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WEBINAR

MAKING PROGRESS ON GENDER EQUALITY:
IT'S TIME FOR MORE TRANSPARENCY

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P R O C E E D I N G S

MR. INGRAM: Good morning. Good afternoon. Good evening. Wherever you may be. I am George Ingram. It is my honor to moderate this event. Cohosted by the Brookings Institution, a Washington based policy institution where I'm a Senior Fellow. Publish What You Fund, a London-based global campaign for aid and development transparency and Friends of Publish What You Fund, the U.S. sister counterpart for Publish What You Fund.

This conversation could not be more timely. While the topic of data transparency may sound a little obscure, in fact, how much, by whom, for whom, with what results. Support goes to advancing women's and girl's empowerment is anything but abstract. It is central to the developing process.

It has highlighted, one, three weeks in the communiqué of the G-7 and its words, we know that we cannot make true progress towards gender equality without robust data and a way to track it over time. Secondly, a week ago in the $40 billion of public and private commitments to gender equality, that the Generation Equality Forum and by the more than 500 people who registered for this event.

The statement of the G-7 puts a fine point on needing how to know whether that 40 billion commitment translates into action and into impact. The need for transparency on the flows of the dollars.

The event today involves first a presentation of the just published report making gender financing more transparent, available on the Publish What You Fund website followed by a panel of six experts from the public and private sectors to discuss the report.

Relevant questions that have been submitted with the registration process will be reflected in my moderation of the panel discussion. The findings of the report, the principal authors of whom are Jamie Alton, Henry Lewis and Sally Paxton. It will be presented by Sally. The U.S. representative of Publish What You Fund and the director of Friends of Publish What You Fund. Sally, over to you.

MS. PAXTON: Thanks, George. Let me add my welcome and thanks to everybody for attending the launch of our global report today. And thanks also to Brookings for hosting.

This report is the final product our work on this project. Among our other key outputs were our three country studies published this Spring.

We know there are two basic tenants around gender equality that are undisputed. Investments in women and girls are key to accelerating global development and equality and COVID is causing the progress to be reversed.

When we started our research into donor financing of gender, we quickly realized that it was difficult to get an accurate picture of who was funding what gender equality projects where and what their impacts were. So, the question is how can we know if we are on or off track if we don't know where we are? With the support of Plan U.S.A. and Save the Children U.S., we set out on your gender data journey.

There are concrete benefits to better transparency of gender financing data. It can improve allocation. It can improve coordination. It can help identify funding gaps. Learnings about what worked and what didn't become more public. And holding donors to account for their commitments is something else that greater transparency can lead to. Through better transparency we can stretch scarce resources.

There are three main points to our approach of this work. First, ODA is important to understanding gender equality efforts, so we wanted to capture those flows. But we also wanted to include the bigger picture of other financial flows. Humanitarian, philanthropic and DFI resources notably the 2X Challenge as well as what partner countries spend through their own domestic budgets.

Two, we wanted to start with a country lens. What data is available to country level stakeholders? What do they need and use? And three, we also wanted to include a wide range of stakeholders in our research so we could maximize our understanding of different perspectives.

At the end of all the research, the consultations, the discussions and the surveys, we conceptualized our theory of transparent gender financing into three separate but interrelated concepts. Data capacity, data engagement and data quality. All three are need for effective transparency. There is no point in high quality data, for example, if stakeholders can't use it, don't know about it and aren't engaged in the data process.

So, let me unpack these three concepts. On data capacity, we look at it as access and capacity are really two sides of the same coin. We want to reduce the barriers to access while boosting the capacity of users especially local stakeholders. Some of the examples of how we can reduce barriers include ensure that access is free. Ensure it's in formats that are useable and maximize the use of filters, which is especially useful given the number of databases and platforms.

Understand the formats that are most useful for stakeholders. Thinking about also offering simplified versions and infographics and local languages were necessary. The other issue with respect to capacity is funding. Core or unrestricted funding is rare. Our research showed that most of the funding for gender equality comes in the form of specific short-term projects.

The result is that there is very little funding to invest in data skills. Meaning that data literacy is either lacking or is outsourced to more expensive experts. This is especially true for women's rights organizations and local NGOs.

The lack of engagement around gender data is a critical problem. While significant efforts and resources are devoted to publishing data, publications often are the only step taken by donors to engage with potential data users. From our perspective, donors need to engage with stakeholders throughout the entire cycle of a project including in the collection of data and the use of data.

Data should be a place to start a conversation with all stakeholders especially local actors. Data is power. And if we want to really empower locally led development, we need to empower local users with accessible, usable quality data at all

points in the development cycle. From setting priorities to investment decisions to implementation and to evaluation.

There are two primary issues with respect to data quality. The first concerns the use of gender policy markers. Gender markers can be very useful filters. Our research concluded however that there is a lack of consistent and sufficient use of gender markers. Not all donors use them and not all donors use them consistently. And the use of gender markers was especially low across DFIs, humanitarian and philanthropic donors.

On consistency, for example, we found different results for the same donor on different platforms. One way to address this is to develop an internal system which links together related databases. Take, for example, Global Affairs Canada. When their staff updates a project on IOD's data, it updates the corresponding OECDRS data and vice versa. That provides consistency.

Second, it's also very difficult to understand why a particular project was marked as it was. Although there is often detailed guidance and criteria for assigning a score. The OECD, for example, has a handbook that provides donor guidance. The underlying donor analysis is rarely available.

We think it should be. This would allow users to understand why a particular score is published. Who the intended target groups are? What the project objectives are? And what indicators will measure progress?

Donors could significantly increase the understanding of their investments to others including to other donors if they published these analyses. And data platforms should facilitate and/or encourage the publication of these documents.

SGE5 sets out our global gender equality goals and these have been reaffirmed as recently as EPI7 and the generation equality forum. Yet, despite knowing how important gender equality is to drive progress. We have a real problem tracking what efforts are being made. And we know that progress has been challenged by COVID-19.

Gender data on both financing and programming is a critical foundation for

progress. With it we can track, coordinate, reallocate and learn what's working and what's

not and we can hold donors to account. But we need to improve this foundation. Our report

has a number of detailed recommendations and we encourage all of you to consider and act

on them.

Importantly, we need to act on the ways that make data accessible and

usable to all gender equality actors. Most importantly, though, we need to empower the

local partners through active engagement with them and by increasing their overall capacity

as they need to be central to addressing and reaching our gender equality goals. Thanks

very much for listening. And, George, back to you.

MR. INGRAM: Thank you, Sally. That was a nice, concise thorough

presentation. We will now move to the panel and first we will talk to Louise Holt. Louise has

two decades of experience in the Canadian government serving in Ottawa, Nairobi and

Victoria in the area of social and economic development. She currently is director general of

social development for Global Affairs Canada.

First of all, Louise, congratulations on your consistency in using the gender

marker. We all know that Global Affairs Canada has been on the forefront of advancing

gender equality and women's empowerment in both foreign policy and development. It is

known to have a strong focus on funding women's rights organizations and feminist

movements.

Please explain Global Canada's commitment to feminist foreign and gender

equality and the role that data plays in supporting those aims.

MS. HOLT: Great. Well, thank you very much, George. And hello

everybody. So Global Affairs Canada, first of all let me just say, we were really pleased to

be engaged in the gender financing project. And I'm really happy to be part of this event as

well as we really are still quite early in our journey to improve gender equality data in our

international assistance programming.

We do, as Sally sort of pointed at, we do recognize that this needs to be

done hand in hand with women's rights organizations and feminist movements. So, we really appreciate the thoughtfulness with which Sally and team approach that need in their work and in the report. And how that's recognized in the report.

So, let me jump as you said, George, to our feminist -- so we have a feminist foreign policy and we have a feminist international assistance policy as part of that broader foreign policy framework. And as we call it, the Fiat (phonetic).

It really sets at a clear commitment to building a strong evidence based to underpin the under-equality actions and results. And I said we were quite early in some ways. We have been an advocate and probably I'd say even a leader in advancing gender equality and women's empowerment in all of our international assistance work since the late 1990s, I'd say. Certainly, well over 20 years.

But it was interesting to see in 2017 when the FIAT was launched. There was less than three percent of our overall bilateral program that specifically targeted general equality outcomes. And I think a lot of people were surprised by that. There was sort of an assumption without evidenced based data that we were doing a lot more that was directly targeting gender equality results.

And I think starting from the position, there was a lot of skepticism that the FIAT and a new policy framework would really bring about more change and real change, but the policy set out very ambitious targets. It challenges us to move from just three percent of targeted gender equality outcomes to no less than 15 percent of all of our ODA programming that would target specifically gender equality results. And an additional eighty that would integrate gender equality results as part of their programming.

So fully 95 percent of our programming by 2022 was the target. Lots of skepticism, but I'm actually really pleased to say that we're on track to deliver that commitment. So already in 2020, 14 percent of our bilateral assistance targeted gender equality outcomes specifically, and 83 percent integrated gender equality into the results and outcome as one of the results or some of the results. So more than 97 percent of all of our

programming targeting gender equality.

And I say that certainly very proud of it, but it's also really interesting to see that you can do it if there's a will and if there's a framework to support that. So, I mean, I'm happy to say that the framework to support that really was a robust system for tracking progress including the EGE markers and a GE coding system. And we ensured that we were collecting data about where and how we were funding our development assistance and holding ourselves accountable, and we report against those targets quarterly.

My team and myself sometimes kind of think like, oh, my gosh not again. Like we're just report it and we have to report again, but we report quarterly against that and update quarterly.

So, let me tell you a little bit about how we do that. So, first of all, our coding system is very closely aligned with the OCDC docs gender equality policy marker. So, every single project or disbursement gets tracked including those in humanitarian settings. The coding system is led by very dedicated and experienced gender equality specialists. And I can't underscore that enough because none of this would have happened without the dedicated personnel to do that.

And while we did in 2017 year that we needed to be kind of beef up and increase our capacity in that area and we brought on some extra resources. We probably didn't do enough so those folks have been working very, very hard over the four years to get us to where we are today.

And we require all of our external partners and our funding recipients to demonstrate from the outset how their project or program integrates gender equality. And then our gender equality specialists sort of assessed the project proposals, the plans, the implementation plans. And they validate this and code each project or program based on how well gender equality is integrated throughout the project process.

And through that, you know, again I'm really happy to see that the DOC, the OECD DOC has recognized us as a global leader in institutionalizing our gender equality

coding approach as well as our tracking of investments. And particularly around sexual reproductive rates and health and gender-based violence.

So, we also talk about do we look at how we can invest and directly support data centered projects? So, for example, we really proud to be working with whatever my panelist, concern-panelist here today with Equal Measures 2030 to support local women's rights organizations in Kenya.

With just $1 million in funding and I say that because I know that can be a lot of money for a small organization, but for donors, it's not really that challenging for us to do that and we should be able to move more money into these types of initiatives. So, it's a two-year project to harness the power of women's rights organizations particularly in crisis and conflict effect situations.

And it focuses on building their capacity to both produce and use quality data and evidence to advocate for women and girl's education and to make their voices heard in decision making processes. I think this is an area again, where listening to Sally's opening remarks and seeing the report, we're sort of happy to see that we're moving in the right direction but recognize that still very few efforts in this area and lots to be done.

Where we've been investing a little bit more is through our women's voice and leadership program. It is now active in 32 countries and it was one of our five flagship initiatives under our Feminist International Assistance Policy. And through that we're piloting a feminist monitoring evaluation and learning approach.

It's been very much a learning effort for us. Key to that is I think consistent with what Sally was saying. Is that we're really partnering with civil society, women's rights, LGBTQI organizations to develop the monitoring evaluation and learning framework, but also for each project identifying what are the project results and what's the data that's relevant and important to those organizations for them to be able to understand where they're making progress and how they're making progress. And that it's aligned with the issues that they and their constituents face every day.

And I mean I could talk forever and there's lots of lessons learned from that particular process including direct capacity and capacity building. I think a key one note for us has been the time. That you need to invest the time at the outset to make that work. And will make the project process a little bit longer, but obviously the results are much better quality and quality data and hopefully results.

We're still sort of in our first couple of years of operation of these projects, so we'll see as that moves forward. I'll just say as well though that we do already have a very robust program evaluation process. And we're looking at how we can increasingly integrate those feminist approaches and local approaches. So, for example, we recently had taken an evaluation of gender equality in a part of women and girls in our Middle East and monogram region.

And basically, the findings highlighted certainly again the important rule that gender equality specialists play in providing expert advice. But also, again that we probably are not really fit for purpose to best work with local organizations and particularly women's rights organizations. Our processes be administered a burden or requirements don't make it easy for them to access the tools and the timelines and requirements before funding starts to flow make it very challenging to go through the longer iterate of process to really develop quality approaches.

MR. INGRAM: Actually, let me jump here, Louise. And I will note that you've got a clear system of reporting and accountability, but I note a degree of humility that there's more to be done. And in that regard, it's difficult to find detailed information about your work since it's gender analysis or project evaluations either on IOD or on your own portal.

Now, I'll ask for a quick response. Are there plans for the Global Affairs Canada to add a gender equality marker filter to its dashboard and to start publishing project documents?

MS. HOLT: Yeah, thanks, George. I mean just quickly to say, I can say

yes. We recognize the importance of publishing -- of having a marker as part of the search function. I mean, I'm pleased to say, you know, and as Sally alluded to that we do publish our gender equality public policy markers in open data.

Sally mentioned IOD and the OECD DAC. And we do using our gender equality markers have that in published information about the projects. We have a fairly robust project browser that's open to the public and people can look at it. And it does include information but you're right. It doesn't have as a search function by gender equality by that markers. So, we certainly seeing the importance of that and open to looking at that as we improve our project browser going forward.

MR. INGRAM: Right. Thanks very much, Louise. If all of the panelist would turn their video on now, please. And next, we will talk with Lisa Williams who has a background championing policy research on gender equality, democratic governments and conflict prevention with two decades of experience at the OECD. Lisa now leads its development cooperation directors general equality in women's empowerment team.

Lisa, the OECD DAC gender equality policy markers, one of the most widely adopted markers that allows tracking and understanding, international funding for gender equality. While the marker was originally designed to be used by a small set of government donors to report on a limited amount of flows, it's now used by a range of donors.

But the report finds the uptake of these groups such as private foundations, the DFIs, humanitarian organizations is relatively small. How can the OECD encourage voluntary reporting and against the marker by non-DAC members?

MS. WILLIAMS: Thank you very much, George. It's really a pleasure to be here today. And I do have the pleasure of leading the gender equality in women's empowerment team and I am the development cooperation director.

And I would just take one minute to say that the development assistance committee is a 30-member committee and all of the members are reporting against the gender equality policy marker that developed now in the '90s so about 20 years ago.

And it allows us to tell a certain part of the story about how gender equality investments are being made in alignment with the twin track approach from the Beijing platform for action. So essentially to try to align with those commitments that we made so that some of the integration can be seen and then also we can see what's dedicated to gender while we are targeted gender equality. As Louise mentioned Canada has 15 percent of their efforts targeted to gender equality.

I think it's important to realize that this is political process as well. So, the communicate, you know, made an agreement on this effort. My team is there as well as a team that serves the entire process for the accredited reporting system to help members, countries. But also, foundations as well as other multilateral organizations. And increasing now we've just had a commitment from the Development Finance Institutions at the Generation Equality Forum to take up the gender marker as well and my team is there to try to serve that group.

I think one of the things that we found over time in using the marker and in this process is that it is extremely important to support organizations to think about how they work internally and how to find a marker. So, as Louise had mentioned for Canada, they really have a leading sort of group of specialists able to look through the programming that exists and think about how it actually uses this marker and how it's working internally in their system.

So, what we found is that it's really important to be fit for a purpose as an organization. Whether you're a general organization or whether you're foundation or a DFI to really be able to apply the marker. It's relatively simple to look into the sectors and look at the percentage that's being invested or to look at what you see to be the dedicated efforts working on gender equality.

But it does take some comparison and peer learning among organizations we find to be as effective as possible with your internal systems. So, in the DAC gender in that we manage within my team two groups. One on gender equality and women's

empowerment specifically where the senior gender advisors who are dealing with the marker every day convening and compare the ways in which their organizations operate.

And then we also run and work on some work on ending sexual exploitation, abuse and harassment. So, we have a reference group there focused on those particular issues too.

But in the gender net where we really do focus on comparative ways of making change happen, we have also over the years worked with organizations like our fellow panelist who will come up from AWID. Where they have an excellent use of the DAC marker and take up the data for financing for women's rights and have done so over the years really effectively.

So, we're proud to be able to provide this type of service to researchers, to civil society, to the public to help with increasing transparency. Now, we absolutely can't reach everyone. It's true that it isn't to do the quality control. We provide the data and we are there to try to assist the extent that's possible.

Just to give you a little sort of overview of the numbers. Around 40 multilateral organizations and banks are currently using the marker itself. More than 40 private foundations are as well. And as I already mentioned and was announced at the Generation Quality Forum, the two next challenges are going to be taken up the use of the marker aligning with their criteria. So that will be an interesting process as well.

At the EODC, we also really want to try to make sure that you have the strategic analysis to use these markers. So, in the team, we're focused very much on how can we make sure that you understand what investments exist? And where the gaps lie?

Obviously, today what we see is that 45 percent of official development systems, for instance, is being invested in gender equality. Five percent of that is dedicated to gender equality and the rest mainstreaming or integrated into other sector areas.

And what we're able to do now more and more is to provide strategic analysis in symptomatic areas. So, I'll put it into the chat, but we've released a piece that is

an analysis of different areas. So, looking at women pieces of security investments.

Looking at investments in programming on ending violence against women and girls.

Looking at women's economic empowerment and the other sort of action coalitions process

that was set up for the Generation Equality Forum.

We created a short piece that gives you some of the strategic analysis. We

also provide gender profiles and a ranking of gender efforts. So, this again is on the

investments. And you can see the levels of investment in the top five countries and the rest

that are listed on a regular basis annually.

And then we are working right now on a guidance handbook that we feel will

be important for the entire community. It will start really with the DAC data themselves

without being fit for purposes to deliver on gender equality in the Development Assistance

Committee thinking about how their practices can be improved.

And we'll think about institution arrangements and have a section on

financing for gender equality that addresses, you know, the potential for everything from civil

society organization efforts and women's rights organization's efforts and how to better

support them institutionally all the way through to how is it that we can be thinking about

going to finance arrangements also for gender equality anywhere.

Trying to put learning between the communities. Working on financing and

on gender more specifically so that there is a better sort of quality of conversations. So,

starting to think about some of the things that this report that Publish What You Fund has

produced and what Sally has recommended.

Finally, one of the key points I think I'd like to make is that our team is very

much considering ways to help with the accountability framework as we go forward around

the commitments from the Generation Equality Forum. And we would really see that it's

time for us to have thinking discussions like this one and others and we'll be happy to

convene those kinds of efforts in the future along with partners here and others as we think

about how to use some of the markers we have. Some of the data indications that we have

an effective way to create an accountability framework.

So, I think with that, George, I'll stop there and I'm sure there may be other questions that you may have, but thank you very much.

MR. INGRAM: Lisa, thank you for starting off your comments noting that getting people to use the marker is not just a technical issue. It's a political issue too. And I think that's the aspect of it that too often we forget about.

This new report joins a 2019 OECD care review and other studies in saying that the current reported gender marker information doesn't provide for the public to understand why and how donors have assigned the gender markers scores that they have to various projects. How can the OECD work with donors to get this information out there to get them to publish this data, this critical information?

MS. WILLIAMS: So, I think for the moment emphasis has not meant so much on pressing donors to publish that information, but rather to compare the ways in which they are operating.

So, as I mentioned in my initial points. What we do is we meet annually and we also provide workshops to donors individually on, you know, comparing the ways in which internal systems are set up to deliver on the marker.

So, there are definitely some stronger countries that are really able to have a Cordray that is looking that's looking through programming and able to identify when it does end up dedicated to gender equality and to actually pressure organizations to make more donor aids dedicated to gender equality. And there are others that have weaknesses and have much that still needs to be changed.

And I think the role of the Development Assistance Committee is to create that peer pressure and that work collectively and collective action among the members to compare their learning and then, you know, push ahead. So, I think some of the more effective ways that we can be helpful will be through the guidance that we're developing and also eventually updating our handbook.

But really developing this guidance on what it is to be fit for purpose to deliver on gender equality. And in this effort, we compare, you know, how it is that the donors are set up to use the marker more effectively for policy change. We really think the most important thing is to think about the strategic policy areas where we want to see more and where we want women and girls to be better empowered going forward.

MR. INGRAM: Right. Thank you, Lisa. Tenzin Dolker. Tenzin began her career working on girls' education, community-based development in rural and nomadic areas of Tibet. She currently is located in Chicago where she's a feminist advocate and researcher at AWID.

So, Tenzin, for those of us including myself who are not the familiar with AWID's work what's its mission? And how does this project in AWID's work complement each other and reenforce each other? And thank you for being with us today.

MS. DOLKER: Thank you, George. Hello everybody. Thank you for inviting me to join this timely conversation on data transparency and gender equality.

I work at AWID which is a global feminist membership movement support organization which achieves gender justice and women's rights (inaudible). Typically, I work for the resource in feminist movements initiative which shines a light through our research and advocacy. It (inaudible) which range from a ton of us resourcing and (inaudible) to more formal funding streams.

Through our research analysis, we exam how (inaudible) practices can really truly and meaningful better serve women's rights and justice in feminist movements. And I personally coordinate this flagship research project with there's need for feminist organizing. Since its founding it even has been a leading source of analysis on this data funding for women's rights and feminist movement literally from the early 2000s and since its conception in 1904, I believe.

The chief findings on (inaudible) of lack of funding for women's rights have been cited many times in advocacy spaces to expand and deepen resources for them

(inaudible). And the research has also been a model for other regions for women's rights groups and networks to try fund (inaudible) local conflicts as well.

So, for me, the global gender financing report really truly explains I think what feminist groups and activists have long known and have been saying. And that is that development is (inaudible) funding ecosystem for gender equality is not reaching (inaudible) organizations and feminist organizers particularly (inaudible) south.

For instance, in your report you highlight exactly that in all three of the (inaudible) studies that less than one percent of (inaudible) is reaching women's rights in Guatemala and Kenya and in less than two percent in Nepal.

And the fact that almost 90 percent of the funding is short term in Guatemala and Kenya are truly shocking, but for most of us who are in this field, it's not surprising. So, these empirical findings I think are really truly reenforcing much of what feminist groups have been saying for a very long time. But it is incredibly useful to have groups that (inaudible), you know, also finding these analyses and it is (inaudible) in terms of it being relevant, timely as a globalized analysis. And we will be using some of these findings in our advocacy work for sure.

So, the report is really I think a call to action for donors to really double down in providing that course of long-term flexible funding which Sally, you know, mentioned. Particularly the recommendation of a (inaudible) so that groups can fully have that autonomy to set their own agendas whether it's political agendas and of course very much intertwined with research agendas.

So, to repeat, recent funding campaign, a feminist funding campaign Stop Talking Stop Talking. I think that was something that was loudly shared and heard, I think in the last two weeks following the Generation Equality Forum.

But I do want to add one point that I think the report doesn't touch which is really within our feminist ecosystem framework that we offer as a conceptual thing for a (inaudible) having this (inaudible). I've worked with, you know, Jaime and others in

(inaudible) that methodology and conceptual framework which I've also shared earlier as well as the advisory committee member about the funding and (inaudible).

And I think it is the really critical piece that we should be mindful of that gender equality is part of our ecosystem to acknowledge but a significant portion of funding (inaudible). Funding or even development finance. And of financing the kind of clinical development that entails, you know, (inaudible) industries like mining that involves displacement of communities and what kinds of human rights abuses that we see that exacerbate, you know, the impacts on women and girls and, you know, nonbinary communities.

So, we cannot speak of transparency such as the financing without also speaking about these transparency of, you know, human (inaudible) that carry out like with some of these development funds. So, I'll stop there because I know you have a few other questions, but I think those are some of my thoughts to that question, yeah.

MR. INGRAM: Let me ask you another quick question in that report suggest that many women's organizations and feminist movements lack both the capital and skills to interact with existing gender finance data.

And we've got a question from the audience that the situation of women has become even more precarious with the effects of COVID-19 pandemic. And how can women have the opportunity to access sufficient resources? And why is it so important to include grass roots feminist activists in the production, analysis and discussion around gender financing? Why is it so important that they be involved?

MS. DOLKER: Yeah. And I think, you know, again, you know, more and more sort of empirical research findings shows that the autonomous mobilization of feminist in the communities and the grass roots. It is truly a critical factor accounting for a policy change especially when it's around gender equality.

That political party, the women in government or even factors like national wealth. So, it is not a matter of I think political of sort of inclusion per se, but really around

policy effectiveness, transparency and accountability. Sort of the building blocks for a functioning democracy.

And now with recent sort of announcements and pledges for over, you know, $40 billion coming to gender equality and women and girls, I think it is really critical that funders of course follow through and share where their monies going? When? To whom? You know, where funds.

But I think funders should also be truly accountable to feminist's movements who ensure that demands for gender equality are transformative, intersectional. Just are kept alive for the long haul and generationally.

And so, feminist movements I think will continue to (inaudible) that these new funding commitments are directly reaching grass roots feminist groups in the global (inaudible) and that it is not just doing business as usual, doing development as usual, which I think many of us in this sector has just been very familiar with the kinds of failures the development sector has brought for local (41:24).

So, I think it is truly critical. And I think Sally also mentioned a (inaudible) feminist activists that being transparent is not just sharing power -- not just sharing information but truly about sharing power. And I think that's what transparency for me more or less goes down to is that sharing power and letting go and compromising.

And that connects to a sort of (inaudible) research agenda who sets that -- who has the resources and the privileges to sit and even conceptualize research questions in the first place and on whose terms? And for many local feminist groups, I think working on data research would be considered an incredible privilege because so many communities and activists are getting displaced, criminalized, assaulted and many times just merely trying to survive especially in the context of COVID.

So, we have to truly be honest I think about how and when is aid first alignment with the political project at the grass roots for organizations. And for me, the data from the report is incredibly awesome and thank you for the team for working so hard over

the last year and a half. You're doing that to shine a light on the problem of the lack of funding.

But I would also, you know, bring in that political element which I think George and Sally both have mentioned is that that question. In addition, to sort of the capacity and the skills and sort of operational pieces, right? And so, how can we be really honest about the problem of the lack of data versus -- and whether the problem is a lack of political will.

And how do we (inaudible) to build that political will and so I think -- and consider those cases, I think data might not necessarily help us if we are not facing the actual political opposition and obstacles to feminist agendas in the first place.

So, I think these are much deeper conversations that I think that all of us will (inaudible) about gender equality should be having. And I look forward to doing that. So, thank you for including and inviting us.

MR. INGRAM: Yeah. And so, you've noted that a lot of this eventually comes down to power and politics and particularly political will.

So, I would like next to turn to Michele Sumilas. She has a range of experience in development from prior positions as a Senior Committee Staff in the U.S. Congress and a foundation in the NGO world and a prior standing in USAID.

She recently joined the Biden administration, the senior policy position at USAID. Is an assistant to the administrator for the Bureau of Policy Planning and Learning.

Michele, President Biden's budget request for 2022, gender equality is a strong priority and includes ending gender-based violence and supporting survivors, expanding access to family planning, healthcare services and increasing worker protection against discrimination based on gender identity and sexual orientation.

How will the government's agenda for gender equality be implemented by AID and how will data fit into that picture?

MS. SUMILAS: Well, George, I want to say thank you so much for hosting

this event. And I want to thank Sally and her team of Publish What You Fund for publishing this report.

I am new to USAID in this role and PPL and I'm just learning in depth about these issues around data and how they work and what USAID has been doing.

Let me just start my comments with a few thoughts based on your question. First of all, I think the Biden/Harris administration has demonstrated that we have a strong commitment to gender equity and equality at home and abroad. The new executive order that established the White House Gender Policy Council sent that message I hope to everybody. And the gender USAID will be working with that council to do a new gender strategy as well as update our own.

I also want to just highlight in that budget proposal, there was a new gender equity and equality action fund. In going back to some of Sally's comments about what happened to standalone money that is focused on these issues. I wanted just to say that that money is actually very much standalone money on these issues.

And we are really proud to say that that will be funding that will advance to equity and equality globally by promoting programming of all sorts, women's economic empowerment, GBB, other things. So just look to that fund which I think will be an important new addition to the U.S.G. tool kit on these issues.

As you know, USAID has been working for a long time to apply a gender lens towards digital data collection. We're one of a group of donors supporting the U.N.'s Women's Women Count program which increases the capacity of government statistic offices in over a dozen countries to gather gender data. We're really proud of that project.

And we heard at the Gender Equality Forum a new call for gender data. So, we're working internally, and we have a new gender data activity which will be conducting an internal and external analysis of our network to determine recommendations and best practices related to gender data within USAID especially as it relates to digital access issues and infrastructure issues.

I would also just say that we will also continue to try to a close the digital divide for projects like the Women Connection Challenge which directly confronts the social barriers and identifies solutions to make sure that women have access to digital tools.

So, I just say these are just a few examples of the things that we are doing. We are very committed to this issue. Our team has been working for a long time with some of the folks on the screen here and we look forward to next steps.

MR. INGRAM: Nice to hear in response to a couple of others that you've got the political will to move ahead in this area.

An important finding therefore is that many gender equality stakeholders including some donor's own staff seem to lack the capacity to engage with stakeholders to utilize quality gender financing data. The report finds that especially grass roots organizations and nationally NGOs are often unaware of the data that donors like USAID report.

As a donor, how does AID encourage conversations with global partners around data to assist in the design and implementation of gender programs? And what are AID's plans to increase local ownership?

MS. SUMILAS: So, thank you very much for the question. Again, you're hitting on the key issues. I think, you know, USAID is very committed to sustainable development and we know that sustainable development means that women and girls and others need to be included but women and girls particularly in that development work to make sure that it sticks, that it stays and that it becomes part of the DNA of the communities in which we are working and their systemic change.

We also know that it needs to be -- that development needs to be built on local priorities, knowledge, expertise, lived experiences. And we need to build the capacity of those NGOs that we work with to be able to do that.

So, USAID does a lot of work around localizing our assistance and that will become more of a priority for the new administrator. Administrator Powers is very

committed to working with local organizations. Helping give them the tools and the

capacities and knowledge. Pulling the knowledge out of them that they probably don't even

know they have about how they could use this data and make that happen.

So, we know that we need to address those traditional power dynamics that

exist out there. But having the data available, making sure that donors like us and the

Canadians and others are prioritizing this will make sure that people understand this is

something that we need to focus on.

And I just want to thank our OECD colleagues for all the collaboration we

have with them on this issue because it's really important that there are standards that we all

can sign onto and work on together.

I just want to also say that, you know, as part of the G-7 process. There

was an announcement of a new initiative which we're calling the Build Back Better for the

World infrastructure partnership. And that will be a really important opportunity for us to take

advantage of because it focuses on three key areas, global health, climate and digital.

All of that infrastructure work has to be done with a gender lens and the

needs of women and girls need to be taken into account as that project is initiated. I just got

off a call with my G-7 colleagues talking about how we need to make sure that that is really

based in good data, good information and this is a way also to make things sustainable,

right? Because our local partners will be focused on it.

I also just want to highlight our new partner's initiative. As I said earlier,

we've been working across administrations to make sure that we have new opportunities for

local partners. And the new partnership initiative was initiated during the last administration

and we're proud to continue to support that as well as the targets to work with local

organizations in additional women and girl that are set through thus far.

Finally, maybe just a mission level example always makes the conversation

a little more interesting. And in Nepal, we have a civil society accountability project which

works with media and women's rights organizations there to strengthen their analysis of the

gender data that's available.

The budgets and expenditures, how that impacts women and girls and then advocate with local governments and the central government to make sure that they are sensitive to gender needs.

So, we're really happy to be supporting that. There's a whole set of work that we do that is both printed and online. We're increasing access and this has been particularly important during the COVID pandemic when people have had to do things online. So, I'm going to stop there and turn it over back to you. Thank you, George.

MR. INGRAM: Well, Michele, a last quick question to put something on what sounds like a very full plate already. Any plans for AID to start including the OECD gender marker scores in its IOD and its own portal data?

MS. SUMILAS: I am very pleased to be able to say yes that we are excited to announce that we do have plans to publish the gender marker more consistently across our platforms in the very near future. I ask for some definition on what near future means and we don't quite have a date or time, but we are working very hard to make sure that happens including in our IOD data.

So, when we launch USAID's new profile management system which has been in procurement and in development for a long time, but we're nearly finished, which the development information systems. We will be streamlining the process of assigning the gender markers and we'll be able to more precisely and consistently assign them.

I also just want to say that I think someone raised earlier the need for consistency across donors. And we're really excited and pleased to have worked with OECD, as I mentioned, on the development of that consistent guidance that was a recommendation of this report. And so, I think that's a good example of how we're working together across this work.

So, I want to thank -- I don't think people do this often, but also thank the advocacy community for their active work to really push us to do that work together over.

MR. INGRAM: I know you've always been supportive of keeping public accountability on what USAID and what public entities do so we appreciate what you've laid down here and we'll be following. So, thank you, Michelle.

MS. SUMILAS: Excellent. Thank you, George. I do need to jump off in just a few minutes so I don't know if there are any last comments you need from USAID. I appreciate being included. We all appreciate being included in this important effort. It's so consistent with this administration's priorities.

MR. INGRAM: No. You've covered what's going to be my last question and that is what is the one thing you can do? And I think you've put more than one on the table, so I think you've covered that question. Thanks, Michele.

MS. SUMILAS: Thank you so much. Our team has been very busy. I want to thank Andy and others who are working this hard every day with all of you to make it possible. Thanks. Bye-bye.

MR. INGRAM: Bye-bye. Now, I'm going to turn to Marijn Wiersma. She has a background in sustainable and inclusive finance in Africa and with the FMO with a particular focus on what drives people and on unlocking the potential of women and girls. She currently serves as Interim Gender Lead at CDC.

Marijn, could you please briefly introduce the 2X Challenge and what it means to have a 2X project? And as you start, please correct my pronunciation of your first name which I've been working on, but I still don't have it down right.

MS. WIERSMA: You are forgiven, George. It's a difficult Dutch name. Marijn. Marijn remember?

Okay. Thank you for giving me the floor. Thanks for the important work done on the report. And let me talk to you a bit about 2X and 2X Challenge.

That story started in 2018 at the G-7 when the G-7 countries decided to have their development finance institutions rally around the common goal. And at the G-7 in 2018 in Canada, a target of $3 billion U.S. dollars was sent to go towards gender finance.

Fast forward to early this year, we got the numbers back and instead of $3 billion, which seems outrageous at the time, $7 billion has been generated or has been channeled through other profiles of the DFIs to gender finance. And a new commitment of $15 billion has been announced at the recent G-7 for the next two years.

So, what does that mean to your question, George? To have a 2X project? So 2X came up -- and we're talking data today. I think 2X came up with four very simple to follow criteria metrics around leadership employments, women as entrepreneurs and women as consumers. And there's a simple rationale and you can find it on the 2X Challenge website.

I understand if I share in the screen, participants won't particularly see it, but look it up, 2Xchallenge.org and then the criteria. It's a project that is in development bank finances adheres to two of those criteria. It qualifies for 2X and goes towards that target that we just mentioned.

So, I think this talks to what, Sally, you were saying in the beginning that it is all about sharing data in order to align and to stretch scarce resources.

Also, I would like to say that these criteria are aligned with Lisa as you already mentioned. We'll be aligned with OECD DAC gender marker as well as the U.N. women economic environment principles. So, we're trying to really collaborate to work together.

The topic of today's conversation I think is transparency. What we are doing is sharing a lot within the DFIs with this conversation and this report makes us realize that there's more we can do to share externally. And back to you, George.

MR. INGRAM: Thank you. Well, we seem to be getting some very positive news out of this event. AID is going to start using the marker and reporting on it. The 2X is going to start aligning with it. That's really good.

But further on, the report finds that it remains especially difficult to find reliable and detailed information about DFI's 2X funding because the 2X secretary does not

disclose information about 2X commitments publicly nor do many DFIs clearly and consistency publish information about their projects to their own platforms such as project results.

How can the 2X Challenge and its members encourage greater transparency and detailed information about the specifics about how 2X has mobilized funding and the impact of these investments?

MS. WIERSMA: That's a nice challenging question. As I said, I think we are doing a fairly good job of sharing internally amongst the DFIs, which in and of itself is news. I'll put it that way.

What we are now acutely aware of is that we can do more externally. I think this is a learning journey that we're collectively on with donors but also with (inaudible) from more of an activist background. It's very good to hear your story. I think there are different worlds we're trying to connect here because in the end all wants to work towards the same thing.

So, what can we do? Well, we can engage in this conversation within the 2X community. Maybe I can also speak on behalf of CDC, which is where I work, the U.K. development bank. So, we are looking at -- beginning this year, we said 2X as a screening tool on our insurance actions. And we are exploring a 2X target. And once we feel comfortable with what we can actually commit to and have it be a stretch target, but also be achievable, we will start to communicate externally.

So, this is what from a CDC perspective we are now exploring. And this is definitely a conversation that we will have going forward within the 2X steering committee.

MR. INGRAM: Right. So that's good to hear. And thanks for sharing that information with us.

Next, we will go to Amanda Austin. She is head of Policy and Advocacy at Equal Measures 2030. She's focused on fostering feminist program partnerships to better access, understand and use gender data to transform policy and investment for girls and

women in their diversity.

So, Amanda, the report suggested that there was currently a lack of engagement and coordination between donors, donor platforms and local actors in feminist movements working on gender equality. Tell us a little bit about Equal Measures' mission and work and how this new research supports your mission.

MS. AUSTIN: Thanks for inviting me today, George. It's a pleasure to be with all of you. Equal Measures 2030 is a partnership, a collaboration of national, regional and global leaders and organizations from feminist networks, civil society, international development and the private sector.

And we came together around a belief that data can expose inequality and injustice and motivate change and drive accountability. I think that's shared really by everyone who has spoken so far.

Our work is divided into three key strands and they each touch on important areas in this report and in the work of my fellow panelists. And that includes developing and disseminating demand driven data to support gender advocates, strengthening the capacity of those advocates to use gender data and working as a collective, as a partnership to advocate for a greater political commitment and funding on gender equality.

So really at times with this research and in so many different ways, but what jumps out to me is unsurprisingly this emphasis on data engagement. And I think it's always important to come back to why are we all gathering this data in the first place? You know, we've mentioned, you know, every quarter having to come back and do that.

And I think it can be easy to forget that of course we're doing that not so that it can sit on a shelf or so it can sit in a report, but so that it's used. It's useful. And there's so many angles to that so I'll just pick a couple.

And I think one of them that really jumped out to me from this research is really working with data users from the start to design the data collection processes, to choose the research questions. And my friend and colleague, Tenzin, really touched on this.

But that is again coming back to a question of power.

If data users and data producers are right from the start working together to define what's needed in order to do the advocacy, what's needed to know what change is going to be most useful and most effected then that's going to be more useful, more usable data from the start. And we see that being piloted really brilliantly.

For example, in Kenya between the Ministry of Women, Kenya National Bureau of Statistics and Civil Society actors like our partner groups in Kenya that are designing the new time use surveys. And that can draw on great expertise of course from statisticians.

And also, from the Civil Society actors who have been gathering this kind of information from grass roots women who have the deep knowledge about the way in which they are using their time and the way that is impacting their rights and wellbeing.

And then really the other one to jump out at me and it's kind of jumping all the way to the sort of data value chain. And that's really what I would like to call it kind of data translator role. So, it's thinking about the particular staff working with donors in communication agencies, data journalists, universities and advocates themselves who can help demystify data.

And that's a journey that a lot of advocates are on. You know, we've been working on this with our partners in Kenya and (inaudible) through the projects that Louise Holt mentioned as well as in our six other focus countries. And from these gender equality advocates, we know the desire to use data is there. The desire to unpack it and to visualize it is there, but sometimes what we really need is just some support in order to demystify that giant spreadsheet to try to understand what is the key start here? What is it trying to tell me? And how can I package that up in a way that's going to be compelling a policymaker that I'm trying to influence or engage or the general public that I'm trying to get to understand more about what this means?

And I think that's a really key part of this data engagement chain that the

report is talking about.

MR. INGRAM: I would also add at your organization, the website has a treasure trove of data on gender equality. I came across it last year when I was writing a report and I was very fortunately to find it and to use it so thank you for that data on gender equality that you've got up there.

So last week's gender equality forum, public, private organizations made a range of commitments on investing in gender data and feminist movements. Delta and our audience noticed makes the point of where's the accountability? Too often organizations make these commitments but there's no mechanism to track whether or not they're fulfilling those commitments.

What steps can international donors and data platforms take to engage local actors through the data cycle and to increase accountability?

MS. AUSTIN: Thanks for that question, George. And to Delta for raising this and also for referencing that our gender advocate data have, George, I'm really glad that that was just a helpful resource for you as well.

You know, accountability is such a tough, sticking point. And I was delighted to hear that colleague from OECD mention that perhaps you're going to be engaging in this accountability workstream because the honest answer is, we don't know yet how that's going to work for gender equality.

I think for me one of the big questions for accountability is always whose voice is counting when we're deciding whether progress is happening or not. We've got big datasets collected on the data platforms that have been discussed today by the U.N., by the ones that Equal Measures 2030 uses for its STG gender index. And these are really powerful measures, but I think for true accountability they have to be complemented by perspectives from those who are closest to the action, closest to that impact, who are really seeing day by day, week by week winds of change or backlash.

And that's why Equal Measures 2030 was really thrilled to launch with Arrow

Fem Net Equality Fund, CREA and IWDA, a collective commitment to explore a new poll survey of feminist movements. This is meant to be a contribution to this accountability ecosystem around generation equality and work with feminist movements from the start to design a regular survey but captures their expert insights. Their finger on the pulse information that can really tell us how and whether change is happening in a way that can be much more timely and much more insightful and much more in depth than if we wait only to look at big outcome indicators or the change that might only be seen only every two to three to four years when those big datasets are being refreshed and collected.

So, I think this coming back to "who are we trying to be accountable to" and "whose voices are we listening to" is crucial in that. And that's why we're so excited to be a part of this collective commitment.

MR. INGRAM: Thank you, Amanda. We have five or six minutes left. I have a final question to each of you. And don't be afraid of repeating what you said before. Just make it very quick.

What's the one -- you all are committed to this topic. What's the one thing that your organization or collectively can do to move the needle in this arena? I'm going to start with Amanda and go in reverse order.

MS. AUSTIN: So very quickly. Please support and fund gender equality advocates. And by those, I mean the ones in government. The ones on this panel working in the private sector and the development sector and civil society to know what gender data are out there? How best to use them? And how to add their own data and evidence to show a more complete picture of where progress is and isn't happening for girls and women in all their diversity.

MR. INGRAM: Thank you. Marijn?

MS. WIERSMA: Thank you. Thank you, Amanda. Mine is very brief to encourage and have the conversation within 2X about sharing our data publicly.

MR. INGRAM: Right. Tenzin?

MS. DOLKER: Yeah. I would just reiterate just centering grass roots women's rights organizations, feminist organizations, gender justice organizations from the conceptualization period all the way to the implementation and start early and think about -- yeah, really bring home the (inaudible). And not assuming that there are also (inaudible) kind of building those trust and relationships in the long haul and not just sort of, you know, on the whims of the political (inaudible) intentionally kind of prioritizing that.

MR. INGRAM: Lisa?

MS. WILLIAMS: Yeah. I tend to agree more with Tenzin that transparency is publishing, right? I thought that was an excellent thought.

And I think that in that vein, it would be really great for us to work together with different types of actors in this community to think about the ways forward on accountability from the Generation Equality Forum and just in our work more broadly. And then to say that we're obviously here at the OECD with the international assistance committee and my team ready to support organizations to perform effectively as possible with a simple system to try and provide learning and progress. Thank you.

MR. INGRAM: And Louise?

MS. HOLT: Thank you. You know, I fully support everything that others here have said. And I think just circling back to the Generation Equality Forum and, Amanda, your points and, George, yours.

I mean I think that we really don't want to miss this moment and the opportunity of Generation Equality Forum and that $40 billion to really think about what we're doing. I know for us, one of the things that we want to move forward on for Canada is the collective commitment from AC6 to put in place a global alliance for feminist movements and organizations. AWID as a key partner in setting that up with board foundation and equality funds.

And the intended that it's not offending alliance, but it's really a learning alliance to help ensure that more and better funding moves to women's rights organizations,

feminist organizations. Those organizations at the front line of advancing gender equality.
But also, to make sure that they lead on the local gender data collection efforts. So I'll a
shameless plug to say that all of you are welcomed to join in the alliance and we look
forward to working with you in that capacity.

MR. INGRAM: We accept. We accept shameless plugs here. And let me
just add to what you said. And that is in a prior incarnation when I was working on education
policy and data. What I learned is that quality data presented in the right form so that
policymakers can understand it can be powerful and can help create that political will. It is
so important.

Let me just wrap up by highlighting the principal findings of the report and
this discussion. And that is how critical it is for delivering on commitments, on holding
governments and donor's accountability, on creating real movement towards global gender
equality and tracking impact.

And quality data is fundamental, but it will only be useful through
engagement with a broad range of stakeholders ensuring that they have sufficient capacity
to use and contribute to this information.

My thanks to Publish What You Fund for a report and for these panelists for
a robust discussion. I'm sure there's going to be a lot of follow up among you and with you
from this. And my best wishes for everybody to have a good day and a good evening.
Good night.

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