THE BROOKINGS INSTITUTION

WEBINAR

UNDERSTANDING USAID'S POLICY FRAMEWORK

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Panel Discussion:

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P R O C E E D I N G S

MR. PIPA: Understanding USAID's *Policy Framework*. Really pleased to see all of you here today, both in person and online. I'm Tony Pipa. I'm a senior fellow in the Center for Sustainable Development here at the Brookings Institution. And a warm welcome just for what I'm sure will be a rich conversation today about USAID's *Policy Framework*.

Those of us who are here at the Center for Sustainable Development are really pleased to host this conversation. And I'm especially pleased to welcome our guests from USAID, those who will be participating in today's conversation, and those of you who are here in the audience and online. And it's great to see old friends.

But before we get too far into the program, I just want to start by offering my congratulations, actually, to our guests. I know from firsthand experience how complex and how tricky it is to produce a *Policy Framework* for the agency, having been part of producing a framework in a previous administration. It has to balance many different things and it has to be

informed by many different things, including the

experiences of USAID programming that's come before it,

by evidence about what's working, what's not, by

analysis of the important global trends and where the

world's going, and the role of international development

in it, and by the role of the U.S., and in particular

the agency. And the role that the agency can play in

providing leadership and investment that matters,

leadership and investment that maximizes development

impact, while also advancing the interests of our

country.

So, it comes with a lot of responsibility.

The document provides the roadmap and the guidance for

everyone who works at the agency across so many

different parts of the world. But it's also important

for helping others within the U.S. Government understand

USAID's role in helping advance the objectives of the

National Security Strategy and its perspective on the

National Security Council. It helps implementers of the

agency's programs understand the goals and objectives

that the agency has in mind, the rationale behind them.

And it lays out the agency's priorities for its partner

countries and spells out how it's going to contribute to

their aspirations and to the globe as a whole on

agreements like the Sustainable Development Goals and

the Paris Climate Accords.

So, no small task, especially given that the

U.S. remains the world's largest bilateral donor. So,

really a warm and hearty congratulations on producing

this particular *Policy Framework* and really looking

forward to today's conversation. For today's program,

we're going to start by hearing from Ambassador Isobel

Coleman, who's the Deputy Administrator at USAID. She

will kick us off with some opening remarks, give us a

broad outline of the *Policy Framework*, the priorities it

elevates and why. And that's going to set the stage for

a panel discussion co-moderated by my colleague here at

the Center for Sustainable Development, George Ingram,

and Susan Reichle, who was my first boss at USAID, now

at the International Youth Foundation, as they discuss

the framework with Michele Sumilas and Sarah Rose and

engage with questions and comments from you in the

audience as we get underway on that discussion.

So, to get started, it's my pleasure to

introduce Ambassador Isobel Coleman, who's USAID's

Deputy Administrator for Policy and Programming. In

that role, she oversees the agency's regional and pillar

bureaus, and guides USAID's crisis response, including

on the National Security Council. This role means that

she's responsible for overseeing agency efforts to

promote food security, strengthen education, health,

democracy, and economic growth. And her work builds on

more than 25 years' worth of experience working in

government, the private sector, and nonprofits.

Immediately prior to coming to USAID, she

served as Chief Operating Officer of Give Directly. And

before that, she was at the U.S. Mission to the UN and

served as the UN Ambassador to the United Nations for

Management, Reform and Special Political Affairs, where

I had the good fortune of working directly with her

during my time at the U.S. Mission. So, please welcome

me in welcoming Ambassador Isobel Coleman. (Applause)

MS. COLEMAN: Thank you. Thank you, everyone,

for joining us here today. It's really a pleasure to be

able to launch our *Policy Framework* with all of you here

this afternoon. And thank you, Tony, for that great

opening and reminder of why all of the work that we put

into something like a *Policy Framework* is so important,

because it does really signal intent and priorities to

so many different constituencies. So, thank you for

that and thank you for all your great collaboration over

the years. And thank you to George, who I know is going

to moderate our panel discussion after this. And

George, who is also no stranger to USAID, having served

as our Principal Deputy Assistant Administrator for our

Europe and Eurasia Bureau during the early years of

former Soviet States where, believe it or not, today I'm

spending quite a bit of my time, so.

         For decades, Brookings has hosted important

policy discussions like this, and I'm so happy that some

of my colleagues are here to have the conversation this

afternoon. Michele Sumilas, who heads our Bureau for

Policy Planning and Learning, and Michele really took a

lead on this *Policy Framework*. So, thank you, Michele.

Sarah Rose, who's our Senior Advisor for Localization,

and Susan Reichle, who is also a long-time USAID person

and a former counselor for USAID, and now the President

and CEO of the International Youth Foundation. So,

you're going to have a great discussion with all of

them.

Brookings' thought leadership over the decades

has been really critical on the issues and challenges in

international development and has really helped USAID

and the U.S. Government evaluate progress and develop

strategies to strengthen our mission as stewards of

democracy and defenders of human dignity around the

world. It's fair to say that the document we're

discussing today, our *Policy Framework*, has, in one way

or another, been informed and strengthened by the

expertise here at Brookings. A Brookings report issued

last month titled, *The Second Half of the Sustainable*

Development Goals Era: Ideas for Doing Things

Differently, reaches important conclusions about a

central dilemma that faces all of us that the world has

not been doing enough differently to be on course for

SDG success.

Despite the incredible progress that's been

made over the last few decades in reducing extreme

poverty, addressing hunger and malnutrition, boosting

lifespans, cutting maternal and child mortality, fueling

democracy's rise, getting kids in school, spurring
economic development and growth, we are now seeing
reversals to many of these gains. From day one of this
administration, USAID has been very clear eyed about the
scope of today's challenges. We know that COVID-19
decimated health systems, leading to resurgence in
diseases from measles to tuberculosis, and to the first
global decline in life expectancy in decades.

We also see the devastating effects of the
pandemic on the global economy and many, many nations'
finances. After a decade of heavy borrowing and more
recently, rising inflation, we are now increasingly
concerned about the roughly 60 percent of the world's
poorest countries facing debt distress. Moreover,
natural disasters are increasing in frequency and
intensity, leading to a sharp rise in humanitarian
needs. And democracy continues to face threats from all
sides as authoritarian regimes engage in transnational
corruption, repress civil society, and spread
disinformation, all to undermine freedom and consolidate
power.

These are incredibly daunting challenges, to

be sure, and beyond our own capacity to solve,

especially if we just rely on traditional strategies for

development and growth. Frankly, we don't have a choice

but to do development differently than it's been done in

the past. And that's the spirit of USAID's new *Policy

Framework*, which we've called *Driving Progress Beyond

Programs*. It's a document that outlines today's

development challenges and brings them into focus under

a series of five agency priorities. It brings together

the interrelated components of our ambitious reform

agenda, and it guides us to use our expertise, our

convening power and advocacy to draw in more partners,

leverage more resources, spark new innovations, and

inspire broader movements for change.

         The first priority, the longstanding need for

which is made urgent once again by the crisis in Sudan,

is to better link our humanitarian assistance and

recovery to our long-term development work. When armed

conflict ensnares innocent civilians, whether in the

Sahel and Ukraine, or even here in, our own hemisphere,

more coordinated efforts in peace, resilience, and basic

needs like food security will help foster more

sustainable results.

The second priority is to support partner
countries to mitigate and adapt to climate change by
leading partnerships and initiatives that reduce global
emissions and expand access to climate mitigation
finance. USAID's partners around the world are calling
on us now more than ever to scale the impact of our
climate assistance, including through the Just Energy
Transition Partnership, the President's Plan to Conserve
Global Forests, and Power Africa. Through PREPARE, the
President's Emergency Plan for Adaptation and
Resilience, we will also do our part to make sure the
U.S. meets its goal of helping more than half a billion
people in developing countries adapt to and manage the
impacts of climate change by 2030.

The third priority is in countries where
democratic reformers are pushing for change, so-called
bright spots. We will rally to help democracies deliver
concrete development results for their citizens. We
will not only provide investment in governance,
anticorruption, media freedom, and the rule of law, but
we will also marshal additional resources to support

near-term economic dividends, and quality of life improvements. We will be nimble when democratic openings arise, mobilizing rapid support that is responsive to emerging local needs.

Our fourth priority is to respond to the stresses felt in the health sector. We will go beyond USAID's flagship disease programs to expand our impact and investments in the primary healthcare systems. We will improve integration across global health programming, including in digital health, and invest in a stronger primary health workforce and community health workers capable of adapting to shifting needs and working towards universal health coverage. And the fifth agency priority is to help countries address the grueling economic headwinds that so many are facing in order to help them get back on a path of inclusive economic growth.

Each of these priorities, of course, shares causes and effects with one or more. So, some of the traditional siloed approaches we've taken in the past will need to be reinvigorated. The framework pushes us to build our existing efforts to make our work more

effective. We're experimenting and rigorously

evaluating our work, including through methods like cash

benchmarking, where pioneering studies by USAID found

wide ranging economic benefits of direct cash transfers.

While we have extensive experience using cash in

humanitarian settings, we're now seeing its value in

development contexts as well. In Rwanda, for example,

cash benchmarking of a five-year workforce readiness

program delivered results beyond the program's core

business outcomes to include improvements in

consumption, income, and wealth.

With this type of experimentation and

evaluation, we are honing our tools for cash and noncash

programming alike, allowing us to invest in approaches

that have the highest impact. Across USAID programming

and deep within its development toolkit, we have hard-

won expertise to bring to bear to make the most of our

investments. But just because we're growing our impact

does not mean we can achieve sustainable results alone.

Here, we are guided by the second part of the *Policy*

Framework, which highlights the importance of new

partnerships in responding to today's challenges.

The first line of effort to expand our
partnerships is a renewed commitment to development
diplomacy. Through our convening power, our standing in
multilateral institutions, our influence as a global
power, and our considerable budget, we will drive
collective action to solve shared challenges both
globally and at the country level.

Next, is deeper engagement with the private
sector. Here too, is a path to achieving progress
beyond the constraints of our budgets. For example, in
October of last year, USAID launched AGRI-Ukraine to
bolster Ukrainian agricultural production and exports to
help alleviate the global food security crisis
exacerbated by Russia's war. Earlier this year, we
joined forces with Bayer, encouraging them to invest
more than $35 million to boost the capacity of the
company's seed processing facility in Ukraine as part of
its collaboration with our AGRI-Ukraine initiative.

Private sector buy-in is crucial and also
underscores the reach of our development diplomacy. And
through an ambitious strategy to boost locally led
development, we are putting more local actors at the

helm, since they're the ones who know best how to drive
effective change in their communities and sustain that
change over the long term. This localization effort is
not exactly new. Many administrations have worked
towards locally led development goals in the past and
have fallen short.

So, we're not under any illusions about how
hard this is going to be. But we're making real,
tangible progress by institutionalizing new ways to
interact with the agency, by simplifying our
registration and awards processes, by adjusting our
appetite for risk, and by setting forth a new strategy
for the grant and contract award process that initiates
the tools, the cultural shifts, and actionable steps
needed to bring about our ambitious localization
initiatives. Last year, we obligated 10.2 percent of
our funding to local partners, up from 7.4 percent in
fiscal year 2021. In dollar terms, we obligated $600
million more to local partners in fiscal year 2022 than
in fiscal year '21, a 66 percent increase. That is
significant progress, and it's progress we can build on.

Finally, and critically, the *Policy Framework*

focuses on empowering and supporting our workforce as an investment in our impact and our effectiveness as an organization; by reducing burdens that needlessly trap staff behind desks and piles of paperwork instead of directly engaging them with partners; by growing and investing in the workforce so they have the support they need to do the job they love without burning out; by informing our work with the latest development thinking and data, making it easier for staff to wield rigorous evidence; make informed decisions and hone our tools for development impact to take those lessons forward; by prioritizing diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility; and reforming aspects of our recruitment and retention strategies that have traditionally sidelined underrepresented voices and limited our potential as a development partner.

And the framework underscores our commitment to making long-awaited investments in all parts of our workforce, including our local staff, without whom none of our long-term development goals would be possible. Confronting today's biggest development challenges, forcing, and embracing new partnerships, and investing

in USAID's strongest assets, its people. This is how we
are going to be able to achieve progress beyond the
scope of our budgets and our programs.

        Taken as a whole, USAID's new *Policy Framework*
is about a shift in our mindset recognizing that we are
problem solvers first and foremost, rather than simply
assistance programmers. And it's an encapsulation of
our values, our ambition, and our ability to put those
values to work in pursuit of a world that affords
dignity for all. I hope you've had a chance to look at
the *Policy Framework* and that you'll feel free to share
your feedback with us. And as I said at the top, for
years, so many of you online and in this room have
really helped to lay the foundation for the work that is
reflected in this *Policy Framework* and this vision. So,
thank you all again. (Applause)

        MR. INGRAM: For those of you who are young
research assistants here and elsewhere and are looking
for a career model, I learned before we came up here
that Paloma's first job in Washington was a pre-
doctorate research assistant here at Brookings. So, a
nice career oath.

MS. COLEMAN: Isobel.

MR. INGRAM: Isobel, thank you. My thanks to
Tony and to Isobel for laying the framework today.
We're going to have a moderated conversation for about
45 minutes and then invite you to engage in the
conversation. You've already been introduced to the
panel. I'm George Ingram here at Brookings. Michele
brings a very diverse experience in the civil society on
the Hill, a prior engagement at AID to what I think is
sort of the Brookings of AID, the think tank. And in a
few months, she not only will be head of a policy
bureau, but head of policy and budget, which is very
exciting for those of us who go back to the days when
those two functions were in the same office.

Sarah Rose, I know very well from her time
before AID with the Center for Global Development and
the Modernizing Foreign Assistance Network, where she
was a real thought leader on development effectiveness.
And I'm sure that her colleagues at AID are very pleased
to have her there.

Susan Reichle, who had a 25-year career at
AID, including as counselor mission director, recreated

the office that Michele is now head of, and her

knowledge of policy development is so deep, I've asked

her to share the role with me of the moderator. So,

she's playing a dual role of both panelist and

moderator, and we're not going to worry exactly at what

time she plays which role.

      MS. REICHLE: Good to know, George.

      MR. INGRAM: But let's start off, Michele, at

a broad level at the big picture and two aspects of

that. One is, I think we all got a little self-

satisfied in the immediate post-Cold War era in which

development appeared to be on the ascendancy in how it

engaged in global development. That got cut short with

9/11, and even more so now with the Russian invasion of

Ukraine, and with the challenge, the global challenge of

China. So, that development is now having to struggle

for being heard, for being valued in considerations of

foreign policy and security.

      Secondly, I think it's notable that this

framework, that the subtext of it is progress beyond

programs, and that there's discussion in there of new

partnerships and elevating the practice of development

diplomacy. And I know AID forever has been more than just about the dollars. But what does this subtext, this theme of the *Policy Framework* imply for USAID on how it functions? And how do you maneuver in this context where security and foreign policy issues seem to be at the forefront?

MS. SUMILAS: Well, thanks, George, very much for hosting us here today. And I have to admit it is a bit intimidating to be on the stage with people who've held my role in the past, as well as people who've been thinking about these issues for a very long time. So, I just want to say thank you to all of you who've been my mentors over the years and for coming here today. I also just want to recognize my colleagues from USAID who are here today, specifically Josh Kaufman, Aaron Roesch, Julie Lelek, Kim Bostwick, many, many, many people in PPL who really were the heart and soul of this effort, as well as many of our colleagues in the front office who really made this all come together.

We have been working on the *Policy Framework* with the administrator for about a year now, and this really is an articulation of what she believes. So, let

me just take a little bit of a stab at your question,

and then others can ask further questions later.

First of all, I would say that what the *Policy

Framework* tries to really demonstrate is that

development is actually more important than ever in this

environment that you're talking about. We at USAID are

often seen as the affirmative side of what the U.S. has

to offer to a lot of our partners around the world,

whether it is the challenge of the PRC, whether it is

issues around the Wagner Group in Africa, but we are

providing resources that are telling a story different

from what many of those who have a different world order

are providing.

So, I think we are very excited to be, as you

all know, part of the National Security Council with our

administrator being on that panel. We're very excited

to be at the table. We're very excited to be able to

say, you know, there can be other options, other ways of

working. We can do things like, say, you cannot use

Huawei, as Congress has said to us in our bill, but we

are then going to countries and saying, well, let's talk

about your digital transformation. Let's talk about

what you can do. Let's give you the skills to do that.

And so, this tries to lay that out. It tries to lay out

our priorities.

And later we'll talk about inclusive economic

growth, which is a new priority that's laid out here.

And that really is about saying to countries, how can

you leapfrog? How can you become the next manufacturing

hub of Africa? What kind of enabling environment do you

need? What kind of skills do you need to be able to do

that? We're doing a lot of work on many, many of those

issues.

In terms of how we're acting and being

different, I just want to say a lot of my foreign

service colleagues will say, we've been doing this all

the time. This is what we do at post all the time. And

actually, Susan and I were recently talking about the

20-year transformation in Colombia and how people laid

out a pathway to get there. And what this *Policy

Framework*, though, is trying to say to people is make

this more important than it usually is. We get so

focused on implementing programs. What are the

outcomes? How do we design this? How does that happen?

We still need to do that.

But when you design that program, how do you do it in a new way? What kind of new questions do you ask? You're not just doing an agriculture program in a rural part of Africa. You're saying, how does this agriculture program add to the economic growth capacity in this country? How do we reach new and different populations, whether it's women, whether it's young people and trying to give them new skills. So, what this is trying to do is say, let's think about those questions. They're just as important as how your program is going to work.

And then finally, what it's also about is bringing new partners to the table. It's about bringing the private sector and understanding that if you're going to have the private sector come in, it has to be about benefits to them as a company, as an organization, but also, how do you help them benefit the people that they're serving in the community they're in? How do you bring philanthropy to the table? We are currently working on three new MOUs with three different foundations to work on new, different parts of the

localization agenda. How do you work with donor

partners in new and different ways? And this is how

we're working differently within USAID.

So, just recently, the President went to

Ireland, and as part of that, he talked about what Irish

Aid is doing on global food security. That is work that

we have been doing with Irish Aid for probably two years

now. And that's no surprise to any of you, right? The

administrator is of Irish descent. She's very committed

to that. We see it as very important. They joined with

us last year at UNGA providing $50 million for

malnutrition. They've now signed on to do new,

additional work in Africa.

But it's about saying, how can we have joint

goals, joint ways of working, bringing new partners to

the table? We brought Korea to the table to work with

us on Ukraine agriculture when the President was just

here last week. So, we're thinking about who are new --

we're still working with the UK, we're still working

with Germany, but we're also thinking about who's

bringing new money to the table. So, I'll stop there.

But thank you for the question.

MR. INGRAM: So, Susan, in your role as a
panelist --

MS. REICHLE: Okay, put that hat on.

MR. INGRAM: -- Michele mentioned Colombia --

MS. REICHLE: Yeah.

MR. INGRAM: -- a country you know well.

MS. REICHLE: Mm-hmm.

MR. INGRAM: And you were involved in USAID's
engagement there when it was playing a significant role
in what was a national security agenda strategy. So,
how does this framework and beyond just the money and
operating in a foreign policy milieu, how does that
resonate with you and what was your experience?

MS. REICHLE: Well, thanks, George. Well,
first, congratulations.

MR. INGRAM: And we only have about, you know,
a few minutes.

MS. REICHLE: Okay. I'll be very brief.

MR. INGRAM: I know you could go on for two
hours.

MS. REICHLE: I know, because you can talk
about Colombia forever. But first I want to say

congratulations and echo what Tony said at the start.

We know how hard this is to do a policy framework. And

for everybody who worked on this, congratulations. It's

so important. It's so important to set that trajectory

for the agency.

        And I can say now, pivoting to Colombia, I had

the honor of serving there from 2005 to 2009 when we

didn't have a policy bureau and we were developing

strategies. And I remember submitting it to Washington

and being told, well, we don't have a policy bureau or

any way to approve this. There's no real overarching

framework. Just keep going. You know, you're on the

right path. And I think Colombia is a great example of

really what the agency has been doing for some time, of,

you know, the progress beyond the programs. Programs are

important. It is the bread and butter. But it's about

the overarching framework and strategy.

        And getting to your point and question that

you raised, George, about the geopolitical nature of the

work we're doing now, which is truly different than when

I was in the agency, obviously with the war in Ukraine

and with the rise of China, you know, really thinking

about this differently. And obviously, there may be a

movement towards transactional, as there was with

Colombia at times, but we were part of the longer term

and really integrated as the deputy administrator talked

about of development diplomacy and as Michele just

highlighted the importance of us being at the table as

all development actors to achieve that longer term goal.

        And so, Colombia, it was started under

President Clinton, President Pastrana went several

administrations bipartisan because there was the larger

goal that all of us were working toward. And I think

that's the framing of thinking about this moment and

what we do and how do we think about those larger term

goals beyond the implementation of the programs and how

do we knit that together and have leadership driving

towards that. And the *Policy Framework* provides that.

So, it's an exciting time, I think.

        MR. INGRAM: And Sarah, not to pre-up what I'm

going to ask you about later, but it seems like to me

that AID has been trying to play that larger global role

on leading other donors and implementers into the

localization space, and back in the fall brought donors

together to try to sign on to a statement committing the

motion localization.

          MS. ROSE: Yeah, exactly. And so, you know,

we see the approach to localization as encompassing a

number of things that we can do as an agency. But one

of the roles that we see being able to play is being

able to use, you know, our voice, our convening power,

our relationships, our partnerships, to be able to have

conversations, and to be able to lead conversations

about what locally led development can look like

throughout sort of the broader ecosystem.

          And so last fall, Michele Sumilas and her

team, including Shereen Faraj, who is here in the

audience today, really led an effort in partnership with

the aid agency of Norway, NORAD, to pull together a

bunch of bilateral donors to sign on to a statement that

commits the signatories to really pursuing sort of three

things. And one is shifting power as much as possible

to those whose lives are affected by the work that we

do. The second is to shift funding as directly as

possible to the proximate organizations, again, who are

living the challenges that we are seeking to support

their efforts to address every single day. And then the third is to sort of continue this sort of public advocacy around locally led development.

I think, as Deputy Administrator Coleman put out at the beginning and George put out as well, you know, this isn't new. The international community has been talking about locally led development, or country ownership, as it was called, sort of in the era of the Paris Declaration 20 years ago. But there is an opportunity to think about it in new and different ways now, really sort of underscored by this groundswell around diversity, equity, inclusion, accessibility, with new thinking about, you know, how can we think about grappling with some of the inequities that have been baked into the aid system for a long time. And because of this, there is renewed attention and different kinds of attention to the role that we as donors can play in terms of thinking about how to shift the system to really be more locally led. And so, again, we had 14 bilateral signatories to this broad donor agreement on locally led development and are really excited about the signal that that sends in terms of sort of the direction

that we see things moving soon.

MR. INGRAM: Great example. Thanks, Sarah.

Susan, I'm sure you can seamlessly switch hats now.

MS. REICHLE: Sure. I was thinking about what

Sarah was thinking again, of this not being new. And

yet we have a moment now we really do have, I think, a

unique moment in development where we're talking about

inclusion, we're talking about decolonization, we're

talking about issues. Many of you are members of the

Coalition for Racial and Ethnic Equity and Development.

More than 100 development organizations have signed on

there. The administrator has leaned forward on

inclusive development, obviously as the deputy

administrator talked about, with inclusive growth.

And yet, you know, as we look at the issues

and we're so excited, Michele, that budget and policy

are coming together. I mean, again, to reiterate that,

because it's wonderful to have policies, but it really

does come down to where's the money and how do we drive

that forward? And so, as we look at that, several

questions came in online about inclusive development

and, you know, questioning with the *Policy Framework*

where, you know, whether it's gender and women's

empowerment.

Clearly, the administration has made a huge

commitment in the FY '24 budget of, you know, an 180

percent increase. But questioning by the community of,

you know, is this still ticking the box of integrating

it? Okay, we'll count that as gender and women's

empowerment, or obviously, youth. As the head of the

International Youth Foundation, it's wonderful to have a

youth policy. But again, how is that, as well as the

disabilities community, the Indigenous populations,

LGBTQI, all the things that are so important for

inclusive development, how do we actually have program

dollars? And most importantly, how do we measure

impact? Right? I mean, Sarah, this is your area, and

as well as Michele's, of being able to show we're

actually making a difference as we drive towards the

Sustainable Development Goals. Because, again, taking

it all back to that higher level of why do we do what we

do? And not just obviously the U.S., but all of us as a

community, we're not going to achieve or make progress

against the Sustainable Development Goals without these

communities.

And so, there was a sense within the *Policy
Framework* that there was a bit of the ticking the box.
Each of the communities had said, okay, how many times
was, you know, gender mentioned and how do we do that in
order to drive towards also inclusive growth? And
again, I think the community is thrilled that inclusive
growth, just as under the Obama administration, broad
based economic growth, was a pillar of our policy
framework. But how do we make that happen without the
money really being directed? Most importantly,
measuring impact?

MS. ROSE: Yeah, this is a great question.
And I think that, of course, you know, the Biden-Harris
administration, one of their key priorities is
inclusion. And so that is something that USAID has
really embraced in terms of how we're thinking about
what the path forward is. And, you know, one of the
ways that we're thinking about inclusion is in the
institution of new offices to focus on this both
internally and externally. And so, one of these new
offices, of course, is the Office of Diversity, Equity,

Inclusion and Accessibility, and a new Chief DEIA

Officer, Neneh Diallo, of course.

And the mandate of this office in particular

is really to advance DEIA across the agency through

coordination and through the sharing of technical

expertise. And thinking about how we can make USAID a

more safe, respectful, inclusive kind of environment to

work, it has to start with that angle to be able to

think about how that applies to our programming.

And of course, we also have the inclusive

development hub that we've set forth in the Bureau for

Development, Democracy, and Innovation, in DDI. And

this hub is really, you know, framed around this

understanding of inclusive development as an important

angle to all of what we do and when we work. And when

we talk about inclusive development, what we're talking

about is really this approach that's built on the

understanding that sort of all people in all

communities, with all of their diversity have a role to

play in the development process and need to be able to

bring all of those voices, that diversity of voices to

play in order to really have sustained results.

And I would just highlight, too, there is a very strong linkage, of course, between inclusive development and localization, right? So, localization in the absence of this inclusive development lens, you know, really risks sort of exacerbating or reinforcing some existing inequities that may exist in the countries in which we work. And of course, inclusive development, without some of the tools and approaches and sort of impetus of localization, you know, maybe risks not having, you know, as much of a way to operationalize some of these approaches as well. And so really, together, these offices provide some of the sort of, you know, agency infrastructure around some of these issues as well.

But I also want to reinforce that inclusive development, gender equity, women's empowerment, you know, these are all aspects of the *Policy Framework* and really integrated into the various aspects of the *Policy Framework*. It's also captured, these issues are also captured across a suite of policies that really sort of describe and elaborate on our commitment to inclusive development. So, we launched our updated gender

equality and women's empowerment policy in late March.
We are anticipating a new LGBTQI-Plus policy later this
year, which will build on and expand upon the existing
LGBT vision for action.

We're also updating our disability policy and
we've issued an updated youth and development policy
just recently or just last year. And then also we have
our Promoting the Rights of Indigenous People's Policy,
which really promotes sort of this thoughtful engagement
on how to engage with indigenous people.

And so, we're also providing, in addition to
the policy, you know, base, which is important, but in
terms of how we bring that into action, what we are
doing is providing these new tools and resources to
really help enable our mission staff to be able to
translate this policy into practice. And this includes
USAID's first guidance on inclusive development. And
this will highlight sort of the roles of equity, of
intersectionality, of localization as part of our
development efforts. And we're also developing an
inclusive development toolkit that will really help
USAID staff, you know, be able to again bring this to

the fore.

In terms of gender specifically, because this was something that George said --

MS. REICHLE: And measuring impact.

MS. ROSE: -- yes.

MS. REICHLE: Yeah.

MS. ROSE: -- like USAID continues to affirm, right, that, you know, gender equity and women's empowerment is vital and important, right? And so, the policy really underscores that, you know, there are specific kinds of challenges that women face, that gender diverse individuals might face, that LGBTQI-Plus individuals face, and specific challenges that are faced by men and boys, as well. And so, it lays out seven principles to think about, how to think through some of these things.

We are also bringing to bear workforce capacity issues to try to address some of these as well. And within the next three years, we are going to ensure that there will be sort of a gender expertise at all of our missions and all of our bureaus across the board and are also working to strengthen our operational policy,

our ADS, if you will, to be able to bring these angles
into it as well.

But the measuring results piece is also really
important and thinking about the kinds of questions that
bring in questions around gender --

MS. REICHLE: That's right, mm-hmm.

MS. ROSE: -- and how to think about ensuring
that we're targeting some of our evaluation questions to
look at some of these questions as well, so.

MS. REICHLE: And I think there will be a lot
of interest in the community and how the community can
help in framing those questions and how we actually
measure impact, because it's fabulous, all the policies,
and toolkits, and guidance you're providing. I know,
having been in a mission, you really depend upon those
toolkits, but ultimately we all have to be driving
towards how are we actually measuring everything we're
putting into this is having that impact? And that's, I
think, one of the questions.

MR. INGRAM: Susan, when the agency puts out a
policy on DEI and makes it a major issue, what is the
experience of that policy being picked up by

implementers, by partners?

MS. REICHLE: Absolutely. And I'm sure, you
know, Michele, who's dialoguing so much with our partner
governments. I was on the phone today with a big
British private sector company and this is exactly what
we were talking about. And they were excited to learn
about the work that's being done here in the U.S. on
advancing DEIA because they know it's important for this
company, which, sorry I can't reveal it's, a big global
partnership IOAF is about to launch. And it was so
interesting to share the experience of everything we're
doing here with them and how we can be one community.
So, it has an impact. Right, Michele?

MR. INGRAM: Michele?

MS. SUMILAS: It does. This is such an issue
that is really dear to my heart and there are a couple
of things that I think are just really important that I
wanted to pull out of the conversation. One is that in
addition to all the new offices that we're establishing,
the new policies we're putting in place, we're also
doing a ton of work. And a lot of that is being done by
our Learning, Evaluation and Research Office in PPL on

helping our staff, foreign service officers, civil

servants, et cetera, to show up at the table

differently. We're doing tons of trainings, tons of

sensitivity work around how do you moderate a meeting?

Where do you sit at a table? What words do you use in

those conversations? These seem like small things, but

they change the tenor of the conversation.

          In addition to all that, we're also working on

changing how we're evaluating each other and our

colleagues and our work and our peers. So, we're

changing the way foreign service officers are evaluated.

We're changing how civil servants are evaluated to make

sure that we're taking into account their application of

these things.

          In terms of evidence building, I want to also

just flag that we've also just recently created a new

Office of the Chief Economist. And our chief economist

is Dean Carlin from Northwestern. He is fantastic, but

he's very focused on working with all of us to say are

we asking the right questions in the right way to make

sure that we're measuring the right results? How do we

tell our story? How do we make that happen?

And then the final thing I also just want to highlight is we're also, as part of our localization effort, really thinking about not just implementing programs through local partners, not just having them weigh in on how we develop strategies and plans and projects, but how we monitor and evaluate those projects. And we just recently signed a new MOU with CGD and Hewlett Foundation to grow and to build the capacity and strengthen local African monitoring and evaluation organizations so that they are actually evaluating our programs and telling us if they're working. Are we asking the right questions? Are we doing it in the right way? So, I think we're trying to think outside of your typical box of how to do these things and really apply new ways of working.

MR. INGRAM: How did you create the transition to what I wanted to raise?

MS. SUMILAS: I don't know.

MR. INGRAM: That was very nicely done. Sarah, localization, which is something, you know something about being the prime lead at AID on that. It was notable and it's gotten a lot of attention, the

administrator's comment last week on the Hill that

localization is difficult. A pretty practical

statement, but it's very honest and humbling for the

head of the agency to admit that and to acknowledge

that.

A couple of things that for me have been

missing from the conversation is how much power are we

willing to transfer, particularly when transferring that

power may conflict with U.S. values, human rights, the

conversation we just had about gender and the

empowerment of women. And I haven't seen that discussed

in the policies and the conversations. Secondly, I

haven't seen a consideration of, well, what is the role

of the international expertise? What is the role of

INGOs and contractors who have decades of experience in

development?

And the third element that, you know, you are

very much in the midst of is the definition of what's a

local entity and a lot of controversy as to whether or

not local affiliates of U.S. organizations should be

included. And what we do, whether or not we include in

that definition the several billion dollars a year that

we put through international organizations and how, you
know, Publish What You Fund has identified that that
would add several billion dollars to our calculation of
what we should be including in localization.

So, I'm curious as to how you're grappling
with these issues. You've been at AID for a year now.
You worked on the issue before you got there, now you're
in the midst of it. So, give us a little bit of update
on those.

MS. ROSE: Well, George, you really hit the
nail on the head in terms of some of these important
questions that I think are really core to how we're
thinking about localization. And I appreciate your
commentary on leadership, but I just want to also
acknowledge that leadership for localization really is
across the agency as well.

So, the power question is a really good one,
right? And so shifting power is really sort of core to
the conceptualization of what it means to advance
locally led development. You can shift funding, that's
one thing, but that's only part of the story. You have
to think about making sure that you are creating space

for local actors to really be able to exercise
leadership over things like priorities, design,
implementation, and defining and measuring what results
are.

The power shift is really important, right?
This is important because of thinking towards
sustainability, right, in terms of owning the goals, the
processes for what you're trying to do. And it's also
important, as I mentioned too, for thinking about this
equity lens as well. How do you think about grappling
with some of these inequities?

The policy foundations that we are putting in
place to support localization and underpin these efforts
really reflect this goal of shifting power as well. If
you look at, for instance, the local capacity
strengthening policy, what this clearly reflects is a
shift from thinking about donor identified gaps and
trying to address those gaps in capacity to shifting the
power to the local organizations with whom we are
partnering to try to hear from them where they see
opportunities, where their priorities are for capacity
strengthening, and seeking to be able to support those

as well. It also shows up in our acquisitions and
assistance policy and our efforts to do more things like
co-creation and co-design to be able to ensure local
priorities are really brought into what it is that we're
doing, decisions over how, why, and where we invest.

But I do want to just comment too, because
George, the point you made is a very good one. Like
when you talk about local priority, it's like you have
to acknowledge that in every country in which we work,
priorities, interests, incentives are very
heterogeneous, right? And so, thinking about that like
we have to make sure that everything that we do can
respond to multiple different filters, right? And one
of those filters are, you know, does this respond to
local priorities, local ideas, local solutions, right?
But also, to what extent does this actually comport with
a) you know, procurement laws, that's one thing. But
also, b) our values as well.

And so, ensuring that, you know, the projects
and the programs that we would put forth are ones that
do things like advance democratic processes, continue to
advance diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility

priorities, work through things like climate change, et

cetera. And so, I think that that's one sort of, you

know, key answer to that is that there have to be

multiple filters to how we think about our work.

        The second question you asked George, is about

international expertise and the role of that. And the

very short answer to that question is that there is a

key role for everybody in terms of thinking about how we

advance locally led development. International

implementing partners have very key roles with their

technical expertise that they bring. They have key

roles as mentors in capacity strengthening. We talk to

local partners quite a bit who talk about the value that

they get from their relationships with international

implementers in that case. When you think about local

private sector as well, you know, they have, you know,

strong connections, innovation, et cetera, and

relationships there. And of course, international

faith-based groups have, you know, deep roots and good

connections as well. And so, the key to this is really

just in the relationships, right? How do those

relationships exist that create that space for really

creating the conditions for local actors to take the
lead over some of these kinds of issues?

The definition question, George, is a great
one and I want to use this opportunity to thank very
much Publish What You Fund, who's put forth some
analysis and has done a lot of thought leadership
around, you know, different or alternative ways that you
might measure what it means to be local. And I just
want to underscore too that this analysis actually
highlights that there is a lot of ways that you could
measure what it means to be local. What it means to be
local is a very complex, it's an inherently nuanced kind
of concept, right? And so, any definition that you
might choose will sort of inherently come with sort of
errors of inclusion or exclusion, sort of depending on
where you draw that line.

And so, what we have put oath in terms of
thinking about how we're measuring what it means to be
local, it's a proxy for local leadership. And we aim to
sort of create this proxy with the understanding that
another priority that the agency has is one of burden
reduction as well. And so, we wanted to be able to, as

much as possible, draw data from our existing systems to be able to put forth a suggestive, you know, value in terms of the amount of funding that we're providing to local organizations.

        And so, I also want to underscore that we have a commitment to transparency through all of this too. And again, thanks to Publish What You Fund for continuing their advocacy for transparency. We are aiming to put forward -- sorry -- we have a commitment to publish our data set of what organizations we are considering local as part of our progress report. And so that those who wish to dive into that data set and apply different filters are absolutely welcome to do so. Thank you.

        MR. INGRAM: Michele, Susan, anything to add?

        MS. REICHLE: I'd love just to add, it was wonderful to hear, sir, that you're reflecting on this isn't new, right? And we were talking beforehand when we created the Policy Planning and Learning Bureau 13 years ago, the previous heads of policy bureaus sent me policy documents from the time of the Kennedy administration. And it was about sustainability, it was

about locally led development, and whether it's USAID

forward and local solutions or a journey to self-

reliance, and now it evolves.

And I guess my question related to that, you

don't need to answer it now, but it's something of how

do we ensure it's institutionalized? Because we get so

stuck in feeling like we're not making progress. And

again, you know, this is a unique moment. And so,

having consistency in definitions, having consistency in

data, so whoever's sitting in these chairs in the

future, we're actually seeing we're moving in this

direction because I think, as we all know, right,

they're not waiting for us. It's a very different

environment. And again, you know, congratulations to

the team for really taking this on in a very bold way.

But I think we have a lot of work to do as a community.

MR. INGRAM: Okay. Now put your moderator hat

on.

MS. REICHLE: Okay. So now, in a consistent

way, one of the things that was emphasized in the *Policy*

Framework and the deputy administrator mentioned was the

importance of the private sector. And again, kudos for

the private sector engagement, modernize, and all of the

work, clearly, that this administration has been doing

building on previous administrations. And yet we know

agility and speed are absolutely critical to working

with the private sector. And at IYF, I have the

privilege of working with a lot of companies, and it's

not in a transactional way. And so, I think it goes

back to this larger theme that George put at the start

of like how do we -- they're in for the long haul, you

know, whether it's Caterpillar, who IYF has partnered

with for 20 years, maybe it's two to three-year

agreements, or Hilton, more than a decade. And in this

case, it's about youth employment.

The *Policy Framework* talks about the

importance of the private sector, but we often think

about it as terms of resources. But it's actually the

commitment to solve development challenges, whether it's

youth employment, climate change, you know, health

systems, and, you know, how we actually then think about

this in terms of also local private sector. And so,

we'd love to hear your thoughts on this and, you know,

that we need the agility to move quickly.

          And while it's great this administration

created the Edge Fund, it is only $50 million, right?

And there's huge potential to really, you know, grow

that. And how do we make sure the Edge Fund, which for

those of you who don't know, it's a fund that very

quickly, hopefully, they're going to make announcements

any day of private sector partnerships, often with

international organizations and USAID missions, to dive

into an issue. But how do we make sure it's not just

the same organizations and we're really growing the

partnership base which again is a priority for this

administration. So, your thoughts on some of those

questions?

          MS. SUMILAS: Well, let me say a couple of

things. One is this is another issue that we've been

trying to do for a long time. I think we all remember

the Global Development Alliance and the work that's been

done there. So, I think what I would say is I think the

Edge Fund is our attempt to try to be agile and nimble

within a world where a lot of our funding is earmarked.

And so, what we're trying to do is to say can we have a

small pot of money, $50 million to demonstrate that we

can do this, to demonstrate that it will make a

difference, and demonstrate that we can bring new and

different partners to the table.

        And as soon as we get our 653(a) approved by

Congress for FY '23, we will be able to hopefully make

some announcements. But I think it is the first

attempt. We are also working within some sectors that

have traditionally been working with the private sector,

whether it's the agriculture sector, or the education

sector, or the microenterprise sector. We're also

having them think differently about how they work.

        So, one of the things that's unique about the

private sector modernization effort in this

administration is that oftentimes we centralize that

outreach unit and we say that all has to be done within

-- we're doing that with foundations, we're the hub for

foundations in PPL. But the way they have done this

with the private sector engagement is that there are

contacts for all of these private companies across the

agency. And so, if you're working with Caterpillar and

you're an RFS, you're the main lead for that company.

It doesn't have to be in our democracy, development,

innovation, private sector team.

MS. REICHLE: Yeah, that's important.

MS. SUMILAS: And so, what we're trying to do
is institutionalize this across and make everybody have
some ownership of it. One of the concerns that you
mentioned is really the focus on big corporations. And
look, there's always going to be a focus on big
corporations, whether it's Bayer going to Ukraine as she
had mentioned, or others. But we're also working with
different ways of working. So, the Aspen Network worked
with young people in Guatemala and has worked with 60
corporations to bring a pot of money together, about $60
million, for them to get seed funding for young small
private sector companies in Guatemala. So, we're also
trying to think about how do we kind of build from the
bottom up, which is about the inclusive economic growth
model.

MR. INGRAM: So, we're a couple of minutes
from moving to the audience participation. Before we do
that, and because I'm a member of the Center for
Sustainable Development and I've got Tony Pipa sitting
here, Michele, I have to ask you. The Sustainable

Development Goals, the framework has an upfront

commitment, but then it's not mentioned again in the

framework. And unlike all other major donors, the U.S.

has not really embraced and brought the SDGs into your

policies and programs and projects. And, you know, what

you're doing is in pursuit of a lot of the specific 17

goals, but you're not using that as a frame. And why is

that?

          MS. SUMILAS: So, I have some really good

talking points here on that to put in place. So, let me

say a couple of things. One is that we are very proud

to be supporters of the Sustainable Development Goals.

The National Security Strategy talks about it, our

strategy talks about it. And we are working very

carefully with the interagency as we lead up to the SDG

Summit in September to really put forward some real

commitments around the SDGs.

          As you said, everything that we do is in those

17 goals. Every project that we have, every policy and

strategy we put out, has goals and outcomes attached to

those. And so, it is true. We do not outline in the

Policy Framework this is about SDG this, this is about

SDG that. But we are very focused on achieving the

SDGs, and we're very focused in this *Policy Framework* on

integrating all of those projects together, whether it's

gender, whether it's our new Democracy Delivers project

which says we're all about supporting democratic

countries that are trying to make a difference, address

corruption. And then in those countries, we're going to

show that the progress has been made and that the

communities can see it by bringing in more health money,

more education money. So, we are very committed to it.

But it is true, it is not integrated here by

calling it out by SDG. But I wouldn't read that as us

stepping back from it. This *Policy Framework* steps very

forward into meeting those SDGs. And as someone

previously said, we are the biggest provider of ODA, and

we're not stepping back from that. And we will continue

to apply that in ways that get us towards achieving the

SDGs.

MR. INGRAM: Okay, over to you. There's a

microphone. Please introduce yourself up front.

There's a question here up front. Introduce yourself

and be brief and end your comments with a question mark.

          MR. MURRAY: Thank you very much. My name is

Matthew Murray. I'm a former commerce, former USAID,

and currently teach at Colombia and do USAID Project

work in Ukraine, in Egypt, and Armenia. So,

congratulations on this incredibly broad based and

deeply thought-out policy, as well as other leadership

initiatives that USAID has shown on anticorruption and

other similar important policy areas.

          The question that I have goes to as you look

at broad based, inclusive economic growth that leverages

U.S. private sector in different countries, there are at

least two challenges, and there are many, but they're

the traditional local challenges. But there's also a

strategic competition challenge arising from Russia, to

some extent from China, pushing a model of capitalism

which is antithetical to broad inclusive growth and that

is based, in certain ways on oligarchic rules of the

game, right? So, that's the challenge that you face.

          The other challenge is actually, in some

respects, here at home because, you know, the United

States is, as you know, changing the way it approaches

free trade generally. It's adopting industrial policies

that some of our traditional trade partners are not very

happy with at the moment. And so, I'm just curious how

the economic component of what you're doing addresses

those two particular challenges?

MR. INGRAM: Thanks, Matt. Michele?

MS. SUMILAS: Wow, these are hard questions.

MR. INGRAM: That's not an easy question.

MS. SUMILAS: That's not an easy question.

But so, I think that goes back to kind of the theme that

we started with, which is the world has changed and that

it is important for us to change and to think

differently about the work we're doing. And so, what I

would say is I think that the Partnership for Growth,

PGII, is actually the best example of our new way of

working.

So, under PGII, it's an interagency project

where we are thinking about how do we build

infrastructure in countries where we're all working and

how do we use the different tools that we have across

the interagency? How does DFC go in with certain tools?

How do we go in with tools? We probably go in before

DFC goes in because we're creating the enabling

environment. Then DFC comes in. MCC comes in in the
countries where they're working. State Department is
doing a ton of work to try to bring private sector to
the table. And for the first time in my career at
USAID, we're working very carefully and closely with
commerce to think about how do we really, what does the
private sector need to be able and willing to go into
those countries? If our private sector doesn't go in,
if we don't go in, then countries like China and Russia,
who do have a different model for development, who do
have a different way of supporting infrastructure and
other investments will be there.

        And the issue is also, I mean, the other issue
that makes this really hard is that we have to do all of
this while maintaining our values as the United States
for transparency, for sustainability, for following
environmental and social policies that we care about.
But we do feel like we're making a difference. We're
finding countries are saying, you know, we really do
want to create projects with you and not using those
other models because they're seeing how things work and
don't work. So, I would say that PGII is probably our

best example of how we're working differently, which is
very consistent with both the National Security strategy
as well as with, you know, driving progress beyond
programs and working across the interagency.

The final thing I'll say is this is not just a
U.S. initiative, it's a G7 effort. It's taken a while
to get off the ground as the G7, I will admit that. But
in the next G7 Leader Summit, you're going to see real
commitments by each of the partners to this initiative
and to us working together and to projects that we're
working together on.

MR. INGRAM: And Matthew, I'm going to play a
dual role like Susan. And the latter part of your
question has been something that's troubled me for some
time. And that is the conflict between what we know the
benefits of open trade is with the growing industrial
policy. And I think somewhere down the road there has
to be a new set of rules of the game. And at some
point, we've got to bring China into this game and we've
got to set some rules that protect, promote, advance
trade and open trade in the context of knowing that
governments are going to play a role in favoring

particular sectors in their economy. I don't know how
that's going to come out, but somebody smarter than I am
needs to deal with that issue. Yes, young man up here
in the purple shirt.

SPEAKER: Thanks so much. Hey, I'm Sam. I'm
just a recent college grad, but long admirer of both
work at USAID and in Brookings. So, I just had a
question. You were talking a lot at the beginning of
the conversation about the need to center a lot of this
policy around promoting, you know, women and girls,
initiatives there. And I could not agree more, you
know, everything from education, to, you know, access to
menstrual products. But from what I understand, a lot
of organizations throughout the world have found it
difficult to partner with the U.S. given, you know, with
each turnover in party leadership in the executive
branch, we've flip flopped on, you know, the Mexico City
policy or the gag rule. And that's made certain
organizations on the ground hesitant to work with U.S.
funding at all because there's this lack of long-term
commitment.

So, given the sort of flux in U.S. politics

and how that can affect our funding and the particular

projects we're willing to engage with, how do you

instill, you know, you joked about going back to the

Kennedy administration, we're sort of stuck in this

cycle. So, how do you say, all right, we are going to

be there in the long term, and these particular projects

which require long term funding are going to see

continued funding when we know certain administrations

are more or less willing to actually feed funding,

particularly for, you know, the issues of, you know,

gender equity that you were discussing.

          MR. INGRAM: Susan, do you want to tackle that

because you've had to deal with that both as AID, but

now --

          SPEAKER: Thanks so much.

          MR. INGRAM: -- Susan heads up an organization

which is created to partner with local organizations for

the long term.

          MS. REICHLE: Yeah, and it's so important what

you're pointing out. There are changes of

administrations, and our partners are extremely savvy,

sometimes more savvy than we are about the intricacies,

whether it's the Mexico City policy or where we are on
locally led development and whatnot. And I think what I
learned under serving under five administrations
actually with USAID and now running a nonprofit is it
goes back to, I think what Isobel and Michele and Sarah
have pointed out and we all feel is this is the largest
development agency in the world, you know, and it's been
60 years. And so, how do you sustain those
relationships even during the tough times?

        And I really applaud our missions on the
ground. The way IYF works, we only have local offices,
local teams work through local partners who can really
navigate those uncertain times. And we shouldn't take
it for granted because again, getting back to we're in a
different environment now, so they might have been with
us in the past and they kind of got it and, you know,
did start around the time of the Cold War ending, and
that shifted development dramatically. I'm sure there
are many people online, my former colleagues, who know
how development was during the Cold War period. And I
think we have to rethink this. So, you're raising an
important point that I hope will really take and we will

think about this new environment we're working in and

how do we keep those partnerships because it's so

important for the long term.

MS. SUMILAS: Can I just say one thing,

because I've been a women's health advocate for a very,

very long time and working on gender issues off and on

over my career. I think a couple of things I would say.

One is it is true that every administration there will

be hot button issues. We've all worked on them. We've

all seen them happen. They'll raise their heads. But

what I've seen through various administrations as well

is that USAID, and the State Department, and many other

agencies are full of professionals who figure out how to

keep those relationships, as Susan said, going and

working in the way they need to.

And the last thing I'll just close on is the

importance of evidence and going back to that. We have

demonstrated over the years that women are the kind of

engine of the world, right? If you give money to women,

they're going to spend on their children, their kids are

going to be better educated. I don't have the

statistics right on the tip of my tongue, but we all

know them. And that evidence is actually what kept a

lot of the gender work that we started in the Obama

administration and had started in Clinton and other

administrations going through the Bush administration.

The Bush administration did great things on gender and

women's issues. Women were the center of PEPFAR and

really were part of that. Even in the Trump

administration, they continued to work on gender issues,

on women's economic growth issues. Maybe they did it

slightly differently than we did, and we might have come

in and shifted the different ways of working.

        But because the evidence is so strong of the

importance of women to making economies grow,

administration through administration will still

continue to work on it. So, I would encourage all of us

to really think about how do we keep building evidence

out of our programs of the importance of focusing on

women.

        MR. INGRAM: Good. I forgot to mention

earlier that we had about 18 questions submitted with

the registration and Susan and I have folded probably

about six of those into the questions we've asked. So,

thank you all for providing that.

MS. SUMILAS: Not doing questions for the
record, though.

MR. INGRAM: Oh, yeah, good ideas. I like
that. Have we had any, since we started, any online
that you want to bring to the fore?

MR. REN: We have one question along that line
of evidence. The *Policy Framework* appropriately
references the use of experimental methods and cash
benchmarking to improve the cost effectiveness of
programming. However, a study USAID did in 2020 found
that only 10 percent of USAID evaluations are impact
evaluations and half of USAID impact evaluations don't
meet the agency's own definition of an impact
evaluation. Only 3 percent were very high quality. It
would seem that to improve cost effectiveness, USAID
should do many more impact evaluations. The question
is, is USAID taking any steps to expand the number and
quality of impact evaluations with cost analysis?

MS. SUMILAS: So, I'll take the first. Do you
want me to try that or Sarah?

MR. INGRAM: You know, I was going to say, it

sounds like a question Sarah would have asked when she

was at CGD. But go ahead and start.

   MS. ROSE: I can start and then Michele,

please, because this is your --

   MS. SUMILAS: No, you do it.

   MS. ROSE: -- space, so.

   MR. INGRAM: Did you plant that question,

Sarah, with one of your --

   MS. SUMILAS: I was going to say --

   MS. ROSE: That's a great question.

   MS. SUMILAS: -- I think I know who did

though.

   MS. REICHLE: Great data.

   MS. ROSE: Exactly. So, the answer to that,

the short answer again, is that yes, USAID is taking a

lot of steps to, you know, think about how to do more

impact evaluations and more cost analysis. So many of

you are familiar with the evaluation policy that was

instituted in 2011, which really highlighted the

importance or the need to do impact evaluations for

pilots or for programs that you are testing. And in

2020, we sort of reupped that policy and made some

additions to it to really emphasize the importance of
conducting an impact evaluation when the question that
you are trying to answer is about attribution, right, in
terms of what USAID contributed to the outcomes that you
see. At the same time, we also added new requirements
that all impact evaluations should be accompanied with
cost analysis to be able to build this data bank, if you
will, of sort of the cost effectiveness of different
kinds of interventions.

So, we haven't seen the full effect of these
changes yet. And actually, I would just note that the
COVID pandemic, of course, led to lockdowns, which
really put a damper on some of our evaluations. A
number of them were delayed or canceled. And actually,
you can see this in the data that we have on our
development experience clearinghouse. We've gone from
an average of about 150 evaluations per year to only 68
in fiscal year 2021 and 76 in FY 2022.

But I would note that despite the sort of
overall declining trend, impact evaluations have stayed
steady and they've actually increased to 24 percent of
the total and there were 18 of them published in FY '21

and 17 in FY '22. So, the commitment to impact

evaluations is certainly there and strong.

And I know Michele mentioned earlier, too,

that, you know, beyond our own commitment to thinking

about impact evaluation, you know, USAID is partnering

with the Hewlett Foundation as well as the Center for

Global Development in an initiative to think about how

can you strengthen local policymakers, in particular in

Africa, to think about how to engage with evidence, how

to produce, engage with evidence in a stronger and a

different kind of way that can help inform policy making

more broadly as well as our own programming.

And I would also just note too, that, you

know, with the leadership that we have in place at

USAID, there is really strong commitment to this, both

from Administrator Power to Deputy Administrator

Coleman. Of course, the new Chief Economist, Dean

Carlin, has been a leader in this kind of thinking for

many years. And Michele, of course, as the leader of

PPL, bringing these efforts forward as well. But what

would you add to that?

MS. SUMILAS: The only other thing I would add

is just I would focus on the fact that Dean Carlin, our new chief economist, is very, very focused on this and he's been working with us. We're actually looking at the program cycle and new rules to -- a new way. This is so bureaucratic, but it's the way USAID works --

MS. REICHLE: It's important, mm-hmm.

MS. SUMILAS: -- which is that we're putting in new requirements around impact evaluation and on evidence to make sure that we are doing what you just described. So, there will be some new things coming out probably in the next six months on this.

And then we're also looking at the evaluation policy and thinking about is there a need to look at it and think about the use of evidence, not just, you know, how we evaluate and how you do it and what it looks like, but then how do we use that evaluation evidence in the budget cycle in the project design, to make sure it's being applied? So, some of that will really come out in the next couple of months.

MR. INGRAM: Great. Junjie, pass the -- right behind you, Sally.

SPEAKER: Thank you, George. Thanks

everybody. First of all, congratulations again for

getting your *Policy Framework* out. I know that's a big

lift. Also wanted to just congratulate the

administrator also on having a very ambitious goal on

localization. We know it's hard. We appreciate her

kind of referencing that last week. And we look very

much forward to seeing the progress report coming out

and appreciate the point that you will make all your

data. We promise to look at it. We promise to get back

to you on that.

So, just two quick questions on localization.

One, is that something George alluded to, and that is

what we look at as an opportunity to drive more funding

to local organizations and that is looking at that pot

of money that is UN money that is projectized. So, not

the kind of the assessed contributions that we make, but

the money that is set aside for technical cooperation

and other projects that are country based. We've heard

from some of our MFAN Southern Voices that that is a

huge opportunity and we estimate it's about $840-plus

million a year that could be open to the possibility of

being more local. So, we just kind of would be

interested in your comments on that in terms of being
another opportunity.

And then second, I'd be really interested to
hear on the other donors the commitment that you got
from the 11 or 17 or whatever other donors in terms of
their pushing the localization goal. What's next in
that? I mean, USAID has been the leader in terms of
setting a pretty tough goal for itself. So, what are
the other donors doing? What do we think the next steps
are for that?

MS. ROSE: Yeah, let me tackle the first one
because Sally, that's a really important point and I
want to just underscore that the point that you made
highlights, you know, again, we have a definition of
local partner. There's a lot of other ways that you can
advance locally led development that is not just tied to
that definition that we are using to capture progress
towards this target for direct local funding.

And again, we're capturing some of these
things separately, like we're capturing government to
government assistance separately, we're capturing like
regional organizations separately, acknowledging that

those are also very important as well. But the category

that you particularly called out and George, you did as

well, and I apologize for just blazing right through

that is about sort of UN organizations and PIOs,

because, you know, we do recognize that a lot of those

kinds of modalities and beyond that, it could be things

like, you know, trust funds managed by the World Bank,

et cetera as well. A lot of these do end up being, you

know, almost just pass throughs to local organizations

and can be really useful vehicles for empowering local

organizations and getting funding to local

organizations.

      The trick for us, though, is that there is a

range of the way that these organizations report to

USAID and a range of the way that our systems capture

these relationships as well. So, it's not an easy thing

for us to capture right now. That said, we are in

exploratory phases right now of how we can capture that

better because the point you made is exactly right that

these, in some cases can be really important vehicles

for advancing local development.

      MS. SUMILAS: Thank you. That is a very

important focus of ours. And I know for BHA, which your

number seems a little low to me, because BHA gives tons

of resources to the World Food Program, who then does

subsequently sometimes do go to INGOs, but also

sometimes to local organizations. So, we are also

working with them to try to figure out how we can count

that and think about that.

          In terms of the other donors, we're super

excited. We got 14 other donors to join with us. And

we are now in the process of working through with them

what the next steps look like. And so, some of the next

steps are things like we're working with the OECD DAC.

They have a working group on localization and they're

looking at trying to come to a common definition for the

DAC members. We're looking at potentially a new metric

on localization. We all work towards numbers, right?

We've done that since we were little in school, in our

grades, and as adults, we work towards those numbers.

So, the DAC is thinking about a new metric on

localization.

          They're also collecting best practices, what

works across different organizations and agencies.

We're working on sharing with each other our playbooks

on localization. Australia has an incredible playbook

on working with local organizations. So, we're trying

to share that information.

And then finally, some of the entities that

signed on will probably never give 20 percent of their -

- 25 percent of their resources to local partners. It's

just not the modalities that they work on. But some

countries are doing things like saying if we give money

to our national NGOs in our country, then those NGOs can

only keep a portion of those resources in our country.

The resources have to flow to the countries where we're

working. So, we're trying to think about every country

will have a different way of playing in this space, but

how can we work with them a little differently? We're

also working with foundations to get them to make

commitments to localization. And so, our Hewlett MOU is

our first foray into that where we're working with local

monitoring evaluation organizations. But we're really

trying to move this throughout the ecosystem.

And I want to just also say one of the

differences for localization in this administration from

past administrations has been the support we've received

from the NGO community, the contracting community, and

others. I have scars still, as does Don Steinberg who

worked on this, and Susan does too, from the hearing

questions that we received over the years, from the

concern that this would mean that we wouldn't be funding

INGOs or contractors here in Washington. It is an

ecosystem. Everyone will continue to be funded. It's

just the shift. There'll be power shifts, money shifts.

So, I just want to say thank you to the community that

has been so thoughtful. You've put a lot of pressure on

us and we appreciate that to be also to reach as high as

we can.

          MR. INGRAM: Okay. We're approaching the

witching hour, so we need to wrap up. Everybody gets a

minute to conclude. I'm going to start with you, Susan.

          MS. REICHLE: Oh, wow, okay.

          MR. INGRAM: What is your takeaway? And also,

what are you grappling with that the community needs to

be grappling with and that the agency or we here at

Brookings or whoever?

          MS. REICHLE: Yeah, I think one of the things

I'm grappling with, maybe. So, the takeaway is this is

a big step forward and again, kudos to everyone who

worked on it. But what I think many of us are grappling

with, everything we talked about today requires people.

And if we're going to achieve, you know, localization,

MFAN, the Modernizing Foreign Assistance Network,

longtime push for how do we have enough people at USAID

in order to deliver on more effective development or

innovation, right? We just had FIGDA launch last week,

unlocked aid, big group, part of this.

          All this comes down to people and I guess we

can't do questions, but I just would sit this with

something that Michele testified to, is we need a new

way of thinking about this. So, she put out there, you

know, maybe 15 percent of all program funding actually

is used for people who can actually help advance this.

Because if you're going to do innovation, locally led

development, a development that really requires -- it

requires more people in USAID, more resources. And

George and I have the numbers, we'll put it out in the

blog. It'll tempt you. You'll see what the people

within USAID are managing. And as the program resources

have come up, people are managing more and more

challenges within the agency. And we've got to fix this

because just to end it coming back to where we started,

we're in a whole new world right now and our development

architecture has not kept up with the challenges that we

need to meet today.

          MR. INGRAM: I can't resist picking up on

that. In the last 10 years, AID's program money has

doubled and its staffing money has barely gone up at

all.

          MS. REICHLE: Exactly.

          MR. INGRAM: And you're asking AID people to

do more and more and more without adding to their

staffing or their training. And I think beyond, you

know, 15 percent of program money being allocated to

staffing, which, Michele, you suggested on the Hill a

few weeks ago, I think the agency appropriators need to

get rid of the OE account like most government agencies.

And beyond that, I think the agency really needs to

engage somebody like the National Academy of Public

Administrations to rethink the whole personnel system in

the 21st century. Minor, minor project. Sarah, what

are your thoughts?

MS. ROSE: So, thank you. And I will frame my
thoughts just around localization, just because that's
the focus that I bring to my work primarily. And I
think the first thing that I would just note too, is
just like sort of the clear sort of cross cutting nature
of a lot of these things. Like, when we think about
localization, it's not an initiative, right? It's a how
we work and it's sort of how we do all of these other
pieces that we're trying to bring forth, both in the
Policy Framework, as well as just the broader work that
we do.

And the other thing I noticed as part of our
conversation today is that there was a number of
different times that we talked about why this is a
different moment, right? So, I was talking about how
the focus on power is different. Michele talked about
the consensus, the new kind of consensus and support for
localization that we see now as well. But I also just
want to highlight that this is a different moment for
this too, because of all the -- we have a rich base of
lessons learned now. We've been doing this for some

time. So, we have lessons from prior leadership, we
have lessons from our staff who have been doing this for
a long time. We have lessons from our implementing
partner community. We have lessons from advocates as
well.

        And so, I just want to say that this is a
process and we are open and willing and very eager to
continue to continue to learn those lessons as we move
this forward. Localization is not a short-term
endeavor. It is something that we are pushing forward
over the long term.

        MS. SUMILAS: So, I have a couple of things
I'm grappling with. First of all, climate change. We
have not talked a lot here about climate change. It is
one of our core priorities. And with the new World Bank
president just approved today, it'll be one of his
priorities. But I think that a lot of the progress
we've made over the years is being whittled away by
climate change. And so, you know, development has often
seen climate change as something over there and it's
really important that we really integrate climate
change. And the administrator often says that we are a

climate agency.   So, we're trying to really, as we
think about integration, how do we own that and feel
that?

The second thing I'm grappling with is what
you talked about, which is there's a whole section of
the *Policy Framework* and I actually have a printed one,
which is kind of new in this world, about what we're
doing to strengthen the agency and people is very
important. We have a Global Development Partnership
initiative which the administrator launched. We have
hired more people. I think we've hired 400 new people
since 2022. So, we are working really hard. We're
focusing those hirings in areas like contractors and
climate change experts and DEIA those areas that are new
and that are different.

So, I would also just say that we also have
are focused on our foreign service national staff, which
is a huge portion of our staff that does not turn over
every three years as our foreign service officers do.
And it is a big part of our DEIA initiative, our
localization initiative. So, those are other issues
that we're grappling with.

And I'll just close by saying thank you to George, to Susan, to Tony, to everybody who commented on the *Policy Framework* when it was circulated. We have an Excel spreadsheet with every comment and how we addressed every single one. But I just want to close by saying please continue to engage with us. We are happy to come to small groups, to large groups. We want to grapple with these issues. We want reports to come out that challenge us as Publish What You Fund did. But that's what this is all about, because we want to get better. So, thank you for having us. Thanks for the hard questions and please continue to engage.

MR. INGRAM: Well, I wish we had another hour because there are some important questions I wanted to pose. I really wanted to grapple with the burden reduction effort, which I think is so important to the staffing issue, so the staffing has time to do what they should be doing. And there are other issues.

I think, you know, threaded through here was the theme, which I don't think we're adequately grappling with, sort of a dual theme. Matthew raised the issue of how should we be moving in an international

climate and framework which is changing and is

challenging the traditional thought of how public policy

supports enterprise, free enterprise, private sector.

And how we make the case for development in a frame

that's being dominated by geopolitical concerns,

particularly at a time when there's such political

divide in this country. And I don't think any of us are

adequately dealing with that issue and we need to

address it. And my thanks to you all for coming today.

For everybody online, Susan, Sarah, Michele, thank you

very much for being with us today.

     MS. SUMILAS: Thank you.

     MS. REICHLE: Thank you, George.

     MS. ROSE: Thank you. (Applause)

           *   *   *   *   *

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