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PARTICIPANTS:

WELCOME:

RICHARD WHELDEN
Director, Office of Education
U.S. Agency for International Development

OPENING REMARKS: ADDRESSING LITERACY ISSUES:

RAJIV SHAH
Administrator
U.S. Agency for International Development

THE HONORABLE NITA M. LOWEY (D-N.Y)
U.S House of Representatives

DAN WAGNER
UNESCO Chair in Learning and Literacy
Professor of Education and Director, International Literacy Institute
University of Pennsylvania

SESSION 1: GOVERNMENTS TAKING ACTION

**Moderator:**

LUIS CROUCH
Lead Education Specialist
Coordinator, Global Good Practices Team
Education for All Fast-Track Initiative
Secretariat

**Panelists:**

ATO FUAD IBRAHIM
State Minister for General Education
Government of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia

ABEL FERNANDES DE ASSIS
National Director for Quality Assurance Department, Ministry of Education
Government of the Republic of Mozambique

MATOR KPANGBAI
Deputy Minister for Instruction, Ministry of Education
Republic of Liberia

GUILLERMO LOPEZ
Director General, Primary Education, Ministry of Education
Government of the Republic of Nicaragua

SESSION 2: INNOVATIVE APPROACHES TO ADVANCE LITERACY

**Moderator:**

KAREN CATOR
Director of the Office of Educational Technology
U.S. Department of Education

**Panelists:**

FRANÇOIS GERIN-LAJOIE
President
Paul Gérin-Lajoie Foundation

SAKIL MALIK
Director of Global Operations
International Reading Association

DEBBI WINSTEN
Partner Relations Manager
Literacy Bridge

ANTHONY BLOOME
Education Technology Specialist, Office of Education
U.S. Agency for International Development

CORY HEYMAN
Chief Program Officer
Room to Read

JANE MEYERS
President
Lubuto Library Project, Inc.

SESSION 3: THOUGHT LEADERSHIP FOR STRATEGIES ON READING

**Moderator:**

STEVEN J. KLEES
Harold R. W. Benjamin Professor of International and Comparative Education
University of Maryland

**Panelists:**

PATRICK COLLINS
Acting Head of Basic Education
U.S. Agency for International Development

KEVIN WATKINS
Nonresident Senior Fellow
The Brookings Institution

LUIS CROUCH
Lead Education Specialist
Coordinator, Global Good Practices Team
Education for All Fast-Track Initiative Secretariat

SESSION 4: PRACTITIONERS TAKING ACTION

**Moderator:**

KEVIN WATKINS
Nonresident Senior Fellow
The Brookings Institution

**Panelists:**

AMY JO DOWD
Senior Education Research Advisor
Save the Children

JOHN P. COMINGS
Principal International Technical Advisor
Education Development Center

SYLVIA LINAN-THOMPSON
Senior Education Research Analyst
RTI International

AUDREY-MARIE SCHUH MOORE
EQUIP 2 Director
FHI-360

CLOSING REMARKS

ROBERT PROUTY
Head
Education for All Fast-Track Initiative Secretariat

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P R O C E E D I N G S

DR. SHAH: Thank you, and good morning. And welcome to U.S.A. for World Literacy Day. I want to thank Richard and the entire education team here at U.S.A. for your great leadership and commitment to children around the world.

We have a special thank you for Representative Lowey that I will save for the conclusion of my remarks because we have with us today Washington -- probably this country's top single advocate for education around the world, and we're honored to have you with us.

I certainly would like to welcome and thank visiting dignitaries. As Richard has mentioned, Minister Fuad Ibrahim, Abel Fernandes de Assis, Mator Kpangbai and Guillermo Lopez.

We really appreciate your participation today. The experiences of your countries and your leadership, and we are really looking to learn from some of your specific examples, as I'll mention in a few moments.

And then a special welcome for our colleagues from Brookings, the World Bank, our co-sponsors from the Education For All -- Fast Track Initiative. The fact that everyone's worked together for nearly a decade now to dramatically expand access to education gives us the opportunity to focus on literacy outcomes, which will be our focus going forward.

Since the launch of the Millennium Development Goals, the world has seen significant strides in education through the efforts of education ministries and their partners around the world. Developing countries have moved nearly 28 million more children into classrooms over the last decade by abolishing school fees, building new facilities and being relentlessly focused on making sure that every child born anywhere has access to an education.

In fact, today, more than 90 percent of children in developing countries are enrolled in some form in primary school.

But our job as development professionals and government leaders is to always ask the question, “To what end?” Our responsibility does not end when a girl first steps through the doors of a classroom. We have to make sure that she actually has the tools to learn something in that setting.

Unfortunately, a focus on universal access has come, to some extent, at the expense of children receiving a high quality education everywhere around the world. Even as we’ve seen these record numbers of children enter classrooms, we’ve seen the quality of learning sharply drop. Today over 60 percent of all schoolchildren around the world -- nearly 200 million girls and boys -- are learning so little that they are struggling to read basic words.

In some countries, the situation is much worse. In Mali, 80 percent of schoolchildren couldn’t read a single word at the end of second grade. By the end of sixth grade, after spending half their lives in school, nearly half of them still couldn’t read basic words.

Packing children into classrooms without helping them learn is not an education. It’s daycare. Without a motivated teacher, without quality learning materials, without clear targets and effective monitoring, children will have little hope of gaining the promise of walking through those school doors.

At U.S.A., we fundamentally transformed our approach to education to help address this crisis in quality. We’re not going to measure our success by the number of children in school. We’re going to measure it by the number of children who can read and add by the time they leave.

We’re not going to measure our success by the number of teachers we

train at hotel ballrooms or in international conferences. We're going to measure it by the effectiveness they demonstrate in the classroom, as measured by child outcomes.

And we're not going to measure our success based on the anecdotes we're told by our consultants and our contractors. We're going to use sophisticated and modern monitoring and evaluation techniques to ensure what we're doing generates results.

As part of our broader U.S.A. Forward reform effort, we're shifting our emphasis away from outputs like kids in school or teachers trained, and towards real results like literacy.

This was the vision behind our new education strategy, which we launched in February, and it's also part of a widespread effort across our agency to ensure that every taxpayer dollar we spend is getting real results for the American people and for the people around the world we hope to support and serve.

As part of our new education strategy, we developed early grade learning and math assessments designed to help teachers understand the specific needs of their students and their classrooms. These tools are already making a difference on the ground, changing the way entire nations approach education.

With our support, the Liberian Ministry of Education -- we hope to hear more about this later -- has researched baseline childhood literacy, then set up a randomized control trial to test the effectiveness of early grade reading assessments. That trial showed conclusively that continued one on one assessments of student performance led to a two to three time increase in child literacy. As a result, they're now scaling up these interventions to reach most of the country.

In Honduras, studies revealed that weekly curriculum calendars were the most effective intervention in supporting actual learning gains, keeping teachers and

students on track and on schedule. Today these calendars have been adopted by the Education Ministry and expanded nationwide.

In fact, each of the Education Ministries represented here today has a specific operational innovation that has significantly improved actual results for children.

Mozambique is planning to conduct a nationwide reading assessment. Ethiopia, like Liberia, has conducted one and is now committed to developing national reading programs. And Nicaragua has already has taken their evidence-based program to scale.

By focusing on literacy and measuring impact, our new strategy will help improve the reading skills of 100 million children by 2015. That goal is an ambitious one. It's also one that operates now under new constraints in a much more austere budget environment.

But it's important that we remember that helping a girl learn not only brightens her future, it brightens ours as Americans. It energizes our economy by strengthening global economic growth and developing markets for our exports.

In fact, a 10 percent increase in basic literacy translates into a 0.3 percent increase in GDP. It helps protect our own shores by reducing the pull of conflict and violent extremism around the world, and we know this is true based on actual studies done by Brookings and others.

In Afghanistan, we've helped provide an education to nearly eight million children, 35 percent of whom are girls who otherwise would not be in school.

And what Congresswoman Lowey perhaps best articulates is that our investment in global education is a core expression of American values, of dignity, of opportunity, of the freedom that that education provides.

I was reminded of that just this Tuesday, the first day of school for my

two young children. I was able to personally take the kids to school to meet their teachers and to see their classrooms. And I left knowing that each day my children would come home from school and have stories to tell, not just about going to school but about what they learned there about the curriculum, about the content and the enthusiasm that comes with actual learning.

I suspect many of us in this room share that experience, and many of us in this room know that for millions of families around the world, they don't get that experience.

Because ensuring that quality education in childhood is so important to global prosperity and global security, it has brought together a bipartisan community of supporters and leaders. Former First Lady Laura Bush described education as the bedrock of a successful nation, working hard to expand educational opportunities to children around the world. In fact, just five years ago, she hosted the first-ever White House conference on global literacy.

On the other side of the aisle, we have Congresswoman Lowey who, throughout her career, has maintained a steady fight for increased funding for children with disabilities, teacher development and literacy programs here and around the world.

Under her leadership, federal funding for after school programs has increased from $1 million to more than $1 billion. She has cosponsored legislation to reduce class size and wrote the first bill to provide federal funding for school modernization so children can learn with the benefits of technology. And now we're trying to bring that technology around the world.

Congresswoman Lowey's commitment extends beyond our borders, to every child everywhere. And that's why it's an absolute honor to have her here and a pleasure to present her with our first-ever 2011 Literacy Champion Award. And I'm going

to show you --

(Applause)

The award reads, “In recognition of your tireless efforts to champion global literacy and education, your vision, tenacity and leadership have successfully transformed the lives of millions of young girls and boys, and contributed to U.S. national security. Thank you.”

(Applause)

I’ll now let Congresswoman Lowey share her remarks with us, but I thought it would be helpful to put an achievement like that in some context.

And if you look at the slide that’s up there, that was taken from a recent trip where I visited South Sudan. And the kids in that picture are in second grade, second standard. They range in age from six to 13 because many of them have not had a chance to be in school before. They are the beneficiaries of a program that has been studied rigorously that uses radio technology to have a structured curriculum in the classroom, and we know that that has resulted in improved learning outcomes.

But I want to point out that for every girl that you see in that photograph, statistically today in Southern Sudan, they are more likely to die in childbirth than to complete a secondary education.

And I would just make the commitment or observation that no country is going to be stable and secure, and our world is not going to be stable and secure so long as those statistics remain true.

With that, Congresswoman Lowey.

(Applause)

REPRESENTATIVE LOWEY: Good morning. So many good friends who are here today, and I’m happy to join on this panel with Dan Wagner, Richard

Whelden and all the Ministers of Education and so many friends in this room at U.S.A. and other of our agencies who have been working with me, and I truly want to share this award. This is a great, great honor and unexpected, and I really, really appreciate it.

I thank you, Administrator Shah, for your very kind introduction, for your leadership, for your dedication to U.S. development efforts, your commitment to maintaining and strengthening U.S.A.'s role as the world's premier development agency and to ensuring to initiatives such as U.S.A. Forward that every dollar we spend on development is used efficiently, effectively and accountably as a model in this climate of economic hardship. We are so fortunate to have Dr. Shah in this position of leadership, and I want to applaud you.

(Applause)

What a pleasure it is to me to be here this morning, to discuss an issue about which I care very deeply. I can think of no better way to make International Literacy Day than to be here with the experts and leaders you'll be hearing from today, as well as all of you who work tirelessly to achieve universal education for all the world's children.

I have had the opportunity to visit the schools and training programs in a great many countries where we are building the next generation of world leaders. The work you do is invaluable and I thank you.

One of the trips that I will never forget was a few years ago when I traveled to Dada, Pakistan. Has anybody visited my school in Dada, Pakistan? Took about six or seven planes to get there, right?

I was privileged to be there with the delegation to reopen a girls' school. The school had been devastated by an earthquake, but the girls' thirst for knowledge was undiminished. They were so beautiful and so eager and so enthusiastic, and they asked

me for computers. They wanted me to send them a science teacher.

Even in that very conservative part of the country, these girls knew that access to quality education brings the promise of a better life.

And that's why we're here today, to discuss strategies that work and explore new approaches to bringing the promise of education to every child throughout the world. We have made progress in recent years, but there's still an estimated 67 million students who are not in primary schools and tens of millions more drop out each year.

Now we all know the facts, but I think it's important to repeat them. Education does lead to economic prosperity and reduces poverty. Each additional year of school adds 10 percent to an individual's earning potential, and on a nationwide scale, boosts the country's GDP by one percent. No country has reached sustained economic growth without achieving near universal primary education.

Education enhances health. Universal primary education would prevent 700,000 HIV cases each year. Children born to mothers who can read are 50 percent more likely to live past the age of five. Girls' education in particular has outsized impacts on a wide spectrum of health outcomes.

Education builds strong communities. Schools can bring together parents, students, teachers and government officials offering services that support and linked up communities and families.

Education promotes democracy and stability. Studies have shown that increased education leads to decreased risk of civil war.

Education lays the foundation for sound governance and strong institutions, and is not just a building block but a cornerstone of free societies.

And working towards universal education is not only a moral imperative;

it is a national security priority. Freer, healthier, more prosperous and more stable societies are resilient against the teachings and recruitment of terrorist organizations.

The mountains of Afghanistan and Pakistan may be the frontlines in our battle with Al-Qaeda and its sympathizers, but the real war is against ignorance and fanaticism. That's a battle best fought in the classroom.

And throughout my time in Congress, I've remained committed to increasing the United States' role in achieving universal education. From the time I became ranking member of the House Foreign Operations Subcommittee in 2001 and throughout my four years as chair, I successfully increased, from a lot of help from you and my colleagues, funding for basic education, as Dr. Shah said, from $100 million to a high of $925 million in FY 2011.

However, in this particularly challenging times, when budgets must be cut, foreign aid becomes an easy target. And so it is our job, each and every one of us, to make sure that every member of Congress and every American understands just how important these programs are. Now is the time to invest in what works, and we know that promoting basic education is amongst the wisest investments we can make for our security, our economy and our standing around the world. Scaling back these programs means scaling back our own national security and economic prosperity.

It's also an appropriate time to be looking at ways that each dollar can go further and have the most impact. That's why I hope that this can be the first year that the United States contributes to the education for all Fast Track Initiative. This multilateral effort to address the challenges of achieving universal education will leverage each U.S. dollar with contributions from other donor countries, as well as -- and this is critical -- contributions from each partner country and will augment the United States' bilateral efforts across the globe.

But funding is not enough, which is why I, along with Congressman Dave Reichert, have reintroduced the Education for All Act. This bill places the United States squarely in a leadership role in the march for access to education worldwide. To achieve the goal of universal quality basic education, the Education for All Act lays out U.S. policy that includes working with other countries, multilateral institutions, civil society, to assist developing countries in providing children with equality, basic education and strengthening their education systems.

The bill supports activities that train teachers, build schools, develop effective curricula. It also recognizes that it is imperative to focus on strategies for reaching the most disadvantaged children -- girls who live in poor remote areas, children in conflict zones, child laborers, those with disabilities, victims of human trafficking and children who are orphaned or negatively impacted by HIV/AIDS.

The Education for All Act requires that basic education be inclusive in all comprehensive U.S. development strategies and it creates an Education for All coordinator position to help improve the coordination and effectiveness of all U.S. government agencies' education assistance programs.

Passing the Education for All Act will be a big step forward, but it can't take the place of the many small steps that each of you takes each day to provide a quality education for children everywhere.

The work you've been doing, including the development of U.S. aid to education strategy and the Center for Universal Education's global compact on learning helps move us closer and closer to our shared goals.

May our conversation today with leaders in the field, including representatives from several countries that are working to achieve universal education, inspire us all to keep marching with a renewed commitment to global education.

On Sunday, we will commemorate the tenth anniversary of the September 11 attacks. It will be a day of sadness, of reflection and a time to remember those we lost on that horrific day. But it will also be a day when we can commit to redouble our efforts to defeat global terrorisms, to stamp out the roots of fanaticism and ensure that no more innocent civilians are the victims of such heinous crimes.

Our commitment to Education for All is part of that effort, and in fact, the 9/11 Commission concluded that educational opportunity is essential to rooting out terrorism once and for all, because unstable and poorly educated societies are incubators of violence.

Working together, we can make a difference. A commitment to basic education provides an opportunity for the United States to positively interact with populations around the world while supporting our foreign policy and diplomatic goals.

So I want to conclude by thanking you for this very special award. Thank you all for your work towards universal basic education, and I look forward to working with you as we stride to bring the promise of education to every corner of the globe.

Thank you very much.

(Applause)

MR. WAGNER: Well, good morning, everybody. It's so encouraging to hear the words of Director Whelden, Administrator Shah and Representative Lowey.

These are people obviously with broad experience and an ability to make things happen. We need more than ever people like them in order to move forward the global agenda on literacy, and I must say you're also hard acts to follow.

And some of the ideas I'll be talking about have already been broached by the previous speakers, but I think I'll be able to add a few new directions, and that's what I'll be getting to.

Let's start by considering what exactly is our global literacy agenda? Is it to reduce illiteracy by a certain percentage? Is it about increased awareness concerning literacy problems? Should we concentrate more on fundraising or spend more time garnering political will?

These questions and underlying issues they reflect are likely to be familiar to all of us in the room today.

There's no doubt that the precursor issues of political will and greater funding are of critical importance in nearly every sector fighting for social and economic justice, literacy included, and I believe we have come farther down the road toward global literacy than is commonly thought. We have made serious and sustainable progress to date, even if it remains poorly understood by the public and even if there is still much to do.

Where are we now and how far do we need to go? As we've heard already, there are roughly 800 million adults that the U.N. says are illiterate today; cannot read a short paragraph in any language. And it's a number that has not changed much over several decades, and 2/3 of these are women.

Further, as we already heard, the U.N. says 67 million children do not receive any schooling today of school age. Untold millions more children receive schooling so poor that even after several grades, they cannot read a single word.

And as distressing as these statistics are, they present only part of the picture. Looking more broadly from where we, the global community, have come, it's safe to say that significant gains have been made in recent decades.

Many of the world's poorest countries have dramatically increased the percentage of children now in school. Education advantages are especially true for girls, whose rate of participation in many countries is nearly equal to boys, having doubled or

tripled in recent years.

The number of schools has also greatly increased, and internet connections have begun to sprout up in remote locations, giving a sense of future possibility to many who have felt previously cut off from the world at large.

Yet one of our biggest challenges today is that while we put millions of children into schools, we have not adequately provided them with quality learning experiences, which must include learning to read -- and of course the previous two speakers also have just cited that point.

One example -- let's just take Uganda, where now 90 percent of the children are enrolled in primary school. And even though Uganda has received a considerable amount of donor support and have developed strong strategic plans, it's still the case that more than half the Ugandan children will drop out before they can complete primary school.

This is just one example of the necessity of improving the quality of learning for children.

And there are many poignant stories of poor children who live in poor countries, showing that even if they have attended school, many, and sometimes a large majority, cannot read a word in any language and have learned little of the curriculum provided to them.

In these poor schools, there are often too many kids -- say, 60 to 70 kids in a single classroom, too few books, poor sanitation and unskilled or absent teachers.

Many of us have heard such stories. Many of us in this room have seen them, directly or in photographs or in visits to similar schools where these situations are endemic today. But unlike a decade or two ago, such classrooms should lead us to think that the world is faced with hopeless situations that defy good solutions.

Up until fairly recently, the literacy field -- which I've been a part of now for more than three decades -- especially when concerned with resource-limited countries, has accepted the first benchmark of education for all, namely getting kids into school.

Fortunately today, we know -- and as the previous two speakers said as well -- that access is not enough. And I think substantial research in literacy has led to a new phase of development where empirical science and innovation is beginning to impact policies to improve the lives of children and adults now, today.

Contributions have come from higher education think tanks, donor agencies, foundations, governments, NGOs, people such as you in this audience today and from the fields of anthropology, linguistics, psychometrics, medicine, digital technology and more -- and from across the world.

What this means is that we have come farther down the road toward universal literacy. So now is the time to try to imagine a literacy system -- not just an educational system -- that supports reading as part of the fabric of everyday life.

Let's imagine for a moment what this future would look like within the next five to 10 years. At the micro level, there would be inexpensive assessment tools available to identify each child's reading development or reading progress, with information provided back to teachers and parents alike so that everyone knows if learning is actually happening, and in which domains. And we would have teachers who are trained in how to teach reading effectively.

At the macro level, local and national authorities would have monitoring tools that would reveal inequities within classrooms, across schools and across regions. Identification of disparities is crucial for addressing the needs of the most marginalized groups. Just as importantly, these data would be posted on the web so that communities

and parents could better understand the learning outcomes of their children. And as some of you well know, this is already happening in parts of India today.

Programmatic interventions would include widely available literacy classes for unschooled mothers because we now know that adult literacy has a significant impact on both learning and health outcomes of children, and creates economic opportunities for an entire family.

We'd have mother tongue instruction for all with appropriate research-based transitions to second language literacy.

Also, there would be interventions at individual, community and national levels that gather data needed for programmatic adaptation to local circumstances and local needs.

There would be a reduction in data gathering for the sake of regulatory compliance. Rather, with the rapidly growing use of handheld devices, we would provide realtime data on children's progress, school monitoring and on the impact of design interventions.

Again, some of these tools are already available today.

It is not only in the field of healthcare that expediency matters to save lives. In educational terms, failure to act quickly can do real and lasting harm to children's social and economic futures as well.

Finally, let's imagine literacy from the perspective of social justice. National governments would be less likely to see socially and ethically diverse groups as educational problems, but rather as opportunities to create equitable, pluralistic societies. Through the involvement of multiple stakeholders, educational authorities could be held more accountable to their own policies of inclusion.

Children who happen to be born in a remote corner of Ecuador or in

inner city Bombay would not be relegated to a life where they are at risk of being an illiterate person who is easily exploited. Geography would no longer be destiny for children in poor places.

Overall, in our more literate future, whether in poor parts of the world or among the disadvantaged in the U.S.A., programs would be empirically driven, time-sensitive and much more transparent to multiple stakeholders. This has already happened in some places some of the time.

What we need to imagine today is that this future is within our view. We can see our way forward, and together we need to make sure the road forward is clear, expected and fought for in the competition for global and national resources.

In sum, our achievements have not been small, even if we have a substantial way to go. This meeting, along with other efforts, will guide us more rapidly than ever before down the road to a more literate world -- and that is something to celebrate on this 2011 International Literacy Day.

Thank you.

(Applause)

MR. CROUCH: I'm Luis Crouch from the Education for All Fast-Track Initiative. We are, as many of you know, changing our name soon to the Global Partnership for Education, which I think, more effectively, reflects what we've been doing. I'll talk a little bit more about ourselves later on. In this session, my role is simply to moderate and introduce our distinguished speakers.

I would like to, before I introduce them, talk a little bit about the composition of the panel. It's a somewhat engineered panel, in a sense that we've got countries that, in some respect, are further along the track of doing something large-scale, national scale on literacy, such as Nicaragua, which started a little bit earlier than

Liberia, but Liberia, as well, which has serious randomized trials and is going to scale. And we have other countries that are, sort of, beginning down that path to some degree, doing national assessments, drawing baselines, designing programs. And so, we wanted to create an opportunity for exchange compressions both amongst them in formal situations, but also with you, so that the audience gets a sense of the spectrum that we're working with.

So, let me introduce the speakers, and I will introduce them in the order in which they will be speaking. And so we will have Ato Fuad Ibrahim, the Minister of State for Education -- General Education in Ethiopia. We will then move on to Abel de Assis from Mozambique, who is the National Director for Quality Assurance in the Ministry; Mator Kpangbai, who is the Deputy Minister of Instruction for the Ministry of Education in Liberia; and then, Guillermo Lopez, who is the Director General of Primary Education in Nicaragua. Let me just say a word or two about each presenter, just so that you get to know them a bit.

Minister Ibrahim is the -- as I said -- the State Minister. He has served for many years in the Harari Region in the -- in his country. Ethiopia is a decentralized country, and he has experience at the decentralized level. He has, like most of the panelists, experience as an instructor in a teacher training college, in this case. He earned his Bachelor's degree at the Bahir Dar (inaudible), and a Master's degree from a Finnish university.

The next speaker will be Abel Assis, and his background is that he has been head of the -- he is currently head of the Quality Assurance Program at the Ministry, but previously he has worked in the National Learning Assessment Institute of Mozambique with experience in curriculum design assessment and examination and certification.

Minister Kpangbai is currently the Deputy Minister for Instruction in the country of Liberia. It's the third highest post in the Ministry. He is a dynamic and tireless fellow. He has the distinction, relative to other members of the panel, that he has been an educator in the United States as well, being a teacher, and I believe ending up as a high school principal. He has many distinctions and honors from various bodies in the United States and abroad. He has a Bachelor's of Science degree from Cuttington University in his own country, and a Master's in business administration from, I believe, the United States -- a United States university.

And finally, Guillermo Lopez is currently the Director General of Primary Education and Ministry in Nicaragua. He has a Master's degree in teacher training from The National University of Nicaragua, and a Bachelor's degree in education science, and he, perhaps, was the longest serving teacher. He has a 30-year teaching career, so we're quite honored to have someone who has been, for so long, at the coalface, if you will, of teaching. He also plays a role in various teacher unions and work organizations in Nicaragua.

So, without further ado, I would like to turn the session over to Minister Ibrahim.

MR. IBRAHIM: Good morning. I'm glad to express my gratitude for the organizers to have me here and give an opportunity to explain about my country's education, our children's challenges, and so on. So, since I'm not only in this, our climate is to be very brief about my presentation. My presentation follows so much (inaudible) education with that and a greater assessment (inaudible) you have that. The (inaudible) plan system and the plan for addressing the challenges in operation (inaudible). And you talk a model of education is about a hundred years old. Since 1991, only -- for (inaudible) 16 percent of them are going to school, when this government took power, 19, 18 years

ago. So, totally, 20 percent of the children were going to school. Most of the children who were going to school were from (inaudible) nationalities (inaudible) 18 nationalities, so that's put 18 nationalities on the (inaudible) nationally as we are going to discuss.

The (inaudible) advantages (inaudible) because rural happened the difference was so huge. Gender issue was another problem. So, among nationality sources, there was a difference very much, (inaudible) and (inaudible) as I said. So, with this government came to power what it did was, it established, and largely, it was composed of different, you know, social strata, with (inaudible) and also representation, more so that the (inaudible) and government. Our (inaudible) is a country without. Just for, you know, the transition of (inaudible), which led, you know, as a country for two to three years.

So, this gross (inaudible) identified for major problems for education. The first one was access, as I said. The second one was (inaudible) and quality. The third was (inaudible). The fourth one was inefficiency. So, as I said, many children before they finish primary education, they leave the school. Drop-out was very high. Repetition was very high. As I said also, the education system totally followed in a way (inaudible) had a very good relation with (inaudible). Everything came from (inaudible). When we had a very good relationship with England, everything came from England, and when we had more so relationship with U.S.A., again the same average. And now, of course, what we did was, we have these folks whatever (inaudible). It is dismissed that we do not want to know the (inaudible). But together we (inaudible) partners we identify problems, we plan together, and we implement together, and also we (inaudible), and we read feedbacks and improve for the next test. This is how we are now working, so this is the difference also.

So, then, the other very important issue is when we come to the problem,

our teachers were unprepared, I could say because, as I said again, the text books, everything was coming from different countries where you had different relationships with different countries all based on our leadership. So, even the teachers' preparation was not (inaudible). So, they don't know what they are going to face when they go to the schools.

In 2006, we have good AT, nationalities with AP languages, (inaudible) and everything, but to be where forced to learn in only one of the language in the country. So, (inaudible) were a problem with the countries (inaudible), as you know, this government has taken a (inaudible). The first one is, it was 1997, I think, we had a (inaudible) development plan, education sector coming up with the plan, which was followed by the 20 years, you know, that active plan. This time, 20 years later, the plan was also followed, you know, the education training and policy. It was (inaudible).

After identify those four problems, as I said, we developed the education and training policy in the country. It's a 15-page document that's each and every worker is that document has with a very, very huge (inaudible). So, it will explain a lot of things. Every word in that document explained. So, based on that, education training and policy, which asked in a first objective sense, we will pursue an education which will support the economic development of the country, and the vice versa where the economy also supports the education (inaudible). Now, everybody in the country has the staff observe and sense this in our statement because the (inaudible) has been joined the last five years. So, we have to run to the last -- this what we have been create with U.S.A. because we have (inaudible) it's (laughter).

So, it is those parents that brought 20 million students into the land (inaudible). It just (inaudible) our schools to have 28,000 primary schools and 20 million -- more than 20 million students. So, why need to separate, why need to separate? It's

good to bring children to school, but we need to provide them quality education, better education. So, last year we conducted a study -- EGRA study, with EGRA (inaudible). It's six-long weeks in (inaudible) but there is (inaudible). So, everybody was thinking we would do (inaudible), but it was not. So, now we have developed a plan, as I said. What we -- the curriculum -- we will -- curriculum would be now changed, the syllabi (inaudible) and everything -- the curriculum. Is it (inaudible). Then, we are going to develop the textbooks, and then, (inaudible) textbooks who are going to train our teachers. Again, we will check -- we will conduct (inaudible) EGRA and we'll see against those (inaudible). And finally, some of these processes, we'll see. And on October, we will have an English EGRA and also EGMA, math tests. We have national (inaudible) and they will conduct it, and for grade 4, 8, 10 and 12, by every two year, we do national assessments. So this (inaudible). As a principle, we are following that -- a principle we're following that. Education is an instrument to maintain development and development of (inaudible) resources for development, so we'll get an education, quality education, that we have in (inaudible). Thank you so very much. (Applause)

MR. CROUCH: The next presenter is Mr. Assis from Mozambique. Would you prefer to manage your own slides?

MR. ASSIS: Yes.

MR. CROUCH: Yes. This is the forward.

MR. ASSIS: Okay. Good morning, everyone. I want to salute you all for this International Literacy Day that commemorates today, and to thank the organizer of this event, and my official language is Portuguese, but I will try to do my best to present it in English.

My presentation will have three main parts, which is the context, the progress, and the summary challenges. In Mozambique, (inaudible) believe that

education is a key to combating poverty and increase economic development, and the priorities is (inaudible) educational reach comprises now seven years of primary education. Here, we bring the assignment progress, starting -- increased it from 1992 when the end of the war, so can see the expression at the primary education in general in all the system, and to have also increased the effort and (inaudible) especially in general -- gender in primary and secondary education, and although we have high pupil/teacher ratio. We also have as a problem the drop-out is still high, particularly in grade five and seven.

(Inaudible) issue were trying to implement different programs to measure the quality of the education, so that some are actions, at the national level, who have different institutions from the government, (inaudible) and also from the civil society what they can -- some measure to measure the learning of the children. So indicating (inaudible) briefly to hear some examples, and to also put (inaudible) in the original initiative which we called SACMEQ which comprised 14 categories in the Southern Africa regions of 15 minutes of education in grade six in language, maths, and the third one in also age (inaudible).

And here, we bring you one of the (inaudible) taken this year. The purpose is to make a (inaudible) in the north of the Mozambique Capital Garden, and then that is some question of this study, as there was selected in some of the indicators. And then, the measure of findings; we can see that is there. We spent little time on task and that (inaudible) affect us. The school year starts later. Some lessons started also later. Absenteeism for the teachers and students due to different reasons; (inaudible) official visits and public events are some of the factors that contributed to the problems that we have in the schools. Also the time spent in the classroom is ineffective and shows the students are not on task. From the SACMEQ, we participated in 2007 in the

assessment and to really have results from the reading, so the scale comprises eight lists -- eight levels from the lower to high level of skills. So, we can see here that, in general, in the progress that our students have some difficulties at higher-level skills in reading.

Also, in maths, we have very similar problems that differs from the progresses, that some can say that Mozambique is still a long way to meeting the Millennium Development Goals.

For us, our challenges is access, retention, and conclusion of the seven years of education with the relevant contents, and to deal with these problems while focusing on the read and write in the first grades, and that's why we're trying to improve some areas. One of the areas is school assessment, basically to call (inaudible). It just (inaudible) to make the teacher aware of what the students learn. The second one, we will use the National Assessment in the reading and maths. The third one, we will continue to use the SACMEQ Assessment, and to deal with the quality issue also, focus on measuring outcomes, which implies to define norms and standards, to train people to use the instruments, to train the head teachers, and to identify the progress in our education system. So, those are the challenges that we have in that part of education in Mozambique. Thank you very much. (Applause)

MR. CROUCH: Excellent. Thank you very much, and I hope you're all taking notes because we're being exposed to some very, in my view, brilliant insights and suggestions on which you may have questions later. But, thank you so much to the presenters so far, and over to you, Mator.

MR. KPANGBAI: Thank you, Luis. I want to extend to EFA, FIT and AID and all the partners for organizing the International Literacy Day. A quick (inaudible), my friend at the computer two, I will move in numbered slides.

SPEAKER: That's no problem.

MR. KPANGBAI: So, firstly, we have a literacy rate of 58 percent. That matches our life expectancy. English is spoken as our official language. We have 16 major languages. Liberia went through a brutal civil war, so interestingly, at our primary level, we have about 3 or 4 percent of all students completed grade six. We have 52 percent of our teachers currently not certified and considered unqualified, and we use English as our official instructional language.

After the war, we had over a half a million overage of student population. So, the first thing we did as a government, was to look for programs in which would accelerate learning, so we have an accelerated learning program that has three levels. And level one and level two will prepare students for grade one and grade two; level two and four -- I'm sorry -- level two will prepare students for three and four, and level three will prepare students for grade five and six.

We had opportunity to have assessed the program, which is referred to as the Core Skills -- Education Skills for Liberian Youth, which is going to be evolving to advance youth programs. One thing we have done is that, we have recently made reading as a separate (inaudible) of curriculum for grades one through eight.

Unqualified teachers, we got support for AID, so we work on rehabilitating our Rural Teacher

Training Institute, and work with international NGOs to train teachers. We have issue out on a secondary level; government had made our university free for educational students. We have recently passed an improved (inaudible) center for teachers.

This presentation will be guided by five questions, and I will forward to slide number seven. Now, when did we become aware of this issue, as it relate to early literacy skill?

SPEAKER: (Inaudible) want to take over that?

MR. KPANGBAI: Please.

SPEAKER: Because I can see your page but he cannot.

MR. KPANGBAI: Sorry.

SPEAKER: That's all right. Page 8. (Inaudible).

MR. KPANGBAI: Yes. In 2008, we ran the pilot Assessment, with (inaudible) from the World Bank, and in primary we're looking at two grades, grades two and grade three. As you will see, we had 34 percent of the students couldn't read one word, and we have -- the average number of word read were 19.6. So what do we do with a dismal reading performance of our students? Internationally, as required, we have about 45 words being read per minute, but our goal in Liberia is to approach 60. So, with the pilot done, there were five core questions that had to be answered. So, on page 10. The re-intervention what we've done with the Ministry of Liberia (inaudible), and we're looking at baseline oral reading assessment data, our (inaudible), and we're looking at the group, going to schools, and we're using a (inaudible) and we're required (inaudible) to fund the term assessment.

With the intervention we had 60 schools in 7 counties, and in 15 school districts. In Liberia, we have 15 counties, and we have a hundred school districts -- on page 12. So, with the EGRA Plus intervention, the lesson learned, based on a (inaudible) approached, but one of things that children learn the signs of English, and we're talking about the signs, the letters, in initial instruction. As EGRA is evidence-based, we require a 45 minutes a day instruction. In addition, teachers are required to read every afternoon. There's a homework component that students read to parents and parents sign and return to indicate that they are also part of the process.

Today, we (inaudible) our program to 670 schools in 4 counties with the hope of reaching the other 11 counties.

With our EGRA Plus, our coaching is the center of competent, so we have coaches to different schools to help our teachers. We use social marketing. There's a parent/community report card, and continued assessment is required.

The fifth thing, the experiment that (inaudible) and reading comprehension. I want to try -- get folks attention to the effect size. If you look at the control and full intervention, there's no difference. If you look at final mean at one and a half years, you'll see the effect size for letter-naming doubled, 0.52. For oral fluency, we doubled, 0.80. And for reading comprehension, it's 0.82. And these are significant means.

Quickly, letter-naming means that you have 100 regular letters that kids can name in rows. Oral reading has to do with the (inaudible), assist the words and read (inaudible) at a secondary level, and comprehension means that students must answer five questions on the passage read. So, with that size, and the number of students that participated in the experiment, were 2,800 students. So you see the proof. After -- the group over a year was letter-naming (inaudible) two years. Oral fluency was 1.8, and reading comprehension for two years. So, there was significant gap close. Students that couldn't read, now read almost at grade level after only five years. We have changed our name from EGRA Plus into Reading First, and this is based on (inaudible) AID but it's also required for all of our teacher training institute. So, all of our incoming teachers, now, into our schools must go through the EGRA Plus or the Reading First program to ensure that they are able to teach students when they leave the (inaudible) institution (inaudible).

Our interim goal is 45 words, but that is also international benchmark; but for Liberia, our goal is to ensure that all of the students by the end of grade three they can all be able to read and write. We now have support for (inaudible) that will be doing

national assessment reform to determine that all students are indeed able to read at completion of grade three.

How do we sustain this? As I indicated earlier, we have made a requirement in terms of making sure our teacher preparation programs teach reading. We are (inaudible) realignment between our ECB and our primary education, and finally -- if you could go to Page 22 -- just a minute -- the important thing is that we are (inaudible) language in the pre-primary instruction, in the English where we have local partnerships.

Finally, Page 24, the goal is to focus on reading and reading (inaudible) we had (inaudible) Liberia. We are trying to find resources to have professional development at all levels, and critically important pieces that you need leadership in the (inaudible) Bureau of Recertification. Thank you. (Applause)

MR. CROUCH: And last, but not least, because in a way, it's the country that's sort of moved ahead the fastest or the furthest, Nicaragua, Guillermo is going to speak in Spanish, but the presentation will be in English, and I will help him (Speaking Spanish). He's going to speak in Spanish; the presentation will be in English. So, welcome to a globalized world, and if you can't do it, get with the program. (Laughter)

MR. LOPEZ: (Speaking Spanish)

MR. CROUCH: Sorry, just a quick note that the -- on the quality side because it's acronyms, those are teacher training programs where teachers are encouraged to analyze the curriculum rather than just, sort of, receive, so they think about the curriculum that they're a part.

MR. LOPEZ: (Speaking Spanish)

MR. CROUCH: So master teachers -- a master teacher program that reach out to others.

MR. LOPEZ: (Speaking Spanish)

MR. CROUCH: Just to summarize, again, the acronyms, on the EGRA and (inaudible) RFB, basically refer to early assessments appropriate for early grades that they're either experimenting with or have already adopted more -- adopted more in reading experimenting amount.

MR. LOPEZ: (Speaking Spanish)

MR. CROUCH: Sorry, that may be a little hard to follow. So, it's, just on the slide. So, he's talking about the middle -- bottom middle slide there, around issues of shared responsibility and accountability, school councils and so on.

MR. LOPEZ: (Speaking Spanish) (Applause)

MR. CROUCH: One statistic that I don't know if you caught is that Nicaragua has now a 97 percent literacy rate in (Speaking Spanish).

MR. LOPEZ: (Speaking Spanish)

MR. CROUCH: So, in Nicaragua, the process obviously is how to do literacy better and faster because, in a way, they're -- in terms of basic percentages -- they're almost there. Unfortunately, due to the time, I've just been told by the process managers that we will have time for only one or two questions. So -- but of course, there could be fifteen answers, right? (Laughter) So -- no, but seriously, let's take the two questions right -- one after the other -- and then we'll give space for the panel to answer the questions, and hopefully, in any case, there will be time over tea at some point, coffee, to chat some more. So, a couple of questions, please, from the audience? I told you to have questions, so, surely, you heard me and came up with some.

SPEAKER: Good morning. Thank you for your presentations. My name is Annie Duguay. I'm from the Center for Applied Linguistics, and I'm wondering about -- maybe some of you touched upon it -- but I'm wondering about first language use in

your literacy programs.

MR. CROUCH: Second question? Nobody else? One over there. She had her hand up first, so let's move to her first.

SPEAKER: Hello, I'm Jenny Spratt from Research Triangle Institute. I would suspect that, in many of these countries, there is a dearth of reading materials for children, and I would like to hear a little bit more about what -- I noticed Nicaragua mentioned libraries and maybe you said more, but I wouldn't know -- what your countries may be doing to develop age-appropriate reading materials. And, perhaps, private sector involvement in that work.

MR. CROUCH: Okay. So, you heard the two questions. Home language issues, how are you approaching that, and the issue of high quality and appropriate reading materials? Are we going to --?

SPEAKER: One more, hopefully, if they can weave it in. My name is Meg Gardiner. I'm a researcher at the Woodrow Wilson Center right now. My question is whether or not you've had the opportunity to hear from the teachers about how some of these policies are trickling down and what are some of the constraints and enabling factors that they face in the schools.

MR. CROUCH: So, if I could ask all panelists to contribute, you know, fairly quickly to any of the three questions -- you don't have to take all three. Just take the ones that you feel are most pertinent, and why don't we do it in linear order, from here to there.

MR. ASSIS: Can I speak in Portuguese? (Laughter)

MR. CROUCH: Yeah. Thank you.

MR. ASSIS: In Mozambique (Speaking Portuguese)

MR. CROUCH: Okay. Just a quick translation is that, yes, they are,

indeed, paying attention to the home language issue. They have had several pilots, and the results have been good, and they are, while not yet at the stage of going to national scale, they are beyond the pilot stage, so they're in a, kind of, intermediate -- between pilot and full scale. They agree fully with the importance. In fact, their analyses show that that's one of the reasons for early failure, is the lack of home language instruction. The challenges remain to prepare the teachers and also to adjust the assessment tools for a variety of languages, and to preview use of assessment in non-Portuguese languages. I think I got that right? I think you borrowed that one. Yeah.

MR. IBRAHIM: Okay. Just to reflect. The first language in Ethiopia, as a minimum of instruction, is about 24. Okay. In Ethiopia, as you know, we have a very (inaudible) language voice in our education training and policy. It's very much education and training policies; it's very much (inaudible) primary school is -- has to be used by the (inaudible). But, in most cases, (inaudible) grade one to four (inaudible), and each state is independent. It has gots its own (inaudible), so education is just (inaudible) regions, so, so far, we have reached 24 languages, but, as my colleague said, it -- using (inaudible) as a first language is very good. But, if we are not (inaudible) and also psychology can be very (inaudible). Then, it's a problem. This is what EGRA showed up. So, we have to work on that. So, we have (inaudible) and intervention. English, we start from grade one as a subject, but for most readers, from grade seven onwards, they achieve (inaudible) minimal instruction. But, according to the policy, every region has to start English as a minimal instruction from grade nine onwards. This is (inaudible). The other one is (inaudible). Yes, we do. We have a lot of that. (Inaudible) we do. It was in our own (inaudible). It was in our own regions, but now with the GEQIP, General Quality -- General Education Quality Improvement Program, which is a very comprehensive package to bring about quality education, and it has about six programs, and these

programs -- this package is designed in such a way that each program has an impact, as well as (inaudible) combination has an impact. This includes leadership in the school -- from the Ministry level to school leadership, very important; the teachers; the curriculum; the school improvement program where the next center that results in all achievement of all students; and more so, the (inaudible) aspect of it. (Inaudible) education because it took place a very long (inaudible). I said 80 languages, 80 nationalities, and so, we need to bring all of these people on board together, so that we have (inaudible) and (inaudible) education, which has got 12, in all, values, in which everybody exerts a part in making a difference. Another one is ICT (inaudible) College Technology to -- as a subject in the schools, as well as (inaudible 17:00:51). So, using this (inaudible) as a tool to deliver -- render quality education. So, just out of six programs, which are considered part of the package, which is supported by (inaudible) technically (inaudible) because they have (inaudible) 3,000 schools -- some 3,000 schools. So, the same program that in some 3,000 schools, and so on. So, this is outside of the issues, but as far as teacher (inaudible) has been raised, it's a problem. As I said, it is (inaudible). The problem is, especially with -- we are (inaudible). I usually travel to different parts of the country. When I travel, I go to schools and I observe classes. I discuss with the students, with teachers, everyone. Even in math classroom, when I go there, and it's grade seven and it's grade six, first ask children to eat, and then to explain to me what is said. Before I ask of them, you know, to (inaudible) so there are problems. So, now, with EGRA, with this idea, you are thinking that if every child is (inaudible), so I was (inaudible) to the same, you know, (inaudible), so every child is different. At the same time, also, every teacher has to teach reading and writing.

You know, we -- it was in this context (inaudible), so we have, now, tonight, so, this is very important. One of the problems is, the teachers, themselves,

sometimes they have no literacy. I'm sorry to say that. We have to prepare them. This is not their problem, but this is our problem -- the training of our teachers -- the system in which we are training. You have one of the teacher development program explains very well the difference of programs, about six (inaudible) programs, updating -- upgrading the (inaudible) of the teacher (inaudible) everything we've considered in our program, and that's a very huge program. So, I said GEQIP -- General Education Quality Program, so this, we hope, will solve this problem. Thank you. (Applause)

MR. KPANGBAI: Thank you for your questions. For (inaudible) official language for instruction is English. Several years ago, we began piloting Liberian languages in different parts of the country. On August 8, (inaudible) it revised education law that required Liberian languages to be taught in every school. We are currently in the process of coming up with the different policies, but we are looking at grades one through nine, somewhere (inaudible) like to support to ensure that Liberian languages are taught. But, this will be done on a decentralized basis because we are 16 plus different languages, so we are hoping now with different (inaudible) school goals, where it would decide the predominant language in that particular county to be taught.

The issue regarding localized materials, we do have the Liberian Association that does allow collaboration with (inaudible) in developing a (inaudible) and relevant materials. Many, at times, we have material that not relevant, a content for students to relate to. So, we are (inaudible) supplemental materials or even primary materials for the local context, in which the students will be able to use it, draw conclusion, and have some understanding of.

Teacher, our challenges are (inaudible) as a way we have brutal civil war in (inaudible) why the folks fled. We had (inaudible) parting several ways with the rehabilitation for Rural Teacher Training Institute. The (inaudible) that we have had with

our EGRA program is that, knowing that the teacher are taught and supported, we have coaches that regularly do visits and part of our (inaudible) is to, not only have coaches come to the school for teachers identify in each school where they also can't get work alone with the program after three years, they can assume of role of helping individual teachers and students.

MR. CROUCH: Professor Lopez will answer in Spanish, and I'll make a quick translation.

MR. LOPEZ: (Speaking Spanish)

MR. CROUCH: Okay. Just quickly, then, on the languages issue, there in the Atlantic Coast is where they have the greatest variety of languages, and that -- if I understood it correctly -- a kind of semi-autonomous -- has a semi-autonomous policies. They have five or six original languages. They've been adapting the assessment tools -- early reading assessment tools and also the textbooks, and also improving the teacher training and the teacher training colleges to handle the mother-tongue issue.

On the textbooks, they have a massive textbook program, free distribution, but aside from textbooks, they've also been working on -- I don't know what to -- sort of, fun reading materials, that are not instructionally-based, such as reproducing a lot of the poetry of Nicaragua's national poet -- actually a important part in the whole Hispanic world -- so that kind of thing.

And, in terms of the teacher integration into the new policies, his, sort of, rhetorical question is, "How do we get the teachers to accept the policies," and his response was, "Well, they co-developed them," so the teachers had been integrated into the development of a lot of these policies, a lot of dialogue, a lot of consultation. Imagine it's time-consuming, but I'm sure it pays off.

So, thank you to the panelists. I think there are some very clear lessons

that emerge out of this. We will make sure to come back to them during the following sessions, so that a set of themes clearly emerges throughout the day. Thank you very much. (Applause)

MS. CATOR: We have had all manner of amazing stories this morning, description of challenges and barriers, and lots of inspiring ideas.

So, what we're going to do now is take this to -- take another topic, which is the promise of technology -- how can different technologies potentially help us get to the problem of providing literacy education for people throughout the world.

So, we in the U.S. published the National Education Technology Plan in November, and laid out a broad vision for learning that is powered up by technology that can allow all students to access a personalized, more individual opportunity to learn, the kind of personalized instruction that is, in fact, very participatory, that people can connect with each other, building in social technologies, building in mobile learning opportunities, building in amazing kinds of digital content that's being designed and developed, and building in the opportunity to continually learn from the interaction as well.

So, I am actually not going to talk more about that, and I'm going to turn this over to our panel because we have a fantastic panel. And they have a lot to tell you.

What we've asked them to do is do some kind of short, snappy presentations, and we will go just a little bit over at the end of this. I'm glad most of you stood up at least and stretched and took a bit of a break. We'll go a little bit over, but we will time for some audience questions hopefully, so be thinking about kind of what's inspiring you, what's interesting to you, what kind of innovations are you listening -- are you hearing, and what do you think is the promise of innovation and innovative technologies for improving learning throughout the world.

So, with that, you have the bios in your package, so I'm not going to read

those to you. I am just going to simply introduce the panelists as they speak.

So, first up is Anthony Bloom.

MR. BLOOME: Okay, great.

MS. CATOR: How are you?

MR. BLOOME: Thank you, Karen. So, don't start the timer yet, Steven. I have a quick question for the audience. How many of you can guess what the cost of the first mobile phone was when it was introduced in 1984? Just yell out numbers.

SPEAKER: Five thousand.

MR. BLOOM: Oh, darn it.

(Laughter)

MR. BLOOME: Am I giving this presentation?

(Laughter)

MR. BLOOME: So, 1984 the first mobile phone that came out cost $4,000. That just gives you some idea of costs of innovation in learning, the cost of technology.

I recognize, though, Karen, that I may be one of the only ones talking specifically about technology. I believe there's a variety of other innovations that are going to be discussed here. And Karen asked me to be provocative, so I'll start off after your break with a provocative set of slides.

Okay. We've heard a lot about quality this morning, and don't need to underscore it further. It's hard to imagine how we will achieve our millennium goals -- the challenges of schools and children having low resource settings, not having enough schools -- without thinking about the contributing role of technology. Now, this isn't to supplant the importance of teacher professional development and the importance of traditional education systems, but as Nita Lowey had said this morning, how we reach learners in all parts of the globe. And, again, it's hard to imagine how we could do that without creative uses of

technology.

This is a picture that I took when I was in Mozambique with a number of kids that were trying to get in, and I thought this was an apt metaphor of kids outside the school system that all of a sudden what happens when they get into the school? What kind of challenges are we going to have in regards to access to technology?

So, we're fortunately at what I would suggest is the tipping point in terms of regards of uses of technology. We have a number of pilots that USAID and other development partners are supporting looking at low cost technologies and interventions, whether it's interactive media, such as radio, hand-held devices. We see the costs of these are being lowered, and at the end I'll present a challenge in terms of our collaborative opportunities to lower these costs further.

Of course, we want to make sure that it's cost effective, accessible, and scalable, and sustainable. So, again, it's not to supplant the importance of rigorous evaluation about the contributing roles of technologies. But we're excited about what we see currently and over the horizon in regards to creative uses of technology to promote early great reading.

Now, our strategy -- the new USAID education strategy, there's specific reference to the importance of partnerships. There was a question from the panel, somebody asked about engagement with private sector, because this is an important area of collaboration as a development community that we recognize the innovation, the opportunities to collaborate with private sector organizations.

It's also important again that we underscore the appropriate uses of technology through rigorous evaluation. We don't want our technology interventions in countries to be led by technology of convenience. Either that's being promoted by private sector in developed worlds looking for an additional market, or the aldorum (?) technology as

opposed to seeing how it can it can be fortunate and integral part of an education program. So, that's why we want to make sure that we have this rigorous evaluation.

USAID has been supporting a variety of challenges to raise the level of awareness and to catalyze new ideas in regards to the use of science and technology in development. Our administrator came on board and launched a series of grant challenges, including the first, which is a grant challenge on saving lives at birth. Education in a few months will be announcing its grand challenge, "All Our Children Reading." So, again, specific opportunities and interventions to use science and technology to promote early great reading.

We're delighted that World Vision came on board as our initial founding partner, and recently I've heard that AusAID has also come on board. So, we're excited, looking for other founding partners.

We also suspect that we'll have a variety of applications that are related to mobile applications. And what I mean by mobile applications is not exclusively just your mobile com. I don't know if any of you've seen the Pico (?) projectors. Has anybody used these Pico microprojectors? You can now purchase them for $100. What is the opportunity to connect a Pico projector to a flash drive to bring a mountain of resources into a low resource setting? Flash drives are another example.

USAID recently co-hosted a symposium with a variety of international institutions interested in mobile applications for education and development. And we're thrilled that we'll have a formal alliance in short order to build upon those experiences and best practices.

Oh, and I'm on my last slide. Excellent.

(Laughter)

MR. BROOKE: This is a picture of someone from the Philippines when I

was there. Our previous instructor, David Barnes, had always said to me, Tony, whenever you talk about technology, how is it going to help a girl learner in wherever you're working? And I don't know if Dee is here as well, but I think about that in regards to the appropriate uses of technology as well.

I'll tell you the opportunity, and I mentioned this at the beginning in regards to challenges, is if we work together as a development community to identify appropriate technologies that are sustainable and appropriate, how can we help lower the costs of that technology penetration in the communities that we're trying to serve?

We represent a wide array of development institutions. Let's challenge the world to help lower the costs of access to bring those technologies to contribute to a great need? Thank you.

MS. CATOR: Thank you very much. Yeah, so that's interesting. We've been talking a lot about how we launch these types of challenges to the world's investors and entrepreneurs. So, we would love to talk with you more about that. That's a worthy challenge of the best minds, the best innovators, to attack that.

And, yes, this is a panel more about the best variety of innovations, not specifically technology. So, yes, I apologize for that.

So, the next speaker is Francois Gerin-Lajoie, and he will be quickening through this fast presentation. Thank you.

MR. GERIN-LAJOIE: Thank you, Karen. I'm Francois Gerin-Lajoie. The Paul Gerin-Lajoie Foundation was named after my father when he stepped down from ACEDA, the International (inaudible) Agencies. My slides are in English, but my tongue is in French. But as I'm Canadian, we have both official languages, so I'll try to do my best in English. Thank you.

The Foundation today, the core of our business is more towards

employment, employment amongst the youth. And we are more into vocational training assisting program.

But we did quite a lot in literacy, and we did quite a lot also in basic education. So, if I can go through these.

We also have -- and I'm not talking about it today because five minutes wouldn't give me a good chance to talk about it. But we have this tremendous and humongous contest, which is called (Speaking French), which is a dictation contest that we've been running for 20 years. And it's dictation, as I said. It's a dictation called (Speaking French). And we're among six sub-African countries in French, and we gathered in the last 20 years, 4.5 million participants from (inaudible). We had 1.5 coming from Africa.

And every year, there's African winning the contest, so it's just to tell you that they are avid at reading because we do distribute materials so they can win the contest. So, that's a good entry. We're very proud of that project.

If I go to the first project. Okay. I have three little projects here that I want to present to you. This first one started in my backyard in Montreal. The middle one is a little community of 5,000 inhabitants, and we're aboriginal nation. They're totally, totally illiterate. We went there last year with my volunteers, Educators Without Borders, which (inaudible) one little ID. The multidisciplinary project that was put ahead, ACHIEVE. And we decided to team with them, which was the seasons. (Inaudible) natives, they have six, contrary to what most North American countries. And those six seasons are based mainly around their hunting and fishing season.

So, we decided to use that as a subject, and from there we went on to do an acute reading program that was for four weeks. And it was very, very important to involve -- like some ministers said this morning -- to involve parents, and to make sure also that grandparents would be in the portrait, and that finally that we would finish it off with a

one-month program on the radio. And today, one year later, we're not there anymore, but the program is still going on and going very strong.

The second project, which is from Quebec from and I'm one who really, really put it on. And this project is called the Quest for Knowledge. So, as you can see, I'm going to go read through my -- it's going to be easier for me. I'll just make the description of the project because it's very interesting.

We took a group of students, five to eight, armed with Dictaphones, and we have interviews and questions of storytellers on three subjects. And then, the kids choose their favorite project, translate it from dialect to French, and then (inaudible) the story into books, tailor content, chapters, interdiction, conclusion, and acknowledgment. And, finally, illustrated their (French term). And the final act was a grand celebration at the village, where they would act, sing, or recite their own story. So, if you look at it, this is what would look at the end. You have it in dialect on the left; you have it put on computers on the right. And you've got the illustration here. So, we did great with that, and it was not (Speaking French).

And, finally, I'm sure everybody around here knows a little bit about interactive pedagogy, which we did also in 13 FSO. And their success was that at the end of the project -- it was a project of a year -- the ministry decided to have a seminar and constructed a policy around it. And today, they have an inter-pedagogy among 15 FSOs. But the difficulties are the same that the administrator of USAID was saying this morning. The problems are always the same. We don't have ways of measuring how it goes today, how it's done today.

So, this concludes a little bit my presentation, the end of the five minutes. But just read maybe this President Barack Obama presentation. We also looked at how we can foster the innovations that can be the game changers in the program.

Thank you.

(Applause)

MS. CATOR: Thank you. And one of the key things that I heard Francois say is talking about compelling projects that engage communities, engage participants, engage communities. There's a lot of storytelling -- really interesting focus on the human dynamic. And that's one of the things that we absolutely have to do. We can spend hours talking about the measurement, but we won't.

So, with that, we'll pass it on to Corey Heyman.

MR. HEYMAN: Thank you very much, Karen. Good morning, everyone.

My discussion about innovation this morning is also not about electronic technologies. Instead, it is our attempt to grapple with the issue of global illiteracy using very traditional resources, teachers and books, but using them in strategic ways.

At root, one of our main organizational goals is to help children to become lifelong, independent readers. We started 11 years ago by building libraries, more than 1,400 libraries in school plots built to date, and 11,000 libraries established overall, and stocking them with donated books, more six million donated books to date.

We quickly realized that donated books were not helpful for our children at the earliest stages of reading if the children could not read the books in their own languages, and began to publish exciting storybooks and nonfiction in local languages. Approximately four million books distributed from our local language publishing program; 550 titles, including books in 25 languages.

We have also learned that to become lifelong readers, children need to develop the habit of reading and reading skills, and have, therefore, initiated large-scale research and development efforts in nine countries, now 10, in Africa and Asia to bridge gaps in teachers' ability to teach reading, supplementary materials to support language textbooks and children's reading habits.

Our research and experience to date indicates that it is important to think about the kinds of resources that are needed at each stage of a child's adversity to development to foster the goal of lifelong reading. This is particularly important for children from economically disadvantaged backgrounds who may have little exposure to books or reading before they come to school.

Our first focus on teacher instructional support is being designed to help teachers think about how to and when to promote a range of literacy skills, including listening, speaking, reading, and writing at different phases of literacy development from pre-reading, where children develop speaking skills and listening comprehension, to decoding, to fluency and reading comprehension.

At the same time, our focus on materials development also takes into the evolution of children's literacy skills. At the very early stages of learning, there needs to be a substantially greater emphasis on materials for instructional support. This is particularly important to fill the gaps in introductory reading textbooks, which often progress too quickly from a focus on letter/sound combinations to complex texts.

As children begin to develop their reading skills toward automaticity, the point at which they're able to read word combinations with enough fluency to remember text, there can be a much greater emphasis no pre-reading activities to develop a longer-term habit of reading.

The question is how to bring instructional support and materials together in an integrated approach. That is the innovation that is and will be Room to Read's research and development focus over the next few years. The anchor, of course, is sensitivity to the stages of children's literacy development.

In terms of teacher engagement with reading resources, there is also an evolution of responsibilities with the gradual release of responsibilities from teachers taking

full responsibility of children's literacy skills development to children's independent reading.

In terms of instructional support, Room to Read focuses on the development of supplemental instructional materials that fill in the gaps in existing curriculum and provide children with extensive practice materials, practice, practice, practice, at the earlier stages of learning.

At the same time, we provide a variety of storybooks and nonfiction in classroom libraries and school libraries to expose children to the wonder of reading and the excitement of colorful books that they can feel and touch. At the early stages of literacy development, these include illustrative books with beautiful pictures that teachers can read to children as well as books without words for children to make up their own stories.

We then provide picture books that help children practice their reading skills with text that they can negotiate with teacher support, as well as books and formats that teachers can share and which children can follow along.

Once children gain a level of fluency that they can comprehend more complex texts, we provide advanced books and perhaps chapter books for practice and enjoyment.

To conclude, I have a few pictures. This first one is a page from a storybook in which children are able to develop their own stories. Here is a photo of a teacher working with children on exercises to supplement the government language textbook. A variety of materials designed to promote reading skills and the habit of reading. A teacher helping children to write using their fingers and the ground. A teacher reviewing and commenting on a child's written work. Children's stories colorfully written and illustrated on a classroom wall. Using letter cards to make words and play games. Paired reading with a buddy to support skills development. Creative writing exercises with practice drawing circles, lines, and hearts. And, last, children with workbooks to supplement the government

curriculum.

MS. CATOR: Thank you, Corey.

(Applause)

MS. CATOR: It just reminds us of the power of story and the power of language, and the interaction between people as we build child literacy skills.

It also reminded me that we as we create technology to supplement these kinds of practices, really focusing in on the best of what Corey just said and other researchers have said about how people actually do develop language in order to read, and the importance of social connection. There's a lot to learn, and if we can get the entrepreneurs and investors to totally understand those things, then we have hopes of building supplements that can potentially scale up some of the best practices that we have across the world. So, thank you.

I'd like to turn this now to Sakil Malik for the next presentation.

MR. MALIK: Thank you, Karen. This is a very happy day for me, of course I'm sure for many of you, because this came along.

The reason that we are all celebrating the International Literacy Day at USAID, which is very new, and this is the first time in the history of International Literacy Day, because we have advocated for this for a long time, that we do it together.

Of course, many of you are used to the tradition of International Literacy Day being celebrated by the International Reading Association and in our different venues and partners' venues. But we are also doing this here, too. There is a parallel event going on right now at Georgetown University, but it is completely focused on domestic issues in the U.S. And, of course, I have not cloned myself here, so I cannot be in two places.

The second celebration is, of course, really important that in this particular day, UNESCO awards the National Literacy Prize. And I want to congratulate -- this is a

coincidence that Cory is sitting next to me, the award winner this year, one of the (inaudible) winner is (inaudible).

(Applause)

MR. MALIK: And there are four other awards -- goes to Mexico, Burundi, Democratic Republic of Congo. So, this is our second celebration issued for us.

The type of thing that I want to start with is that, of course, my topic when we started to talk about what I would be talking about is teachers. And before I start my few points of particulars, I want to take this moment to, you know, really pay my respect and my gratitude to all my teachers. And one of them is sitting right here, Dr. Steve Klees from the University of Maryland, College Park. And it's amazing. Without them, none of us, we would be here actually. So, again, thank you, our teachers.

Basically, there are four or five things I would just mention in the innovation of teacher professional development. What we have seen over 60 years at International Reading Association is that there are a few things that we need to really take seriously and give attention to when you are developing (inaudible) teaching. And I'm taking you one step higher -- we are not deliberately going to the student (inaudible) yet. Before you go there, you have one step, which are the teachers, and then just go one step above that is the teacher and educators who are training the teachers.

So, we talk about evidence based student line up. This is still very difficult work for me. I don't understand all of this too much.

(Laughter)

MR. MALIK: But I understand the teacher and educator. If the teacher and educator is not doing a good job, and then the teachers cannot do a good job, and the students will not do a good job. It's a very simple cycle for me.

So, how does an active teaching (inaudible) look like? There are a few

important issues. One is creation of supportive instructional environment. This is very crucial, and it would include a lot of things -- more efficient time management within the classroom, and we all know this, 80 and 100 children in the class most of the countries where we work. And, of course, our (inaudible). All of you know how you do with your big classrooms and the teachers. So, instructional environment is very important.

Attention to skill and strategies for reading success. Just because I aligned sociology throughout my master's degree, I'm not a sociology teacher. I cannot -- you need to learn how to teach teaching, you know. And so, lining about reading pedagogy is crucial. Just because I work in the education system doesn't mean that I know reading. That's why there is something called reading specialists. That's why there's something called reading research. It's very important to give attention.

When you have a problem, you know, in your heart, you go to a cardiologist. You don't go to an internal medicine doctor. So, it's important to give attention to those people, that they are reading numbers. They know what to do, and they can help us.

The hard thing is separate instruction. It's really important that observe modeling by the teacher, participating in guidance practice. There is demonstration and demonstration back. Try out new strategies and skills on their own, and then you can give feedback. A one time, one shot training program is not going to work. We have to give attention that these training programs are attached to mentoring, coaching on weight measuring in the programs.

Comprehension of the language and disciplinary contracts. I went to families who live in Liberia. To really make reading as a content area, not literacy of the content area, not saying that we do reading in other subjects. Yes, we do need to do all of them, but making literacy as a content curriculum. This is a very important step.

Ongoing and informal assessment. Great assessments going on (inaudible) is very important all the national assessment. But ongoing assessment by the teacher himself or herself in the classroom on a daily basis. And that's very important to think about. And, of course, cannot say enough about the family involvement into all of this, how the teacher and family interact to help the children when they come home.

Finally, there is no substitute for teachers who are knowledgeable, flexible, strategic in helping children learn to read. And, of course, I will end with a very simple metaphor that I always use. We always talk about think outside the box. I don't think we know enough about inside the box yet.

(Laughter)

MR. MALIK: So, it's time to learn our inside the box and do well, so what are the four corners of our house? The inside, you go outside. And thank you very much. If you want to know more about that, go to reading.org. Thank you.

(Applause)

MS. CATOR: Thank you very much. Yes, the power of teachers and, again, what we can know from basic research. I had the opportunity yesterday to talk to Charles Perfetti who is at Carnegie Mellon, has been doing amazing research for many, many years. And we know a lot about how to teach people to read, but how that actually gets translated to people in the classroom. And love your analogy about specialists. Good point.

And now, I will turn it over to Jane Meyers. Thank you.

MS. MEYERS: Thank you. The intervention that I'm going to talk about at the Lubuto Library Project is fundamentally sort of different than the other ones talked about. It's an institution that can take advantage of all of these different kinds of interventions, but it's filling an important institutional gap in society.

Lubuto Libraries are a somewhat open system and a closed system because schools, as important as it is to improve them, and we work with schools all the time, schools are a closed system. You're either in or out. And unfortunately there are many children who are out of school, particularly after the basic school level. And so, that's why this institution is needed.

The objective of our project, which is a scalable project and is going to scale right now in Zambia, is to ensure access to high quality educational services to support holistic development and power for the children who use it to fill capacity, to train teachers and communities to do this.

Again, literacy actually is a means to an end, and I think a lot of those speakers earlier this morning talked about the role literacy plays. So, we are going -- we're aiming toward that end goal as well.

We've also found that effectively serving the most vulnerable youth -- out of school children, vulnerable children and youth, requires professional library services drawing on a range of technologies, and creating innovative programming that benefit the entire society and not just the vulnerable youth.

Public libraries can, and Lubuto libraries do, educate girls without depriving boys, provide access to shared technology and comprehensive book collections. And this shared is important. I hope someone asks a question about that. Educating out of school children, child head of households, and teen mothers. So, we are able to reach out and bring these children in, and we have done it in huge numbers. Provide early childhood education -- again, that's something that happens all the time every day in our libraries. Improve teaching and education quality -- I'd love to have a chance to elaborate on that, too. And to serve as a bridge to schools for out of school youth.

Our libraries have been recognized within the library profession as a model

for library services for disadvantaged children anywhere, with a powerful and measurable impact.

One thing that we know about the profession is that there are three necessary elements for successful libraries, ones that will really have an impact and be sustained. You have to have an excellent and comprehensive collection, relevant programming, and effective outreach. And the collection needs to include all of the kinds of materials previously mentioned, including information technology.

We have seen that our library program is especially necessarily for out of school children. And I hope you all were able to pick up a handout that I had out where you pick up your badges that talk about our programs. There's one in particular where we have engaged family and teachers in partnership with the ministries of education and created 700 reading lessons -- mother/child reading lessons that can be used in our library that can be used throughout the country. In other words, we have engaged children and teachers to create 100 in each of the seven Zambian languages. So, that's one thing that can be done in a situation like ours.

Also, for such program to be effective and sustained, you need to be working with the government and communities, and both need to own it. You need to develop specialized architecture that has facilities that will accommodate the need. Capacity building is obvious, what Sakil talked about, training teachers. And also, what librarians do all over the world, just preservation. So, it seems to get forgotten that there have been in the past lots of materials, wonderful materials, in Zambia in local languages. And we have created the digital archive. We track those materials now that don't exist in Zambia any more. And we've created a digital archive.

So, I have one more minute left. Anyway, just a tiny little story at the end, and I hope I can squeeze it in because it's about my mother, and I want you all to know

about it.

My mom was born in Philadelphia, in South Philadelphia, in 1912 into a very poor Irish immigrant family. And when she got out of high school, as we were closing into the Great Depression in this country, she had absolutely no chance of going to college, and she desperately wanted to. But fortunately, she lives in Philadelphia and could spend all of her free time at the Philadelphia Free Library, the iconic first public library in the world, an innovation of a guy you may have heard of named Benjamin Franklin.

And one day in the mid-30s, a woman physician at the end of her career came in and said to the librarian she wanted to send another woman to college and medical school, and did the librarian have any ideas. And, yes, indeed, my mother got a scholarship to college and medical schools thanks to the Philadelphia Free Library met my dad in medical school. And all five kids in our family grew up knowing that libraries were a magic place and opportunity.

And that is what drives the Lubuto Project, and I hope someday I have the opportunity to tell you about Labness, and Miriam, and Betty, and Joe, and David, and all of the people -- all of the young people (inaudible) whose lives have been transformed by our libraries. Thank you.

(Applause)

MS. CATOR: That's fantastic. Thank you. Thank you, Jane. The power of libraries is, I think, even more important today than ever. A lot of people have been talking about the future of libraries. I was also reminded that we were talking earlier that the first Carnegie libraries had a room in them designed to teach people to read. So, really thinking about the power of libraries, sustaining that, and also making sure that professional librarians can continue to evolve and help us deal with the vast quantities of information and data on the Internet as well.

And with that, we'll turn it over to our final speaker, Debbi Winsten.

MS. WINSTEN: Thank you very much. I'm Debbi Winsten. My organization is called Literacy Bridge, and I am the partner relations manager based here in Washington, D.C. so that we can work with you.

And, okay, so this is a talking book. Anybody speak Twi? Okay, so it doesn't look like a book, but it does speak in any language.

Just a little bit about our work, an example of our education programs, and then a bit about the benefits for the entire community that we've been talking about.

So, we're a small NGO in Ghana and the United States, headquartered in Seattle, Washington. Our founder is a dedicated open source software engineer, who designed this small, durable touch pad computer, also very inexpensive, to make vital information in education accessible to billions of people in resource poor areas. We're passionate about ending global poverty, and so we work in remote rural areas to find solutions to bridge the literacy gap.

The talking book is simple. It's interactive. It is a computer, and it doesn't require electricity, Internet, or cell service. So, even a single talking book can serve dozens of learners with up to 140 hours of content in a variety of languages. Very easy for users to add the audio instructions in their own local dialects.

It can also transfer learning materials to another talking book -- it has a USB cord built in -- without the need for a laptop. And it captures relevant user statistics and user feedback. We were looking at the upper West Ghana, very remote area, and the Haim Primary School in Jurupa District, has only four trained teachers. You may know schools like this. There are six grade levels. The smallest class has 64 students; the largest one has twice that.

So, children work on subsistence farms. They rarely pass grade six.

There's no electricity or running water. But sometimes there are textbooks, and the children can listen to recordings the teacher made, and then practice by recording their own reading. This improves their English pronunciation.

Two or four students can work together using headphones or in small groups with a built in speaker, so that even without a teacher or a classroom they can learn. They can write words in dirt with a stick or with their fingers, or use whatever is available for learning materials. And they tailor their experience because the speed of the playback can be controlled by the user.

Interactive multiple choice quizzes on the talking book, test reading comprehension, and define new vocabulary words are introduced. We called them audio hyperlinks, so a bell and a light signal that there's a definition for the word, which the user can access without losing her place, or skip over it if she already knows the definition of the word.

So, this is important when teachers are absent or unavailable, and the students can still improve reading comprehension and pronunciation. Adults who can't read can sit with their children and a book to share the learning experience, another community impact.

And there are talking books on the table outside, so please try them. You'll see that it's really designed to be durable. It uses standard D cell batteries, which are available for approximately 35 cents, U.S., the equivalent in most places in the developing world. And so that users can actually afford to buy them.

Just a little bit about our other work. When subsistence farmers use the talking books for crop planting guidance, which was delivered in their own dialect, they grew 48 percent more food. This means they could send their children to school instead of keeping them on the farm. Traditional birth attendants have recognized the value in this,

and community health workers use them for positive behavior change in hygiene and maternal child health, again, for good outcomes. And adult non-formal learners use the talking the talking books for functional and financial literacy.

So, we think the talking books are a sustainable solution to increase literacy among the poorest of the poor. We hope you think so, too.

(Applause)

MS. CATOR: Thank you, Debbie. Sustainable and scalable. It sounds like that is --

Okay. I think we have time for one, maybe two questions. Does somebody have a question, and you're free to direct it at a specific panelist or the panel in general. What are you thinking about?

SPEAKER: All right, Tony, or somebody on the panel. Part of the problem with innovations and trying to do research -- what you call research innovation -- is that by the time the research comes out, there's a new innovation that has made the research sort of irrelevant. So, how do you keep pace with changing technologies and changing ideas and changing environments, and keep a good, solid evidence base going along?

MS. CATOR: You want to hand the microphone down?

MR. MALIK: I think you need to talk to Best Buy. They have a buy back program.

(Laughter)

MR. MALIK: No, the important part of this is that research is ongoing. And when the old research is obsolete, it still is not obsolete because you know it doesn't work anymore. I think this is an important issue. We always talk about best practice. We talk a lot about worst practice. (Inaudible) projects. Those are very important projects because it doesn't work, and we don't want to go there again.

So, the research that you think is gone and a new innovation came back, still you need that research from previous times because some of them are distinctly needed when you program the new program.

The other issue is that whether we like it or not, many of the developing countries still are in a stage where some of the research has not worked here, but it still works there because they have not came to a sphere where they can use the new innovation yet. So, they have to cross the path through that research process. Just because technology changed from black and white TV to Android doesn't mean everything becomes obsolete. Thank you.

MS. CATOR: Jane and then Tony.

MS. MEYERS: Yes. Another thing about it, using technology in the context of libraries is important, and that's something librarians struggle with everywhere in the world. I mean, information technology by its nature is not sustainable. And so, how can a library have continuity? And it's very important to develop products that are not bound to a particular technology.

So, for example, we've been using the one laptop per child laptops in our libraries for the last few years. We are pretty certain that -- and they're excellent. They work perfectly for our needs right now. But I don't know what the future of those are. So, everything that we're developing, and we developed these literacy lessons using e-toys and a PC application, but they can run on any platform. So, for example, when I presented the e-Learning (inaudible) conference in Dar es Salaam in May, we talked to people who were developing cell phone applications in Finland, and these e-toys games can work on cell phones. They can work on anything.

So, it's important to think of the innovation itself sort of separate from the hardware development.

MR. BLOOME: Yeah, just quickly, I'd say the same thing. Don't chase the technology. What happens is a lot of ministries of education and donors are chasing the glimmer of the eye, what they saw on the Metro as they were coming in. And I think what we need to do is appropriate, sustainable technology and apply it to the (inaudible) problems we have. So, work with the reading specialists to identify the opportunities for the appropriate use.

On the other hand, take advantage of the technology. Just how virtualization uses the power of a single computer to be able to power a number of other desktops or a number of other monitors, that's the way that you can make technology work for you.

eGranary is a project out of the University of Iowa. They're downloading millions of websites, putting it on hard drives, and disseminating it into communities that don't have connectivity.

So, what are the opportunities for us to take advantage of the power of technology to make it appropriate and accessible for the communities we serve?

The last is, of course, mobile comms. Other sectors we have heard earlier, such as health and agriculture, are using mobile phone in terms of helping their development hypothesis. How might we might use that infrastructure if not exclusively for mobile infrastructure for data and access it, yeah.

MS. CATOR: Absolutely. Debbi?

MS. WINSTEN: Well, I also wanted to speak to the power of open source software so that any user with a little bit of experience can actually tailor something like the talking book, that it has a USB connection built in on any USB so it can, if there is a single cell phone, upload and download content from the Internet, and also hook up to computers and so on.

And further, the statistics -- the user statistics are stored inside, so when it does hook up to a computer or another talking book, people themselves in the field can track what's the most effective.

So, we're trying to get the innovations to be accessible to the poorest of the poor.

MS. CATOR: Thank you. Corey?

MR. HEYMAN: Just to go back to Sakil's recommendation that we think inside the box as well as outside the box, is just a plea that there is still a lot of basic research that's absolutely imperative that we conduct to people to understand how children learn, how they acquire literacy skills. And even if there is research that has been conducted in the United States for other developing countries with complex language structures, there's still a lot of work to be done that that Room to Read and other organizations are doing to really understand how children learn in countries where this research hasn't been conducted in the languages that are more regular than some of the languages that we tend to work in.

MS. CATOR: Well, and with that, I think we are out of time. What I wanted to wrap up is, don't get too attached to the technologies. Focus on the basic research, the best practices, the best interactions between people, and get the innovators and the inventors and the entrepreneurs to look at that before they come up with their next great idea.

So, thank you very much to a great panel.

(Applause)

MS. BONNELL: Well, thank you all very much for coming today. My name is Alexis Bonnell, and I've been working with Coley from MTI and Robin from Brookings to organize today. And we just wanted to say how excited we are to have all of you.

I have a wonderful job. I have the best job in the world. My job is Chief of Engagement, and what that really means is my job is to get people excited about education, interested in education and really make that a priority in USAID and to work with all our partners.

So we're really happy. We wanted to show you a quick video that we actually received from NASA.

MR. GARAN: Hi, I'm NASA Astronaut Ron Garan, along with my crewmate Mike Fossum, the new commander of the International Space Station. And we are talking to you from our home 220 miles above the Earth.

First off, we'd like to say hello to our friends and colleagues at USAID, and thank you for the amazing, positive impact you're making on our world -- and also congratulate you on your new education strategy.

(Applause)

USAID's efforts to improve worldwide literacy (inaudible) of NASA's goal of engaging students in STEM -- science, technology, engineering and match.

MR. FOSSUM: Strong skills in both reading and STEM helped pave the way for us to become astronauts. From our unique vantage point on this laboratory, our home planet is beautiful, peaceful, full of promise.

MR. GARAN: By embarking on this education journey together, NASA and USAID are equipping future generations with the skills necessary to ensure a bright tomorrow for the citizens of our world.

To all of you, Mike and I and our other crewmates wish you nothing but a bright future.

Thank you.

(Applause)

MS. BONNELL: Well, with that, we'd like to go ahead and introduce the three principals of the day to talk a little bit about how our agencies are working toward literacy. And hopefully you'll have some really tough questions for us at the end of that.

So I'd like to welcome the next panel up.

MR. KLEES: Hi. Welcome to our afternoon session. I'm Steve Klees from the University of Maryland.

We have a very distinguished panel -- three distinguished leaders in thinking about literacy and engaging in literacy practices.

I will follow Karen Cator's lead and not give you the whole bio since you have them in your program, but let me just introduce them briefly and tell you what each is engaged in at the moment.

I wasn't quite sure what -- wanted to introduce people -- the order in the program is not linear so I -- but Kevin Watkins will be starting us off.

And Kevin is a nonresident senior fellow with the Center for Universal Education at Brookings Institution.

Kevin will be followed by Patrick Collins. Patrick is the Acting Director of the Office of Education in the Bureau of Economic Growth and Training at USAID.

And closing out the panel will be Luis Crouch. Luis recently joined the Secretariat of the Education for All Fast Track Initiative as head of its Global Good Practice Team.

Each will speak for about 10 minutes. We'll open for audience questions and then I'll have a few concluding remarks.

So without further ado, Kevin.

MR. WATKINS: Thank you, Steven, and good afternoon, everyone. It's a really great pleasure to be here.

I was actually reflecting while I was listening to some of the presentations this morning on the Narnia tales -- which I guess all of you who are parents who've read copiously to your children.

The author of those books, C.S. Lewis, once said a single sentence which I think captures so much about what we've been talking about today. And the sentence is -- he said, "Reading is how we discover we're not alone."

And actually, I think that is a very profound way of thinking about reading -- not just in the obvious sense, that it's an activity that can take us into other worlds and other people's lives, other universes -- but also to something really fundamental about reading, in terms of our own development as individuals.

It's one of those really basic foundational skills which all of us in this room -- let's face it -- take for granted. It's the foundation that we've built our lives and our careers on, and it's something that is denied as a human right to so many people.

It strikes me also that we're really dealing with twin crises in education. There's a crisis in access that we still have 67 million children who are out of school and millions who are dropping out every year.

So there's a crisis of getting children into school, but there's an equally profound crisis when measured in terms of what children are getting out of school. And we've heard some of the numbers on that, which are pretty shocking, and I'll come back to in a moment.

But I think we always need to keep in mind both sides of this problem. We haven't solved the access issue and we have simultaneously solved that with the crisis in learning.

This session is headed "Thought Leadership," and I can't really claim to be a thought leader in this area. My colleagues in Brooking who produced the Global

Compact on Learning, I think, can claim to be thought leaders and other people on this panel as well.

But I think also, we need to reflect on how do we go from thought to action for achieving change is what our colleagues this morning were talking about. And in that endeavor, it seems to me there are three really fundamental parts of the equation we have to get right.

The first is to communicate the scale of the problem, which may be apparent to everyone in this room but I assure you it's not beyond this room -- to communicate the scale of the problem and its consequences.

The second thing that we need to do is to identify and communicate the underlying causes, and set out an agenda for change that is both practical and achievable and compelling, that can galvanize political action and public support.

And thirdly, we need to forge coalitions for change. Change doesn't happen because a group of experts identify a problem. It happens because people get together to change it, and that's what I want to talk about a little bit here now.

Let's start with the scale of the problem. And you've heard some of the headline numbers on this. There are two or three that I just want to mention.

In Pakistan, 1/2 of all of the children covered in a nationally representative survey sample of rural schools -- 1/2 of children in grade three were unable to form a single sentence using the word "school." These are children who have spent three years in their country's education system.

In India, only around 1/2 of grade five children could read a grade two text. And in the recent Awayflow survey in Kenya, only one in three children at grade four could read a standard two level text.

Now those numbers are pretty shocking, pretty distressing, but actually,

they only tell half the story because if you think about the inequalities in those education systems, India is a country that produces world class scientists and information and communication technology engineers that -- let's face it -- scare the hell out of the job market in the United States. And yet 1/2 of the children in the rural schools in that country are educated so poorly that they can't read a single word. That is a shocking state of affairs.

When we think about the consequences of those hard numbers and we ask the question, "Who carries the burden?" Well, most obviously the burden is carried by the children themselves because they are suffering a very profound restriction in their future life chances.

These are children who have been earmarked for future poverty by an education system that is failing. These are young girls who have been denied opportunities for basic healthcare because they're being denied literacy skills that can give them a voice in their relationship with health providers. These are children who are destined for lives of low productivity and lives in poverty.

But it's also a shocking misuse of a country's resources, and these countries are just spending five percent of GDP on educational systems that are not even passing the most basic test of efficiency and equity. There are educational systems actually that are gearing whole countries onto a trajectory of slow growth and poverty.

To turn to the second area -- identifying the underlying problems and practical strategies for change. Well, of course there are many problems and some of them are country-specific, but I want to just give you in bullet point terms what I see as five of the most critical.

The first is the neglect of early childhood. By the time many of these children get into school, they're already carrying a massive handicap or disadvantage

because of illiteracy in their own homes.

Secondly, the millennium development goals, I think, have geared the development community towards easy measureable quantitative goals -- getting children into school -- and have deflected our attention from the critical question of what children are getting out of school -- that is to say, learning.

Thirdly, there are too many teachers who aren't where they're supposed to be, which is in the classroom. We have teacher governance systems which are failing.

Fourth, educational systems have really neglected the challenge of putting quality as their core priority. We don't have the assessment systems in place. We don't have the effective teacher training systems in place and I think this was acknowledged by the presentations this morning from people who are trying to change all that.

And last but not least, we're talking about systems that are desperately under-resourced in many cases -- partly because the international aid community has systematically reneged on the commitments that it made to expand financing for education in the poorest countries.

We also hear that the absorptive capacity is the problem in developing countries. All of our speakers this morning set out practical measures which could be supported by the international learning community, and I think one of the key lessons on this Literacy Day for aid donors is that when you make promises to children, you don't break them.

The last point I want to make is about forging coalitions for change. One coalition has been forged already around the Global Compact for Learning, which I think has been a very fruitful and instructive exercise. It pulls together, I think, the ingredients of a coherent strategy that has been developed on a consensus basis across a wide

group of actors.

And I think the next stage is to turn that strategy into a program for change.

Because I can see the one minute sign has just appeared, I'm going to be even more short than I have been so far and say, first of all, we need to go beyond the current millennium developing goal targets to some qualitative learning targets.

How about halving the share of children in every education system in the world who are unable to read a basic reading standard after two years in school as a first step towards the ultimate goal, which has to be that all children after four years in school come out equipped with basic literacy and basic numeracy skills?

We need to work together with the business community, which I believe could be doing far more in this area.

We need to work cooperatively with donors whilst holding them to account for the commitments that they've made.

So I'll leave it there. Thank you very much.

(Applause)

MR. KLEES: Our next speaker is Patrick Collins.

MR. COLLINS: Good afternoon. It's a pleasure to be here.

Also, an apology. I had an old bio. I'm actually Acting Team Leader for Basic Education for the EGAD Office of Education.

We've heard an awful lot of information this morning about the learning crisis. So I wanted to take a few minutes just to address how USAID is responding to this.

You've heard this morning from our Administrator that we have a bold new educational strategy that's unprecedented. It was driven by a presidential policy

directive, as our Administrator stated, and also principals of USAID, which emphasized focus, selectivity, division of labor and evidence-based decision making, among other issues.

And as he noted, quite honestly in the budget environment that we and the U.S. government are going into, but also globally, it was increasingly important for us to look at a more focused strategy, but also one that could demonstrate results that we could use to justify our expenditures in this environment.

Following these principles, the strategy is unprecedented not only in its focus but in its inclusion of time-bound targets.

The first target called for an increase -- for 100 million students to have increased reading ability by 2015.

The second goal calls for improvements in higher education in the workforce.

And the third goal calls for increased access for 15 million students in crisis and conflict-affected environments by 2015.

It's important for us to note also that with goal one, which is most germane to our topic today, one of the key things that we're looking at in order to focus our programming but also look forward in a harmonized way is to harmonize our indicators around those of the Fast Track Initiative, and we did that last year and we recently included that specifically in our new F indicators.

We're extremely excited that this represents what had been years of work trying to find quality indicators -- and yet now we have specific indicators that we as a global education community can rally around.

For goal one, you've heard a lot of information about the information of leading. And we in USAID have taken the conscious step of emphasizing early grade

reading because we know it's foundational to all future achievement.

What we're doing now, given that we've got a time-bound target, is we currently have 56 countries that have basic education projects. So all of us in Washington and our colleagues in the regional bureaus and all of our colleagues in missions between now and 2013 are working furiously to review our current portfolios, our projects, our commitments to our host country government partners and others, and identify how we can best and most logically and efficiently look at revising our programming in order to directly support achievement of the targets that we've set forth.

We wanted to mention a couple things in relation to this, though. Do these targets mean that USAID no longer cares about access or gender equity? Absolutely not. It's been years of hard work to make the strides in access that have happened in the preceding decades, and we don't want to diminish what an accomplishment that was.

And for access, we believe that in stable countries, improved quality will actually lead to increased access beyond the achievements that have been made today -- and for goal three countries, access is the explicit target.

Also, gender equality remains front and center in terms of all the education efforts we'll support.

Also, does this mean that USAID is not interested in broader quality issues, such as early childhood education or transition to secondary math, science? Again, absolutely not. The issue is that we're just one of many players and in an era of likely diminishing resources, we felt that the issue of early grade reading in particular is so core that it's worth investing all in on this effort, in order to try to make a significant global change in partnership with all our other colleagues.

On the issue of working with other stakeholders, I wanted to speak briefly

on the issue of how that plays out. I think what you see represented here -- not just on this panel, but throughout today -- is an example of the division of labor. There's a remarkable synergy in terms of the numbers of organizations that are interested in supporting early reading, and yet we all play a very different role -- and a supporting role.

For example, FTI -- well, first and foremost, the countries themselves. It's important for us to emphasize and all realize that it's their countries, their citizenry, their ministries, their families, their laws, their curriculum that we're all here to support.

In terms of other organizations, FTI is a partnership and the possibilities that we've already seen in terms of improved coordination and communication are really noteworthy. It is extremely important that we have this opportunity for greater information sharing and coordination.

Brookings Institution, for example, are one of our co-hosts today -- plays a very important role in terms of information dissemination and also advocacy -- something that we in the U.S. government can't be engaged in directly. Universities play a very important role in terms of developing new research that helps us all program according to the best available evidence.

Bilaterals such as USAID, DFID and others -- by virtue of the nature of our in-country presence, oftentimes we can be the organization -- certainly with and through our partner organizations, the direct line implementation organizations. And there's also much we can do in terms of supporting innovation, applied research and increasingly looking at focusing on moving programs in early grade reading to national scale and sustainability.

Going forward, we know that there are enormous challenges. And for us in USAID, one of the things that comes to mind most acutely is the realization that even though we've made a great amount of progress recently, ultimately to move the needle

globally and in countries in terms of increased literacy, it doesn't come easy, it doesn't come quickly and you're talking about an enormous (inaudible) of behavior change on the part of all the students who are eager to learn but not necessarily having the time to spend or the access to the materials or the literacy environment at home.

The parents that are concerned about how they can best support improved learning by their children, all the teachers and administrators that are looking for ways that they can better use their time to improve the lives of their citizenry -- but personally and on behalf of USAID, I must say that the coordination that has taken place around early reading in recent years is probably the most encouraging and rewarding thing that we've seen in a number of years.

Again, absolutely not to belittle anything that's come before us but one of the advantages of focus is that it's much easier to bore down on particular issues -- and in particular, what are the implementation strategies that we know work and then how can we look at refining those particular country contexts?

I think the key is through this focus and through events like this, we can learn from each other. We had a large global USAID education conference two weeks ago and we're committed to working with FDI, with Brookings and a wide variety of other organizations to continue to support events such as this so we can compare notes and better learn from each other, especially, as our Administrator said, my own children went back to school this week and, boy, when you have your own kids and worry about their education, it's a very humbling experience. It reminds us that we're all standing on the shoulders of those that came before us.

But I think this really is a unique moment in time and it's our time to put our own shoulders to the wheel of change, and USAID are confident that in coordination with all of our partners now and going forward, that we can indeed make a significant

difference going forward.

Thank you.

(Applause)

MR. KLEES: Thank you, Patrick.

Our next speaker is Luis Crouch.

MR. CROUCH: Well, it's lovely to be on the panel.

As I think Steve or Kevin said: we're being called thought leaders when there are actually thought leaders in the room. I'm myself more of an action leader -- maybe a thinking action leader.

There are thought leaders -- I think -- I don't know if Ben's still around, but one of his books is coming out so I don't want to pretend to be a thought leader when there are people actually writing books about literacy in the room. So I think there were some copies of the book. It's an FDI publication, co-published with the IIEP in Paris, which (inaudible) so a bit of a plug to some of the real thought leaders in the room.

So as kind of more of an action leader perhaps, let me start with a positive message because we've heard a lot of doom and gloom about how little kids are learning.

And what I would like to say -- and on this, I agree with my colleague Bob Prouty, who has been saying that, is that we're about to see a revolution in quality. The quality is dismal. The learning is dismal, but we're about to see a revolution.

And I'm -- to personalize it a bit, I'm betting the rest of my professional life on it. This is what I'm going to do, is work on this revolution. And part of the reason I think this revolution can happen is because of the kind of people that are sitting in this row right here -- Minister Ibrahim, Minister Kpangbai, Mr. Assis and Guillermo Lopes -- I don't know where he went.

Because of people like that, I think we're about to see a revolution in the next four or five years that will do for quality what has been done for access in the last 10 or 15. It's going to take a lot of work, and that's why people have to commit their lives to it. And that's why I'm willing to do that the rest of my professional life, on that.

But I'm completely sure it's doable. The question is how. What are the action steps that are needed?

And I said I'm not a doom and gloom guy. I'm going to give one gloomy statistic, though, because I think even those professionals that have been working on development often fail to realize just how dire the situation is -- and this is a very nerdy statistic. And every time I use it or I convey it to somebody to use, they say, "No, that's too nerdy," but I'll try to explain it anyway.

And it is that the median child in the poor countries achieves at the level of the fifth percentile of the rich countries. The average kid in developing countries is achieving at the level of the fifth percentile in the rich countries -- which means that the average child in the developed world would almost be a special needs child in the rich world. And that is just morally unacceptable and it's terrible for economic growth.

It highlights that we need to work on the real basics because it's not a matter of putting a sort of spin on the higher order skills, it's a matter of getting some of the most skills right.

So what are we doing, now that I can sort of depersonalize it and go back to speaking as an institution? Well, the Global Partnership for Education, which is what we will be called starting soon -- in fact, at the general assembly, we'll be making a formal pronouncement as to our name change.

We are a small group. We're a partnership. We don't ourselves have huge staff and so on, but we do look to intermediate funding. We look to replenish to the

tune of $1.75 to $2.5 billion at our national replenishment event, and I hope the bilaterals contribute to this and the governments -- with two specific goals.

First, the access goal is not solved. So we hope to reduce the 67 million kids that are out of school by at least 25 million kids. So we hope for the next few years to cut by 2/3 the number of kids at our school -- and in line with what Kevin was saying, we have set as a goal for that replenishment halving -- cutting by half -- in 20 countries the number of kids that are not reaching basic skills.

So we think those kinds of goals can motivate action and galvanize the people who will be funding our replenishment, and of course continuing with their own bilateral programs as we move along.

And our name change is very reflective of the fact that it truly is a partnership -- and again, I want to harp on the partnership issue. For example -- and only as examples -- the Brookings fantastic global campaign on learning, which they've asked us to participate and we have been participating. And maybe we'll participate some more and if I answer their emails -- because I know that they're after me with one particular commitment that I am so far hesitant to make, but we're good friends in spite of my occasional negligence.

They're absolutely key to a kind of (inaudible) that we ourselves -- and official bodies often cannot do. USAID, DFID, (inaudible) are frontline implementers, along with the NGOs. And they bring that to the partnership.

And we have representatives of NGOs. We heard brilliant NGOs this morning and we'll hear some more later on. They also bring something to the effort. And of course the countries, as we've gone on.

So what do we bring as a partnership? Let me just enumerate.

First of all, we'll continue to broker knowledge. I think we're in a good

position to broker these kinds of events, further information exchanges that are perhaps longer and more technical. We're very open to that and we have in our work plan the budget and the facilities to do that so that we build things that -- the Minister from Liberia only had 10 minutes to explain, maybe less time -- we can have a whole session on that, exactly what you're doing and have the countries learn from each other in a deeper way.

This is just a celebration. We want depth of exchange going forward -- and like I said, we have the work plan and the plan funded to sponsor such events.

Now what would be the exchange about? What would be some of the technical themes that we think should be pushed forward? We've highlighted them but let me just quickly hit on them again.

Pushing on the issue of mother tongue -- we've heard almost every country or maybe every country talk about mother tongue, but we need more technical results. We need to push, push, push on sort of finding out the optimal points. How quickly it can be done, how well it can be done.

My hypothesis is that it's less technically daunting than we have felt in the past. We have at FTI an effort -- and again, beyond, we're trying to get a program up and running in a year -- a tough, big challenge. It's a pilot program, but if it can be done, we're going to break the barrier of fear that has existed around mother tongue -- which I think is mostly a matter of fear rather than a true technical challenge. I think the fact that we're challenged can be an assessment.

We're ready to finance and sponsor exchanges of information around assessment issues -- how to tie oral assessments in the early grades to written assessments, both in the early grades and later on, as a way of benchmarking? The kind of results that Kevin has talked about and Patrick as well -- how do we measure whether we're achieving these goals?

Third technology -- we've heard some wonderful presentations on technology this morning. The ministers showed interest. I don't know if Tony's still here. I think we need to help each do the kinds of things Tony was talking about, such as developing rigorous evaluations around the technological issues.

Books -- if you want to call books a technology, let's include them, but books are a very basic technology. Libraries locally stores materials that are culturally appropriate and so on -- above that, are scientifically sound.

So how do we do that? How do we do things that are locally sourced but scientifically very sound and very inexpensive? That's something we need to work on -- and again, we have the funds and we have the structure to work that.

When I keep saying we have the funds and the structure, we're concretely structuring a program called the Global and Regional Activities Program -- or window, if you will -- within our fund that is going to maximize collaboration with the likes of UNICEF, UNESCO, the bilaterals in a structured program to sponsor research, knowledge sharing and even scalable pilot activities.

That's a structured fund that we're going to set up -- and I know it's the end of my life, but actually I have two more points to make quickly.

One is the one area that I think is a little bit missing -- and I completely agree with Kevin here -- is popularizing these goals. So far these kinds of goals are being sponsored and talked about by Brookings, by us, by USAID, by DFID. It's not to get multilateral.

And in that location, we're back to the Brookings idea of getting some of these expressed in the millennium developmental architecture so that it's not just a few people adopting these goals but the international community in a very official way.

Lastly, some of the research and knowledge development that we plan to

sponsor is around the whole issue of communities. Wonderful to hear the Nicaraguans talking about community accountability, shared accountability. The contests, the reading contests other countries -- sort of how to evolve the community effectively is an area of potential work.

Of course there's world partnership. All this happens through the countries, through the local education groups. We're just a small bunch of people sitting there on the corner of 19th and I. We're not implementers. This has to happen with the countries and with our partner bilaterals and multilaterals.

Sorry, I took about an extra minute there.

Thank you very much.

(Applause)

MR. KLEES: Thank you, Luis. I'm going to take three to four questions and then come back to the panel so the panel will take notes. Don't have to answer all -- respond to all the ones that you feel you can address, and if the questions -- we'll keep their questions or comments short, and the panelists will keep their responses short, we can go maybe two rounds.

So questions, comments?

Yes. Please say your name and --

FRANKLIN: Yep. Franklin -- I work independently.

For Patrick, I heard you say that AID continues to be interested in early childhood development and a number of other education objectives, but that decisions were made to go only on the early grade reading. Could you elaborate on that? It sounds like a contradiction to me and I don't entirely understand why it's necessary to go all in at the expense of other objectives to bring onto the table.

MR. KLEES: Thank you. Other questions, comment?

Right there.

MS. FINESTONE: I'm Jean Finestone. Several people have mentioned the role of business and industry in education. And Mr. Watkins, you brought that up specifically. After money, which is -- the business has it all -- what are the key things that business can do in those contexts in terms of educational development?

MR. KLEES: Thank you. One or two more.

Over here.

MS. SWAVER: Hi, Lisa Swaver, National Education Association. Up until now, the United States has not given its fair share to the FTI or the Global Partnership Fund -- the new name -- so I just would like to hear some thoughts on where are we at in building that political will even in our own country?

MR. KLEES: Let's take one more.

MS. ROSENBLATT: Leeann Rosenblatt, D.C. Public Library. How do you intend to support publishing in the home languages?

MR. KLEES: Thank you. Go back to our panel now and start with Kevin. Which do you choose to respond to?

MR. WATKINS: Well, maybe on a couple of things. On the role of the business community, it seems to me that -- just as an observation -- if you make a simple comparison with the health sector -- I know there are many differences so I don't know if it would be an analogy -- but if I'm not mistaken, the number is, on a sort of dollar for dollar ratio, the corporate investment or support for aid to health is running at something like eight or nine times the equivalent that's going into education. So there's a big difference in financing.

But in many ways, I think what business can really bring to the table is not so much the money, actually -- it's the technologies and the innovation on which

modern learning systems depend.

And we've had a lot of discussion today from our colleagues actually, from Liberia and Ethiopia and so on, which has really emphasized the importance of good quality teacher training. And I think that so much of it can be achieved through in-service teacher training, provided that the trainers, the teachers have got access to the appropriate materials and teaching technologies.

Now these are often not available in a physical sense in countries. There aren't books and teaching manuals and so on. But they can be made available through IT systems.

For example, New York University and other universities in the U.S. have run a big program in this area, and I think they could be scaled up.

And as my colleagues on the Fast Track Initiative will know -- because I often complain to them about this -- I think that in contrast to initiatives and frameworks like the Global Fund, the HIV, AIDS, tuberculosis and malaria and (inaudible), we don't have a specific window for corporate engagement through an arrangement -- Fast Track Initiative.

Now I think that could be done, and I think that's a window -- could very strongly support precisely the sort of innovations that Luis was outlining.

On the political will question -- I mean, this is the magic ingredient that we all speak about and desire -- don't quite know how to generate. But I do think it's the case that there are many individual donors that are doing great things in education, and I would include USAID in that.

I was recently in South Sudan and USAID is rolling out teacher training programs in some of the most difficult parts of the country, which are making a real difference.

But if I'm speaking bluntly, which I believe I can do now since I left the U.N. last week, we have suffered for a very long time from an acute lack of political leadership in education. We just don't see the same level of leadership -- and I'm talking about high level global leadership here in education -- that we do in other sections. That's why education is actually no longer on the (inaudible) agenda. It wasn't even mentioned last year.

And I think if this is an area over and above the aid program, where the U.S. could make a huge difference. I think Secretary of State Clinton is a key player in this. So anything that can be done to galvanize the Secretary of State to play an even more prominent role I think would be very much welcome.

Thank you.

MR. KLEES: Patrick?

MR. COLLINS: First, Franklin, your question. I apologize if I misspoke. What I meant to say is that in the areas of early childhood development, secondary math, science, does USAID feel that they're not important? Absolutely not.

Are they part of the strategy for goal one? No. And this was very, very tough. I mean, these were tough deliberations, but honestly, among ourselves and with the Administrator, there was a real push to focus and concentrate, and honestly, he would push us to identify, "Okay, what are you not going to do?" Taking things off the table.

And as painful as it is, when you think about it, when you look at a number of projects across countries over the years, a lot of times what you would tend to see is the inevitable kind of Christmas tree approach, where you've got kind of a lot of teacher professional development and maybe a little bit of this, a little bit of that, and all of a sudden, you've got maybe seven or eight sprinkles of things, and it's very difficult to

manage how much of it really went to scale.

It was well-intentioned, but honestly, from what we're seeing, that's not the M.O. of country engagement anymore. Increasingly, whether it's joint sector reviews or round tables with our ministry colleagues and the other donors, the issue is, "Let's get serious."

All right, if you're going to get into a subsector, then do the whole thing to scale -- otherwise, let's quit wasting each others' time. We've got too many things to manage here without having to talk to the latest group of consultants that are coming in, and they do this and they talk to everybody, and they do a couple of schools and it dies, and then everybody's doing similar things.

So it's very much -- it's, we felt, in the spirit of the current engagement. Honestly, for USAID, we're not doing basket funding for the most part, although that's changing also. But it's much more if you're in the (inaudible) particular area and try to make a real difference.

So yes, it's very tough. It was tough for all of us, but yes, that's the logic. And when you think about it, it's hard to argue with. We know that there's a lot of giving up, but we're just one donor. We're not saying they're not important.

But certainly between countries' own budgets and all the other donors and NGOs and private sector; we're not saying it's not important -- just not what we at USAID will do for the five years of this strategy.

Five years from now, we'll look and see what the situation is and do something else.

In terms of the FTI question, good question. We actually are giving money now, although I'm not sure if it's signed yet. It's been kind of gummed up with the lawyers between USAID and World Bank for a couple of months.

And we're directly supporting implementation of some of the recommendations that came out of the midterm evaluation. There are other discussions that have taken place within the U.S. government on what we would do in the future and I can't -- at this point, it's not something that we can talk about publically, but I guess I would just say we are extremely encouraged by the relationship with FTI and also the projects that's been made in recent years.

MR. KLEES: Thank you. Luis?

MR. CROUCH: Yeah, okay. Just quickly, in the interest of allowing more time for questions if there's a second round -- in the private sector, I think the funding is important, essential.

But I think it behooves the international community and maybe even the think tanks like Brookings to assist the private sector in key countries, especially emerging market countries that are on the road to becoming donors themselves, such as India, the Gulf countries -- to progress also toward helping to support financially the international education efforts -- but also what I would call sort of advocacy and policy support.

If you look at how the private sector in the country has evolved in their support to education, there seem to be certain three steps.

One is the private sector does adopt a school kind of things. Let's paint some school. You can brand it. You can feel proud you helped those schools. Slightly more sophisticated form of intervention is what I call the program interventions, where the private sector starts supporting, let's say, a better testing program or better scholarships for them.

The most sophisticated private sector will frequently endow a research foundation such as Brookings or something like that to then do ongoing advocacy

because they've come to the conclusion that that's the most highly leveraged form of intervention that you can make in the education sector -- and you need all three. You need private sector doing much more to things, programs and policy, and I don't know exactly how one gets the private sector to do those things.

I think the donors themselves can help. The northern think tanks can help the private sector evolve in that direction -- and it has nothing to do with wealth.

I know that, for example, El Salvador has a very active private sector in the policy sense, but it's a poorer country than Peru. Peru, the private sector only has sort of very limited adopt a school kind of things. Okay, so that's on the private sector.

On the home languages, I think the issue of home language publishing could possibly be a natural marriage with some of the technology issues. And I think that's something we certainly would like to encourage -- again, and using perhaps some of the structures and funding that I've talked about -- because you can think of very creative things -- not necessarily e-readers, although you could do those, but you can think of software ways to codify the creation of readers in home languages.

And because you've codified it in a software structure, you can assure that the textbook that turns out is reasonable high quality -- because the software sort of forces you to follow certain rules of design pedagogy in the design of the book -- possibly. I'm just -- this is a hypothesis. People like room to read. People like some of the panelists this morning could certainly play a role in helping the multilaterals come up with creative solutions for these things.

MS. LINAN-THOMPSON: -- very what Mr. Hussein found in his experience in the classroom. I'm going to show you a couple of slides about the results.

And so, here we have -- these are second grade classrooms and the line or (inaudible) I want you to pay attention to is the red one. These were not overlapping

cohorts, and so where you have the green line is the 2009 students, the kind of purplish-blue line is the control classroom, and then the red line are the children that received the early grade reading program.

And so, you can see here across all of the measures that the comparison students were doing about the same as they were doing in 2009. But if you don't change instruction, if you keep doing the same thing over and over, you get the same result. But if you change even something as small as focusing on an area that you found was missing and provided for a short period of time that you would every day provide training and do it consistently, you've got pretty dramatic results.

So, as you can see, the mean -- these are means on each test -- increased dramatically for the kids in the intervention.

So, the other thing that happened -- again, we're paying to the red line -- these are the children that got zero scores, so they could only read one single word or a single letter, one we did a time before. Again, you can see the number of children that were now were able to read increased dramatically in the schools. They got the intervention. Again, if you don't change what you do, you get basically the same results.

And then finally, because we were interested in seeing not only were they able to read one or more words, but are they meeting benchmarks. This last slide shows you the proportion of students who made benchmarks on each of these assessments. And so, (inaudible) is it more with something they were doing fairly well, they were still doing it well.

But then, if go all the way to the passage reading, you can see, again, that the children in intervention, they were reading at least 45 words per minute, increase to, oh, I think it's about 19 percent. And so, the children -- so there are two things going on. We're decreasing the number of children that can do nothing, but also increasing the number of

children that are reading well enough to reach benchmarks. And so, we're basically moving the whole mean up across all the measures.

And here's another great video, which I hope you continue to -- can you see if you can try to get this one up? It works on my -- no. Okay.

So, what this shows is that children -- it's an interview, and it shows the children -- the interviewer actually tells what Mr. Hussein is different in your class this year. And so, they start talking about all the activities. They start talking about, well, we used the turtle, and we broke words apart, we put them together. We used these letter parts. We put them together and we made words, and then we read them. And so, if you ever get a chance to see it, it's really very cute.

But the exciting thing about that and why I chose to show that, or would've showed you if I could, rather than the classroom is because actually the children, as you hear them talking about their learning, what you really see is the cognitive engagement, level of linguistic awareness, and maybe cognitive awareness about what they have learned. So, it's not just doing the tactics in the classroom, but they can actually talk about, these are the things we are learning. They're becoming aware of their own learning.

And so, to start wrapping it up, this quote I really like by Holmes, which is, "A mind once stretched by a new idea never regains its original dimensions." And I think it's really appropriate for this project because both in the teachers and in the children what we saw is that they had gotten to a new place. The teachers had a new way to think about their teaching, about what to teach. The children had learned new ways to think about their own learning and to engage in learning. And so, moving forward, neither the teachers nor the students will ever be as they were before the project.

And then finally, just to wrap it up, this project succeeded in doing two things: first and foremost, improving student outcomes, which was one of the goals, but also

improving students' motivation. I guarantee if you've seen that little ditty, you would've seen how excited they got about talking about what they had learned. And the teachers improved their practice, but also, more importantly, they increased and improved their feelings of self-efficacy. Teachers like to know that they can do a good mob, and when they feel they can do that, then they feel more confident about their job.

Thank you.

(Applause)

MR. WATKINS: Sylvia, thanks very much. That was great. For me, one of the things that comes across looking at those graphs, because what you were describing, it seems at least to the uninitiated like me, to be very scalable. I guess it's the sort of thing that could be integrated into the international system. And if it were, and if you could take those results across Egypt, you wonder what it would do to Egypt's ranking on the (inaudible) survey or the (inaudible) survey.

So, as our Scottish brothers said, I'll go to our last speech, Audrey-Marie.

MS. MOORE: Great, thank you. My name is Audrey Moore. I'm with the Education Quality Program at FHI-360. And I want to just talk a little bit about EQUIP 2 as a U.S. -- for those of you who aren't familiar with this program, it's a USA funded program that has both a research arm and an arm for implementing projects. As part of this research arm, we've done extensive amounts of research in different areas of education, and one of those areas is an opportunity to learn. And the way that we've defined opportunity to learn are looking at some of the foundational things that have to be present for a child to learn. So, you have to have a teacher, you have to have time in the classroom, the students have to be present, the school has to be open. And what we've done is to take a look at that against whether children are learning to read.

And so, since 2008, we've worked with some of our partner organizations,

including Save the Children, CARE, and the Aga Khan Foundation to do five case studies in five different countries to look at the tiniest of the school and classroom and how that correlates to -- our proxy for learning was EGRA. So, the early grade reading at the third grade level.

And we worked with co-investigators Joe DeStefano from RTI, Amy Jo from Save, and Sheila Manji from the Aga Khan Foundation, as well as Elizabeth Adelman from FHI 360.

And before I show and talk about some of the results, I do want to qualify and recognize that the work that we've done on the use of time and learning is one aspect of quality, and we recognize that, that there are a lot of areas of quality that we want to impact. But what we're really interested in is, we hear about all of the great interventions that everyone is doing, but in order to be able to really use and do those interventions effectively, you have to have time in classroom to be able to do that. So, our study has really focused on that.

I also, when I show the results you'll see that they're listed by country. And I do want to point out that these are not representative of samples of the country, but rather we worked with between 40 and 60 schools that were supported by our partner organizations in specific regions. So, it's really looking at specific regions of that country.

So, I won't talk about every single country, but I'll go through one. What this graph represents is the loss of time that we've been able to document in these studies. So, if you look at Guatemala, for example, there's 180 official days in their school year. When you begin to deduct for things such as how often the school was open, whether teachers were present, whether the students were present, how much time was lost during the day as a result of the school opening late, closing early, recess being extended from 15 minutes to 30, 40, 50 minutes, and then inside the classroom, often past time, in Guatemala, you begin

to move from 180 days to 56 days of effective instructional time.

So, even though the students may go to school for a certain number of those days, in terms of effective instruction, that's more than 50 percent of their time that's being lost or wasted during the year that could be used for effectively to be teaching children.

And you can see that in Honduras, there's 69 festive days. In Nepal, we had approximately 87, in Ethiopia 69, and in the (inaudible) region of Mozambique, there was only 30 days of effective instruction once we accounted for all that time lost.

So, we then looked at what that meant against the reading fluency. And we did use all of the instruments that have been adapted or created under the EFRA Education Data 2 Project. So, this just represents the fluency results again by country. So, you can see in countries, such as Honduras, and Guatemala as well, although -- yeah, Guatemala, the students on average were reading much better. They were much more often up in the 60 to 80 words per minute range compared to countries such as Ethiopia and Mozambique, who were reading between zero and 10 words a minute. And, in fact, in Mozambique, with the 60 schools that we worked with, on average, 80 percent of the students couldn't read a single word in grade three.

So, the data that we collected, in the interest of time, I didn't include the slides, the observation data that we collected to really look at time on task, also collected a lot of information about the kinds of pedagogical activities and the kinds of things that were happening in the classroom. So, many of the countries we documented, how often the official language of instruction versus mother tongue instruction was being used. We looked how often reading was actually being done, any kind of reading, whether it was reading instruction, reading out loud, reading in silence.

And what we found is that in these sample schools, between five and 10

percent of whatever time on task they had was used to do any kind of reading.

So, you begin to see that not only are you losing time generally in the school, but then within that classroom time, there's not a lot of effective instruction happening that's focusing on reading and helping kids read.

We also found in countries -- this was particularly true in Mozambique when we redid the oral vocabulary. Many of the students couldn't -- didn't know the vocabulary in Portuguese. They couldn't understand the Portuguese even in grade three. So, what that raises for us as practitioners and folks that work in the field is this kind of information allows us to really begin to look at interventions that are more catered to the environment that we're working with.

So, for example, in Mozambique, you might focus more on really the foundational areas of early learning -- oral vocabulary, concepts about print. In Honduras, almost all of the students we tested scored really high on their concepts about print. So, the issue then becomes improving their reading fluency. So, it allows you to look at a diversity of interventions that will help improve their literacy.

Very quickly, we also did some modeling, and what we did is to consolidate some of the data. And so, this is the model. It's not representative of any particular country. But what we found is if you looked at the numbers at the top, so dates the schools were closed, 12 days, teacher attendance at 86 percent, and so on, you find that 34 percent of students will read at 40 words a minute when you have 49 effective days of instruction.

When we do just add a couple of days extra that the school is open, increase for teacher attendance rates, 92 percent, hold their attendance rates steady, decreased their time lost during the day to 15 minutes, and then focus kids on tasks slightly more times.

The number of students that can read above 40 words a minute jumps up

to 54 percent. And, you know, this is a model, but that's without doing any kind of real intervention that could then increase the reading fluency that much more.

So, we begin to see that the general environment within the school also impacts, and we really should be thinking how to incorporate that as we're focusing as well on interventions that help kids reads more fluently. Thank you.

(Applause)

MR. WATKINS: Thank you, Audrey, for that. Actually I think Audrey has the distinction of being the first speaker in the day, and so we will correct me if I'm wrong, to finish one minute before the end of her --

(Laughter)

MR. WATKINS: I think also really a fascinating presentation. So, a huge thanks.

So, there's an awful lot of, I think, very rich material, that's being presented. And (inaudible -- 14:55) about some of the general propositions that are being raised or about specific subjects that are being outlined.

So, the floor is open. I think we'll take maybe three -- can we have two batches of three questions if we have time? Yeah, thank you.

SPEAKER: We can go across the whole board or does a single person answers the question?

MS. CARGILL: Imabeth Cargill. This question is for John.

Did you find out why listening comprehension consistently was weak throughout all the grades when you did the project -- when you did your project? And then, when you compared the schools, it would also still be. Did you stop to think about listening comprehension? Did you have an answer as to why there was a consistent weakness throughout all the tests in all the grades?

MR. WATKINS: One second for your question, and then you will time to reply.

MR. STANSBURY: First of all, thank you to all the presenters. Aldo Stansbury from Save the Children.

As I'm sitting here throughout the day, I'm finding myself moving and getting a little bit more uncomfortable. As we're focusing on reading, the vast majority of our presentations today have been focused as the teacher is the primary focal point for changing reading in children. Almost 95 percent of it has only been focusing on teaching.

Now, realizing teachers do have a critical role, but even the best teacher will have some problems with poverty, HIV, a whole host of other -- you know, intergenerational illiteracy. There's a lot of other issues that are coming into play. So, even the best teacher is going to have some challenges regardless of the amount of improvement.

So, it's just a feeling that I throw back to the panel. Have we begun to focus all of our eggs into one basket, focusing on teachers, or what role do we see going beyond those three hours that frequently children are in a classroom for three, maybe 3.5 hours in a 24-hour cycle, you know. They live in a community, they live with families. It's a growing discomfort I have. Thank you.

MR. WATKINS: Thank you. One more question.

MR. COLLINS: Hi. Victor Collins with USAID. Actually I was interested, Amy Jo, in your last finding. But in particular, and the issue -- looking at the issue of scalability, which is I think related to, and building on a previous question, I think the 4 Ts and across all the different interventions we've seen in a number of countries in recent years, there's a very clear commonality in terms of structured lesson plans, emphasis on phonics, component aspects of assessments that you can then build on and track, et cetera.

But it's very interesting the data that you had on the influence of reading out of the classroom. And I'm wondering if you could particularly speak to that, because I remember there's some research from the (inaudible) Foundation that's also getting into this increasingly.

And maybe extrapolate what you're seeing as that -- could you extrapolate as far as the generalizability of your findings, but in particular given that the interventions would say maybe you need to say it's locality of assistance versus other types of interventions.

MR. WATKINS: Okay. So, I think we've got two speaker specific questions and one more general question on the role of teachers in the classroom (inaudible). So, if we could make the division of labor along those lines? So, if John and Amy could respond with their specifics. John?

MR. COMINGS: We just found this out, so we don't know why it's true. However, but we will try to find out if we can.

But the important part of how this relates to the presentation I gave is that the approach to improving practice in these schools involved the whole school leadership and teachers in making their own plans as to how to take what they've learned and put it into practice, and then to monitor their own implementation.

We can now go back -- and they did that based on similar kinds of data from the pre-test -- to inform their intervention.

So, we can now go back with them and say, this is what we found out. First of all, you're doing a good job. This is working. These kids are learning. They're learning each year. However, something's wrong with listening comprehension. And then, we can provide specific technical assistance on how you might improve listening comprehension so that the staff and teachers can talk about how they're going to implement that. They can

implement it and they can monitor it.

So, I don't know why this particular thing happened across all three grades, and we don't know what effect it has. But there's always a possibility that if one component is really limited, that it's limiting the growth in the other components, and this may be true in this case. So, it's exactly where they ought to put their attention.

MR. WATKINS: Thank you, John.

MR. COMINGS: You gave me an extra couple of minutes, so I want to thank you for asking the question.

(Laughter)

MS. DOWD: And so, I have to thank Patrick for asking me the question about the scaling.

I think absolutely the scale and scalability, the different pilots that we have going on is crucial right now for us. In each of the nine countries where we've put on these pilots, we've started with 10 to 20 schools in a sort of proof of concept of phase, and are looking at how do we get bigger, really depending on what partnerships and what funding opportunities are available.

So, they range between additional sponsorship sites with another 15 or 20 schools up to Pakistan, 400 schools now. Boom.

Scalability with our model is built into the teacher training, the content. So, it's a question of figuring out the implementation modalities, as well as the assessment. That doesn't have to be redone or done differently; it's a question of how you're going to implement it larger.

The biggest challenge for us, I think as you point out, is this community action side and scale. But given what we're seeing about equity, we think it's really key to keep working on it and working on it together in partnership with you, with local NGOs, and

our national NGOs, local publishers, library systems, daily journals, starting to explore all kinds of networks that look at getting book banks into communities, to fill them, keep them current, and keep them relevant.

Beyond that, I don't have another answer, but I think it's crucial, given that we're seeing when you get reading and reading materials into the lives of the poorest, into the lives of the girls, and into the lives of those that have a low literacy environment in their own homes, it's obvious we're having a big impact on equity.

So, if you're going to improve phonics and yet the only children who are going to benefit are the ones that already have that benefit in the home, coming out of their ECE environment, you're still sort of stuck. So, I think crucial to look at, scale and equity together in this way. Thank you.

MR. WATKINS: And if I could ask Sylvia and Audrey to address the question that Pablo raised which is I think we have other questions as well and at the heart of it, I guess, it is a concern. We're overstating what the significance of what goes on in the classroom and understating what comes before and what goes on beyond the classroom.

MS. LINAN-THOMPSON: It's a very good point. And just to add this project, I did focus only on the teacher, and only inhabitant schools, but it did have summer camp components and other community components that went on alongside of it. It had a lot of impact.

I think for some of the reasons that Amy just stated, any time that children have more opportunities to practice, more access to interactive print outside of the classroom, the better able they'll become.

One of the results of these having these communities camps, for example, where some of the mothers were coming with their daughters, and were benefitting and becoming literate themselves. And so, any time you start to raise the literacy level within the

school and then expand it to the broader community, you are impacting the whole community.

So, I think it's definitely something that should continue to be explored and finding ways to make that acceptable whether it's through these summer camp programs or just having more print available in the community, it's worthwhile on this as well.

MS. MOORE: In our case, the organizations that we've been working in partnership with tended to be really interested in the community aspects, primarily because it does often take a community to help or contribute to improving the school kind of focus on how they use time -- making sure the teachers, that these are roles that PTAs or SMCs can play.

We also collected data from the students about how often they read material about private school, how often they read at home. This was particularly relevant in Mozambique, where Aga Khan was very interested in their community component and working with parents to be reading with their kids outside or for the kids to be reading with the parents outside of school.

So, the focus was less on the teacher and the research work that we were doing and much more about the sort of comprehensive environment that does create a literate environment.

And in Guatemala, we worked in three regions: Nebaj, Quiche, and Quetzaltenango, and found that in the regions where we actually data on their access to print materials, any kind of print materials, and the students in Keecha tended to have more access and were reading much better than in the other regions. So, there is a connection.

MR. WATKINS: Thank you. Do we have time for another round of questions? Excellent. So, we'll take another three questions.

SPEAKER: I'd like to make a comment. I think it would be a wonderful

contribution if, and I'm sure maybe there has been research that's focused on community action in terms of improving reading, the role of libraries, the role of camps, et cetera. I know that in the U.S., often when you ask for evaluation of summer reading programs for libraries, the argument being given is that it's very hard to isolate it in terms of the variables. So, it would be great if research could be focused on this because it addresses the time issue.

MR. WATKINS: Thank you.

SPEAKER: (Inaudible). My name is (inaudible). I think one way to think about education is a three-way (inaudible): The government who are the providers of the facilities and the employers or the teachers, the teachers themselves, and the parents. I want to just (inaudible). How many of us do spare time for 30 minutes or even 10 minutes at our worst? What did you do in this school? Let me see the English, the mathematics, writing, drawing, religion. How many of us? Zero. But we can buy the Nintendo T.V. games and (inaudible) or go to shopping malls and bring it to them.

The teachers are not encouraged because of poor administrative service and ineffectiveness in teaching and dedication to teaching. And in addition to that, the qualified ones will say, okay, let me proceed to universities and further my education (inaudible) just like me. Now, I'm a journalist with 32 years' experience. And there's on the other side only the qualified teachers are employed as teachers because there is a (inaudible). No jobs are available for them except teaching, and, therefore, without a good method of teaching, nobody, even a university professor would do what's expected of them. He will not (inaudible) -- teachers will not be able to impart knowledge of two times one, two, and one plus one gives you two, two minus this gives you zero. You will not be able to tell the child (inaudible) experienced teacher that will after giving a lecture and then giving an assignment will go from one table to the other to see (inaudible) who are not ready. She will be able to assist them and say, how you do this, put your one hand here, another hand here.

This plus this will let us (inaudible) you and I. One, two. The one plus one gives you two, one minus one gives you zero (inaudible). Only a trained teacher can do that. So what developed nation only employs teachers (inaudible) secondary school neighbors and (inaudible)?

MR. WATKINS: Thank you. I think you're a very good teacher.

(Laughter)

MR. WATKINS: Another question.

SPEAKER: I'm very appalled by those results, they're so -- in a way they're quite bad. And to me, they're like governance issues. So, were those results confronted to a (inaudible), and what was their reaction?

MR. WATKINS: Why don't we start with (inaudible) and then go this way?

SPEAKER: Yes. In all of the countries, we did presentations that of the results to the partner -- with collaboration with our partners, as well as inviting government officials, donors, multilateral and bilateral in the countries, and their availability. And it's really our partner organizations that are doing programs. Amy Jo, who is working in Nepal and Ethiopia. I think some of the data that we collected there originally with her is part of the baseline work that they're now doing. I know that Aga khan Foundation has been very active in disseminating the results and working with their government partners.

So, it's a beginning. We've just now completed Mozambique just a couple of months ago, so it's still very early in the stages of disseminating the results and trying to move forward with those countries.

MR. WATKINS: Thank you.

SPEAKER: I would say that in Egypt and in every country in which we've implemented EGRA and show very dismal results, the reaction by the government and the ministers is usually what can we do? And I think one of the exciting things that we can do

now is, even though we keep finding the results that we have done, we do know what to do.

And so, being able to provide very concrete steps of what to do next is very helpful because it's not like, oh, here you go, you're not doing a good job, but here's what we can do about this.

And then depending on the country, the solution might be a little bit different in each case, but there's really a set of things that are going to work almost anywhere. It's just a matter of matching it up. In Egypt, for example, we worked very closely with a ministry of education working group to find the solutions. And with that is that now that we've implemented for one year and we have the results, the ministry is ready to take full ownership. They're ready to move forward. And so, having that buy in and that collaboration from the beginning made it easier to go to the next step of scaling and then eventually sustainability.

MR. COMINGS: I'm going to answer a different question. I'd like to talk about this issue of the limitations of the teacher in the classroom.

It would be great if all the kids who were coming into the schools had parents whose literacy skills were sufficient that they could help them prepare. There are some adult literacy programs that address the lack of skill on the part of the parents, and address it in the context of helping those parents learn how to prepare and support their children once they're in school. That's one approach.

Plus for those of you who have never visited the National Student Literacy website, you should go there. They have these great materials for parents for if you have a preschool child, if you have a child in the early grades, if you have an older child and how to support them.

And the preschool and even some of the school-aged suggestions that they give, all of which have evidence to support them, don't really require the presence of the

parent to pass on literacy skills. Just asking your child every day when they come home from school what did you learn is a very powerful motivation for the child to continue learning.

So, I think if you that rhetorical view, which is easy because I've been around so long. You know, 25 years ago, there was access and equity, and then it was internal efficiency getting the kids to complete. And now we're talking about basic reading instruction, getting the classroom reading instruction to function in relation to what we know works.

And I feel that there are these other things that we can do, the community and the parents might be next or something else. But at some point, the parents and the community have to be brought into this equation.

One of the really famous approaches to literacy instruction in the United States is called Success for All and was developed at Howard University and John Hopkins, not too far from here (inaudible) and his group. And it demonstrates what you can get. It was tested out. And then, he took it into really poor disadvantaged neighborhoods to see how it works, because his real goal was to get kids in disadvantaged poor schools to be reading at grade level by grade four. And he got 100 percent increase, from 20 percent reading at grade level to 40.

And I asked him about this, and he said we have to go into the community and into the homes if we're going to -- you know, this is 60 percent of the kids are still not reading at grade level. We've done everything that we can do in the classroom. Of course, you might be able to marginally get it up to 45, 50, but at some point after we've got to access equity, internal efficiency. We've got a good evidence-based practice going. We're going to go outside the school and start getting environment (inaudible). Or we're going to have to start doing better preschool and so forth.

MR. WATKINS: Amy?

MS. DOWD: I think I would propose and even add that in many of the countries that we've seen, one of the big benefits to looking earlier is also just oral language skills, just self-expression -- the known language, parents talking, and nobody needs literacy to talk to their children. So, it's another piece that comes in earlier.

I wanted to respond to the call for more research about the community action plan. Absolutely. We've been grappling with whether or not with some of our privately funded -- is it ethical to do part of literacy boost or not part of literacy boost, or how that works with our partner communities and ministries.

We would love to do it in isolation, and I think probably where we have the opportunities coming up in the next three countries or the two that come after that, Zimbabwe and Kenya are on our hit list for planning. You know, we'll see if it's possible to build in some limitation of research that favors these things so we learn more specifically about the community action side. But for now, we're trying to gain more insight into how this works within just the Literacy Boost sites because they've all had the same teacher training intervention as I was showing.

And I think that's where I stand. Thank you.

MR. WATKINS: Thank you very much. So, with that, just there are a couple of thoughts that I have at the end of this session. And one of the things that I found really inspiring actually is I think what the evidence shows us is there's a lot of low hanging fruit when it comes to reading and literacy, school investments that can yield very big returns. And, of course, these problems are difficult. But this isn't rocket science actually. It's not like putting those ads up in the space station or, God forbid, closing the U.S. (inaudible) deficit or something like that.

(Laughter)

MR. WATKINS: These are things where political consensus can be forged. And I do think if we can consolidate this type of evidence and get it in the hands of people like yourselves here who are really trying to achieve change at a national level, and use it to persuade policy makers in the international community to invest in it, then we could really -- Liz described it as a revolution -- but it could take the revolution forward.

So, we've got (inaudible) did a fantastic job (inaudible), so thank you.

(Applause)

MR. WATKINS: I think if I'm not mistaken, we're going straight into the final session now, which Bob Prouty will come to the table and do a summing up for us.

Just before Bob brings greetings, I think a lot of you know him in his capacity as head of the fast track initiative secretariat. And in that, Bob has played a leadership role within the Education for All community.

There's one thing about Bob that you may not know that I'll mention that I know from private discussions with him. He worked for many years in Eastern Democratic Republic of Congo with small church-based, non-government organizations who were building schools, really one of the most desperately conflict-affected and most deprived parts of the world. And I think he's really brought that commitment with him into the Fast Track Initiative. So, we're very lucky to have him with us.

He's got a tough job actually trying to summarize and wrap up today's meeting.

(Laughter)

MR. PROUTY: Thank you very much, Kevin. And because it's a tough job, I won't try to do it completely.

I want to start by just saying that it's been refreshing at a time when the news cycles are dominated by talk of Iran and Iraq and maybe Irene -- we could have a

whole day devoted to Irene. And my hope is in the future that there'll be a lot more to read than all these other things that are going on. I really do believe that what we're doing here is transformational. This is stuff that's going to change those headlines in the world in a very positive way.

I think we tend to be very humble in the education sector, and I think that we sometimes are guilty of perhaps understating or undervaluing the challenges at hand. But if we pull off what we're talking about pulling off here, and I say "we" in a very inclusive sense. This is largely the countries themselves that will pull this off. But if we do this, and I truly believe that we will, this is going to make the world that we bequeath to our children a very different and a much better world. So, I hope we get some sense of the enormity of what we're trying to do here.

When I look at the numbers, USAID for instance, a firm commitment to helping 100 million children to read over the next few years. That's an astonishingly public and transparent commitment. When Luis said earlier that he's ready to gamble the rest of his professional career in making this happen, this is what makes me be proud of working in this country. I feel like we're on to something here. There's an exciting time just ahead.

I'll only say a few words about the lessons of the day. I'm not going to try to sum up entirely because, first of all, I didn't attend all of the sessions. Unfortunately I came part way through. I had scurried around to get a little bit of information on the things I missed, and I do want to touch on a couple of things that I think are emerging points of consensus. I've only got five minutes to do this otherwise Sylvia is going to start waving her fingers at me in a moment. So, I'll go quickly with that.

But I do also want to end up with at least one thing that I'm still unhappy about from what I hear today that I think we need to do to better and rethink -- maybe two or three things.

First of all, there's, I think, consensus in ways that we didn't have a couple of years ago around some simple, fundamental truths: kids should learn to read in a language they understand. That seems pretty basic. We weren't there a few years ago, and we're not there in all parts of the world yet, but we're getting there.

On assessment, I think a lot of discussion here. A lot of improvement I think in terms of where we are on assessment. We have a lot more information, still a lot of gaps. And I didn't hear all these sessions, so I'm not sure how much was said about the use of assessment for improving classroom instruction. I think that's an important one.

Time on task. I took part in a study of four countries a number of years ago on time on task as well. We found similar results, really quite worrisome results in terms of the amount of time children actually have.

We looked at reading time in one of the studies I did a number of years ago, and we estimated that children on average were reading six minutes a day in one of the countries that we looked at. And six minutes a day is simply not going to get you where you need to be.

Some discussion earlier today on the question of standards. I think this is an important one. It's one we wrestle with at the Fast Track Initiatives, soon to be Global Partnership for Education. I think it is important. We have to think this thing through carefully. I think it is important to have global standards where we're expecting children to be able to perform consistently at a high level. I think that tiering of low expectations explains in part why we haven't seen more progress on the quality of education.

But there's a challenge here. It's one that's going to require a delicate balance between countries defining their programs, owning their programs, and taking them forward, and still having some sense of what is possible and what is being done elsewhere.

Discussion and research and evaluation, personally I think that there's

some significant gaps that remain in our understanding of issues. One thing that came up today towards the end of discussions I was hearing has to do with the beyond school content. What is the environment beyond school?

We supported a study a couple of years ago and looked at children's exposure to print. And we found that in one part through Africa that child within -- after three years of schooling had only seen a couple of thousand words of print, whereas children in the U.S., for instance, will see that every single day of their lives. So, children with approximately 1/1000th at least is best for the exposure to print as children in other environments. So, it's not surprising that the classroom teacher struggles to make up that gap.

The question of community involvement I think is critical. These issues are de-linked to the question of language of instruction. I think it's been greatly overlooked in terms of community involvement. When the parents are essentially told that school is about something you know nothing about, it's in a language and an approach that has nothing to do with you, it's not surprising that we see the schools de-linked from learning. And I think if we're going to achieve what we want to achieve in terms of reading and what we can achieve, then the communities are going to be a part of it, not just because they're encouraged to be a part of it, but because structurally, schooling is managed in a way that is quite different and that encourages it.

I want to say a little something here. There are more things you could say. I thought this was a wonderful point of reading for fun. Coming from a background of development institutions where reading and learning in general or education is talked about in terms of impact on GDP and so on, I think it's refreshing to hear that we can actually look at some other impacts and say that self-development of individuals is important as well.

I want to say one thing. I thought we had wonderful presentations, very

thoughtful. But I'm still worried about this question of scale. Listening to the discussions today, it still seems to me that far too much of it, and this is not a criticism of any of you. It's maybe a criticism of us institutionally because I think somehow while we're ambitious we're starting to embrace ambition. These numbers that we're putting out, these targets, it's a good step, but I think we're still too timid institutionally and we're not getting ready to take on a lot of these problems at scale. We're still doing 20 schools here or 30 schools there, 100 schools here. And I agree -- I can't stress this too strongly: it's time for us to go to full scale. We need to be doing these things at national scale.

Part of it is going to be uncomfortable to us as some of the institutional arrangements that we have set up. It's hard for, let's say, Save the Children or maybe hard for AIR or some of the individual participants to operate at that scale just because of the way -- the things that they're asked to do and funded to do. So, we are going to have to set up a global partnership for partnership, if I could dare say that, in a small, lower case letters here. We're going to have to work together in ways that we're not. And I'll speak to our representatives of our countries here in particular.

I think it's absolutely critical for you to make demands of us as a development community as well. And your demands, I think -- you have the right to insist that we not come at you piecemeal with a lot of little things. I mean, there will some experimenting and there will be some research that has to be a part of it. But you have the right, I believe, to ask that we come to you in a coordinated fashion working together at full national scale.

Let me make a personal comment. As I say, I'm not going to try to sum all this up. I want to come back to the idea of reading for fun. I have in my household a seven-year-old and a nine-year-old, and they often go around with books in front of their faces reading. And my wife and I often have to steer them by the elbow to keep them from

bumping into things because they're not paying attention to where they're going.

And to me, this truly is the ultimate goal of what we're trying to do is to see -- if I can make a little metaphor, it's to see essentially -- see children everywhere walking around caught up in the joy of a good book. But ultimately, to see children navigating through life because of the worlds that have been opened to them through reading. I think that's where we're going when we're talking about making the world a better place in many different aspects.

Reading saves lives. We haven't talked about that yet. We can talk about that. I think that's a whole other story. But essentially helping us find our way through life maybe by being guided by the elbow once in a while through the lessons that we're giving and through the worlds that are open through reading.

I truly believe that this is beginning to happen. Luis talked about the revolution that's coming. It will be revolutionary. If you look at what's happening at a small scale now, virtually every one of these interventions, you're seeing the effect of the sizes of 100 percent, 200 percent, astonishing effects. To me, that shows that literacy is possible. I think I would add -- and I think that Steve has made some excellent points about needing to take a more holistic approach to this whole thing.

But we must not lower level of ambition. It is possible to achieve at levels that we have not imagined. And I believe that not only will see that in our plans, I'm looking for the next five years to see really a revolution in terms of what's happening at the schools.

So, thank you all very much.

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CERTIFICATE OF NOTARY PUBLIC

I, Carleton J. Anderson, III do hereby certify that the forgoing electronic file when originally transmitted was reduced to text at my direction; that said transcript is a true record of the proceedings therein referenced; that I am neither counsel for, related to, nor employed by any of the parties to the action in which these proceedings were taken; and, furthermore, that I am neither a relative or employee of any attorney or counsel employed by the parties hereto, nor financially or otherwise interested in the outcome of this action.

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