When Data Meets Story: Reimagining Gender Equality in Sport

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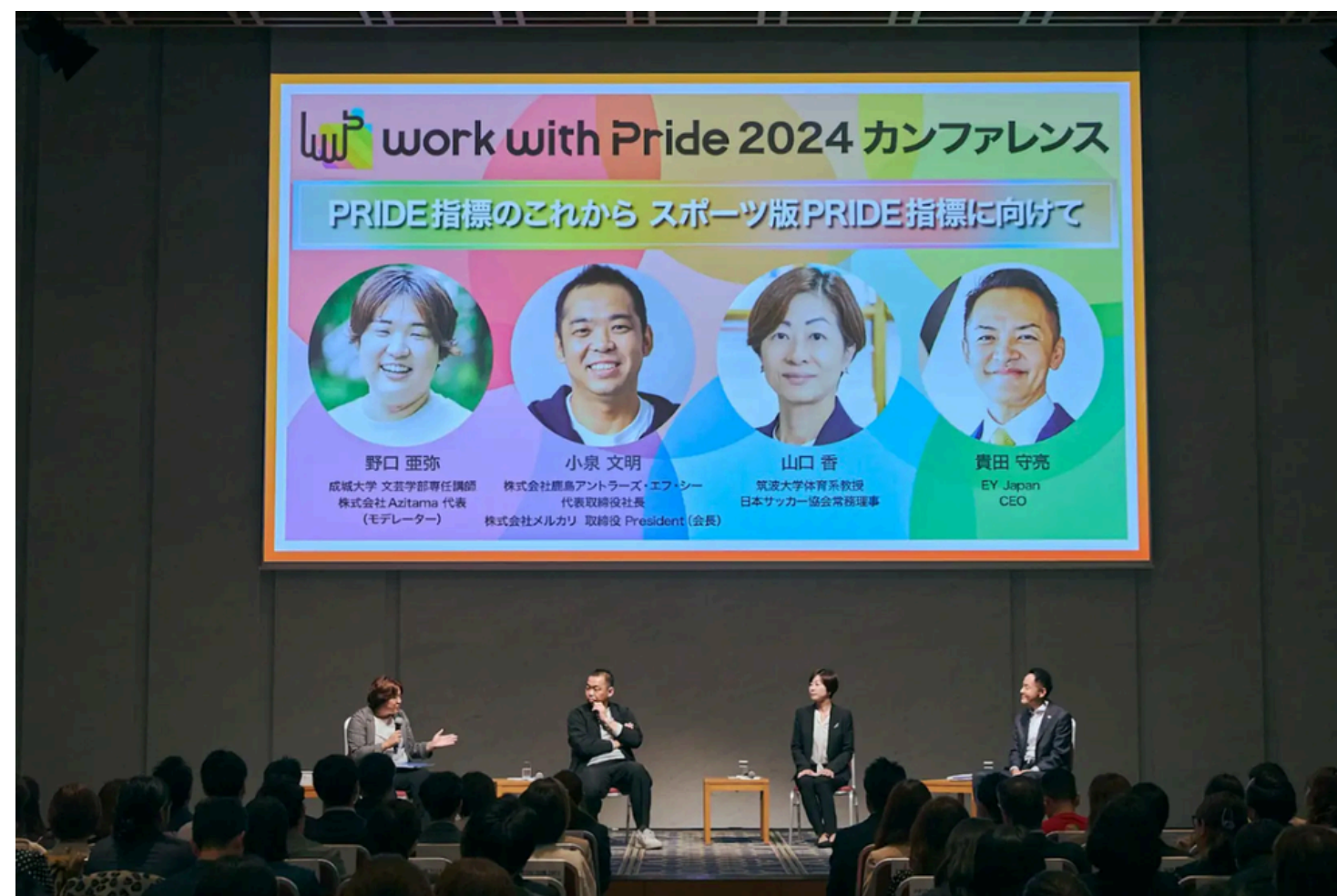**Deputy Director, International Research Center for Sport and Gender Equality (SGE), Seijo University**
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📊 Why Data Matters for Gender Equality in Sport

Japan Sport Pride Index

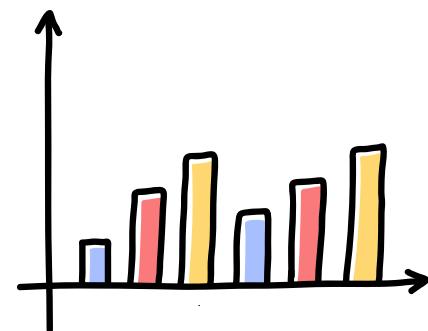ASEAN-Japan Action on
Sport: Gender Equality

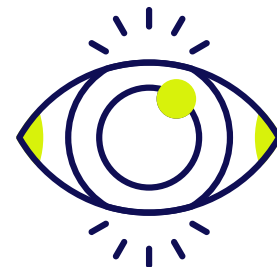# 📊Why Data Matters for Gender Equality in Sport

Data makes gender inequality visible — but visibility is only the beginning.
Through initiatives such as the _**Japan Sport PRIDE Index**_ and
the _**ASEAN-Japan Actions on Sport: Gender Equality**_, we are building systems that help
visualize progress and identify barriers to equality.

- Data enables objective dialogue between policy, research, and practice.
- Visibility transforms perceptions into accountability.
- Measurement is not an end, but a shared language for change.

Data ▶ Visibility ▶ Dialogue ▶ Action

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📈But Numbers Don't Tell the Whole Story

Numbers can show progress, but not always _how_ or _why_ change happens. In Japan and many ASEAN countries where I collaborate, maintaining relationships with family and community is a core cultural value. Change can be subtle, relational, and gradual — often invisible in data but deeply significant in practice.

- Focusing solely on metrics may overlook people's agency and context.
- Qualitative data and storytelling capture lived experiences and cultural nuances.
- Rapid, number-driven change can sometimes disrupt community harmony.

💬True equality lies where data meets lived experience.

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🌏From Data to Culturally Grounded Change

True equality requires both visibility and empathy.
Objective data must be balanced with local voices,
ensuring that progress reflects not just numbers but lived realities.

1. Integrate gender data systems into policy design.
2. Include qualitative indicators to reflect cultural and relational change.
3. Promote participatory monitoring that values both numbers and narratives.

💡 "We need to listen not only to what the data shows, but also to what people live."

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