United States Agency for International Development

Public Meeting on Democracy, Human Rights & Governance

Innovation
Breakout Session

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CLAIRE EHMANN: Hello, welcome everybody. Can you hear me?

MALE SPEAKER: Yes.

CLAIRE EHMANN: Ok great, welcome everybody. Can you hear me?

Wonderful, okay. Hi, I'm Claire Ehmann, and as the Division Chief for Civil Society and Media in the DRG center, I am really honored to be here today. I am a huge proponent of formal channels of communication between government and civil society. I think it's really the only way that we're going to solve our development challenges, and so I'm really honored to be here and I want to thank you so much in advance for your participation. So my goal in this -- in this meeting is to actually not talk for too long so that we can really get to the substance of the meeting which is really to hear your views.

This is the innovation session. I'm not going to go into a lot of definitions. I'm going to -- just going to tell you my definition of innovation just for the session. To me innovation really is this very human process that we have about trying out new things to make things better, and I want to frame our innovation conversation in two ways. One is about process innovation so what are some ways of doing things that we can innovate and make things better, and then of course technological innovations and how can we harness the opportunity of technology to get better impact. But why is it important for us to talk about innovation today as a development community?

Well does anyone here still have a yellow and blue card in their wallet from Blockbuster video? Might be time to throw that away, right? Blockbuster is an example of a model. It was a great business model. It was running well, but it got disrupted by other innovations twice. Once by a new delivery model, DVDs getting -- going to your house and that got me, and then of course another model now of streaming digital service. It's so much better.

So I want to think about blockbuster video when we're thinking about innovation because we want to remember that the decision not to innovate and not to adapt to change is also a choice, and when we make that choice there are risks associated with that. We might think we're avoiding risk, but actually there's also risk of lost opportunity.

Why do we need to come together to talk about innovation as a Democracy of Human Rights and Governance Community? Because, frankly, the health of our sector is not good right now. As we know from Freedom House, we're in our tenth consecutive year of freedom -- of decline in freedom around the world. Governments are cracking down on civil society media. Their

ways are very effective. We know what they're doing -- and they're basically disrupting our business model, our -- some of our traditional ways of delivering development assistance. So we need to come together to think about innovation so that we can see more democracy and respect for human rights around the world, not less.

So some of you who might know me actually, I'm actually privileged to be in this new class of White House leadership development fellows, and I'm on a one-year detail over to the Office of Management and Budget (OMB), OMB and I'm working for the Federal Chief Information Officer which is basically IT. And I'm working on open data which I will not talk about right now, but I'm happy to do that after. I'm learning really a lot about IT and one of the first things I learned was when I'm over there in that community and they say I work on developments, you here in this room, you know I'm talking about international developments because you're my people.

[laughter]

But when I'm over at OMB, there and I'm talking about

development, they immediately think I'm talking about software development and they start to ask me what programming languages I know and all these things. And so if you'll indulge me, I actually think because, you know, in my mind I'm thinking about USAID and I'm thinking about IT, and some of the things that are going in the IT sector, and I'm thinking about process innovations, I think might be actually kind of interesting for this discussion. So the big transformation that's going on in IT is this sort of movement from what's called the "waterfall method of developing a system" to the "agile method of developing a system."

You may have heard about these things, you know, reading the *Wall Street Journal* or the newspapers that you read, but the waterfall system is basically the traditional way, which when you're designing a project, say you want to build a new financial management system, you basically spend a lot of time designing your program. You get all of the requirements together. You plan out the five years and then the program basically unfolds in these very orderly stages, you know, throughout the time and at the end you get your financial management system. I'm going to pause.

Does anyone see any similarities between this model and our sort of -- the way that we do business with foreign assistance? Right, we do a lot of assessment. We write some requirements. We put in an RFA or an RFP and then we, you know, sort of that we assume the project's going to unfold in a certain way. So, the problem with the waterfall methodology is that when you -- something doesn't -- when -- if something goes wrong, there's a boulder in your waterfall, right, something doesn't go according to plan, you have to go back to the original design and redo all your requirements. And then suddenly your financial management system that was going to cost you a million dollars costs $10 million and it's two years late, and actually at the end of the day, the system that you have isn't that good, like nobody likes it.

So it's kind of going on in the private sector and a little bit in the government. It's kind of this agile methodology which is basically thinking about your project and chunking it out in different modules, smaller modules. Then you do these little things, discovery sprints around them where you have an idea. You test it out. You find the bugs. You fix the bugs and they

actually do this very interesting thing about user design. So they actually go and ask people who use the financial management system, "Oh, what do you like about it? What doesn't work about it? What would you really like to see in your financial management system?"

So ideally at the end of the day in this kind of process innovation, you actually come out with a program that ideally costs less to make, you know, is delivered on time, and most importantly it's actually something that users want and they want to use. And so I just sort of wanted to get us in this mode of like thinking about process innovation. And it's not directly applicable 100 percent to international development, but we have tried to do something like this, not really knowing what we were doing, with the Civil Society Innovation Initiative. So I don't know has anyone heard of this Civil Society Innovation Initiative? Maybe a few people. Yay, my team.

[laughter]

Civil Society Innovation Initiative is USAID's response under

President Obama's Stand with Civil Society agenda. Stand with Civil Society is a multi-government, private philanthropy effort to stand with and support civil society actors in the face of these headwinds of closing space. Stand with Civil Society was launched in 2013 and then over the course of the year when we were thinking at USAID about what possible programming that we wanted to put around it, we really -- we really knew a couple of things. First, we knew the problem really well. Our problem is really well defined. We know from our partners like where space is closing. We know how it's closing. We know the kinds of laws that are restricting foreign funding and making registration more difficult. We know a lot about the problem, but our regular toolkit of responses isn't that robust.

So we also knew designing something like this for civil society, we needed to do some user design with civil society. So we used one of the innovations from the Global Development Lab, the broad Agency agreement, this new procurement instrument that allowed us to do co-creation. The idea behind co-creation is a little bit of this trying to get at a more participatory design process. You can bring together USAID, other donors with -- together with civil society and together you actually work on

some of the solutions and then you try to kick start
collaboration to get -- to get things done.

So doing this process around the Civil Society Innovation
Initiative, we have a lot of lessons learned and again another
thing I'm happy to talk about after this session. Thank you,
but through this process actually for us, it was really valuable
and it's had a ton of impact just that we did this process
evaluation and didn't do things in the regular way. Instead of
just talking a few civil society organizations, through a
process of a global co-creation and in six regional co-
creations, and then those organizations actually went out and
had more consultations, we have touched maybe 500 different
organizations all around this Civil Society Innovation
Initiative, not just DRG groups, but civil society organizations
across the development continuum. Networks have been built that
we never even thought would happen and a lot of diversity has
come out of like getting that different group of stakeholders
together.

And now we're 18 months in which is actually not that long from
a -- it's a little bit shorter than a normal USAID procurement

system, and we actually have six prototype civil society

innovation hubs around the world, and they're ready to start

actually testing some of these services that they're going to be

using. So some of these parallels about process innovation,

it's hard to do. Sometimes you don't know if it's the right

thing to do, but I think it does really reap some benefits.

So that's process innovation and then quickly, I also want to

talk about -- I don't think we can talk about innovation without

mentioning the T word, technology. This is a picture of my

favorite technological innovation, which is the Post-It note.

As a civil society person, I like get -- I brought some. I'm

like I get nervous to go to a meeting without my Post-It notes

so obviously, I think this has already been talked about today,

but the -- but technology and the sort of the technology of our

time, right, the internet, social media, mobile phones, phones

with cameras. These are really -- there's so much opportunity

to use these tools for -- to improve DRG around the world for

better participation, for civil society groups to use data to

advocate for better services, to reach more marginalized

populations.

So the opportunity is great, but we also know there is a lot of risk, and I think in our sector in particular we really know there is a lot of risk, right? We're not developing a financial management system. We're actually working with populations and so there's a lot of risk that governments use technology too to surveil activists. Right now in fact, Counterpart International is running the information safety and capacity program, a two-day workshop that brings together human rights activists and technologists to kind of go through a process around what are the risks you face online and offline, and what tools might be best for you to use to protect yourself. So we know there are risks from bad actors.

We also know the internet isn't really the most inclusive place in the whole world, right? There's lots of groups that don't feel welcome there, and, of course, we know that there's a huge digital divide in a lot of countries where we work and there just isn't, right. The internet, as much as Google and Facebook want it to be everywhere, it isn't and not everybody can afford a smartphone. But I think if you want to think about technology, and remember that we know there are these risks, thinking about mitigating these risks, but also how do we

harness the opportunities the technology can bring in our sector
and particularly in DRG? So because I spoke so quickly --

[laughter]

-- I think we have some time for discussion so that's really it.
I just wanted to sort of give an opener, give a framing around
innovation and now really this is the heart and this is really
why I came to the meeting which is to talk about some questions
for discussion. So we'll have a mic. We have some -- if you
could please -- if you have some feedback, if you could please
give your name and your organization and then talk about sort of
I want to frame these two questions. So what are the promising
areas of like process innovation in DRG and then how can we
harness the opportunity of technology while mitigating risks?
And the last thing I'll ask is just to be brief so that we can
get as many people in as possible, but I think that we have
about 20 minutes for this conversation and so with that kick it
off.

NICK DAMATOUR: Hi.

CLAIRE EHMANN: Hi. Let me turn off my mic now.

NICK DAMATOUR: Turn off, turn up?

CLAIRE EHMANN: No, I'm going to turn myself off.

NICK DAMATOUR: Oh, Nick Damatour [spelled phonetically]. I'm a consultant, but I have a background in DG so there. My question is about political economy analysis. It's not an innovation because it's been around for quite a while, but to what extent could the DRG center become the locus for political economy analysis and use that as an entry point to break some of the silos down at USAID since all of the different disciplines would like to start using political economy analysis?

CLAIRE EHMANN: So Nick --

NICK DAMATOUR: Yes.

CLAIRE EHMANN: -- thank you so much for that question and actually it reminds me that this isn't a Q&A with me, as much as I would love to do that. So actually if I could reframe your

question maybe I -- what I hear you saying in more of a kind of
for the group maybe because really what we want to get is
recommendations out of this that the actual committee then can,
you know, think about is maybe thinking about this political
economy analysis, this different kind of way of doing things
where you actually think about any development program and
actually think about what might be the -- because of politics,
what might be the barriers to my program like my malaria
program? What might be the barriers to implementation?

And thank you so much because the DRG center has a team that is
really trying to use this methodology with other parts of USAID,
with health and with economic growth, with the environment, to
try to think about, right, as an innovation, thinking about
political economy as a way in for some of our DRG issues. So
thank you very much.

NICK DAMATOUR: You're welcome very much.

CLAIRE EHMANN: No, so not a question, a comment, right.

JOHN COONROD: So you want comments not -- I thought you wanted

a list of questions for the group, but --

CLAIRE EHMANN: Well so I think so. I just I don't want to -- I
don't want to --

JOHN COONROD: Okay.

CLAIRE EHMANN: -- answer your questions I'm talking [laughs].

JOHN COONROD: No, I'm not looking for an answer.

CLAIRE EHMANN: Great.

JOHN COONROD: So I'm Jon Coonrod with the Hunger Project. We
really focus on community led development and we see that one of
the big things that's largely missing in the kind of systems
thinking that most donors are doing is it doesn't really look at
what's happening at the -- at the -- at the lowest level of
governance, and there's several things that I think USAID could
do on both of these points. In fact I'll send you a whole
paper, but the first is that in terms of the BAAs and the
processes have kind of been squeezed into a traditional pattern

where USAID is picking who they want to talk to rather than actually crowdsourcing and setting up a democratic process where, as the U.N. has done, where civil society itself picks its own representatives and gets its act together and interfaces with U.N. agencies.

So I think going to a much more inclusive consultative process and a more democratically selected process would kind of be walking your walk in DRG. The second thing with technology is that key to the agile system is creating modules that are actual platforms and tools, not products and projects, and I think the area of DRG, there's been way too little development in basic tools. You know, if I'm a local government in Rwanda, do I have access to a free online tool to do my planning, my transparency, my, you know, to take -- to create the kinds of tools both for governments and for civil society to engage without having to do a giant technological creation.

CLAIRE EHMANN: Awesome, I love that. USAID as developers, tool developers. Yeah, we can -- okay, go ahead and then we'll come back.

LESLIE COSGROVE: Hi, I'm Leslie Cosgrove. I'm with AMARANT
Village. I'm working in Nigeria, South Sudan, and eastern
Congo. So when I look at innovation, I'm looking at human
innovation versus technology because I'm working with issues of
working together, sharing resources, finding and agreeing to
rules of engagement, admitting levels of capacity,
representative leadership, and community and economic value
chains that are identified and engaged with, and that is a huge
barrier. Those are huge barriers to those particular countries,
to the people, and to their economic cultures. So I'm having a
little hard time trying to move into this discussion because in
most places I am, there's no power, you know.

CLAIRE EHMANN: Yeah.

LESLIE COSGROVE: Gas is too expensive for the generators to run
and without them, you don't have the internet. So yeah.

CLAIRE EHMANN: Oh yes indeed.

LESLIE COSGROVE: It's a little hard.

CLAIRE EHMANN: That's why I use the Post-It note as an example actually because I definitely want to get it, right, like sort of human innovation, right, process innovation, different ways of doing things, different ways of changing cultures. So thank you for that. We definitely are not only talking about the internet. We can still think about the internet where it is -- where it is appropriate. Yeah and so we'll go over here and then we'll come up here.

KEITH MARTIN: Yeah.

CLAIRE EHMANN: And then we'll go up here.

KEITH MARTIN: We didn't arrange this arrangement, but it'll come to pass. Keith Martin, the Consortium of Universities for Global Health. Thanks for organizing this. When I was a member of Parliament in Canada, I used to visit my colleagues in low income countries. My colleague would say this in a -- as an example, "Keith, look at the table that I have here. This is the table that I share with three other members of Parliament. This is the one lamp I have. This is the one telephone I have and that's it.

CLAIRE EHMANN: Yeah.

KEITH MARTIN: How can I do my job?" You go into the universities. You know in West Africa and the Ebola affected countries they're working with curricula that's 20 to 30 years old and they don't have access to soap. They don't have access to power so if I could make a suggestion. One -- a couple things that could be very powerful for USAID to do is to consider long term capacity building in the public service across different departments using American allies. I happen to be Canadian, but use allies to be -- and don't hold it against me please -- to be able to have long term partnerships and relationships between departments and listen to what they want in terms of building up their own public service administrative capabilities. That would be powerful. Access to university libraries so they can do the work that they need to do, access to research, and listening to what they want, the basic stuff, and that long term capacity building. If we do that then they'll fly. Thanks.

CLAIRE EHMANN: Thank you. I love that comment and really it's

right like listening to users, right, in this -- in what they want and what they can actually use, what's going to be useful for them because they don't have power. Thank you.

DUREA BADONI: Hi, I'm Durea Badoni [spelled phonetically]. I'm with Devis and prior with the State Department in Brookings. So my comments are really actually directed much more towards the Middle East, focusing on that and in terms of some of the promising areas for new innovations. I really think that some of the lessons learned coming from that is related to local capacity building, right, and transfer of knowledge. And I think one of the most interesting challenges in crisis has been following the Arab revolutions has been how are you now looking at this transformation of government and how are you looking at this outcry from citizens and trying to empower them more move into understanding governance, right? And how -- what is the best U.S. role for that and particularly when we're looking at capacity building around civil society in particular?

And so I think those have been some of the promising areas where it's been a challenge to find out how we best do that, but I think there have been some successes. And particularly in terms

of the second question about opportunities of technology have also been related to social media, right, because that has been so incredible when we've really been able to harness voices that you hadn't heard before. And going to some of the questions that you would ask in terms of marginalized populations, social media has really been a way for people to become involved and participatory in a way that they haven't before though we do need to think about some of those risks clearly because of lack of access and censorship so --

CLAIRE EHMANN: Wonderful, thank you. That's great. I think I saw somebody over there.

BRANDT HUT: Hi, I'm Brandt Hut [spelled phonetically] from Plan International. I noticed that a lot of organizations in implementer land we tend to use local organizations as our fulcrum for change and for good reason. I think, however, this carries a risk sometimes in that each D.C. based implementing partner will pick its own favorite local organization to work with and will have [laughs] a whole bunch of small organizations tied up to bigger D.C. organizations. And depending on whoever wins, the organization that might be -- the local organization

that might be involved may not necessarily be -- it may not
necessarily legitimately capture the interests of the population
that you're trying to reach.

How can we work our way around this [laughs]? How can we work
from -- we move from boutique projects to broad movements?
There might be some more boring ways like open grant pools and
things like that, and involved in a project there might be
harder yet more fun ways like co-design things like this, but I
think it's important for us to do that if we're going to really
try and capture local interests.

CLAIRE EHMANN: Thank you. Back there, yeah.

JANE CHARLES-VOLTAIRE: Thank you. Hi, my name is Jane Charles-
Voltaire from the International Association of Women Judges. We
work in several countries. I personally work as a Program
Officer in Haiti and in the Dominican Republic. I think one of
the things that we've learned through the process of
implementing our programs with our local chapters is A, having
our local chapters, our member judges also work with other
institutional partners so that, you know, they are working and

collaborating with prosecutors for example and police which are
often times roles and relationships that they don't have.

And so really promoting that as well as promoting other I guess
organizations that are also being funded for example by USAID so
that we are partnering with them rather than feeling as though
we're competing with them for funding, and I think really
promoting those linkages is really important as a process in and
of itself. And part of that developing that local capacity so
that they can also then see okay, we can beyond these particular
projects, move forward in terms of other points of
collaboration.

CLAIRE EHMANN: I love that. I know, right, trying to get
beyond competition into actually collaborating, yeah.

JUDY GEARHART: Hi, I'm Judy Gearhart. I'm with the
International Labor Rights Forum. We're an international NGO.
I saw it on the list. We're not a private voluntary
organization so a lot of what you went over really quickly was
like zoom. So I'm going to ask clarifying --

CLAIRE EHMANN: It was like that for me too.

JUDY GEARHART: I'm going to ask a clarifying question if I can
and then I'm going to make a comment [laughs] if that's okay.
It looked like your Post-It note display was from something that
I've been a part of which is the co-creation process.

CLAIRE EHMANN: [affirmative]

JUDY GEARHART: Okay, just checking. I feel totally with it now
because I was actually part of the co-creation process which I
understand is totally new. So comment on that co-creation
process, you know, granted it allowed a small NGO like us to
access AID funding. Well theoretically, it's not quite there,
but we're almost there, but it also required us to invest quite
a lot of time over an entire year of figuring out and mapping it
out. That was completely unfunded time.

CLAIRE EHMANN: [affirmative]

JUDY GEARHART: So that's -- that hurt and probably took away
from other grassroots organizing, but we're excited about the

new project that's coming on stream and we are looking forward

to it, but it's all for one year of resources that we don't

know. So I guess my question and sort of comment is in my

experience from grassroots development, I think that's why, you

know, this kind of process opens up space for a group like us.

It's very much driven by our grassroots partners.

I mean when we do sub grants it's like ten grand here and five

grand there. I mean we're really working with very small

groups, right? So I think it's wonderful that AID is pulling in

those kinds of voices and those kinds of groups. That's the

civil society partnership you all I think we want to see happen.

However I guess I have a -- I have this little bit of a concern

as to am I going to be able to move my grassroots partners that

quickly in a 12 month timeframe? That's a huge lift and, you

know, I've long for 25 years had a critique of U.S. government

short term thinking, right. So the -- give me an 18 month

proposal and make sure it's innovative. Like well sometimes, to

go back to the Africa comment, radio is still the best damn

innovation on the ground.

CLAIRE EHMANN: Oh definitely, that's right, yeah. No, thank

you for that comment and definitely about timelines, yeah. I
think we definitely -- it's a big challenge.

FEMALE SPEAKER: Comments on [unintelligible] learning over the
past two years of doing that process [unintelligible].

CLAIRE EHMANN: About co-creation? Sure I mean -- sure just
very briefly. I say again it was the first time we were doing
this, right. So and we really didn't -- we -- it was quite
difficult I think even for groups to trust us that we actually
really wanted to hear from them. We knew that they were
devoting a lot of time. We knew that, right, and we knew it was
a cost to them without potentially any benefit and so that is
definitely something about the co-creation process that I think
we also learned and recognized.

At the same time, that ability to get more voices in, and maybe
those groups made a connection with other groups that they
didn't have, was also something that came out of it. I think we
actually really sort of learned a lot and I think again like
thinking about innovative processes would do things differently
or would iterate. And I think since other co-creations that

have gone forward after that have also sort of like -- are trying to gather these lessons learned, but I don't want to keep -- and we can take it offline. I'm happy to have the conversation after the session. I think I saw -- yeah.

INGE DETLEFSEN: Hi.

CLAIRE EHMANN: Hi.

INGE DETLEFSEN: I'm Inge Detlefsen with Relief International. I think one simple thing that we could do is to try to mainstream DRG elements more into humanitarian and developmental systems, and by doing simple -- very simple things such as civic skills building, certain processes in all our projects such as transparency meetings if we do a cash program, if we do any kind of program at all. We're letting the beneficiaries know how the money is spent, etcetera, sort of creating that demand for transparency, and incorporating dialogue between local government and community leaders into our project. I think these are simple things we could do if we did them systematically and measured them. I think it would make a difference.

CLAIRE EHMANN: Oh thank you for bringing up the measurement word. I didn't want to take that one.

JEFF PHILLIPS: Hi, I'm Jeff Phillips from IRI. Just a quick comment from democracy and governance implementer. I think it's important for us all to recognize that it's not only civil society organizations that are innovating, but it's also authoritarian regimes that are innovating, often times faster and better than --

CLAIRE EHMANN: More resources.

JEFF PHILLIPS: [laughs] And they have more resources than local organizations, and so I think it's important for us to recognize that for our innovations to flourish there must be an enabling environment for civil society organizations. So my recommendation for [unintelligible] would be to really raise the profile and elevate in bilateral, multi-lateral discussions the restrictions on civil society organizations around the world. And I know USAID is doing a great job of this, but to just sort of reiterate that and to reinforce that would I think make all

of our work a lot more impactful. Thanks.

CLAIRE EHMANN: Thank you.

ALEX SBARDELLA: Alex Sbardella with IRX. Very good to see you.

CLAIRE EHMANN: Hello.

ALEX SBARDELLA: A very engaging presentation. We have a center for collaborative technologies at IRX and we're creating a center for applied learning and impact, and giving a lot of thought to innovation because the center will be squarely focused on innovation. And so you mentioned the concept of disruptive innovation, you now, you used Netflix. It disrupts the market, you know, it takes over the market and, you know, Blockbuster goes away.

And so we were looking at disruptive innovation and its potential and how it can be funded and sustained in our space in the DRG space. And one thing that we found out actually, if you look at the private sector because that's where the concept came up and that's where it's found mostly, is that typically

disruptive innovation happens if there is massive untapped demand which usually means a massive market to basically fuel it.

And by that I mean that, you know, unless we really increase the DRG pot of funding actually that fuels innovation of a disruptive kind. I'm afraid that innovation in this space is likely to remain incremental of a sustaining kind. So it's a bit of a fine line to walk actually, but I really think that innovation of a disruptive kind, if we're looking at this as a solution provider actually, will require that massive market, that massive untapped demand.

That's one comment I had and I have a suggestion with regard to your first point there. As you know, we work a lot with media at IRX. We implement a media system I believe the index in partnership with USAID. We also, with funding from Canada, thank you, we're implementing a learn to discern new approach in the former Soviet space actually where there is a lot of misinformation and propaganda actually. And I think that there's a lot of promise in the use of social media, new media, new technology, not on the development of media institutions,

not on the training of journalists, not on the investigative
reporting. These are basically the old tried and true, you
know, things that DRG has done, but on the consumers.

The consumers of the information, we all believe the information
is good. It's very important to our space actually, to the
quality of governance, democratic governance, but if it has to
have any value for democratic governance, it must be consumed
properly. So I think this is space where new technology can be
actually measured. We're trying to do some of this actually as
part of our learn to discern new methodology to see what
messages work and actually we're seeing measurable, quantifiable
progress in the sense of consumers discarding misinformation,
consumers discarding propaganda, and using good information. So
that's one suggestion. Thank you.

CLAIRE EHMANN: Wonderful, thank you. So I think -- so we have
only about four minutes left so let's try to take right as --
let's see, put your hand up if you have a question. One, two,
three -- I'm sorry, a comment, thank you. One, two, these
three. Is that right? Will I get them all? And then Nick you
had one.

MALE SPEAKER: I do, but --

CLAIRE EHMANN: [laughs]

MALE SPEAKER: Just a pinch in the tools references some of the tools that are out there, survey tools, how to communicate and so a lot of tools already out there. We just need to need to give them a purpose [unintelligible].

CLAIRE EHMANN: I love it, but yes, exactly. Innovation can be taking an existing tool, right, and using it in a different space. Love it, thank you. So let's take the last three and then we will -- I'll cut it off.

MALE SPEAKER: Yes, my name is Joseph. I am with Skills8, a nonprofit interested in vocational and technical training. I'm going talk about human rights and governance. I know education is one of the human rights issues especially in my country, South Sudan. If you didn't know, most of us are in the war and our children are unable to go to school, and the type of jobs they do is to ride their motorbikes and or a taxi or some of

them are about to be recruited into the army and get killed.

So my question is if education is one of the human rights, is there a possibility for USAID to provide vocational training to our youth who are there trying to look for employment so that they don't join the rebels or be just, you know, go to do another data job. So this is my question for you to consider. Thank you very much.

CLAIRE EHMANN: Thank you.

MALE SPEAKER: Hi, my name is Hann. I am a USAID payed fellow and my comment is with -- so when I was doing my Fulbright in Thailand, I understood that -- I started to understand that development has a very elite -- there's a very elitist view to development. You have to speak English. You have to be able to write these grants in English to be able to get this money, and I remember meeting this young man. He got kicked out of his home when he was young and now he arranges flowers for living and they're gorgeous. They're beautiful, but he doesn't have money to start a flower shop and so he could only go to other type people to borrow money and a bank wouldn't give him money

since his parents couldn't back him up, and he spoke no English.

He barely knew the alphabet and there are people like this out there that, you know, as FSOs and are trained, I think like three months in a foreign language, but imagine learning English in three months. It doesn't happen and so to -- as we move forward and begin to have more technology so that we can translate in real time using our smart phones, using the internet so that we're able to reach people who don't have the time or don't have the ability to take English lessons.

CLAIRE EHMANN: Thank you. Is there one last question over here?

ANELIA ATANASSOVA: Thank you. My name is Anelia Atanassova. I'm with Cardno Emerging Markets and I work in Central Asia, Indonesia, and Southeast Africa, but I'll make a comment based on my personal background. I come from Bulgaria and I was graduate student when Berlin Wall fell, and I would like to share my real concern with what's happening right now because it's not about the technology. Technology itself is not the solution. We need to figure out how to impact the minds and

hearts of people. When I was young and Chernobyl happened, we listened to BBC and Radio Free Europe, and that's how we found out about the disaster around us and what's happening to our families and our kids. And now I have even -- I know people even here who listen and watch Russian TV and believe all the Russian propaganda. So my point is that we need to work more on like embracing our co-values and about human dignity, human rights, and also support projects that bring more effective service delivery to the people and all this beneficial is there to work for.

CLAIRE EHMANN: Thank you so much. I think that was a lovely ending comment actually and a great vision. I really want to thank all of you for your -- this wonderful discussion. I especially want to thank this person right here who has been capturing our conversation.
[applause]

It's Dean. So this is one -- this is one of my favorite facilitation tools and techniques which is he's just been in the background listening to all of your comments and somehow magically put them on the board and drew them into a picture so

please come by. Take a picture of this because this is what you all made here in just a few minutes and then please, I want to make a special announcement not -- now, you know, we're over here in this Hemisphere A. Don't leave because Gayle Smith is coming back at 3:50 over in Polaris.

So don't get lost, but please don't leave because we would also love to -- we're going to do a wrap up session. We would love to continue to engage you. So thank you so, so much for all of your comments and questions. I really appreciate it. Thank you.

[applause]

[end of transcript]