

PARTICIPANT INFORMATION SHEET

TITLE: COVID-19: gendered risks, impact & response in the Indo-Pacific

HUMAN RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE APPROVAL NUMBER: 2021/147

PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATORS:

Prof. Sara Davies and Assoc. Prof. Robin E Roberts

Dear participant,

You are invited to participate in this Papua New Guinea research study described below.

Why is the research being conducted?

The COVID-19 pandemic has contributed to increases in food scarcity and higher food prices. Food security is a genuine barrier to shifting populations out of extreme poverty. Regionally, women and children have experienced more hardships to accessing safe, affordable and nutritional foods during the COVID-19 pandemic. It is vital to understand the baseline food insecurity position in the region as a result of the pandemic. In agriculture and food systems, women experience more discrimination and challenges than men, in particular in accessing credit, seed, and markets. A crisis on the scale of COVID-19, where lockdowns and border closures have caused extensive disruption to food systems and access to food markets, is likely to have created challenges.

This research is being conducted to investigate the experiences and perspectives of women during the COVID-19 pandemic. Specifically, to understand individual experiences of food insecurity and economic impacts as a result of the pandemic.

Who is undertaking the study?

This study is funded by the Australian Centre for International Agriculture Research, and is being led by the Griffith Asia Institute, Griffith University, Brisbane, Australia, under the leadership of Professor Sara Davies and Associate Professor Robin E Roberts.

Why am I being invited to participate in a focus group?

You have been selected to participate because of your experience in the food sector, and the impact on your livelihood in the pandemic environment caused by COVID-19.

Who is leading the focus group discussions?

The lead in-country researcher and contact details are:

Name: Naomi Woyengu

Email: navhi.woyengu@gmail.com

Mobile: +675 7334 6151

What will I be asked to do?

You will be invited to participate in a focus group to discuss your personal experiences with the COVID-19 pandemic.

How much time will the study take?

We expect the focus group session to last approximately 60-90 minutes. These group sessions will be held in your local community.

Are there any risks associated with participating in this study?

There are no foreseeable risks to you as a result of participating in this research.

If discussing your experiences in an interview causes any distress to you or your family, we encourage you to access free support services accessible through the Haus Kuk Initiative, through Facebook

<https://www.facebook.com/pg/theinitiativeprojectpng/posts/> or by phoning the Initiative directly on (+675) 7334 61645.

What are the benefits of this research study?

This study will develop knowledge about the ways that women have been affected and are responding to the COVID-19 pandemic in their communities. This knowledge could help to develop an understanding of how their communities might prepare for potential future changes and challenges.

Can I withdraw from the study?

Participation in this study is completely voluntary. If you agree to participate, you can withdraw from the study at any time.

What will happen to my information?

Your information will not be made public. Any identifiers will be removed from the data once collected, and the full dataset will be securely stored at Griffith University on the Chief Investigators password-protected computer. These records will be kept for a minimum of five years after any publishing opportunities have been exhausted, and destroyed when no longer needed. The information and results will be used in academic and industry publications and may be presented at conference events. At all times only aggregated data will be made public; no individual data will be presented or released.

Who do I contact if I have questions about the study?

If you have any queries or concerns about this study, please contact the Chief Investigators Professor Sara Davies (sara.davies@griffith.edu.au) or Associate Professor Robin E Roberts (robin.roberts@griffith.edu.au). Alternatively, enquiries can be made by contacting Naomi Woyengu, from the HausKuk Initiative (navzhi.woyengu@gmail.com) based in Madang, Papua New Guinea. A summary of the research results can be obtained by emailing the Chief Investigators for this study.

What if I have a complaint or any concerns?

Griffith University conducts research in accordance with the national statement on ethical conduct in human research (2007). If you have questions or problems associated with the study or wish to raise a concern or complaint about the study, then you should consult the Principal Investigator or contact the Human Research Ethics Committee's Secretariat on phone +61 7 373 4375 or by email to research-ethics@griffith.edu.au. If you wish to speak with an independent person regarding concerns or a complaint, the University's policy on research involving human participants, or your rights as a participant. Any complaint or concern will be treated in confidence and fully investigated. You will be informed of the outcome.

Yours sincerely,

Professor Sara Davies