on media analysis and interviews with key players in the gender quota debates in both countries,⁴ this article examines why the push for a quota succeeded in Samoa and not in Papua New Guinea. First, I review the explanatory factors for quota adoption identified by the existing literature. I then present an overview of the quota campaigns in Samoa and Papua New Guinea. A final section analyses these campaigns and the extent to which local actors, external actors and structural factors influenced the different outcomes. A structural factor – *political stability* – is highlighted as a key factor explaining quota adoption or non-adoption in these two case studies.

-
2. Pippa Norris, *Electoral Engineering: Voting Rules and Political Behaviour* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), p. 191.
 3. Mona Lena Krook, *Quotas for Women in Politics: Gender and Candidate Selection Reform Worldwide* (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2009), p. 4.
 4. Interviews were conducted in Samoa in August–September 2012 and November 2013, and in Papua New Guinea in September 2013, with a range of subjects (male and female), and included current and former Members of Parliament (MPs), unsuccessful parliamentary candidates, civil society leaders, businesspeople, public servants, academics and journalists. Several interviews were also conducted in Australia in October–November 2012.

Factors explaining quota adoption

The existing literature on quota adoption identifies various factors that contribute to the success or failure of quota campaigns.⁵ None of these factors, or combinations of factors, can fully explain quota adoption in all cases. All can play a role, although their significance varies depending upon the context. They can be grouped into three categories: local actors, external actors and structural factors.⁶

Locally, the strength and influence of the *women's movement* can impact the outcome of a quota campaign. Scholars consider women's groups to have played an important part in quota reforms in Latin America, Asia and other regions.⁷ Individual women actors, particularly those with connections to male political elites, can influence the success or failure of a quota campaign.⁸ Furthermore, *male political elites* themselves can affect the outcomes of quota campaigns through their support or opposition. Political elites who support quota campaigns tend to do so on pragmatic rather than ideological grounds, such as if they consider their support or perceived support to be personally advantageous. This support can be a tokenistic gesture.⁹ Nevertheless, the support of one high-level male political actor can ensure the adoption of a quota in some cases.¹⁰ Other local actors could include civil servants, academics and journalists, who can play an advocacy role in quota campaigns,¹¹ and members of the

-
5. For a comprehensive overview of the quota adoption literature, see Krook, *Quotas for Women in Politics*, pp. 19–35.
 6. I am defining these terms as follows: local actors as individuals and groups within the country who are involved in the gender quota campaign; external actors as international and transnational individuals and groups who are involved in the gender quota campaign; and structural factors as organisations and systems that constitute the political and institutional context in which the quota campaign took place.
 7. See Julie Ballington and Drude Dahlerup, 'Gender Quotas in Post-Conflict States: East Timor, Afghanistan and Iraq', in Drude Dahlerup (ed.), *Women, Quotas and Politics* (New York, NY: Routledge, 2006), p. 254; Mala N. Htun and Mark P. Jones, 'Engendering the Right to Participate in Decision-Making: Electoral Quotas and Women's Leadership in Latin America', in Nikki Craske and Maxine Molyneux (eds), *Gender and the Politics of Rights and Democracy in Latin America* (New York, NY: Palgrave, 2002), p. 33; Jane S. Jaquette, 'Women in Power: From Tokenism to Critical Mass', *Foreign Policy*, Vol. 108 (1997), p. 34.
 8. Kathleen Bruhn, 'Whores and Lesbians: Political Activism, Party Strategies, and Gender Quotas in Mexico', *Electoral Studies*, Vol. 22, No. 1 (2003), pp. 101–119.
 9. See Guillaume R. Fréchette, François Maniquet and Massimo Morelli, 'Incumbents' Interests and Gender Quotas', *American Journal of Political Science*, Vol. 52, No. 4 (October 2008), pp. 891–907.
 10. Gregory D. Schmidt, 'The Implementation of Gender Quotas in Peru: Legal Reform, Discourses and Impacts', paper presented at the International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance (IDEA) Workshop 'The Implementation of Quotas: Latin American Experiences', Lima, Peru, 23–24 February 2003.
 11. Cecilia Bylesjö and Francisia S.S.E. Seda, 'Indonesia: The Struggle for Gender Quotas in the World's Largest Muslim Society', in Drude Dahlerup (ed.), *Women, Quotas and Politics* (New York, NY: Routledge, 2006), p. 260; Celia Valiente, 'The Women's Movement,

judiciary, who can pose a significant challenge to the introduction of gender quotas, for example, if the legislative measures are found to contravene constitutional anti-discrimination provisions.¹²

At the external level, *international organisations* can be important actors in quota campaigns. Bush argues that international influences can be more significant than domestic pressures in quota adoption.¹³ International organisations have played a supportive role in quota campaigns in most cases,¹⁴ although they have acted to block the implementation of quotas on occasion.¹⁵ *International and regional diffusion* of quotas can also occur, with international networks of activists sharing campaign strategies,¹⁶ and quota debates being influenced by the quota policies of other countries in the region.¹⁷

Structural factors can contribute to the success or failure of a quota campaign. *Political culture* can encourage or prevent the adoption of quotas.¹⁸ The ‘fit’ between a quota and political culture is important, with the success of the campaign for the parity law in France, for example, partly attributed to the rhetorical links drawn by campaigners between the concept of *parité* and French political culture.¹⁹ *Electoral institutions* can affect the type of quota proposed and the success of a campaign. The characteristics of *party systems* and the level of competition between political parties can also have an impact on quota adoption.²⁰

This article highlights one structural factor – *political stability* – as key to our understanding of the divergent outcomes in quota campaigns in Samoa and Papua New Guinea. While political instability has been viewed in other cases as providing a

Gender Equality Agencies and Central-State Debates on Political Representation in Spain’, in Joni Lovenduski (ed.), *State Feminism and Political Representation* (New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 2005), pp. 174–194.

12. Lisa Baldez, ‘Elected Bodies: The Gender Quota Law for Legislative Candidates in Mexico’, *Legislative Studies Quarterly*, Vol. 29, No. 2 (2004), p. 234.
13. Sarah S. Bush, ‘International Politics and the Spread of Quotas for Women in Legislatures’, *International Organization*, Vol. 65, No. 1 (2011), pp. 103–137.
14. Krook, *Quotas for Women in Politics*, p. 29.
15. Julie Ballington and Drude Dahlerup, ‘Gender Quotas in Post-Conflict States: East Timor, Afghanistan and Iraq’, in Drude Dahlerup (ed.), *Women, Quotas and Politics* (New York, NY: Routledge, 2006); see also Milena Pires, ‘East Timor and the Debate on Quotas’, paper presented at the International IDEA Workshop ‘The Implementation of Quotas: Asian Experiences’, Jakarta, Indonesia, 25 September 2002.
16. Bruhn, ‘Whores and Lesbians’, p. 115.
17. Marila Guadagnini, ‘Gendering the Debate on Political Representation in Italy: A Difficult Challenge’, in Joni Lovenduski (ed.), *State Feminism and Political Representation* (New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 2005), p. 144; Mona Lena Krook, ‘Reforming Representation: The Diffusion of Candidate Gender Quotas Worldwide’, *Politics and Gender*, Vol. 2 (2006), pp. 303–327.
18. Katharina Inhetveen, ‘Can Gender Equality Be Institutionalized? The Role of Launching Values in Institutional Innovation’, *International Sociology*, Vol. 14, No. 4 (1999), p. 414.
19. Claudie Baudino, ‘Parity Reform in France: Promises and Pitfalls’, *Review of Policy Research*, Vol. 20, No. 3 (2003), p. 387.
20. Baldez, ‘Elected Bodies’, p. 232.

window of opportunity for quota advocates,²¹ in these two Pacific case studies, political stability can be seen as a positive factor with regards to quota adoption. Using the context of Samoa's and Papua New Guinea's respective levels of political stability, the success of the former's quota campaign, and the failure of the latter's, can be more fully explained.

Samoa²²

Samoa adopted a parliamentary gender quota in 2013. The quota will be in place for the 2016 general election and will ensure a minimum of five women MPs. It will operate under a 'best loser' system, whereby the highest-polling unsuccessful female candidates occupy additional seats in the Parliament to ensure that there are at least five women members.

Background

After Samoa won independence, only *matai* (chiefs) were eligible to vote and stand for Parliament. This rule restricted women's political participation, as only a small fraction of *matai* are female.²³ Universal suffrage was introduced in 1990 after a referendum found just over half of voters in favour, creating an influx of female voters. While all adult Samoan women have been eligible to vote since 1990, eligibility to stand for election is still restricted to *matai*. Despite the relatively low number of female *matai*, some women have been successful in national politics (see Table 1). Following the 2011 election, there were two female MPs in the Samoan Parliament.

In October 2011, Samoan Prime Minister Tuilaepa Sailele Malielegaoi made an announcement that he was seeking to implement legislation to reserve 10 per cent of parliamentary seats for women. Discussing his plans, the prime minister said:

If we do not put in the necessary stipulation in our legislation one never knows whether in the next elections there [will] be absolutely no women in Parliament. So this is part of our intention to ensure that there shall always be women in Parliament.²⁴

21. See Eléonore Lépinard, 'The Contentious Subject of Feminism: Defining Women in France from the Second Wave to Parity', *Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society*, Vol. 32, No. 2 (2007), pp. 375–403; Socorro L. Reyes and Wan Azizah, 'Quotas for Women in Legislative Seats at the Local Level in Pakistan', International IDEA (2002), available at: http://www.idea.int/publications/wip/upload/CS_Pakistan_Reynes.pdf (accessed 26 May 2013).
22. Samoa is a Polynesian country with a population of approximately 190,000. It was the first Pacific state to become independent, in 1962. It was initially called Western Samoa, but the 'Western' was dropped in 1997. It has a unicameral legislature.
23. According to the 2011 Census, there are 16,787 *matai* (8.9 per cent of the total population), of which 1,766 (10.5 per cent) are women. Because one *matai* can hold multiple titles, the number of titles is much higher than that of individual *matai*, at 60,162, and 3,944 (6.6 per cent) titles are held by women. Ten Samoan villages, from a total of just over 200, do not allow women to hold *matai* titles.
24. Quoted in Radio New Zealand International, 'Samoa PM Seeks Legislation to Guarantee 10 Percent of Parliament is Women' (4 October 2011), available at: <http://www.rnzi.com/pages/news.php?op=read&id=63532> (accessed 15 May 2013).

Table 1. Women MPs in the parliament of Samoa, 1962–2011.

Term	Women MPs	Total MPs	Percentage of MPs who were women
1962–1964	0	47	0.0
1964–1967	0	47	0.0
1967–1970	0	47	0.0
1970–1973	1	47	2.1
1973–1976	2	47	4.3
1976–1979	2	47	4.3
1979–1982	1	47	2.1
1982–1985	1	47	2.1
1985–1988	2	47	4.3
1988–1991	1	47	2.1
1991–1996 ^a	2	49	4.1
1996–2001 ^b	3	49	6.1
2001–2006	3	49	6.1
2006–2011 ^c	4	49	8.2
2011–present	2	49	4.1

Notes: ^a In 1991, the number of MPs increased by two; a constitutional amendment in 1992 increased the parliamentary term from three to five years.

^b Four women were initially elected in the 1996 election, but two lost their seats after electoral petitions. Another woman was elected in a 1998 by-election.

^c Five women were initially elected in the 2006 election, but one lost her seat after an electoral petition.

Source: Ministry of Women Community and Social Development, Samoa.

A constitutional amendment to this effect was tabled in Parliament in early 2012. On 24 June 2013, the Bill (the Constitution Amendment Bill 2013) was passed by Parliament with 44 votes in favour and none against.

The Constitution Amendment Bill 2013

According to the constitutional amendment, the Samoan quota will ensure a minimum of five women parliamentarians. If five or more women win seats in a general election, the quota will not be activated. If fewer than five women win seats in a general election, additional seats in Parliament will be occupied by the female candidates who gained the highest percentage of the vote in their constituencies.

There are mixed opinions regarding the future effects of implementing the proposed quota. It was generally thought that the legislation would result in more women being encouraged to run for Parliament.²⁵ The legislation had generated more public dialogue around gender roles, and around women's representation, and civil society leaders hoped that having at least five women in Parliament would help to normalise women's representation and lead to greater acceptance of women in politics.²⁶

25. M.V.R. Peteru, personal communication (4 September 2012); S. Retzlaff, personal communication (5 September 2012).

26. F.N. Mata'afa, personal communication (28 August 2012).

Table 2. Women MPs in the parliament of Papua New Guinea, 1977–2012.

Term	Women MPs	Total MPs	Percentage of MPs who were women
1977–1982	3	109	2.8
1982–1987 ^a	1	109	0.9
1987–1992	0	109	0.0
1992–1997	0	109	0.0
1997–2002	2	109	1.8
2002–2007	1	109	0.9
2007–2012	1	109	0.9
2012–present	3	111	2.7

Note: ^a In 1982, Nahau Rooney was re-elected after successfully challenging the election results in her electorate.

Source: Adapted from Orovu Sepoe, 'To Make a Difference: Realities of Women's Participation in Papua New Guinea Politics', *Development Bulletin*, No. 59 (2002), pp. 39–42.

Doubts were raised by women leaders in civil society and the public service about the ability of five women MPs to make an impact in Parliament. The quota was described as 'minimal',²⁷ and 'not enough' to make a real difference.²⁸ They were concerned that women who became additional MPs rather than being elected outright in their constituencies would be perceived as 'second-rate citizens in Parliament' and respected less than MPs who had won constituency seats.²⁹

Among urban Samoan women, the legislation was expected to have little effect for Samoan women living in rural areas. It was thought that it would be mostly educated Apia-based women putting themselves forward as candidates. There was not a wide awareness programme regarding the quota, and many people involved in the debate doubted that women living in rural areas fully understood the significance of the legislation.³⁰

Papua New Guinea³¹

Since gaining independence, Papua New Guinea has only had seven women elected to Parliament (see Table 2). In the 2007–2012 term of Parliament, the sole female MP at the time, Dame Carol Kidu, introduced a private member's bill that would have established a parliamentary gender quota. The Equality and Participation Bill, colloquially known as the 'Women's Bill', would have allowed for one reserved seat for women in each of the

27. R. Vavatau, personal communication (8 August 2012).

28. Anonymous, personal communication (12 September 2012).

29. G.T. Afamasaga, personal communication (6 September 2012).

30. G.T. Afamasaga, personal communication (6 September 2012); P.V. Annandale, personal communication (10 September 2012); L.F.E. Shon, personal communication (10 August 2012).

31. Papua New Guinea is the largest state in Melanesia, with a population of over 7 million. It gained independence from Australia in 1975. It has a unicameral legislature.

provinces of Papua New Guinea. If introduced before the 2012 election, this would have created 22 reserved seats for women in a Parliament of 133 seats.

Background

In Papua New Guinea, women have never made up more than 2.8 per cent of parliamentary seats, although the number of female candidates contesting elections has risen significantly over time. In the first post-independence election in 1977, 10 women stood as candidates; in the 2012 election, there were 135 women candidates.³²

Following the 2007 general election, advocates for greater women's representation began to push for special measures to increase the number of women in Parliament. First, there was an attempt to create nominated seats. A provision in the Papua New Guinea Constitution provides for the establishment of up to three nominated seats in Parliament: 'The Parliament may, from time to time, by a two-thirds absolute majority vote, appoint a person (other than a member) to be a nominated member of the Parliament'.³³ These seats are not specifically for women, but could in theory be used to increase the parliamentary representation of any societal group. Kidu had attempted to implement this provision to bring in additional women in the previous parliamentary term, but her proposal had been defeated in cabinet.³⁴ Following the 2007 election, she made a second attempt to institute nominated seats. In this case, the prime minister then selected three women nominees following a recruitment process, but the leader of the opposition refused to support the move, and when Parliament voted to confirm the nominations, they were voted down.

While the nominated seats process was ongoing, a proposal for reserved seats was being developed. The legislation advocated by Kidu would amend the Constitution to add special seats for women as a category of parliamentary seats along with open seats, governors' seats and nominated seats.³⁵ It would be accompanied by enabling legislation to institute the reserved seats before the 2012 general election. When the Equality and Participation Bill was first mooted, the prime minister at the time, Sir Michael Somare, was supportive of the legislation.³⁶

The Equality and Participation Bill

The Equality and Participation Bill was tabled in Parliament on 9 September 2011. The debate over reserved seats for women in Papua New Guinea was highly polarised and followed closely by national media. Kidu claims: 'I would say, in the fifteen years I've

32. Isaac Nicholas, 'Gore, a Shining Light for Women', *Post-Courier* (17 July 2012), available at: <http://www.postcourier.com.pg/20120717/news12.htm> (accessed 15 May 2013).

33. Constitution of the Independent State of Papua New Guinea, section 102, available at: http://www.paclii.org/pg/legis/consol_act/cotisopng534/ (accessed 19 April 2014).

34. C. Kidu, personal communication (17 October 2012).

35. In the Papua New Guinea Parliament, open seats are elected from general electorates, and governors' seats are seats occupied by the governors elected in each province. As of the 2012 election, there are 89 open seats and 22 governors' seats. There is also a provision in the constitution for up to three nominated MPs (see earlier).

36. C. Kidu, personal communication (17 October 2012).

been a member, I think it was the most . . . public campaign type of legislation in the whole time'.³⁷ The Equality and Participation Bill was passed by 72 votes to two on 23 November 2011. The Constitution was henceforth amended to include a provision for 22 reserved seats for women.

To implement the law, however, an amendment to the organic law on elections, requiring a two-thirds majority in Parliament, was needed. On 22 February 2012, the Organic Law on National and Local Level Government Elections (Amendment No 2) Bill was debated. The amendment received 58 votes in Parliament, short of the 73 needed for a two-thirds majority. While only one MP voted against the amendment, 21 MPs left the chamber shortly before the vote commenced.³⁸

Despite reserved seats not being in place, the 2012 election still saw a record number of female candidates. Three women were elected to Parliament,³⁹ the highest number of female MPs since the first post-independence election in 1977. Given the highly publicised campaign for reserved seats in the years leading up to the election, it was suggested that the public awareness of women's under-representation raised by the campaign contributed to the success of the three new women parliamentarians. Other factors raised as potentially significant by observers of the election were party support, notably, from the Triumph Heritage Empowerment (THE) Party, which endorsed two of the successful female candidates, and the high profile of the three women in their respective electorates.⁴⁰ After being sworn into Parliament, all three women MPs stated that they would not support a resumed call for reserved seats, arguing that women should compete alongside male candidates in the open and regional seats. One claimed: 'If I can do it others can too'.⁴¹

Some campaigners for reserved seats believe that there is still a chance that they will be implemented in Papua New Guinea.⁴² Kidu, however, believes that there is little hope of advancement without a sitting female MP who is committed to advocating for the reserved seats proposal.⁴³ Alternative methods to increase women's representation have been mooted, including a 10 per cent party candidate quota, which was one of the proposed changes to the Organic Law on the Integrity of Political Parties and Candidates (OLIPPAC).⁴⁴

37. C. Kidu, personal communication (17 October 2012).

38. Jeffrey Elapa, 'Reserved Seats for Women Bill Shelved', *The National* (23 February 2012).

39. Delilah Gore, from the Triumph Heritage Empowerment (THE) Party, elected in the Sohe Open seat in Oro Province; Julie Soso, from the THE Party, elected governor of Eastern Highlands province; and Loujaya Toni, from the Indigenous People's Party, elected in the Lae Open seat.

40. C. Kidu, personal communication (17 October 2012); O. Sepoe, personal communication (13 November 2012).

41. Quoted in Nellie Setepano, 'Women Are Capable', *Post-Courier* (3 December 2012), available at: <http://www.postcourier.com.pg/20120801/news09.htm> (accessed 15 May 2013).

42. O. Sepoe, personal communication (13 November 2012).

43. C. Kidu, personal communication (17 October 2012).

44. *The National*, 'Parties Required to Have Women' (26 June 2013), available at: <http://www.thenational.com.pg/?q=node/51937> (accessed 30 January 2014).

Factors in quota adoption

As outlined, important factors in quota adoption can be grouped into three broad categories: local actors, external actors and structural factors. The influence of local actors differed in the level of involvement of the *women's movement*, with women's groups playing a much larger role in the campaign in Papua New Guinea than in Samoa. In both cases, however, *male political elites* at the highest level were advocating for gender quotas in Parliament. The role of external actors in both campaigns was similar, with *international organisations*, notably, the United Nations (UN), featuring significantly in both campaigns. With regards to structural factors, both countries had conservative *political cultures*, and the 'fit' between *electoral institutions* and quotas may have influenced the type of quota proposed in each country. To explain more fully the divergent outcomes of the quota campaigns in these two countries, a structural factor – *political stability* – is highlighted.

Local actors

One aspect in which the campaigns in Samoa and Papua New Guinea differed was in the role of the *women's movement*, with women activists in Papua New Guinea playing a much greater role than their Samoan counterparts. In Samoa, women's organisations were engaged to an extent in the quota campaign, although women in civil society were discouraged by what they perceived as the government's unwillingness to consult with them over the issue. Concern was expressed that there was no public consultation over the bill prior to its drafting, despite the proposal first being mooted about a year before the bill was drafted.⁴⁵ The lack of consultation meant that while non-governmental actors could and did voice their opinions on the legislation, they lost any influence they may have had over the provisions of the bill.⁴⁶

Non-governmental organisations (NGOs) have been the main advocates for greater women's representation in Samoa in the past. The Samoa Umbrella of Non Government Organisations (SUNGO),⁴⁷ a coalition of over 120 civil society organisations, consulted on the legislation and held a national forum on 1 March 2012 to gather the views of civil society communities. Around 100 people attended the forum, which resulted in a submission that SUNGO presented to Parliament. The submission stated that an 'overwhelming majority' of forum participants agreed with the intent of the legislation to increase the number of women in Parliament, but expressed concern over the design of the proposed quota. A separate women's electoral roll to elect five female parliamentarians was suggested as an alternative option, although the submission did not provide details on how the separate roll would be implemented.⁴⁸

45. P.V. Annandale, personal communication (10 September 2012).

46. Anonymous, personal communication (5 September 2012).

47. Although SUNGO is an umbrella group comprising of NGOs that deal with a broad range of issues, not always related to gender, it is a woman-led organisation. The chief executive officer (CEO) of SUNGO is a woman, as are its president and vice-president.

48. SUNGO, *Submission on Constitutional Amendment* (Apia: SUNGO, 2012), p. 2.

The extent and nature of grassroots involvement in the gender quota campaign is contested. Some claim that it was a grassroots movement, 'though the Government has made that doorway, they just turned the knob to the door and we push'.⁴⁹ It is argued that women from the grassroots were active participants in the forums on the issue. Others, however, maintain that the campaign could not be characterised as grassroots, and that village-based women had little influence on the campaign.⁵⁰

In contrast to the Samoan campaign, the push for a gender quota in Papua New Guinea came primarily from women's groups. The sponsor of the proposed Women's Bill was Kidu, the only female MP at the time the bill was proposed. Kidu, however, stresses that she was a 'political conduit' and that the drive for reserved seats came from outside of Parliament,⁵¹ particularly from the National Council of Women (NCW) and other women's organisations. The NCW and the Women in Politics group were heavily involved in promoting reserved seats, and established a roadshow that travelled through the four regions of Papua New Guinea to promote reserved seats for women. The NCW had significant organisational capacity throughout the country, with a network of provincial councils that was utilised extensively during the reserved seats campaign.⁵² While activists claimed that attempts were made to raise awareness of the issue outside the urban centres of each province, funding restrictions and geographical barriers made this difficult:

we tried to reach out to some villages . . . but not as extensively as we [might have], not in the geographical terrain in PNG [Papua New Guinea]. You probably need helicopters to go out to the most remote villages tucked away behind these big mountain ranges so [there were] those practical difficulties.⁵³

Rural-based women in Papua New Guinea also have high rates of illiteracy, which was an added barrier to the dissemination of information about the reserved seats. The lack of engagement with rural-based women gave rise to criticism that the campaign was driven by elite, urban women. Others argued that this was not the case as it was largely driven by the women's movement: 'In this country, [the] national women's movement is not the elite women. It's really the ordinary women who are in it . . . it is really a grassroots women's thing'.⁵⁴ Other women claimed that while the women's movement leaders claim otherwise, 'they're not really grassroots. They are quite prominent, they're educated women'.⁵⁵ While some interviewees conceded that elite women were driving the campaign, they argued that this was necessary to push the issue forward: 'if the elite women don't do anything, then who will do it? Then will it ever happen?'⁵⁶

49. R. Vavatau, personal communication (8 August 2012).

50. L.F.E. Shon, personal communication (10 August 2012); Anonymous, personal communication (2012).

51. C. Kidu, personal communication (17 October 2012).

52. L. Tua, personal communication (6 September 2013).

53. O. Sepoe, personal communication (13 November 2012).

54. Anonymous, personal communication (5 September 2013).

55. Anonymous, personal communication (3 September 2013).

56. O. Sepoe, personal communication (13 November 2012).

While the women's movement was less prominent in the Samoa campaign than in the Papua New Guinea campaign, both campaigns had high-level *male political elites* advocating for gender quotas from inside Parliament. In Samoa, the prime minister has been the primary advocate for the proposed gender quota. Within the Samoan government, he was the initial proponent of the legislation. Given that his party holds a two-thirds majority in the Samoan Parliament, his support has been crucial to the success of the quota campaign.

Female MPs have taken a less prominent role in the Samoan campaign. There are two female MPs in the current term, both members of the governing Human Rights Protection Party (HRPP). While both MPs have spoken in support of the legislation in Parliament and in the media, they have largely assumed a background role in the quota debate. Fiame Naomi Mata'afa, the current minister of justice, explains:

there's also a lot of room for misunderstanding I think, being a woman and a politician, that could be interpreted as a very sort of a personal thing. And I think it's very important that men are seen to be active.⁵⁷

Male politicians from the opposition party, Tautua Samoa, were initially opposed to the legislation, claiming that although they supported increased women's representation, they disagreed with the proposed method.⁵⁸ At the third reading of the bill, however, all Tautua Samoa MPs who were present voted for the quota. Electoral considerations figured strongly in the decision to change their vote: 'we are a political party, and we don't want the voters, particularly the women, saying "Tautua doesn't support us" . . . so we voted for it. But we still feel it's not the right way to do it'.⁵⁹

In Papua New Guinea, male politicians were divided over the Women's Bill. Both Somare, who was prime minister when the legislation was first mooted, and his successor, Peter O'Neill, publicly stated their support for the Women's Bill. Kidu credits Somare as a firm supporter of greater women's representation,⁶⁰ while O'Neill claimed that greater women's representation would improve governance in Papua New Guinea: 'Only with the input of women will PNG go on and thrive to become a great nation'.⁶¹ The support of both Somare and O'Neill, however, did not guarantee the success of the reserved seats legislation:

we had assurance from the prime minister but he is just one person . . . it meant that he had to convince those others who were with him to vote for what he believed in. And not everybody was with him when it came to the final casting of the votes.⁶²

Other prominent male politicians were also outspoken in their support for reserved seats, including Puka Temu, who was deputy prime minister in the Somare

57. F.N. Mata'afa, personal communication (28 August 2012).

58. Anonymous, personal communication (28 August 2012).

59. Anonymous, personal communication (5 November 2013).

60. C. Kidu, personal communication (17 October 2012).

61. Quoted in Eoin Blackwell, 'Activists Welcome PNG's Women's Bill', *Sydney Morning Herald* (23 November 2011), available at: <http://news.smh.com.au/breaking-news-world/activists-welcome-png-womens-bill-20111123-1nue2.html> (accessed 15 May 2013).

62. Anonymous, personal communication (5 September 2013).

administration,⁶³ and Powes Parkop, governor of the National Capital District.⁶⁴ There were MPs, however, who were strongly opposed to the legislation, including some provincial governors, who raised concerns that the reserved seats, which would be organised by provincial boundaries, would affect their roles.⁶⁵

External actors

In both cases, *international organisations* played a role, with the proposed quotas gaining support from international actors. In Samoa, the UN provided funding and support for public discussions on the legislation. The UN also sent a technical advisor on special temporary measures to Samoa after the legislation was announced. She met with civil society leaders, although the involvement of the UN in this way was not universally welcomed:

The UN technical advisor came and said, you know, just be happy that there's political will behind the government's bill, to support it, I said that's not my point, so there we have a technical advisor, who is very, to me, like imposing her ideas . . . [they] want a tick in the box, we want something that is progressive.⁶⁶

In Papua New Guinea, advocates described the reserved seats campaign as a partnership between local actors and development partners,⁶⁷ including the UN Development Programme (UNDP), UN Women and the Australian Agency for International Development (AusAID).⁶⁸ One interviewee, who worked for the UN in Papua New Guinea during the campaign, estimated that the funds spent by these organisations on the quota campaign came to over US\$800,000.⁶⁹

Donors played an important role in the campaign, through providing significant technical and financial support. The UN offices in Papua New Guinea provided assistance to the campaign in the form of advocacy skills training and campaign materials.⁷⁰ UN Women ran media campaigns in support of the reserved seats, with print media, radio and television advertisements.⁷¹ The UNDP's role included support in drafting the Women's Bill, lobbying MPs, gender-sensitising projects and funding for projects, including a billboard advocating for reserved seats that was placed in a prominent position on the road leading to Parliament House.⁷² AusAID also provided technical and funding assistance, often channelling funds through the UNDP.⁷³

63. Anonymous, personal communication (5 September 2013).

64. P. Kassman, personal communication (6 September 2013).

65. C. Kidu, personal communication (17 October 2012).

66. Anonymous, personal communication (2012).

67. O. Sepoe, personal communication (13 November 2012).

68. AusAID was integrated into the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade in 2013.

69. Anonymous, personal communication (5 September 2013).

70. L. Tua, personal communication (6 September 2013).

71. J. Bukikun, personal communication (3 September 2013).

72. Anonymous, personal communication (20 September 2013).

73. Anonymous, personal communication (5 September 2013).

There were suggestions in both cases that international organisations and donor agencies had applied considerable pressure on the national governments to institute quotas. Tautua Samoa MP Levaopolo Talatonu argued that the UN was heavily involved in the Samoan campaign:

the United Nations is behind the push, and my concern is that if it's left unopposed, it will lead to Samoa's traditional form of government becoming lost eventually. It's an indication we're going backwards to the days before Samoa became independent . . . it's the UN which is calling the shots and the HRPP is sucking up to them.⁷⁴

In Papua New Guinea, too, gender advocates were accused of promoting the UN's agenda. Opponents claimed that the reserved seats were a foreign idea that would be imposed on Papua New Guinea. Kidu recounts being accused by a fellow MP of being 'a pawn of AusAID'. She counters that, in fact, Papua New Guinean women 'have been pushing this thing for many, many, many years, twenty years', and that development agencies only assisted financially as the government could not provide funds for the campaign.⁷⁵ Papua New Guineans involved in the women's movement strongly refuted the idea that the reserved seats campaign was primarily driven by donors.⁷⁶

No independent state in the Pacific region had adopted a gender quota before the Samoa and Papua New Guinea campaigns, thus limiting the opportunities for the *regional diffusion* of quotas. The extent to which women's activist networks coordinate and influence other quota campaigns in the Pacific region is hard to determine. Coordination between women's groups in the Pacific is limited by the geographic spread of the region, a lack of funding and language barriers.

Quotas are used at sub-national level in the Pacific region, with the parity law mandating equal representation between genders on party lists in the French Pacific territories, and three reserved seats for women in the legislature of the Autonomous Region of Bougainville. The quota used in the French territories was not referenced by campaigners in Samoa and Papua New Guinea. The reserved seats in Bougainville were referred to in the Samoan campaign, but in a negative manner. Supporters of the proposed quota argued that it was superior to a system like that in Bougainville, claiming that this kind of system led to the reserved seats being considered 'women's seats' and the general seats, therefore, men's seats.⁷⁷ As Bougainville is a region of Papua New Guinea, lawmakers were undoubtedly aware of the region's reserved seat system, although it is unclear whether that was a significant influence on the Papua New Guinea campaign. Supporters of the campaign argued that a reserved seat system was the only logical choice for Papua New Guinea: 'It was the only thing that seemed possible, to get a reasonable number of women on the floor.'⁷⁸

74. Quoted in Aigaletaule'ale'a Tauafiafi, 'Women Bill Flawed?', *Sunday Samoan* (5 February 2012), pp. 1–2, 15.

75. C. Kidu, personal communication (17 October 2012).

76. S. Kakas, personal communication (3 September 2013); P. Kassman, personal communication (6 September 2013).

77. Tauafiafi, 'Women Bill Flawed?', pp. 1–2, 15.

78. C. Kidu, personal communication (17 October 2012).

Structural factors

Conservative *political cultures* are a feature of politics in most Pacific Islands states and could contribute to lower levels of women's representation and a resistance to measures to increase the number of women in Parliament.⁷⁹ In the Pacific region, the strict enforcement of gender roles in the colonial era meant that in communities where women previously had significant input into decision-making, they were then relegated to the domestic sphere; in others, colonial and Church administrations replaced one set of customs that restricted women's access to the public sphere with another.⁸⁰ Huffer has argued that it is not, in fact, culture and custom, but rather their interpretation by those in favour of the status quo, that results in women's political under-representation.⁸¹

During the debate over gender quotas in both Papua New Guinea and Samoa, culture was invoked by opponents of the quotas. In Samoa, one of the most common arguments against instituting a quota was that it was a foreign idea and not compatible with Samoan culture. Opponents suggested that Samoan society was not ready to elect more female representatives.⁸² They emphasised the high status of women in traditional society,⁸³ and argued that Samoan women themselves were not prepared to put themselves forward as candidates.⁸⁴ Others contended that while some cultural traditions may be discriminatory, the proposed quota was not an appropriate solution:

there are some cultural practices that may be counterproductive to the advancement of women's development. But you have to use culturally acceptable ways to address those kinds of things. It's very difficult to bring in . . . an idea or a way from overseas, which works overseas, and apply to here and hope and believe that it will work. Because most likely it won't.⁸⁵

In Papua New Guinea, culture was at the heart of many objections to the Women's Bill. Kidu recounts that 'at grassroots level, many people would have seen it as pushing the boundaries of culture. And so they would have been quite ambivalent about it'.⁸⁶

79. Elise Huffer, 'Desk Review of the Factors Which Enable and Constrain the Advancement of Women's Political Representation in Forum Island Countries', in Research to Advance Women's Political Representation in Forum Island Countries (ed.), *A Woman's Place is in the House – the House of Parliament* (Suva: Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat, 2006), p. 34.

80. Jean Drage, 'The Exception, Not the Rule: A Comparative Analysis of Women's Political Activity in Pacific Island Countries', *Pacific Studies*, Vol. 18, No. 4 (1995), p. 71; Huffer, 'Desk Review of the Factors Which Enable and Constrain the Advancement of Women's Political Representation in Forum Island Countries', p. 33.

81. Huffer, 'Desk Review of the Factors Which Enable and Constrain the Advancement of Women's Political Representation in Forum Island Countries', p. 18.

82. Mata'afa Keni Lesa, 'Change Our Mindsets, Not the Constitution', *Samoa Observer* (13 January 2012), p. 12.

83. Niccola Hazelman-Siona, 'Brownie Points', *Samoa Observer* (13 January 2012), p. 3.

84. Lesa, 'Change Our Mindsets, Not the Constitution', p. 12.

85. L.F.E. Shon, personal communication (10 August 2012).

86. C. Kidu, personal communication (17 October 2012).

Concerns were raised that the country was not ready for greater women's representation. Kidu said that many MPs found her presence tolerable because she was Australian-born, but were opposed to representation for Papua New Guinean women: 'many of my colleagues would say things like "Oh we don't mind you being here but we don't want our women in here"'.⁸⁷ Bob Danaya, the governor of Western Province in Papua New Guinea, claimed in a speech in Parliament against the Women's Bill that the role of women was not to enter politics:

In culture men are warriors. They go and protect women. We go and die for woman [sic] Mr Speaker – not a woman going to the war. No, we go and fight! And we support them and provide what they need also at the same time.⁸⁸

Kidu rejected this argument, saying: 'I don't find it acceptable to say that the women's role is in the home. I don't want my daughters and my grand-daughters confined to that'.⁸⁹

Kidu explained that some of the opposition to quotas also stemmed from the belief that they were incompatible with democracy:

it's not only pushing cultural boundaries but . . . people's perception of what democracy is, also. Often people don't understand there are many, many forms of democracy. And they've had this fixed idea of the elections and how they should be run and, because that's all they've known since independence . . . something different is . . . seen as favouring one segment of the population, when that segment has no voice anyway.⁹⁰

She stressed the connection between equal representation and representative democracy: 'you can't call it a representative democracy when half the population are not represented, it's as simple as that'.⁹¹ In Samoa, too, opponents of the quota claimed that it was not democratic and that it would unfairly penalise male candidates.⁹²

The *electoral institutions* of each country may have affected the types of quota proposed. Samoa primarily uses a first-past-the-post (FPP) voting system, although in certain electorates, a block vote (BV) system is used as two MPs are elected. The proposed quota legislation would operate under a 'best loser' system. The quota is designed so that if fewer than five women are elected in a general election, additional women will enter Parliament. If five or more women won seats in the general election, there would be no additional seats.

The voting system used in Papua New Guinea is limited preferential voting (LPV). It was changed from FPP ahead of the 2007 general election. Under the LPV system, voters

87. C. Kidu, personal communication (17 October 2012).

88. Quoted in Liam Fox, 'PNG Passes Historic Women's Rights Bill', *AM*, Australian Broadcasting Commission (24 November 2011), available at: <http://www.abc.net.au/am/content/2011/s3374727.htm> (accessed 15 May 2013).

89. Quoted in Fox, 'PNG Passes Historic Women's Rights Bill'.

90. C. Kidu, personal communication (17 October 2012).

91. C. Kidu, personal communication (17 October 2012).

92. Charlina Tone, 'PM Defends Women Bill', *Samoa Observer* (8 February 2012), pp. 1, 3.

must vote for three candidates who are ranked according to preference. This change was expected to help female candidates,⁹³ although no new women MPs were elected in 2007. Following this election, the reserved seat legislation was proposed. The Papua New Guinean proposal was for one reserved seat per province. While there was debate over whether to specify a set number of reserved seats in the legislation, the decision was ultimately made to tie the number of reserved seats to the number of provinces, which was previously 20 but increased to 22 in 2012.⁹⁴ As the electoral boundaries for provincial representation were already in place for the election of governors' seats, tying the reserved seats to the number of provinces was considered a practical move.⁹⁵ The reserved seats would have increased the size of Parliament to 133 seats after the 2012 election, with 89 general electorate seats, 22 governors' seats and 22 reserved seats for women.

The effect on parliamentary politics of the two quota proposals could have been quite different. In Papua New Guinea, the establishment of 22 reserved seats for women would have ensured a minimum of 16.5 per cent female representation in Parliament, a huge increase from the current 2.7 per cent. In contrast, the Samoan proposal would have a smaller impact on the gender make-up of Parliament, as five women would represent between 9.3 per cent and 10.2 per cent of MPs, depending upon how many additional members were required to meet the quota. Both of these quotas, however, are relatively low compared to quota requirements in other countries. While legal quotas range from 5 per cent to 50 per cent, a quota of around 30 per cent is most common.⁹⁶

Political stability as a key factor

In both Samoa and Papua New Guinea, campaigners for gender quotas had support from male political elites at the highest level. The difference lies in how male political elites in Papua New Guinea were unable, or unwilling, to translate their support of reserved seats into a successful parliamentary vote for the enabling legislation to become law. In this section, the political contexts of each quota campaign are examined, and *political stability* is proposed as a determining factor in the quota outcomes of these two cases.

Political stability is not always seen as a possible indicator of success for gender quota campaigns. Some scholars point to periods of political instability, or significant political change, as constituting a *window of opportunity* during which the adoption of a gender quota is more likely. In a period of political transition or instability, quotas for women can be framed as a positive development, one that would have a transformative influence

93. Nicole Haley and Ray Anere, *The 2007 Papua New Guinea National General Election Domestic Observation Report*, The National Research Institute Special Publication No. 52 (Port Moresby: National Research Institute, 2009), p. 61; C. Kidu, personal communication (17 October 2012).

94. E. Kwa, personal communication (20 September 2013).

95. C. Kidu, personal communication (17 October 2012).

96. Drude Dahlerup and Lenita Friedenvall, 'Quotas as a "Fast Track" to Equal Representation for Women', *International Feminist Journal of Politics*, Vol. 7, No. 1 (2005), p. 38.

on democracy.⁹⁷ Conversely, in the cases of Samoa and Papua New Guinea, political stability was a positive factor in quota adoption. While both countries have been continuously democratic since they won independence, in 1962 and 1975, respectively, Samoa has a high level of political stability, while Papua New Guinea is relatively unstable.

Samoa is an outlier in the Pacific Islands region in terms of political stability.⁹⁸ The HRPP, Samoa's first political party, was formed in 1979 and it has been in power since 1982, save for a period in opposition from 1985 to 1988. The HRPP currently hold a two-thirds majority in Parliament, with 37 seats. The only other party officially registered at present is Tautua Samoa, which was formed in 2008. The 12 non-government MPs are all aligned with Tautua Samoa.

Prime Minister Tuilaepa has held the post since 1998, making him the longest-standing current political leader in the Pacific Islands region. He has presided over several controversial political changes. In 2009, Samoan drivers shifted from the right-hand side of the road to the left-hand side. The change was intended to make cars cheaper, as they could be imported from New Zealand, Australia and Japan instead of the USA. Prior to the change, there was strong opposition, including an almost 20,000-strong march in central Apia in April 2008, and a legal challenge in the Supreme Court. Then, in 2011, Samoa moved across the international date line from Universal Time Coordinated (UTC) -11 to UTC +13. In practical terms, the move meant that Samoa jumped from 29 December 2011 to 31 December 2011. This change was intended to improve business connections with Australia and New Zealand, countries that had previously been approximately a day ahead of Samoa. Both moves were initially divisive, but neither affected Tuilaepa's long-term popularity significantly. He has established control of both his party and Parliament, even following controversial law changes, to the extent that a piece of legislation that he has personally advocated for, such as the gender quota bill, is considered a 'fait accompli'.⁹⁹

Tuilaepa's personal political dominance has allowed him to drive the gender quota bill forward even though his previous position was against the use of quotas. A former senior public servant claimed:

the current prime minister used to say . . . why 30 per cent when you have a 100 per cent? And so in all of our international meetings, that was the position of the government of Samoa . . . if we want equality, in terms of representation, you compete on the same level. No special provisions, because the opportunities are the same.¹⁰⁰

97. Jill Lovecy, "'Citoyennes à part entière'? The Constitutionalization of Gendered Citizenship in France and the Parity Reforms of 1999–2000", *Government and Opposition*, Vol. 35, No. 4 (2000), pp. 439–462.

98. See Iati Iati, 'Samoa's Price for 25 Years of Political Stability', *The Journal of Pacific History*, Vol. 48, No. 4 (2013), pp. 443–463.

99. P.V. Annandale, personal communication (10 September 2012).

100. L.F.E. Shon, personal communication (10 August 2012).

The first public indication that this position had changed was the announcement of quota legislation in October 2011. Opponents of the legislation claimed that it was an attempt to bolster goodwill from the UN in relation to the country's upcoming transition from least-developed country status to developing-country status, with the consequent reduction in aid.¹⁰¹ Whatever the reason for the policy shift, Tuilaepa's strong personal support and the large parliamentary majority of the HRPP ensured that the quota was introduced.

In contrast to Samoa's relative political stability, the post-independence political history of Papua New Guinea has been characterised by weak political parties and frequent changes of government. The OLIPPAC, introduced in 2001, was intended to encourage stability and promote strong parties, but its provisions generally proved difficult to enforce.¹⁰² Another law, aimed at slowing the rate of administration changes, protected governments from votes of no confidence for 18 months following a general election,¹⁰³ and a year preceding a general election.¹⁰⁴ Somare, who had been prime minister twice before, led the first government to maintain power through a full parliamentary term from 2002 to 2007. He again became prime minister following the 2007 election.

Papua New Guinea has a multiparty political system, and the number of parties has proliferated in recent years. While 10 or fewer parties contested national elections before 2002, in that year, 43 parties were registered to contest the election. In 2007, the number of registered parties was 34. In addition, a large number of independent candidates stand for Parliament, with independents making up over half the total candidates in the 2007 election. Following the election, 23 parties won at least one seat. Twenty independent candidates also won seats, although most aligned themselves with a political party soon after the election.¹⁰⁵

The passage of the Equality and Participation Bill was affected by a constitutional crisis beginning in 2011.¹⁰⁶ In April, Somare had travelled to Singapore for medical treatment. When he had not returned by August, a motion of no confidence was passed in Parliament and O'Neill was appointed prime minister by the governor-general. Somare subsequently returned to Papua New Guinea and challenged O'Neill's appointment in

-
101. Savea Sano Malifa, 'Another Ludicrous Brainstorm?', *Sunday Samoan* (5 February 2012), p. 12.
 102. Alphonse Gelu, 'Papua New Guinea', in Stephen Levine (ed.), *Pacific Ways: Government and Politics in the Pacific Islands* (Wellington: Victoria University Press, 2009), p. 184.
 103. This has since been extended to 30 months.
 104. Jon Fraenkel, 'Party-Hopping Laws in the Southern Hemisphere', *Political Science*, Vol. 64, No. 2 (2012), pp. 106–120.
 105. Alphonse Gelu, 'Political Parties and the 2007 National Election: Alignment to Reform?', in R.J. May, Ray Anere, Nicole Haley and Katherine Wheen (eds), *Election 2007: The Shift to Limited Preferential Voting in Papua New Guinea* (Port Moresby and Canberra: National Research Institute and State Society and Governance in Melanesia, 2011), pp. 113–128.
 106. See Ron May, 'Papua New Guinea's "Political Coup": The Ousting of Sir Michael Somare', *State, Society and Governance in Melanesia Program Briefing Note 1/2011* (Canberra: The Australian National University, 2011).

the Supreme Court. In December, the Court, in a three to two ruling, declared the appointment unconstitutional and called for Somare to be reappointed. Following the Supreme Court's ruling, however, O'Neill was re-elected as prime minister by the house, and the speaker of the house announced that he would only recognise a government led by O'Neill. Both Somare and O'Neill appointed separate cabinets and police commissioners. In this context, the O'Neill government took on the 'Women's Bill', developed by Kidu while she was a cabinet minister in the Somare government.

The constitutional amendment to allow for reserved seats was eventually passed under the O'Neill government at a time when its sponsor, Kidu, was leader of the opposition. To institute reserved seats, however, enabling legislation was needed, which, as a change to the electoral law, would require a two-thirds majority. This piece of legislation – the Organic Law on National and Local Level Government Elections (Amendment No 2) Bill – was debated in early 2012. The O'Neill government allowed MPs aligned to them a conscience vote, despite government coalition MPs being bound to vote for other amendments to the electoral law, including one to increase the number of governors' seats in Parliament.

This treatment of the reserved seats amendment by the O'Neill administration led to accusations that the quota had been supported merely as a token gesture, and that the government had no intention of establishing the reserved seats.¹⁰⁷ The ongoing constitutional crisis also hindered the potential passage of the enabling legislation, as MPs loyal to Somare were boycotting parliamentary sittings at the time that it was debated, thus reducing the number of potential votes, as one advocate of the reserved seats explained:

it all happened because of the impasse . . . like there was two governments, right? Two of everything, and so people are not on the floor of Parliament in full numbers in order to have the voting take place. That was our disaster.¹⁰⁸

While O'Neill had spoken publicly in support of reserved seats for women, allowing a conscience vote on the enabling legislation was considered by some activists to be evidence that his support was not genuine.¹⁰⁹ A binding vote would have ensured that reserved seats were created; instead, with a conscience vote, the enabling legislation was not adopted. It could also have been a compromise that O'Neill had to make to the various parties and independent MPs that made up his governing coalition.

Ultimately, the political environment in which the Women's Bill and subsequent enabling legislation were debated did not prove conducive to the progress of the reserved seats campaign. The political instability of Papua New Guinea, characterised by the 2011–2012 constitutional crisis, may have appeared to offer a *window of opportunity* for the quota legislation, with both Somare and O'Neill publicly supporting the Women's Bill. As the crisis continued, however, MPs loyal to Somare stayed away from

107. Anonymous, personal communication (2012).

108. J. Sape, personal communication (4 September 2013).

109. Anonymous, personal communication (2012).

Parliament and the MPs of O'Neill's coalition, made up of various parties and independent MPs, were offered a conscience vote on the enabling legislation.

Conclusion

This article has explored the factors that contribute to the success or failure of quota campaigns through an analysis of two case studies from the Pacific Islands region: Samoa and Papua New Guinea. The local, external and structural factors commonly found in the gender quota literature can help to explain the outcomes of the gender quota campaigns in these two countries. In this article, I highlighted one structural factor – political stability – as fundamental to the divergent outcomes of the two campaigns. While both campaigns had the support of male political leaders, the relatively stable nature of Samoan politics ensured that this support would translate into the successful passage of quota legislation. Conversely, the fractured nature of parliamentary politics in Papua New Guinea meant that the support of successive prime ministers could not guarantee the implementation of the constitutional amendment enabling reserved seats. Thus, the quota campaigns in Samoa and Papua New Guinea show that political stability can be a positive factor in explaining quota adoption.

Samoa's 10 per cent quota will be implemented in the 2016 general election. It will become the first independent Pacific Islands state to introduce a parliamentary gender quota, and the first example of a successful campaign for a national-level quota in the Pacific. It is important, however, to consider how we define an unsuccessful campaign. While the 22 reserved seats were not established in Papua New Guinea for the 2012 election, the Women's Bill did succeed in amending the Constitution to provide for reserved seats for women, so it is possible that the provision will be implemented in the future. Furthermore, the 2012 election proved to be a significant one for women. Three women were elected to Parliament, the highest number of female MPs since the 1977 election. It is hard to gauge the wider impact of the gender quota campaign in Papua New Guinea, but the awareness raised by the campaign about the issue of women's political under-representation, and the public debate on the merits of increasing the number of women in Parliament sparked by the campaign, could have had a positive effect on women's representation even without reserved seats for women in place.

Acknowledgements

An earlier version of this article was presented at the 'Electoral Quotas and Political Representation: Comparative Perspectives' workshop at the European Consortium for Political Research (ECPR) Joint Sessions, Johannes Gutenberg University, Mainz, 11–16 March 2013. The author would like to acknowledge the convenors and participants of this workshop for their comments.

Author biography

Kerryn Baker is a PhD Scholar in the State Society and Governance in Melanesia Program at the Australian National University.