**CSW66 Webinar Transcript – Accelerating Women’s Economic Empowerment; the Role of Gender-sensitive Poverty Data**

**Kim Robertson:** Very warm greetings to you all, wherever you are and wherever you are joining us from. As your moderator, I'm delighted to welcome you all to the CSW66 side event, Accelerating Women's Economic Empowerment: The Role of Gender-Sensitive Poverty Data. I am Kim Robertson and I've worked for the Pacific Community for 10 years on Pacific data, gender data and statistics, working closely with government gender statistics planning offices to develop and strengthen the production and dissemination of high quality gender data and statistics, in the context of national gender equality policies, sustainable development plans, official reporting, statistical strategies and so on. I bring you warm Pacific greetings from Vanuatu, acknowledging the custom land owners, the people of Ifira past present and future and paramount chief Teriki Paunimanu Mantoi Kalsakau III. I encourage all of you joining us for this panel to please add your names, organisations and the land you are joining from. Today, our panellists will explore different aspects of the interrelated systemic barriers that constrain women's economic empowerment and pathways to empowerment at different geographic levels. And the challenges that the lack of disaggregated data pose for seeing them prioritising and focusing action to tackle such barriers. The session will consider the data ecosystem globally and the broader Asia region in the Pacific and in the Solomon Islands, reflecting on the role of gender sensitive data to enable and accelerate gender responsive action on poverty and inequality. It is my pleasure to introduce our panel of experts for today's Q and A Joanne, Jo, Crawford is our first speaker. She's a special advisor at Equality Insights, a flagship programme of the International Women's Development Agency, IWDA, that seeks to redefine how poverty is understood and measured to inspire social change and support of gender equality. Jo has been involved with every stage of the measure's development since 2008. Her working life is centred on progressing positive change through research, public policy and advocacy, including a decade working for the Australian government on gender equality, international relations and development. And she has been officially recognised for her work. She has worked with IWDA for some two decades in total in governance and organisational roles, welcome Jo. Chris Ryan has had nearly 30 years experience working in the field of statistics, including 19 years in the Pacific with both the Pacific Community and now ESCAP's Pacific Office. His current job activities include supporting Pacific island countries with meeting the 2030 agenda reporting requirements, including through the development of national indicator frameworks. He served as a member of the Global Technical Advisory Group supporting IWDA's development of Equality Insights Rapid - welcome Chris. Vaela Falefehi Ngai is director Women's Development Division for the Solomon Islands government. She graduated with a Bachelor of Education in 2006 from the University of the South Pacific and completed a postgraduate certificate in gender studies in 2018, she began her career as a special needs teacher with the NGO, Disability Support Centre. She joined the Ministry of Women, Youth, Children and Family Affairs in 2010 as Women's Development Officer providing oversight of women's income generating projects from 2012 to 2020, she served as gender equality and women's development policy coordinator. And in late 2020, she took up her current role, which includes ensuring the implementation monitoring and reporting of the government's international, regional and national commitments related to gender and woman issues, gender mainstreaming, and supporting relevant research reviews, evaluations and data collection Vaela also contributed as a member of the Global Technical Advisory Group for Equality Insights Rapid - welcome Falefehi Ngai. Our other speaker from the Solomon Islands is Ruth Maetala, the founder and director of Dignity Pasifik, a native Solomon Islander, she loves God and she loves people. Ruth is a social anthropologist and works in the area of gender and development. She has more than 20 years experience working with women in the Solomon Islands and the Pacific region. Ruth is an entrepreneur and founded the research business Dignity Pasifik, which we will hear more about shortly. She has excellent local knowledge and an established network in the Solomon Islands, Ruth enjoys writing and reading inspirational literature. She's married with five children and one granddaughter. Finally, some general administration details, all side events are fully virtual. So I encourage you all to enter your questions, comments, reflections in the chat box as they come to you and panellists will respond to these at the end of the session and the general question and answer. If you have a question for a specific panel member, please put their name in the question. And with the Zoom Fairies from IWDA, I will try to keep everyone to time. So we have that time at the end to answer your questions. So that's the introduction over we're now beginning the session proper. And I would like to move on to our first panel member, Jo, from Equality Insights. Jo has been closely involved with the groundbreaking work to develop an individual level, gender-sensitive measure of multidimensional poverty and inequality and associated methodology and data collection tools that overcome the key limitations of household level measurement. And she's going to unpack some of these challenges and the work that's been happening for high quality gender data and statistics on women's economic empowerment and poverty and the inequality inside households. Jo, can you please share the 'herstory' of Equality Insights and challenges to women's economic pathways to empowerment and the solutions that you have developed. Jo, the floor is yours.

**Jo Crawford:** Thanks so much, Kim and good morning all, thank you so much for joining us today. My job really is a bit of scene setting to frame some of the issues that other panellists will further explore. And if I could ask my colleagues at IWDA to share the screen, that would be great, thank you. And if we could move on to slide three, thank you very much. So I will set the scene and other panellists will pick up some more details. So in my contribution this morning, I want to do four main things. I want to outline why strengthening economic pathways to empowerment needs a focus on systems, how data, both, what is collected and not collected makes it more difficult to see and address the barriers embedded in systems. What we can do to improve outcomes by improving data and the potential in particular of gender-sensitive measurement of multidimensional poverty and inequality to reveal the practical and interrelated barriers to economic empowerment experienced by different groups to inform change. So women's economic empowerment initiatives, sorry, next slide, please. Women's economic empowerment initiatives often focus on strengthening the capacities and opportunities of individual women. Could we, thank you of individual women and supporting individuals matters, providing training and mentoring, providing access as to grants or concessional finance to help move a business to the next level, no question. But many of the barriers that women face a systemic and structural rooted in patriarchal norms and kept in place by economic and social systems that reflect and perpetuate a long history of gendered discrimination and divisions of labour, these barriers shape & constrain options and opportunities. The data we routinely collect should help us see that, in particular, it should help us focus on those who are most disadvantaged, otherwise improving economic opportunities, risks addressing some inequalities while widening others. Systemic change includes measuring what matters for our understanding gendered poverty and inequalities to make visible the circumstances of diverse women's lives and enable gender-informed and responsive, targeted action. And shifting power by putting more and better gender data in the hands of gender equality advocates and women's rights organisations, so they can progress change. Next slide, please. In the context of competing priorities and resource constraints facing countries, lack of disaggregated data that helps to reveal the multiple and specific barriers facing diverse women and how these vary just makes it more difficult for makers and advocates alike to win support for targeted action on the systemic barriers that reproduce poverty and inequality, such barriers are often unseen or underappreciated by those who don't experience them. Without evidence of the scope and scale of challenges. It's much more difficult to prioritise and resource action on gendered barriers. This is a particular issue in the Pacific where gender data is significantly missing, especially in terms of recency and Chris and Kim will both say more on this. Women's political underrepresenation in the region contributes to the slowness of systematically excluding particular lived experiences from decision making about priorities and resourcing. This lack of data has costs for individuals, communities, economies and societies next slide, please. One of the more significant and problematic gaps relates to data on poverty and inequality. We know COVID-19 has led to the first rise in extreme poverty in a generation, but there's much that we don't know about the people affected. Most global estimates of poverty are based on household surveys of income and expenditure where one individual in the household, often a male, head of household is asked questions about the circumstances of their household. Household level measurement limits our ability to accurately present statistics by gender, age, disability status, or any other individual characteristic. In addition, household level measurement makes assumptions that we know are flawed: that everyone in the hold is equally poor or not poor, that all members of the household experience the same type and level of deprivation across their lives. For example, in levels of education, their ability to undertake paid work, to improve their economic circumstances. It also assumes that household resources are shared equally among household members. And we know that that's not true or at least not always true. And that poverty will affect - it also assumes that poverty will affect everyone living in the house in the same way, regardless of gender or other characteristics that differ between members of the same household. We need data that helps to reveal these differences rather than hide the circumstances of diverse women and the barriers that they face. Next slide, please. Measuring at an individual level is the foundation for disaggregation by gender, age, disability and other factors so that we can reveal who experiences poverty in what ways. You see here, the dimensions that are measured by Equality Insights, it uses a purpose built survey, sorry to close gender data gaps about poverty and inequality. So routine data reveals rather than hides who experiences it. We need to measure poverty and inequality differently. This requires an alternative to household level measurement. This is what Equality Insights provides. Individual level gender-sensitive data, about 15 dimensions of life collected from all adults in a sample household. To help realise the core for gender and age disaggregated data on poverty made in the Beijing platform for action in 1995. Equality Insights is the result of 14 years of development and refinement by a series of multi-stakeholder partnerships and with support and championing from the Australian government. It collects data on food, water, shelter, health, education, energy, sanitation, relationships, clothing, safety, family planning, environment, voice, time use and work. It also collects data on assets as a proxy for financial circumstances, so we can assess where multidimensional deprivation and financial deprivation are related and where they're not, next slide please. The individual level measurement provides the foundation for disaggregation by gender, age, disability, and other factors, which helps to reveal rather than hide, who experiences poverty in what ways. Equality Insights uses a purpose built survey, grounded in participatory research where people with lived experience of poverty told us what mattered most and what needed to change for them if they were to move out of poverty. Every adult within a selected household is sampled, so we move beyond the assumptions that everyone experiences the same types and levels of deprivation in a household. And we can also get insight into the estimated 1/3 of global poverty, and inequality that sits inside households. Other key features are that we measure multi-dimensionally. Poverty is usually defined as lack of money or by assessing a few key areas of life. Equality Insights measures 15 dimensions of life to provide a more rounded and comprehensive insight into the lived experience of poverty. It's gende- sensitive, we have a gender-sensitive framework, not just in the dimensions that we cover, including voice, family planning and time use, but also the questions that we ask within dimensions, for example, the work dimension asks about unpaid work in the same depth as we ask about paid work, given that we know the gender distribution of unpaid work impacts on women and women's economic opportunities. The measure is scaler. So quite often, traditional measures of poverty are expressed in binary terms there's poor or not poor. Equality Insights is a composite index that measures poverty on a four point scale doing so that we're able to reveal the depth of deprivation experience by individuals and social groups to assist in targeting and particularly targeting those who are experiencing multiple deprivations. Because of individual level measurement, we can also see the intersectional between characteristics - the cumulative and compounding effects of multiple identity characteristics, such as age, disability status and so on. This gives a truer picture of the actual circumstances experienced by women and men and making it possible to see who experiences, which issues, barriers and opportunities as a basis for changing them. Next slide please. So where does this help and how does this help support economic pathways to empowerment? Economic empowerment is essentially comprised of two interrelated components, economic advancement, and economic related power and agency - the ability to change a circumstances. As a gender-sensitive multidimensional measure of poverty and inequality, Equality Insights collects information relevant to assisting both components. Economic advancement can be measured by opportunities to engage in paid work. These are influenced by a range of factors, including gendered norms and unpaid work. We collect data on those things. Being a able to disaggregate data by gender if age helps us show how those things interact. And in particular, the impact and implications when women's productive and reproductive lives overlap. Access to paid work is obviously influenced by education and by time use. And again, we measure those things. Insufficient time for economic activities is a barrier to women's economic advancement and their economic contributions to the household, which can further impact on their voice. Asset ownership and control are typically measured at household level based on information provided by one person, which again, assumes that those resources are shared and all have - all household members have the same access. We know that's not always the case. And so Equality Insights measures the assets at the individual level. And we'll see, in Vaela's presentation, the ways in which those insights tell us much of about the resources that can be mobilised for economic opportunities and how these differ between men and women. Power and agency to change your circumstances can be measured by voice in the household and public domain. So we measure the ability to influence priorities and decision making about economic resources and activities. Next slide, please COVID-19 has really underlined the importance of having data that helps to quantify the gendered impacts of the pandemic and support a more gender equal recovery. It's also made collecting such data through face to face survey approaches, more difficult. So we've iterated, the Australian government has supported IWDA to develop Equality Insights Rapid as a brief and robust survey that can be administered without face to face enumeration. Rapid is intended as a red-flag tool to identify moderate and more significant deprivation. And it's been developed to address the COVID context in implementation. So a remotely administered survey optimised for phone use in the Pacific and also in its outcomes by providing gender sensitive data to inform gender responsive recovery. The initial data collection will be in two Pacific island countries, Solomon Islands with Dignity Pasifik undertaking data collection, and Ruth Maetala will speak further about data collection plans later on. And Tonga with data collection to be undertaken by the Tonga Statistics Department in collaboration with the Ministry of Internal Affairs. Next slide, please. So we're excited about going to the field. We know that improving data can help us improve gender equality outcomes, particularly in regards to poverty and equality measurement. Equality Insights helps us better understand the barriers by measuring what matters for understanding gender inequalities. So we can see the different circumstances experienced by men and women and gender diverse individuals across a much wider range of factors that we know contribute to a people's ability to progress their lives. Providing a sense of scope and scale of the challenges and specific barriers faced by diverse women and men in their context helps interventions be targeted and specific to the root causes. Enabling intersectional analysis helps us see the cumulative and compounding effects of multiple identity characteristics on individuals experiences of poverty so that again, policy makers and advocates can focus on the actual mix of factors that create barriers to people's economic opportunities and adapting to the practical and feasibility constraints of the COVID context. So we're trying to support duty bearers and advocates to access quality gender data that will support a more gender equal recovery. At best at the moment, we have money going into collecting gender unaware data that provides an evidence base that leads to inefficient solutions. At worst those solutions will be ineffective. when you've got finite resources and numerous priorities, we really can't afford to be making best-guess policy. What we need is data that really helps us see where we are and meet them at that point. And that's me, I will now pass back to Kim and onto other panel members, thanks very much. I look forward to questions.

**Kim Robertson:** Wow, thanks, Jo. Great to hear about these data collection tools and innovations and the methodology that gives us real insight into - inside households and the differences in dynamics, just really exciting. We all know that households are places of significant inequality and that's often missed by many traditional household surveys. Great to hear about Equality Insights Rapid and the way that these surveys now can be done remotely. Look really forward to hearing more about the data collection plans from Vaela and Ruth. Moving on now to our next panel member. Please put your questions in the chat box, everyone, as they come to you, moving on to our next panel member, Chris, the Zoom is now yours. Can you please give us a brief overview of the broader Asia Pacific regional data and statistics ecosystem? What available data tells us about progress on the SDGs? You launched the latest Asia Pacific SDG Report last week. Can you share what you think we need to know from that update as the context of this discussion? Thanks, Chris, the floor is yours.

**Chris Ryan:** Okay, thank you very much, Kim and good morning, afternoon, evening to everyone depending where you may be in the world. Firstly, I mean just thanks to the organisers, this event, Jo and your team for inviting ESCAP to be part of this important panel discussion. That was quite an impressive first start presentation you gave. I hope I can con continue that high quality performance, but I do need to say I'm not a gender expert per se, but as Kim mentioned in the introduction at the start, I mean, I have been involved in the field of statistics for a long time. And the majority of that time has been working in the Pacific with the Pacific Community & now with ESCAP. So in the short time I've been allocated to talk here, I want to focus a little bit on the, how the Pacific's going in the sustainable development goals in particular goal five on gender as that's the sort of work I'm involved in. And as you'll see, as I go through the presentation, there's plenty of data issues out there for the region and the area of gender, next slide, please. Just before we get into it, I just want to just make, mention that ESCAP, every year we produce an SDG progress report for the Asia Pacific region and we produce results for each of the subregions such as the Pacific and last Thursday, we launched our latest reports. So some of the things I'm gonna be talking about in the next three or four minutes is just some of the results from this analysis that ESCAP have been doing with global SDG data and give a little bit of a focus, obviously on gender. Before I jump into it, I just wanna say, in the two boxes there, and I think the Link's gonna be put in the chat. The first box has the link to the actual report. And I'd encourage you all to have a look at it when you get chance. And the second link, which is equally important is actually takes you to the ESCAP SDG gateway. And this is where we have all the the data for the Pacific that comes through from the custodian agencies, which we do all the analysis on, next slide, thanks. Right, so this is an example of a, typical bit of analysis we do, whether it be for the Asia Pacific region as a whole, this particular graph is focused just on the Pacific, but we can also do it at the, the national level as well. And I'll talk about that a bit more in a sec, but just so you can understand what this bit of analysis has shown us is for each of the SDG goals, for the things to be on track, we need that bar to reach the 2021 line. So that's where we should be at, at the end of 2021. And you can quickly go down and see that no bars have crossed that line, which pretty much means in the Pacific, we're not on track to achieve any of the goals for the SDGs. And the ones that are in red are going backwards. So not only are we not gonna get there, we're going in the wrong direction. So it's a bit of a concern for the Pacific and we're seeing this all around the globe and COVID certainly hasn't helped. Another thing for looking at goal five on gender. I mean, not only is it only about a quarter of the way where it needs to be, but it's also shaded that particular bar and the shading in this graph indicates that we just don't really have enough data to make a proper assessment of progress for the gender goal. Next slide, thanks. All right, so this is just to reemphasize the lack of data. So this bit of analysis here from our database just shows how much data we have for each of the goals for the Pacific region. If it's in dark green, that means we have sufficient indicator to make a good assessment about it. If it's in light green, it means we have some data, but not enough to make a strong sort of assessment of progress. And that might be because there's not a enough countries in the Pacific that have the data or equally we don't have two data points to measure progress. So if you wanna know, if a country is going forward or backwards or a region is going forward or back, you need data at two points in time to see if the trajectory's getting better or worse. And this is important for the gender goal, because I mean, you do have indicators there, which rely on time use surveys and gender-based violence surveys. And a lot of countries have ran these surveys, but only once so we can understand what the situation is in a new point in time, but we don't know if it's getting better or worse, because it was only a one-off survey. Goal five there looks the worst when it comes to having sufficient data out of each of the goals for the Pacific region, next slide. In that SDG gateway, if you go to the initial analysis that I showed a couple of sides ago, you click on the goal five bar, this is what will pop up. And so you can see, you know, which indicators did we actually have enough data for which contributed to that progress assessment. And here there's not too many indicators again unfortunately for target 5.1 because you've got the Ps in, and these are proxy indicators, which aren't specifically SDG indicators. But the custodian agencies of this data, they still produce 'em so we can use it to monitor progress, but it's only really the last couple seats held by women in national parliament and proportion of women in managerial positions where we've got sufficient data to make an assessment. And I'll a little bit about each of those now on the next couple of slides. All right, so for this little bit of analysis, what we are looking at here is seats held by women in parliament and 'cause we've got in our database, we've got data for each of the countries in the Pacific, as well as each of the countries in Asia. I want to just do a little bit of a comparison on what the city like for the Pacific. And I'm just focusing on the Pacific SIDS in red. So by SIDS, I'm talking about Small Island Developing States, so it's not including Australia, New Zealand. So Australia and New Zealand have been given a blue bar, all right? So it's just the red bars of the small island developing states in the Pacific. And as you can see from this graph, I mean, with the exception of Fiji, which is just above 20%, you're looking at 10% or less of seats held by women in parliament and the three, right at the end, furthest to the left, they're all Pacific island countries. And there is none. So to put that in context, I mean, you've got, as I said, you've got Fiji at 20%, the rest of 10% and below pretty much. Globally that figure is around 25% and Asia and Pacific it's around 20%. So the Pacific is a fair way behind the rest of the world in this regards, next slide. I think this is the last one. Do you see other one, I just wanted to show related to this topic of women and economic empowerment is that the progress of women's share in employment in managerial positions. And this is a little bit more of an encouraging sort of science. So there's only sufficient data for about eight countries in the Pacific to which had two data points to show, you know, what sort of direction we are heading, whether things are getting better or things are getting worse. And as you can see for each of these eight countries, if you look at the column on the far right, they're all increasing in percentage points. So for Cook islands in 2001 went from 36% to nearly 60% an increase of 23.7. So you've got more women than men in managerial positions in the cooks, but the other countries it's still more male dominated, but you can see, I mean, the numbers are getting up closer to 50% for a of countries and it is heading in the right direction, the one slight issue again, and just keep coming back to it about availability of data is, I mean, you can look at time point two and you'll notice there's only three countries that have data beyond 2016. And this has been probably heavy influenced by the fact that labour force surveys are the ones that often provide this information and they don't get conducted as frequently as we would like, so it's good we're heading in the right direction, but you know, we still don't have enough data for recent years to get a better picture of what's happening now. So I think that was my last slide. So, I mean, if I was to do a little summary, I would say, you know, we unfortunately in the area of gender and poverty and women's economic empowerment, we still don't have much data. But what we do have is showing improvement, which is encouraging, but is a long way to go would be a good way to wrap that up. Focusing just on the global SDG indicator data. Thank you and back to you, Kim.

**Kim Robertson:** Thanks Chris, so I'm going to sort of now take us to the Pacific regional level. So from the Asia Pacific or global level to our more on a Pacific level to share some key developments about what's happening to advance gender data and statistics framework to support gender equality and understanding about economic pathways, particularly in small island states. So last year, the roadmap for gender statistics in the Pacific was released, and it sets a very ambitious and broad framework for gender data from production to end use with emphasis on both producers and users of data and statistics. For example, a priority in the roadmap includes advancing statistical literacy of users. So it's a very broad holistic framework. That's grounded in rights based approaches. The roadmap is a targeted and specific agenda of priorities that Pacific gender statistics, civil society and development partners considered missing in national, regional and global frameworks for statistics for use for gender analysis and informed progress towards gender equality, specific states are encouraged and supported to develop their own national gender frameworks using the roadmap as a guide and also their existing statistical development strategies. Our roadmap stakeholders were very clear. They didn't want a focus on poverty because there are official statistics programmes for this as Chris pointed out. Their message was their need for data on statistics and economic empowerment on understanding that data from priority thematic areas of time use, asset ownership, including access to credit, work and employment, including informal, vulnerable work and underemployment, as well as wage gaps are the critical gaps that provide the data that they need to compliment these other positive measures. So we've got the SDGs and we've also got Equality Insights coming together here. And obviously environmental data, gender impacts of climate change are at the centre of the roadmap. The Pacific region is most dramatically affected by the climate crisis. And Pacific woman can play essential roles in environmental conservation, natural resource and waste management and environmental decision making. And that is central to the Pacific gender stats roadmap. A central theme for CSW66 is that gender justice and women's human rights are inseparable from our physical environment and the need for climate justice action is urgent and it cuts across everything that we do. Finally I would just like to sort of reflect and add that the data produced by tools like Equality Insights Rapid contributes to strengthening our data landscape, our gender data landscape. Particularly in the context where gender data is limited, as Chris has pointed out. High quality fit-for-purpose data is just so critical for policy monitoring and reporting against commitments like the Beijing Platform for Action, the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women and the International Conference on Population and Development to name a few, the roadmap identifies the individual deprivation measure, which IWDA is now taking forward under the Equality Insights programme as a specialised survey that addresses gender data gaps. And we need this alongside our other more standard surveys, such as the Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey, the Demographic and Health Surveys and others. Data collection using the IDM or Equality Insights framework is also a country and regional level indicator towards achieving the goals in the roadmap. And these tools provide the means for the first time ever for benchmarking and tracking progress, developing or reviewing monitoring, and evaluating women's economic projects, policies, programmes and interventions in a holistic and integrated way. I'm very excited to see the rollout of Equality Insights and the Rapid version. And it certainly is a game changer in the Pacific gender statistics ecosystem. We know that Equality Insights doesn't yet provide so-called official statistics as per the United Nations IMF frameworks or national statistics office standards. And this is really a part of the journey as you know, 15 years in development, data innovations take time to move into regular use. And this is typically a prelude towards official recognition Involvement of national statistics, offices, and data collection processes helps to confirm credibility, relevance and to really normalise these new data sources and collections. The statistics are high quality. And as Jo noted, statistics specialists and gender specialists provided advice during IWDA's development of Equality Insights Rapid building on those 14 years of research, trial and refinement, I'm just mindful of time. So that us an update for you all about what we are doing at the sort of broader regional level. And we've also sort unpacked some of the innovative gender data and statistics tools that we really need to provide us with the data, for decision making that we require. So please keep questions, comments, feedback, coming in the chat box. We really encourage that for our Q and A session. Now I'd like to encourage, to ask my colleague Vaela as director of Solomon Islands' National Gender Development office how multidimensional data on poverty and inequality has helped to reveal structural barriers to women's economic empowerment and provide evidence to support action. Vaela the video and microphone are yours and over to you. Oh yeah, you've got your slide.

**Vaela** **Falefehi Ngai:** Thanks Kim, thank you, warmest greetings from Solomon Islands. I am so pleased to be able to be part of this panel. Today I am speaking as a government official, policymaker and advocate who's job is to promote gender equality and the rights of women in the context of, you know, significant gender inequality here in the Solomon Islands, including high prevalence rate of domestic violence and the continuing low participation and representation of women in positions of decision making at all levels including in parliament, The relevance and importance of concrete data, particularly disaggregated a data in this context cannot be over-emphasised. In order to advance gender equality, we need to be able to reveal the gender inequalities that exist the real stories that gives real meaning to gender inequalities. In the context of Solomon Islands, where we are communal societies, identifying and revealing the gender inequalities here is challenging, it's most challenging. And therefore, you know, the need for concrete individual-level data that can help us to target the specific barriers people face in our context. Disaggregated and multidimensional data shows who is most affected, in what ways, and to what extent without disaggregated data, it is more difficult to act, which has human, social, economic and political implications. In our context, when there's a long list of priorities and where everything seems to be also a priority with very limited resources, disaggregated data is vital for prioritising strategic planning and focus and targeted programmes and actions. While there is a strong policy environment for addressing gender equality in Solomon Island, you know, and I may know the broad outlines of gender inequality. Without quality gender data about scope and scale, it is much more difficult to lobby and advocate for support to prioritise gender equality and allocate resources in national budgets. And while here in the Solomon Islands, there has been increased interest in gender by other line ministries and sectors in more recent years. And gender mainstreaming is ongoing. The need for the right data is critical, especially in sustaining their interest and attention and helping them see that addressing inequalities is their priority too. And to fast track their efforts in addressing gender inequalities, next slide. To illustrate, I will show you some selected findings from data collected in two provinces in the Solomons in 2020 completed, just as COVID-19 was beginning to impact the region. Our focus on insights, most relevant to women's economic empower. The study was a collaboration between IWDA and the UN World Food Programme undertaken in the previous individual deprivation measure phase as part of a wider programme partnership with the Australian National University and supported by the Australian government. Yeah and, you know, I take this opportunity to say a big thank you to IWDA, the World Food Programme, Australian government, the National University, you know, for, I guess, piloting the Individual Deprivation Measure study in Solomon Islands you know, in 2002, and, you know, continuing with Equality Insights Rapid, which Ruth will speak to later, next. So to reiterate a point made earlier by Jo economic empowerment is comprised of two interrelated components. Economic advancement and economic related power and agency. As a gender-sensitive multidimensional measure of poverty and inequality, Equality Insights collects information relevant to assessing both components. Power and agency, you know, can be measured by voice in the household and public domain in terms of influencing priorities and decision making around economic resources and activities. time use is also a factor in economic empowerment because insufficient time for economic activities is a barrier to women's economic advancement and limits income and wealth generation, including economic contributions to the household, which can further constrain voice, next. The study in Solomon Islands that was carried out in 2020, found significant gender and age differences in education attainment and functional skills highlighting, you know, the importance of having data that can be disaggregated by both gender and age, data that can be explored by both gender can help show the cumulative impact of disadvantage over time. And the implications when women's productive and reproductive lives overlap. Education deprivation in the sample, as you will see there increased with age and the gender gap increased at each age group measuring, you know, in a way that shows intersectional inequalities is critical to understanding how circumstances vary over the life course. It provides information that enables policy makers to focus efforts and connect policy to people, next. So you see in this slide time use by man, the primary activities undertaken by men during waking hours were paid work, followed by socialising and self-care, next. And, and for women, their primary activities during waking hours were unpaid work followed by care work. And, you know, women were far more likely than men to have a child in their care while doing other activities, next. Overall women spend more time on unpaid work and care than men, regardless of paid work status. Women who had not performed paid work in the previous seven days, spent on average 38 more minutes on unpaid care work the previous day than did women who had done a paid work. By contrast, you see men who did no paid work, spend six more minutes on unpaid care work relative to the men who were engaged in paid work. This finding suggests that the, you know, relationship between work and time use is more significant for women than for men, especially with regards to time spent on unpaid and care work, next. There were, you know, significant differences by gender in relation to voice in both household and public domains, significantly more women than men were deprived or very deprived of voice. More men than women had sole decision making power over household finances, large purchases, duration of their work, duration of their study and social commitments. While women had more decision making power over everyday expenses. The data also showed a relationship with age with older adults experiencing less deprivation, other than in very old age, where the probation substantially increased noting there were, you know, smaller sample sizes in older age groups. One of the strengths of collecting multidimensional data at the individual level is the ability to see the links between different aspects of life. This graphs bring together data about voice and data about paid work. There was a large impact of paid work on perceived ease of risk, you know, raising concerns for men. Men who had engaged in paid work, where significantly more likely to say, you know, raising concerns at the local level was very easy relative to men not in paid work. Whereas for women having engaged in paid work did not make it more likely that they perceived raising concerns with local leaders was very easy. Overall women in paid work were more likely to say that issues in public was difficult than very easy. Women who did not engage in paid work, were more likely to have said raising concerns was very difficult relative to their paid work counterparts. This finding implicates other factors, you know, such as discriminatory gender norms on women's perceived ability to raise concerns with local decision makers, next. Assets are typically measured at a household level. This example shows why it is important to measure at the individual level. To reveal the different economic realities of women and men, and the ways in which current gender inequality shape and constrained future options and opportunities, you know, while there are only some of the findings from the 2020 data collection in Solomon Islands, you know, I hope they clearly illustrate the relevance of individual level and gender sensitive data, particularly for policy makers and gender advocates alike, next. Next Millie. Data first needs to exist to be used. And it needs to be used to make a difference, you know, linking data producers and users, duty bearers, and advocates is very important in supporting the relevance and use of resulting disaggregated data and strengthening experiences in using gender data generally. In Solomon Islands, the steering committee overseeing the data collection brought together government ministries and relevant line departments and civil society organisations, the women's rights action movement and our National Council of Women and the Solomon Island's Disabled Persons Organisation was involved in training in enumerators. This multi-stakeholder steering committee involved different expertise, experiences, and perspectives that guided and facilitated data collection really helping to ensure the work was focused and relevant and connected to, you know, existing processes and mechanisms. One thing for sure, especially for me was how much the disaggregated data from the study, I guess, boosted my confidence in undertaking lobbying and advocacy for gender equality. For example, last year, the data from the study supported the Ministry of Women, Youth, Children, and Family Affairs in, you know, beginning the process of the development of a first ever gender and women's policy for one of our provinces, the central islands province, which was one of the targeted provinces for the study. I want to, you know, take this opportunity quickly to talk briefly about the implications of gender data for COVID-19 recovery. There's no doubt that COVID-19 has only underlined the importance of having data that shows, you know, differences by gender, age, disability and intersections of these. Without it, we will see existing inequalities continue to worsen. For the Solomon Islands government, our priority is COVID-19 recovery, you know, and supporting recovery of the productive and revenue generating sectors is critical. For this recovery process to be gender sensitive and integrate a human perspective more broadly comprehensive individual level gender-sensitive data is crucial. For essential COVID-19 related policy and legislative developments and reforms. And of course, for targeting programmes and resources effectively, you know, to meet people where they are. The Ministry of Women, Youth, Children and Family Affairs and the National Statistics Office advocated, you know, within government and to donors for further data collection to support gender responsive recovery, you know, for us gender data is essential, not an optional extra. That brings me to the end, you can just find a more detailed report on the Solomon Islands study and a focus brief on women's economic empowerment on the Equality Insights website, as you can see on the slide. And I think, we put up in the chat as well. And our plan is to get some, you know, short briefs out quickly once the Equality Insights Rapid data has been collected and analysed. Thank you over to you, Kim.

**Kim Robertson:** Thank you, big one friend. That was just so I've got lots and lots of notes written down, particularly. I really like that data, that having that data has given you confidence. I think that that's a really good insight to really start continuing to advocate and for your policy and decision making. We'd now like to hear from Ruth, I'll do a very quick transition here. We've got a presentation about the relationship between gender responsive data and about collection and about economic pathways to empowerment for women in the Solomon Islands as an entrepreneur research and gender advocate. So we've got Ruth's presentation teed up now. Thank you, Zoom fairies.

**Ruth Maetala:** Thank you, Vaela. Thank you IWDA and thank you organisers for giving us an opportunity to present.

**Kim Robertson:** Are we alright? Oh, here we go.

**Ruth Maetala:** Thank you, Vaela. Thank you IWDA and thank you organisers for giving us an opportunity to present our story on this prestigious event this morning. This morning, I will be speaking on accelerating women's economic empowerment the role of gender-sensitive poverty data. My name is Ruth Maetala I'm director and founder of Dignity Pasifik. A local women-led research organisation based in the Solomon Islands, the gender-data context in Solomon Islands, a little bit on it. Since independence in 1978, there was a lack of gender data, and there was limited focus on gender indicators since then. The consequences can include filling knowledge gaps with assumptions and stereotypes, relying on gender norms using out of date information, ignoring differences, example between urban and rural, or younger and older women. There's also gender data gaps, which hinders progress on gender inequality, limiting evidence for policy development and advocacy. Next slide please, showing what is possible. So data collected by Dignity Pasifik in central and Guadalcanal provinces in 2020, confirmed the value of individual-level gender sensitive multidimensional data. The study was revealing inequalities, the multiple and interconnected barriers experience by particular groups to enable targeted advocacy and action, next slide please. Making the invisible visible. So prior to 2020, there was little information about gender dynamics inside households and implications for options and opportunities. However, once we had done the IDM study in 2022, understanding differences inside household provinces, a more complete understanding of women's and men's lives and how their circumstances vary was made possible by these in 2022. Next slide, please. So Dignity Pasifik as a local research firm, is aiming at connecting gender data and gender-informed data collection. And at the same time, it is empowering women economically, and also it is providing data quality. This is our team in 2020. So Dignity Pasifik has managed 42 researchers in 2020 under the IDM contract. And we have had that experience, which now prepares us for this new study. Next slide, please. Establishing and growing a women-led data collection organisation, Dignity Pasifik was established in the belief that quality data collection should be operated and owned locally. Being embedded in the community supports inclusive data and can complement official statistics. And this has been built on close and trusted relationships supported, which is supporting growth. Next slide, please. Why does this matter? Gender bias can influence data collection. Women-led research firms can be a mechanism for closing gender data gaps. It is also employing single mothers, young women and women and men with disabilities provides economic opportunities and wider empowerment benefits through the data collection process and can shift perceptions in the community, next slide, please. Now onto our current activities. So we are working on preparation for Equality Insights Rapid. Equality Insights Rapid has a 14-year history of foundational work that established the conceptual frame and the survey tool for Equality Insights Rapid, under two streams. The first one is technical, a robust complimentary of poverty and inequality that makes the gendered aspect of the experience visible. And then under normative, it shifts understandings of data adequacy both in what gets measured, multidimensional and in how it gets measured. So individual level gender-sensitive. With the COVID context, it makes data about individual circumstances and interrelated challenges they face even more vital. But undertaking a phone survey in Solomon Islands is challenging. A story of geography, communications, infrastructure, remoteness, limited mobile phone penetration is our story. The Equality Insights Rapid is expected to be in the field by April, May this year. So we are excited to be part of the first use of the new tool. And just to also highlight that this work supported by the International Women's Development Agency is a groundbreaking work in the data sector in Solomon Islands. Thank you very much.

**Kim Robertson:** Thank you, our virtual Ruth, that was recorded late last night, early this morning. So obviously we are all really interested to see how Equality Insights Rapid rolls out in the Solomons noting some of those challenges. I'm mindful that we've got maybe 20 minutes left for our Q and A. So thank you to all our presenters this morning for those fascinating insights. We are now going to move to the first question that I've received. Please if you've got a question, include the name of the panellist or the general subject area as moderator, I'm not really wanting to answer any questions please. So, Chris, the question is, what would you say are the main barriers to regular data collection that means the region is either missing out, missing two data points or has a significant issue with recency? I think timeliness, right? And if funding is one of those barriers, what would you say would be the top three actions, three, that funders could take to make the biggest differences? So what are the big game changers? Thank you, Chris, the floor is yours.

**Chris Ryan:** Well, thanks Kim and thanks for the question. That's a huge question and I hope I can do it a little bit of justice. To be honest, I think the way surveys are conducted in the Pacific is a little bit of a mess at the moment. I think it's too much of the cart pushing the horse along as to what types of surveys we're running and the frequency in which we run them. And this has been a problem in the Pacific for many years, going back to when I first started in early 2000s, it was just standard practise for countries to run a census and run a hi. And then all came to DHS, the country started running that now the MICS surveys are a common survey and so forth, but what's not taking place is, I mean, identifying, you know, what is it, the information that the Pacific island countries really need and then tailoring a survey plan or questions within those surveys that meet those needs. And that doesn't happen anywhere near enough. So the things that are driving the types of surveys, being conducted in the Pacific and when they get conducted is basically, you know, when donors and partners have money to fund those surveys in a particular country, they then go ahead and run them. So I think we just need to take a step back. And I mean, SPC for many years has had in place a survey programme, they get the information from the country. So it's not something they dictate. The countries just provide this information for SBC and they make it publicly available. And it'll be like a five-year plan and you'll notice within 12 months, I mean, it's all already a mess, 'cause things change straight away because a different donor or partner comes in and wants to run a different survey. So there's a number of things which need to happen. And going back to my initial point, I mean, one of the first ones is, I mean, we need to start controlling what sort of surveys countries need by, you know, what are the information requirements? And once we can get better alignments between what's required and what's produced, then we need to establish, okay, what sort of survey plan do we need in place in order to deliver on that? And it might be different from country to country, but countries should be able to say, we need a census this often, we need a mix collecting this, this often, we need a high collecting information. And then stick to it so the countries need to stick to it. The partners need to respect it. So, and if we can achieve something like that and it sounds obvious, but it's very difficult to get countries and partners on board with the simple sort of process like this. But if that can happen, then the next step would be how we gonna fund it? 'Cause it still cost a lot of money. So the, the three things I would say is one, we just, firstly, gotta get the process, right. We need to have the data needs driving the I'm focusing on the surveys here, but have the data needs drive the types of surveys that are required. Be let's stay on course for that. Let's not keep changing it every year or so with what's being done. And then yeah, we need to find the funds that can deliver that. So that would be my response, thanks Kim. 'Cause it's a very important issue.

**Kim Robertson:** Thanks Chris, that's a really passionate reply there and it made me think, you know, about so the feminist principles of, gender principles of voice and agency, and we've got a way to go there it seems. We've got another question coming in, thank you very much. I'm just moderating now. The question is maybe for our Equality Insights specialists, what opportunities are there in this COVID crisis to help advance this agenda on collecting data for real? How do we capitalise on some of these innovations and opportunities that COVID really has brought into our lives to address these gaps? Jo and maybe team Solo the floor is yours.

**Jo Crawford:** Thanks very much, Kim. I think that what COVID-19 has really done is focus very much on some of the data gaps that exist at the moment. So when countries first sat down to look at the impacts of COVID, they might have had some real time trade data or economic data but in terms of trying to get an insight into the ways in which those are translating into impacts on people's lives they really was not a lot of quantitative information. Of course you can go out into the field and have conversations with people and get a sense of those lived experiences and that's vital, but having quantitative data that can really help you see who's experiencing these issues is critical. Sometimes you don't have exactly those tools and that was the case for Equality Insights we needed to, with support from the government, to develop a different methodology. When you were doing something by phone and doing something much shorter, it's not just a matter of cutting out a few questions. You need to be still saying something meaningful about the phenomenon you're trying to measure. And so that work has happened over the last period and we'll be able to get into the field fairly quickly. What we are also trying to look very hard at obviously, is working closely with Ministry of Women and with the National Statistics offices to do exactly what Chris is saying and really focus on what some of those priorities are and drawing out an analysis of data from the very rich data set that you get when you collect information about 15 dimensions of life, plus assets, really to kind of drawing out thematic analysis from that data to understand where people are sitting and where scarce resources can best be focused to accelerate change. We're working also with UN Women who is doing a number of short phone surveys in the region to make sure that as far as we can, we are coordinating and collaborating so that we end up adding, adding to the data, rather than just adding to the load of very busy national statistics offices. I might stop there and give some space to Vaela.

**Vaela** **Falefehi Ngai:** Thank you. Thank you, Jo. So I guess at the national level, you know, for Solomon Islands and being, you know, only experiencing, I guess COVID-19 community transmission more at the beginning of this year, January. You know, it has been period where a lot of changes, a lot of new things and new ways of doing things for us. And this also, you know, includes responding to COVID-19. And, you know, the challenge of ensuring that responses are targeted, I guess, is where, you know, the importance of this gender data comes in and, you know, for us at, at this point, it's making sure that, you know, through the different mechanisms we've established, particularly the national protection committee that, you know, whose mandate is to ensure that during this time during this pandemic that we focus that we do not lose sight of those who are most vulnerable in societies, including women, you know, people with disability that the elderly I am on that committee. And, you know, as I said, the, study, the findings is for me most useful at this point, in terms of lobbying for, you know, targeted budgets towards the protection committee, you know, supporting the needs that comes out, you know, being we are being informed of from the individual levels. So, you know, at this stage, I guess it's still fairly new in the data. I'm already seeing the usefulness of it in terms of, you know, advocacy, lobbying for resources, because at this, you know, this is the most challenge for us, especially in the context of community transmission.

**Kim Robertson:** Thank you so much.

**Vaela** **Falefehi Ngai:** Thank you.

**Kim Robertson:** Thank you so much, Vaela. We've got 10 minutes left and maybe two questions. The first question I am going to put to Jo, and it's a question, bum, bum, about training. Where is the question she's looking for a question-

**Jo Crawford:** Ruth before she left Ruth asked what are some options for regional gender data learning. So I just wanted to let people know that of the programme that Equality Insights is doing in relation to the data collection will also be supporting training in the use of that data with national machineries of women and gender data advocates. UN Women is also coordinating closely with them. They have an ongoing program for gender statistics and data for countries to identify their priorities and contribute people and participants in that training. So we are trying to make sure that those investments are done in a way that means that we cover the broadest range of topics. There'll also be once we have the data and analysis done, we'll certainly set up a series of webinars to really discuss some of the information and the findings as they emerge with sort of bite size plans to have kind of bite size jumps into key issues so that we can really try to utilise the data that's generated. So definitely watch this space and the Insights website will provide information when we know it about those gender trainings, thanks.

**Kim Robertson:** Lovely, thank you so much, Jo. Now this question's really fascinating me, and I'm gonna put it to Chris because really it's kind of, I guess, a probe and to your earlier response the question is decolonising data is key, who collects what and for who? What more do you think Chris can be done to ensure data collection is a decolonising process? Thanks, Chris.

**Chris Ryan:** Yeah, no, thanks, honestly, I haven't heard this term decolonised, so I don't know if you have an understanding of the concept Kim or the person who asked that question can just explain. It's probably just other terms that I've seen that I've come across, but you're always learning new words in some of these seminars. So yeah, what-

**Jo Crawford:** Maybe I can, so I think the work with Dignity Pasifik is really an example of that and what you are calling for Chris, which is for country-led priorities to drive the investment of resources and the undertaking of data collection activities. And I think Ruth and Dignity Pasifik's story is really one of seeing and framing expertise differently and framing data quality differently so that it is really centering that capacity that is anchored in the immediate context that is anchored in an understanding of gender dynamics. And that really works, I think, very closely, it's one of the things that I've observed engaging with Vaela and Ruth just how close and powerful the partnerships are on the ground, really going across boundaries of governments, civil society and business. It's the sort of thing that is made more possible in smaller contexts, and also is more critical. And those collaborations are really trying to find the space for those local priorities that are shared to be at the centre of data collection priorities and analysis of those priorities. And I think for me, that's a really good example of what decolonising data collection in practise looks like.

**Chris Ryan:** I'm happy to add a little bit now if that's all right you know-

**Kim Robertson:** Two minutes, Chris, two minutes.

**Chris Ryan:** Two minutes, yeah I'm a huge advocate for trying to, I mean, nationalise, how countries go about, you know, what their priorities are and so forth. And I'm gonna go back to the SDGs 'cause I spent a lot of time on SDGs and I mean, in all honesty, I mean, they're a great indicator framework for monitoring what's happening at the global level, but I mean, how relevant are they for, you know, monitoring progress at a national level? And, you know, when a first started looking at, you know, mapping the indicators and the SDG framework with what countries have in their national plans, their indicator frameworks. So you might have 230 SDG indicators and for a country's national plan, they might have 150 national. You map them together and you might be lucky if you get two or three indicators that are the same. So basically what's that telling us? Is what are the priorities for a country can be quite different from what gets imposed on them from global or regional partners and what they consider the things we should be looking to monitor. So, I mean, it's about a matter of getting that balance right as well. I mean, you don't wanna ignore what the global and regional initiatives are and you wanna report back to these when possible, but the number one priority is always to tailor the work that you do and what you focus on with the information you collect to your national circumstances. And you can still collect a tonne of information at the national level, which is very relevant for the SDGs, but they might be different indicators, but they, you need to make them relevant for your country situation and couldn't encourage countries anymore. What I'm doing at the moment, please tailor these what you are doing to your national circumstances, as much as possible. That should always be your number one priority whilst not dismissing what happens at the regional global level.

**Kim Robertson:** Perfect, thank you, Chris, for that big finish. Thank you everyone, I'm just doing my own big finish here. Thank you everyone who's joined us today for your input and engagement and thanks on my behalf and yours to the panellists, these wonderful panellists who have shared all this rich knowledge and learning in their contribution. I'd also like to thank our support crew from IWDA our background, technical and Zoom Fairies, thank you so much. Obviously have various links have been shared with you in the chat boxes, presentations, I understand can be emailed out. And of course, this recording will be made available to all who've registered via the Equality Insights website. And obviously the links and everything will be there. We're also not immediately, maybe within the next few months, we'll be producing a little blog about this side event to sort of keep maintaining the momentum and just thank you colleagues, thank you friends and thank for joining today and all the best for the second week of CSW. Good luck everybody, thank you very much.

**Jo Crawford:** Thank you, Kim.

**Vaela** **Falefehi Ngai:** Thank you, Kim, thank you everyone.

**Kim Robertson:** Thank you, welcome.