

Transcript – Equity and Gender-based Violence - Australia Pacific, November 29, 2021

Jacqui De Lacy: Okay, we might get going. First of all, I'd like to welcome everyone to this panelist session we have on equity and gender-based violence, linking prevention and response. My name is Jacqui De Lacey, I'm managing director of Abt Associates in Australia, and it's my privilege to be able to moderate this panel today. I'm doing this panel session where I'm, although we're all virtual, I'm actually doing the panel session from camera in Australia, which is Ngunnawal land and I would like to pay my respect to elders past present and emerging. And I'd like to extend those that respect to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people who are joining us for this session today.

We've got a great line up. We have three incredible speakers who will talk to us about their direct experience, working on gender-based violence across the region and I will introduce each of them shortly. But, first, a little bit of housekeeping for our panelists. We're just reminded for everyone to be muted unless you're speaking just to avoid any feedback to everyone who is listening online. We do have the chat function, which on Webex. So please click on the chat box if you have questions that you want to ask the panelists, please put those questions into the chat box. And Leisa Gibson who's from Abt Associates who's helped coordinate, will help facilitate us getting those questions at the end of the session.

As you will know we're here as part of the 16 days of activism against gender-based violence, which is an annual international campaign to call for the prevention and elimination of violence against women and girls worldwide, this year's global campaign theme, *Orange, the World - End Violence Against Women Now* - and I'm trying to wear orange. This is, this is my orange shirt aims to mobilize all networks, civil society and women's rights organizations, government partners, schools, universities, the private sector, including companies, like Abt Associates, sporting clubs and associations as well as individuals to mobilize all of those groups to do 3 things, to:

- One, advocate for inclusive, comprehensive and long-term strategies and programs and resources to prevent and eliminate violence against women and girls in public and private spaces and prioritizing the most marginalized women and girls in that process.
- The second thing, we're all being mobilized to do is to amplify the success stories. And I hope we hear a few of them today that demonstrate that violence against women and girls is preventable. So, we really want to showcase effective strategies and interventions to inspire all of us around what works and to scale that up.
- And the third thing we want to do is promote the leadership of women and girls in their diversity and their meaningful participation in policy making and in decision making from global to local networks. And it's wonderful to have three really powerful and talented women presenting with us today.

During the 16 days of activism against gender-based violence, Abt Associates I'm really proud to announce, is launching our gender equality, disability and social inclusion framework, or our GEDSI framework as we call it. As part of our company wide commitment to equity. Through this framework, we will work on broader gender equality targeting those most marginalized and deliberately promote the leadership of women and girls in this space. Preventing and responding to gender-based violence is strongly linked to challenging racism and harmful gender norms. and I know we're going to talk about some of those gender norms today, as well as promoting, disability rights and shifting the way we respond to disability. Abt's policies are part of our global efforts in violence against people of all genders.

Abt is a global company, and we operate in many countries around the world, and in communities across those countries and regions, and today we have three amazing panelists one from the Philippines one from PNG and

one from Fiji. So, we've focused on panelists from our part of the world from Southeast Asia to hear about their experiences on gender-based violence.

So, let me introduce the three amazing panelists that we have and then we will get into a discussion with and I'll stop talking and start listening.

So, Gina Houg Lee is joining us from Fiji. So, Gina has spent 21 years of her professional career in and the Pacific. And for the past 11 years, she was employed at the Regional Rights Resource Team or Triple RT is it's called, which is the human rights program of the Secretariat of the Pacific Community. which works right across the Pacific. Her background is in training in gender and human rights and while at the Pacific community, she provides program oversight of the violence against women project on addressing violence against women in legislative change. Gina is a former chair of the Fiji Women's Rights movement and has served on the board of leadership, Fiji and Asia, Pacific Forum for Women, Law and Development Regional Council. Gina is currently undertaking gender-based violence costing project in Fiji together with Abt Associates, and has recently been appointed the chair of the women's Fiji women's fund for board of trustees. And is the Pacific's first national women's fund providing grants and capacity development support to diverse women, girls and gender nonconforming groups, networks, and organizations to further their work in gender justice and human rights. So, it is a great pleasure to welcome you, Gina with joining us today.

The second panelists, I'd like to introduce you all to is Carmela Castro or Mia, as she prefers to be called from the Philippines. Mia is an attorney, and she's an expert on children's rights, women's issues, and working with nonprofit organizations. She has over 15 years' experience in the areas of family, law and criminal litigation as a management executive and attorney and Mia has a lot of solidified her reputation within the industry and in 2016 received the outstanding young men and women award. By her contributions to society on law and child protection during the course of her career Mia has been at the forefront of women and children's issues, having successfully prosecuted, dozens of child abuse, child sex trafficking and violence against women and children cases in 2010.

Mia was also the recipient of an award from the Philippines, National Police in recognition of her significant contributions to the enhancement and investigation of anti-human trafficking cases across the Philippines. Mia was the managing director of Consuelo Zobel Alger foundation one of the Philippines most established philanthropic organizations. She also headed the Manila office of International Justice Mission, a human rights organization based in Washington. D. C. Mia is also a member of the Philippines Inter Country Adoption Board under its inter country placements committee.

So welcome Mia.

And the third panelists that we've got the pleasure of listening to today is Nancy Aboga, who I'm very proud to say is one of our own, she's an Abt Associates employee. Nancy is the senior program manager for gender equality and social inclusion at the Australian government funded PATH program, which is the PNG Australia Transition to Health Program in Papua New Guinea during the course of her career.

Nancy has had a strong focus on gender-based violence, prevention response and empowerment of women and girls having been involved in the water and sanitation program, which have a proven record of continuously building capacities of partners, and rural communities, on gender, based violence, prevention, response and community led total sanitation. In addition to this. Nancy contributed to a gender, based violence, program, targeted at schools which focused on adolescent health. Nancy has over 12 years of experience working for international based, in on programs with a focus on health agenda, and more, specifically around gender-based

violence prevention, gender-based violence, response, male advocacy programs, contraception, family, planning and adolescent, sexual, reproductive health.

So, three, amazing panelists all with a lot of really direct frontline experience working on prevention and response to gender-based violence, lots of experience between them. I can't wait to hear their stories.

So, to start off. Can you tell us a little about the work that you do in? And I'll go to Gina first.

Gina Houn Lee: Bula Vinaka, thank you, Jackie for that introduction. I'm actually here in New Zealand and not in Fiji, but in this global world, we, of course move around in the Pacific, but anyway, Nisam Bula Vinka, Ki Ora, Talofa, Namaste, Talofa Lava, Kia Orana, Malo Lelei Fakalofa Lahi, Halo Olgeta, Kia Ora, Warm greetings and hello to everyone. I've been, I started my work in the area of gender and development by working at the PG women's rights movement. This work was really as a, in, you know, working in terms of advocacy and using, the convention on the elimination of all forms of discrimination against women as it's a framework and it was more of an advocacy, lobbying organization, strongly promoting the human rights of women and then my work on GBV is then when I move to a SBC Triple RT and this was, working in the area of, advocating and lobbying for comprehensive, valid violence against women legislation, this was, of course, the inadequacies of the laws in our Pacific region. In that, you know, in some instances we had no specific protection orders written into the law. This work was on building up networks and building up civil society organizations to demand for a better legislation, better comprehensive violence against women legislation. Now I'm doing some work on looking at the costing of violence against women, that is the economic cost of violence. But then what is it that we can cost out in terms of national measures in Fiji to look at, how is it that we can look at whichever respective settings, and how is it that we can build up, what would be the cost so that it can form a tool to, encourage and address, within the systemic ways of, you looking at gender, responsive, budgeting and planning. That's just a little bit about me and my work.

Jacqui DL: Thanks a lot, Gina I've got to remember to unmute myself every time. It would be lovely MIA. If you could just tell us a little bit about the work you've done in, and then we'll get to some more specific questions to go a bit deeper.

Mia Castro: Okay hi, Jacqui, thank you. Very much for having me. Mabu Hi, to everyone, as we say here from sunny Philippines. So, my name is Mia Castro and I've had the privilege of working in the space of gender-based violence from the standpoint of prevention, protection of survivors and victims and prosecution as well. I've really concentrated more on the space leading teams that would educate communities, families, young girls in communities and working as well with survivors are victims as they go through the effects of trauma caused by gender-based violence and the other side. The other end of the spectrum, which is equally important, prosecution law enforcement ensuring that perpetrators have the account. So, thank you for having me her and special. hello to my fellow panelists such an honor to be here in this room and all of you.

Jacqui DL: Thank you Mia. Nancy could I get you to tell us a little bit about the work that you've been doing on gender-based violence in PNG.

Nancy Aboga: Hi everyone from PNG. Gupela Day, its midday, so means good day. So, my work in is specific to prevention and response from the health perspective. So more to want to address the agenda notes society loans within embedded within the community and the approached that was taken, we took up the ecological model. So, psychological ecological model, specifically focused on the tipping points as to where the issues are and how the issues are addressed and who should do that so, working with individuals to communities, homes and then you have the institutions and the policies. In PNG the level of GBV may be comparable to others but are similar to

experiences from other community as well. So, to do this and be more effective in, responding to community prevention at a community level. We got so much support from the stakeholder, specifically the government, when I say government I'm referring to the specific health agencies that are very supportive to the idea of any violence against women and addressing violence against women. So we have a support from FSVAC, Families, Sexual Violence, Action Committees in country that support the work of, as well the initiatives taken up by the NGOs. And then we have the National Department of Health to support. So, every work that we did was not just being alone. What we saw was when you went in partnership with the others, you increase the ways of women. You'll be able to address that so that's the space that I worked in when it comes to the community prevention.

When it comes to the health response specifically, so building the capacity of health worker. So, most of my time we're spending supporting the National Department of Health to develop tools and capacity building. So mostly development of materials, there are experts in PNG we have supported in that work and they've framed the modules, the training materials to ensure that the capacities of each of the records in specific provinces addressed the skills addressed as well. So, apart from just responding to the health workers, we also responded to law enforcement specifically the police. The role in there was to ensure that gender-based violence is not seen as normal. It must be seen as an issue for the country. It has to be seen as an issue to be addressed by the law itself as well so, those kinds of a movement that we had, we made, tried to change the idea of the way people think. They have to think GBV is not normal, so those, different dimensions that we took, tried to bring all the voices at different levels, come together to address gender-based violence. So, gender-based violence is normal. We want to say that it's not normal. So women have to say gender-based violence it's not normal and we have to speak up. So, at various levels of GBV women say they take different options they either move to the silent mode, or they either go to other people they trust, and there are others as well, so it's not normal gender violence is not normal. So I'm going to talk more on that, uh, when the moderator has more of the questions that I can address.

Jacqui DL: Thanks so much Nancy. I mean, it might be good to stay with you now and talk a little bit more about those gender norms. I mean, I think it's really powerful. The first that you've raised, which is to shift, everyone's perceptions that gender-based violence everywhere, but in PNG, in anyway, where you work is not normal, and encouraging women to speak out about that. But could you talk a little bit more about these unhelpful norms that you're trying to address and what are you doing with other groups besides women who are potentially the victims of violence.

Nancy A: Thanks Jackie. So, I'd love to continue. Exclusion or effect, exclusion is seen at different levels. So, in Southern countries see exclusion as leaving someone behind, not getting that service. So, when it comes to the traditional norms of living a woman beyond in decision, making women not getting involved in the state, they should say the West, they should say, but they're not allowed because of the traditional values. So, when I say traditional values, these are values that remain within the cultural systems. And if a woman is married, they are tied to the tradition, tied to the tribes, and the norms that are within the system.

So, the barriers, that are leading to women, not speaking up women being silent is also within the values that they hold on to, to say that "I'm a woman I live in this system". So, in other aspect it will be seen as something like ... they think it's normal, but the woman was feeling the pain. It's not normal. Men may think it's normal, but when a woman is feeling the pain thinks it's normal, it's not safe for them. So that happens within the space where we as women face within the communities, within our domestic families. But then when this goes out to the community, there are gender norms that surrounds it. Especially when bride price comes in. So, the effect the bride price may take women is as a commodity to say that, I paid bride price, so you have expectations to meet. So, we women meet those expectations. So, some of us want to fight that off. We want to say bride price is something that brings families together, to appreciate this, an exchange in marriages and to encourage that. Yes,

we live as families in the societies in PNG. But we should do away with the norms that say that you have expectations to meet the obligations for family. So those are some of the norms.

But when it comes to participation at the levels of socio economic or participation for women, access to finance and the capacity to be built. I mean, they have that opportunity to participate in making money. They need to help and submit for themselves, and the families that they'll take care of. So, when I say families and we're looking at vulnerable women, we're looking at a woman with disability, and those who are already exposed to gender-based violence and all sort of victims, specifically the girls. So, young girls are going to school. Maybe in the rural communities, where accessibility by road. We have those geographical locations where girls are not able to access those services - to come to school. So, we would think that should come to school, but they may not because the traditions would say that "she can't go to school, the boy has to go to school".

So, some of those many situations still exist within the space that I'm working in. And also, in other ways. From my years of working from since 2010 to now, there are changes that happen along the way. So, previously, women with men would say, GBV normal. They will take it as a normal and just recently we see the women coming out and saying it's not normal. I should go and access the service. So we encouraged more investment into women, more in more saying it's a woman I can do it kind of attitude. A woman feel empowered to say that "I can access the service". So, the battle of, uh, really fighting of the cultural norms. The traditions that we see I believe it's the values itself if they can fight all the traditions, it's the value that they could because at one point they might say, yes, I can. But add something else it will bring them back to their 'normal' again. So, to do things out of the odd, like, to do things for themselves. Maybe specifically to save themselves from violence that leads to fatal consequences. So fatal consequences - I am referring to a death, a permanent disability, permanent implement of the body. So, those kinds of things that are really, personally affecting humans daily living, especially for girls, especially for women. For some situations, women do fight for their lives. They tried to come out of it.

I worked in the space of family planning where you have women giving birth one after the other and that's not proper spacing. At some point, a woman would have to say, I will take family planning, I have to go for family planning. So those are case scenarios that they are found in the rural communities where the tribes or the families will have to decide for a woman, whether to take a family planning or not. So actually, I would say it's the decision itself that they have to participate in. Women have to be given the power to say that "I can do it then I will take on family planning service. I will go to GBV service. I won't be silent." But then it's the support system that is in place. Now, I'm referring to the referral pathway systems.

Now, if we let the confidence in our own service provision of space. So, if we say, "I cannot trust this service, and I can't take it, because I don't feel confident about it". So I was thinking that, at some point of programs would want to support the policy in as well as the health service system, then it will make a woman feel safe to get take the service they need. There's lots of issues, like the financial issues they could have access to, but they don't have the capital to start off with. So, they could be empowered - once they empower they will be able to stand up and say "I can do it". I believe in this space that we are working on gender-based violence and gender inclusion. Somewhere some where there's someone is saying, even now that I'm speaking. They want to feel safe and to feel good about the service.

So that's what I want to feel about Abt Associate as well. When I'm with you in the space of an organization. "How do I feel safe in my own organization?" Because when I come from outside and I'm in the organization itself, how does it help me out? So, I can reach out to those services safely. Some of the things that are very much associated with fear with existing service, associated with fear, GBV associated with shame the shame itself.

Someone may be ashamed of accessing that service. So those are some of the norms that I just said, maybe, but I can share that country data just now because it just this is generally sharing what I feel as a woman, and I believe that a woman are feeling the same. You just want to be feeling safe, feel empowered and even if someone has a disability, the woman with a disability, you can say I can stand up and say something. The courage to say something, courage to make a decision. Yeah, I believe in those systems.

Jacqui DL: That's great. Nancy. You touched on many, really interesting and relevant points here. You've talked about cultural practices, or how cultural practices are interpreted in harmful ways for women. You've talked about the really critical importance of empowerment of women and raising women's voice and agency. You've talked about access to services, whether that's financial systems, so, women can be financially independent or education for girls. You've also talked, which, I think is highly relevant around how we all have an obligation to make our workplaces safe and what we can do to support our own workforce, get access to good services and the challenges of service delivery.

I might throw it to Gina and Mia, because no doubt some of these things really resonate with each of you. So, I'd love to get your reflections on this broader issue of the sort of broader gender norms that are affecting or that are underpinning the problems of gender-based violence. Mia I think that you are okay.

Gina HL: Okay, no, I was just going wanted to say that how what Nancy has highlighted, was, you know, in, you know, coming from the Pacific. This is a really urgent problem. I mean, we have such a high rate. I mean, we have the fact that, you know, there is the global, average of intimate partner, violence, physical, and, or sexual violence of women is that 30% and yet Pacific women report higher levels of violence. We are looking at, you know, of the 12 countries that have undertaken this research, you know, Kiribati is at 68% as 64% Solomon Islands, 64% and Vanuatu 60%. You know, this is really urgent and very important this is the urgent problem that we have to deal with in our region.

I would just reiterate again, that whole what Nancy was sharing in terms of that whole cultural, and, basis of the norms. Like, you know that kind of in the household at the private domain in the private space. If we can contribute this, these norms that, you know men are the head of household that they are the controlling point of the head of household. Then it becomes part of these cultural acceptance, and it becomes, you know, you know, statements that people say "Well, it's in our culture to hit women if they don't do the housework". You know, hitting, you know, not just men who, perpetuate that norm. But also, women then think that that's justified. That actually is a reason that they, you know, it's okay to be hit because they didn't, you know, put the food on table on time or that. They, you know, didn't come and be at home at the right time. So all these controlling behaviors, all these social norms that contribute once again to the suppression, or the fact that women are unable to be empowered or to be to have a voice.

I think I just wanted to highlight the role of the law or the legislation and how important it is to you know, try to, put in place this comprehensive violence against women, legislation because what you're trying to do is that when the law, is a very powerful tool because if the law is saying that this is a violation, that this is wrong this is how the law can respond that it actually is the responsibility of the police that it is, the responsibility of service providers to address this, the women in need or the victim of domestic violence. If you put that in place, you're actually making a structural change, you're trying to look at what, what can the system do to then address the very real problem that we have. So, I just wanted to reiterate that.

Jacqui DL: Gina, can I just ask a follow up question on that? Because I know when you work for the Pacific Community, you did a lot of work on trying to get the legislative basis, right across the Pacific. How is it now?

Like, when you look across the Pacific and look at the legislative protections for women and girls around gender-based violence, how is there still a lot of work to go or have we made a lot of..?

Gina HL: Totally, even that was my sort of, you know, I was so geared towards trying to change the legislation and support in this legislative change that. Actually, there has been that's the positive, you know, we have seen some shift and movement in that. Actually now you have legislation that, you know, allows to put in place protection orders, does allow being able to have a response, but it's not over because the harder work. We can pass these laws. The harder work is the implementation, rolling this out, getting a cultural shift within all the service providers. This this is this is ongoing. This is still the work that we have to do. So, I would have to say that the work is not done. We have to still continue. We have to be vigilant to see that when we say that, you know, the police officers are sensitized and trained - are they? Because they still exist in the system where they are affected by their own cultural norms so you have to retrain, rechange. You have to keep the work. So, I wouldn't say that it's over. It's actually even more harder that we now still have to manage and monitor the implementation of these laws.

Jacqui DL: Thanks, I mean, Mia, it would be good for you to get off mute. I mean, you I mean, one, it would be good to get your reaction to the broader issue of gender norms and how they're influencing this. But you've worked at the really at the front line of working with the justice system to ensure that where there are legal protections they're actually used to protect women and girls, but, love to hear from you on this.

Mia C: Yeah, thank you, Jackie. It's so interesting how we're so far away from Nancy and Gina, like, in terms of time and space, but our experience and insights are so similar and I'd like to start by just framing what I'm about to say that my experience on gender-based violence has really focused more on, on domestic violence against women, child, sexual abuse, incest, sex trafficking and through the years I've seen how girls, women, have always been here in the Philippines much more vulnerable to sex trafficking, sexual abuse of domestic violence,

The, the problem is very complex, and so, as we unpack it, we also need to be really open minded and take it from a social, ecological, system or framework as Nancy mentioned earlier. And what I've seen is that it's important as we look at interventions as we come up with policies as we come up with, you know, ensuring protection for victims. We really also need to get to the root of it. And I feel really privileged to have seen it up close, not from sort of an academic standpoint. But I saw how the victims how child abuse, how sexual abuse, how trafficking of women, how it's deeply rooted in inequality between men and women.

That, for me is really the core of it, so, for example, in my experience, we had a chance to rescue a lot of girls who were trafficked for sex and the reason that they became vulnerable to that is because, you know, the Philippines as a developing nation, there is a lot of poverty, and even in the homes, as the belong to families with lots of children, and the parents, because of limited resources, prioritize the education of the male children thinking that, you know, with limited amount of resources, they'd rather just put the boys to school. Because the boys could help out more and later on will be heads of their families, whereas for girls it will be okay for them to drop off. So, from that very point, right in itself, the growth in the, you know, especially in rural areas, coastal areas here are marginalized already and because they are their drop off from school. They're not educated. Then they become vulnerable to predictors the sex traffic or single community.

So it starts from there. And then you see so many layers of norms in society where there's still a very strong patriarchal culture that started with our country through colonial times and even until today,

even it's still very strong. Which basically just shows us that there's a strong belief, especially in farther flung area so that the males, the men are more superior here, it's basically that that there is headship of the men, and which brings women now to a lower level of just being subsumed under men. And so, it's this kind of thinking that makes it acceptable, even for very highly prominent people to come up, sometimes with misogynistic statements or think things that make it acceptable for women to just be treated as sources of entertainment or sex objects.

So these are like, the extreme things that I've seen, but at the same time, I've seen how these gender norms can actually, we have an opportunity to reframe them, and in my experience, it's really is important to go down to the community level and invest in empowering and widening the thinking, not only of girls, not only of girl children and telling them that they are stronger, equal they are empowered and they have the same human rights everyone, but investing in the empowering and widening the thinking of boys. Because many times I've seen even here in the Philippines in our circles. It's the women that are very much easier to invite, you know, to bring to the table, have these discussions and the men are, you know, like the boys or the men or fathers are busy working. But I think that's the part that's super important for me on the prevention side. I really think that, a lot of patience, and a lot of dynamic thinking has to be invested there because they are the future generation and there is, we've seen a lot of changes as well in that because ... teaching boys and girls start at home in communities then it will go a long way.

Jacqui DL: Great thanks, Mia. That's really rich addition. And I think that in particularly your comments around engaging men and boys is unsure relevant for everyone. We might move to the second question that I've got. Gina, which I'll direct to you in the first instance, but I'd really love to hear Nancy and Mia as comments responses as well. But how do you see more diverse, inclusive and local responses changing the GBV space?

Gina HL: I think that certainly, local responses. I mean, people deciding I think that's what's important in terms of, you know, I just wanted to pick up also on, Mia's point, the value of seeing some of these changes, I was just reflecting on, you know, this, the, the, the different powerful settings that we have. So in PNG, recently women the Fijiana which is the women's rugby team, they, recently won a ... they got the medal in the Olympics and we were just so thrilled with their, they did fantastic work. And it reiterated what can be done when you show, or you highlight, or you role model, groups that are in the in the sports setting, or you have powerful role models that, you know, girls can do all of this girls can empower and be empowered and be inspired, so I think those were some of the things I've thought in terms of, you know, education and the importance of, sports.

In terms of how is it that we can make sure that we have locally led changes and that we are involved in, in the process. I just want to highlight an example from when in sort of legislative change, we had included in our programming, the role of a consultative dialogue where we could, get people from various, groups, or groups that were marginalized. And they were involved in sharing with judges and sharing with magistrates - how is it that the law impacts them. That when they come to face the law that when they are trying to access services, how they are treated and how, how is it that they experienced the law?

So, I think some of these processes of making sure that people are included that you include them in hearing their voices, what is it that they, what are their experiences when you, making sure that those platforms or those processes are inclusive, then we will be able to hear their voices, then we will be able to design programs and, design responses that would meet the needs, especially of those who are, marginalized and excluded.

Jacqui DL: Thank you. Thanks, Gina. They are a couple of really good examples. I was wondering, Nancy and Mia. Do you have examples of where you've seen sort of really inclusive local responses have an impact on GBV?

Mia C: I'll go ahead. Yes. Yeah. Similar to Gina. I have seen how just response is really need to be local. Here, for example, in the problem of sex trafficking of children, of girls, sexual abuse, one of the ways that we've done in previous programs that I've led is doing it from what we call here a Bibinka approach, so a Bibinka in our culture is like a rice cake, a native rice cake, and it is cooked with charcoal from the top and the bottom. So, it always has to be this approach where, for example, we talk about the issues in the very local setting, you know, bringing together stakeholders, local police, local students, local teachers, local parents, local mayors, et cetera, and figuring out letting them understand, what are the issues surrounding children here and letting them come together and empowering and being participatory. So I see that it has to be participatory, it has to be empowering. It cannot be sort of moralizing or dictating because that just never works like, after a certain funding is done, then it's done too. But if it is something like, meeting the local community, where they're at and working alongside them. I see that that is much more effective.

And so that is in the, like, micro level, but I've also seen through the years that we cannot just limit our work to the community level. Because so much of the decision making, especially in our country, where lots ... where budgets of government are very centralized. A lot of advocacy needs to be done in the higher echelons of society as well. And so, through the years I've been very passionate about bringing the stories bringing the learnings that we have from the community, the realities of community to the highest levels of government.

So, one example would be partnerships that we've had with our court systems that are established and administered by our Supreme Court. So, throughout the country, we have family courts that hear cases of sexual violence and children and women, et cetera. And it's part of that education is opening the minds of the judges of the court personnel of the prosecutors of the realities of the survivors. Because it's all intertwined. The reason why some victims don't want to go forward is because they feel that once they go through the justice system that they're severely traumatized, there is stigma. And so, we can't just keep advocating down below in the micro level without advocating and opening the minds of the people who actually hold the keys for the wheel of justice to turn. So, we do a lot of engagement, we do a lot of capacity building and just sharing these stories and even basic little tools, like helping prosecution go smoother by, for example, providing anatomically correct dolls so that the children who are victims of violence, don't have to do it in a very painstaking and very humiliating way. So, things like that. So take cooking the rice cake from the very, very micro level, but at the same time, in the top level society in engaging and empowering participatory way.

Jacqui DL: Right. Thank you, Mia. That's enough. There's some great examples. Nancy, I know it'd be good to hear from you. I mean, when you started, you touched on the work that you were doing with, to sort of enable women to access services, but also the work you're doing, for example, with community health workers to strengthen their ability to provide services to women. But I'd love to hear your examples, some examples from you of what you've seen work at local levels.

Nancy A: Thanks, Mia and Gina and Jackie I think I'm really happy to hear from both of you the examples that you're sharing. I think some of those were already applied in PNG. But what might not be appealing, is the strengthening of those systems and those approaches that are already in there. Because if we were in an organizational setting, these are structured settings, where you can utilize the systems, the systems that can be able to address where the GBV cases are. So, it's not only study with the case, but it could also be the inequalities that are embedded in there. So, maybe the difference is in there that slowly, accumulates to the actual GBV.

So I was thinking from the experiences that I have maybe more into the system, so systems should integrate gender into their programs. The organizations should be inclusive of the gender programs and disability programs

to have more visibility. So, having visibility is the issue also seen because when you see, when we see women and if they ought to take on the silence as an option and if there is no mechanism to come out, and we might not be encouraging, if it's the women programs are not visible disability programs are not visible. So, people could have the space to speak because not everything you could report directly. There's a fear of, the fear that associates, the type of GBV that comes along with it. So, if you need more visible, there's a group of people they've talked about it then it's really, really encouraging for women to speak.

And then we have, I agree with Mia when you say engage boys, male engagements, I also work in male advocacy spaces, where, we utilize the opposite of the approaches, meaning that we cannot use the actual traditional male approaches the male norms. But do you see the different way, so I've used the example, like, there was a program called, *Safe Motherhood for Women* and I, I call it a *Safe Motherhood for Men*. So instead of teaching women, you have to teach men and the danger signs.

What is the, what is not safe for men? So, in PNG culture, we, we think that men are in control of the resources, they own the prestige, and the owner of "I'm a man, I can do this". So if you think you're a man, you protect your own women and support them in that manner. So, if you see that, they, they just signed this. I mean, how do you approach that danger sign to show that you are actually safe and you are so actually men engaging men, sexual health very important so that they themselves recognize their own opinions and they also recognize their families health me, especially the women. And if there's a girl child, then they could. So those are some kind of models that came along when it's, when you do a targeted messaging and targeted approach, but taking the opposite of the traditional, normal approaches.

So, like, what you said, we don't do education and don't do our awareness but you do something more transformative in the way you try to engage people. So, as it is gender, always evolves and it's always changing, it doesn't stay the same. Our approaches also need to change. Yeah, and yes, and then, where this new cases that come along approaches also change. like, the cases of, complex human trafficking, we have a little, number of human trafficking that it might increase later on, but for preparedness, we might as well learn from what the Philippines is doing for the country

And when I'm talking about visibility, I refer to, we don't really talk about women in leadership. So if we see a general issue of women participation, women involvement and leadership level women making decisions and women making decisions, you all on the senior positions. So, according to wellness organizations findings, 70% of women mix up the employment space in health, and in our GEDSI stocktake from the PATH program, we also have the similar findings with lots of women in the health space, but don't hold on to the senior roles. So, when you, we don't see women take senior roles we can't address because men cannot talk about it. Sorry I'll talk direct because I want to see that men talk about GBV. So, men give that space say that woman you've come and talk about GBV here. So, if we were to change those kinds of average different, we have behaviour change strategies, different strategies that come along alongside socio ecological model. So, sociological socio, ecological model that brings on prevention all the way to, influencing policies.

Jacqui DL: I've got a there's lots of questions coming in the chat. I can I get you to expand on one thing. So I've just got to follow up really? I don't want you to stop. There's a question that's coming around. How do we, what are some practical strategies to influence men in shifting norms? Even if that is to create the space for women to lead. What have you seen that's working in PNG.

Nancy A: For now, like, at this initial stage, I will not say, man, they've taken a huge role into saying women should participate in this. At this stage, we women asking men to give us that space so. In the stocktake that we too, the GEDSI Stocktake, men are saying women are facing GBV but where is the mechanism if they want to be

involved? In some of those discussions, another thing we saw was, males, we want the space to talk about the GBV issues, because they cannot mention that in front of women. So they have little space to address issues and whenever the questions arise, they could address it to women. So we have that space. So, I've seen that work in the community level where you have the mail engagement and the discussions are only let them in so it's only men led groups that talk about this. And then they eventually so what I've seen is the support. They don't get, they may like the information they need to know. So, lack of information is one of them. And they also like, the idea of where do they get a support to move on to address gender-based violence? Because they are men and most of the amendments, the agenda is a women's issue and only woman program kind of mentality. So I was thinking that maybe we should engage moment and increase the participation.

And then boys to learn at this stage, adolescents growing up. That's why, when we did the school based safe school program actually, the target was to boys, and they have to know starting from adolescent different stages that they come along with to understand the change in them. And they could be able to reflect that into the social change that they will be going through. So, I was thinking more male engagement.

Jacqui DL: Thank you, Nancy. We've nearly run out of time. We've had so much in the chat. It's obviously a topic that our audience is really passionate about and I know we're just going to touch the surface. But, Mia can I throw back to you. I mean, I think Nancy's raised some good points around creating spaces for women to lead in, in addressing GBV. And also practical ways in, which we can engage men. Can you talk a little bit about that from your perspective and experience.

Mia C: Sure, interestingly, here in the Philippines, the space is really dominated by women. Uh, most of the executive director roles of NGOs are women. You know, people are very vocal about these women, You know, to be to be quite candid, it is not easy to engage with, even the communities to, to shift that paradigm. Because this is years and years of socialization. Like, this is like, layers and layers of a mindset of what remains rules are and what and equality is going to be achieved, just by having several sessions of, you know, like brown bags and all that.

But what I've seen that helps us is two things number one is finding local champions finding champions in the community, you know, like open minded fathers, open minded leaders in the community, youth leaders especially, and especially champions in, among people with positions of power, you know, the government leaders, who, who are first to show, demonstrate a mindset of equality between men and women. And the second aside from finding champions in the different circles that you move in, I really think that it is so much better and more effective to invest in the future generation. I feel that, if we have a systematic way of infusing you know, like these principles of equality that are founded on treaties and international conventions, like, The Conventions On Elimination Of Discrimination Against Women like Conventions on human rights. You know, these are like universal principles, and if we're able to break it down in simple ways on just basic equality, dignity, respect among teaching that to the new to the younger generation, I think that is so much more effective. Because we've seen how that can really be something that could evolve and something that, you know, young people can inspire each other on. And creating leaders, you know, investing in the young people, how they could interpret this, and how they can actually lead the way for us to be more responsive and be more ... take more initiative in protecting women, and boys and having this equal mindset.

Jacqui DL: Great, thank you. Unfortunately, we just run out of time, so I'll have to wrap it up, although I know we could've kept going for another hour on these incredibly important topics. There's some very rich commentary. There's some great questions, but also some very rich commentary in the chat box. I know for everyone who's present, we will be sending out an email in a few days with a recording of the event with a copy of Abt's new

GEDSI Framework but we also might summarize some of the comments in the chat. There's some good references, for example, to the IFC's respectful workplaces website that might be useful resources for all of us who are passionate about this topic.

I think we touched on some really good issues. One thing that really struck me was the issues are very similar in all of the places where each of us work and, like, I live in Australia. We've had a lot of issues in Australia this year around gender-based violence around safety in the workplace for women. So, all of the issues that you're saying, resonate for me as an Australian woman, I have to say so, those similarity of those challenges across our diverse countries and cultural context is really powerful.

I also thought the comment around that at the root of all of the issues inequality between men and women, and we have to be able to address that harmful norms and strengthen the empowerment of women if we want to make any progress in this space. I thought that really resonated. I thought there was a really good conversation around, looking for local solutions and making sure we can engage with local communities in nonjudgmental way in a respectful way, and inclusive way and empowering way and work with communities where they're at. But also work at structural levels across the system within our organizations and within government. We talked a bit about the important for importance, for example, of legislative change for protections around gender-based violence.

We also had a really good discussion around the need to engagement and boys in this discussion. And I thought there was some very good examples of what we can do to do better on that. And I really think Mia, maybe your summary at the end that if we can engage youth on these basic human principles of equality and dignity and respect, we can, we can make progress on this really critical, important issue.

But can I just wrap up by thanking each of you for your incredible for sharing your stories and for the incredible work that you do on these issues that I know we all care about deeply. It's hard working on these topics. I know. But I just want to thank you for sharing your experience with all of us today. It's been a real honor to hear from each of you. I also just wanted to finish by thanking Leisa Gibson at Abt Associates, who's put a lot of work in the background organizing this session. So, thank you, Leisa. Thanks everyone.