Matthew Baker:

Just a quick note that, today we will be recording this afternoon's session. And so for any reason you don't feel comfortable, please feel free under no obligation to stay. We will be sharing the information, the resources, following this session by email for any of those who signed up. That's also an alternative way to get all the information that we'll be presenting today, just FYI. And we'll be beginning in about a minute also just to allow a few more people to join before we get started. Thank you. So seeing upwards of 40 folks joining us. I think we all get started. Just to remind that we'll be recording today's session, and so if there's any reason you don't feel comfortable, please feel free to under no obligation to stay. We'll be sharing all the information after the session. I want to offer a warm welcome to all of you who are joining us from wherever you are in the world. We're here today for us to share an update on the progress regarding the DRG Learning Agenda.

Matthew Baker:

It's connection to a related work stream called the DRG Program System, which will calendar. And we will share what those next steps are in that process, as well as how you can engage with that process itself. And to help me in that, we'll be hearing from two people today, beyond myself. Danielle Reiff and Andrew Solomon, both in-person and virtually. I'll be providing brief introductions to both Danielle and Andrew as we proceed. I thought we would begin by getting a sense of our level of knowledge with regards to learning agendas for those who are joining us today. I was going to invite [Shelah 00:03:11] to post a short poll question, which has just been launched. If you click on that button, it'll take you to the poll. It asks you a very short question, which is, "Are you familiar with, or have you ever worked on a learning agenda?" And there are three different options for you to choose. I'm just going to invite you to select the option that you feel best fits your particular situation. And I'll just give you all a moment or two to do that.

Matthew Baker:

And then Shelah will do a grand reveal and share the results. I'll just give you another minute or so just to answer that question. So the question should be, it's a poll question. You should see, towards the top, right of your screen, a set of shapes, a triangle, a square, and a circle. If you click on that, you have an option to full polls. If you just click polls it will take you through to the poll. And the Shelah has just done a grand reveal. I see that there's a range of different sort of experiences that we have here joining us today. Those who have worked on the learning agenda, those who are familiar with the concept and those who are coming at this completely new. I thought before we get started, I would just provide a very brief overview of what the thing is, that we're talking about. And then provide a quick snapshot of the work that we've been doing on the DRG Learning Agenda. Shelah if you could just go to the next slide, please. Thank you.

Matthew Baker:

Here we have two very short and simple definitions for both, what is a learning question and its relationship to a learning agenda. Simply put that a learning question is a specific answerable need-to-know question, that can be addressed through a range of different research and monitoring and evaluation processes. Some of that can be traditional or traditional MNE as well as special studies and the like. Now if we can combine both of these learning questions and sometimes they can be grouped together under themes or categories. They can produce what we call a learning agenda. And that simply is, a systematic and intentional way of addressing a set or a series of learning questions. Sure. Thank you very much. So since 2016, the DRG Center has been working on the DRG Learning Agenda Initiative. And

that is focused on producing a systematic generation of evidence in the DRG sector. And this has been produced through consultative process, which arrived at a set of 20 questions that focused on key priority areas.

Matthew Baker:

And you can see here on the left-hand side of the screen, a snapshot from the 2017 brochure and a series of themes through which specific learning questions were clustered. As a part of the learning agenda initiative, the DRG Center organized and disseminated both existing data, as well as generating new evidence and then providing recommendations by using both academic research, traditional program evaluations, as well as mixed multi-methodologies. As a part of the Learning Agenda Effort, we for example, have supported what you can see here on the right-hand side of the screen, which is an infographic distilling the findings from an edited volume on decentralization. The decentralization volume, including a number of novel findings and a number of articles that demonstrated that decentralization can have both positive and negative effects on governance, not necessarily creating the assumed local control and empowerment. DRG stuff uses information to inform a range of technical assistance, including support through TDWise, to help inform Missions, to produce more tailored programming approaches. And I provide this example, just to give a sense of how some of these learning questions, when address, can help support the work of Missions and bureau here in Washington.

Matthew Baker:

Last year, following a stocktaking of the current effort and the program, the DRG Program System emerged as a way to intentionally, both reflect on the benefits of the learning agenda, as well as the importance of factors such as staff engagement, but also allow the next generation of the learning agenda to be grounded, more comprehensively in evidence. And hence the DRG Program System was born. I'm going to invite Danielle Reiff to share a little bit about that experience. Daniel Reiff is the chief of the learning division within the DRG Center. And she as an epistle who has a range of experiences in DRG and peace building programs, in a range of different contexts, from Uganda to Columbia, to the Republic of Georgia. And he has been working on the DRG Program System from the very beginning. And she'll share with us more information about what that is. Over to you, Danielle.

Danielle Reiff:

Thank you Matt, and good afternoon to everyone from Washington. Very excited to have you all with us. Before I jump into the DRG Program System, I do want to thank Matt for all his work on putting together this webinar today. But in general, you should all know that Matt has pretty extensive experience and expertise in learning agendas and how to develop good learning questions. Matt has only been with the DRG Learning Division for about six months, but he has done incredible things to advance our DRG Learning Agenda and to put it back on the map and keep it moving forward again after a bit of a hiatus. Matt came to us from some work with PPL. He's also very familiar with agency, standards related to CLA, learning agendas, learning questions. He is a resource for the entire DRG cadre in these areas and in other things. So if anybody has specific questions or if your mission wants any support in developing learning questions or learning agendas, please don't hesitate to reach out to Matt. He can provide some very strong support for you.

Danielle Reiff:

So with that, I will jump right into the DRG Program System. As you all know, we have a strong mandate to ensure that when we are developing new policies and programs, that they are based in evidence and

data driven. This is something that is in tranche at the agency level. It's good practice for the field of international development more broadly. And it's something that is very much highlighted in the 2013 DRG Strategy for the agency. And it's something that we take very seriously in the DRG sector. In order to help the sector develop more evidence-based and data-driven policies and programs, we are putting together this DRG Program System. So what is it, what is the DRG Program System? When you boil it down, it is first and foremost, and essentially a way of organizing the universe of programming options and core reference materials in our DRG sector. If you think about the F-Framework, for example, you'll note that the DRG piece of the F-Framework, for example, you'll note that the DRG piece of the F-Framework is broken down into six program areas and it has a number of elements under that.

Danielle Reiff:

Anybody who's been working in the field knows that the current F-Framework is far from a complete, accurate, ideal typography of what we do in the DRG sector. But for researchers and even internally within USAID, for most purposes, that really is the best and only place where we have articulated the entire universe or attempted to articulate the entire universe of programmatic approaches in the sector. And so that's sort of the best we've got right now. But hopefully, the DRG Program System will help to inform some better approaches to that. Shelah a slide. Why do we need the DRG Program System? I want to start out talking about this painting that I put on this slide. This is a Norman Rockwell painting called, can you look at it and guess what it might be about? It's called, The Gossips. And I'm not saying that we in the DRG Center or in the DRG sector are gossips. I really don't think that we are. But what I was trying to capture is this notion that when we do program design, very often, we exchange information and get ideas about what programming to do based on word of mouth. We've actually done surveys of the DRG cadre and asked people, "When you're designing a new program, where do you get information?"

Danielle Reiff:

And some people are systematically looking for evidence and going to Think Tank websites and asking folks in the DRG Center. That does happen. But how many times have you guys been in a mission designing a program and somebody says, "Oh, yeah. In my last mission, we did this really great thing and maybe we can try that here." or maybe somebody says, "Oh, I went to this training and I heard that in the next country over, they're trying this cool thing and maybe we could do something like that." Very often we are basing our program designs on sort of the best available information that we can get through our own informal networks. DRG Officers, have said, we need easy to access and easy to use reference materials. We need help identifying indicators and trends and evidence. And so this system is intended to meet that need. Next.

Danielle Reiff:

The DRG Program System is designed and comprised of three distinct pieces. First of all, we are developing Universe of Technical Approaches, taking an inventory of all the Technical Approaches in the sector. Second, we are identifying external third party, metrics, related to our sector and our programmatic approaches. And third, we are identifying both existing evidence and evidence gaps in a way that will be easily organized and easily accessed. Next slide, please. So, Sorry. So for all of these areas, for all of these three components of the DRG Program System, we are doing them for all six DRG sub-sectors. These correspond with the six program areas in the DRG F-Framework. So we have Rule of Law, independent media, civil society, human rights, EPP, and governance. If you're designing programming in the field on any one of these, you'll be able to access the program system. Click, for

example, on elections and political parties and get a snapshot there, of the technical approaches, the metrics and the available evidence for that sub-sector. To go into a little more detail about technical approaches, you can think of this as a Results Framework. What we're doing is trying to develop, at a very high level, a two-tiered Results Framework for each of the sub-sectors and for the DRG sector at large. Next slide, please.

Danielle Reiff:

You can see on the left a sample from our Rule of Law work. If you look, we have categorized our Rule of Law programming into four major baskets or categories, and those are represented by the royal blue lines in this table. We have four of them, strengthening judicial independence, so a whole basket of technical approaches around that. Enhancing administration of justice and a whole basket of technical approaches around that. We have, improving internal court administrative operations and a whole series of types of programs around that. And then fourth, expanding access to justice and legal empowerment and a subset of programmatic approaches related to that. So for each and every sub-sector in DRG, we're developing a similar two-tiered typology. On the right, this graph that includes red bars. This is about frequency. The methodology we used to develop these technical approaches included a review of all the programmatic documents we could find from the years, 2015 to 2017. And we set a team of consultants to work, reading through all those programmatic documents and pulling out the programmatic approaches, and they have produced these frequency graphs, which basically tell us, during that timeframe, how often were these different approaches actually being used in our field programs. Next slide, please. The second component of the system is about metrics.

Danielle Reiff:

We all know there are dozens of external third-party data sets related to DRG. Everything from VDAM and Freedom House, to the World Justice Project, the World Bank Governance Indicators, the Economic Intelligence Unit, the Bertelsmann Transformation Index. There are so many different external third party metrics. And in every mission I've ever worked, when we're developing our PMP at the mission level or doing our pads, we always consider, are any of these really appropriate for use in our PMPs. And there's always very hot debate about that. You have people who are convinced that these things can be used to measure our program outcomes. And other people who say no, no, no, they're much too far outside of our manageable interest. What we are trying to do, we have already developed a database of all the external third party DRG metrics we could identify. We've divided them up among the six program areas, DRG sub-sectors, and we've done another layer of analysis to separate out, which of those indicators really capture high-level context information, versus which of those indicators can reasonably more or less be considered to monitor program outcomes.

Danielle Reiff:

Which ones are somehow related more directly to the work that we do. So I'll give you an example. VDAM of course has many, many high level context indicators about, is there censorship in the media and how many local government units there are. Those are things that we can't really effect with our programming, but they also have an indicator which is about the institutional capacity of the election management body. And the reality is that, a lot of our elections work, a lot of our country programs include strengthening, institutional strengthening of the election management body. Of the entire VDAM dataset, we've pulled out that one and others that are more closely correlated with our programs. And those will all be organized and they'll all be easily accessible so that nobody has to go

digging around in each and every website for all the different data sets and try to sort it out themselves. It'll all be organized and available. Next slide please.

Danielle Reiff:

So a piece of this work also involves creating two-page data portraits. What you have here is a sample DRG Data Portrait, and we are actually rolling these out today for the first time. If you stick with us, we will tell you how you can access the data portrait for the country or countries that you work on. And then over the coming weeks, you'll see agency notices and whatnot about these. But because you came to our webinar today, you get advanced copies and we hope you find them interesting. The front side, which is what you see on the left, we've included some qualitative data pulled directly from the Freedom House, Freedom in the World data set. There's also some stuff pulled from the CIA Factbook. The red stamp in the upper right-hand corner of the front side, includes very ready, readily available. You can figure out immediately what is the country's freedom house status, what is the VTM Regime type, what is the Tip Tier and whether this country is, how it's doing in terms of, during the pandemic, whether it's having DRG issues related to a pandemic response?

Danielle Reiff:

On the backside, there is one indicator representing each of the six sub-sectors and in our teams in the DRG select, sorry, our teams and the DRG Center selected which indicator they wanted to represent their sub sector. For now all we have available are the DRG overall data portraits, which is what you see, but we are in production as well for two-page data portraits for each of the six sub-sectors. For example, if I work in Sri Lanka, which was my last post, eventually I should be able to download the DRG overall sector information. I should be able to download a two-pager related specifically to civil society indicators. I should be able to download a two-pager specifically related to Rule of Law and media, et cetera, et cetera, et cetera. These will be available to you if you stick with us. Next slide, please.

Danielle Reiff:

The third piece of the program system is about evidence. When I joined the learning division two years ago, I spent a fair amount of time digging in our own internal files. I had access to our P drive and I had time and it was my job to try to figure out where all these studies were. And even in my position with my access to the files, I still couldn't find a lot of the reports. And even the reports I found, they weren't always very easy to read. And we know that field officers don't have a ton of time and that. If field officers are going to use evidence more systematically, then we need to make it easier for people to access. This section of the data, sorry, the program system will pull together evidence summaries as well indicate where there are gaps in existing evidence. We have commissioned an organization called, 3ie, which specializes in these things, to do an evidence gap map for each of the six sub-sectors. Next slide, please.

Danielle Reiff:

In 3ie, as a part of this process is reviewing tens of thousands of articles and pieces of academic literature in each of these sub-sectors. And mostly what they're trying to do is identify when and where does there exist? High quality evidence. They focus mostly on systematic reviews and impact evaluations, things that meet a certain standard of research. But then once they do these gap maps, what they look like is something along the lines of what you see here. And Matt provided a link in the chat box, if you want to dig around and understand them better. They're pretty cool, actually. For every technical approach, they will be able to tell us, for example, under policing strategies and tactics, "Yes,

there is a fair amount of evidence or no, this is an area where there isn't a lot of rigorous evidence." And then we've also asked them in areas where there is a significant amount of evidence to produce evidence summaries, so that you'll just be able to download.

Danielle Reiff:

If you're looking at a policing intervention or a human rights intervention, you'll just be able to download a one or two-pager that basically summarizes the state of the evidence for that approach. Finally, and this is the last slide about the program system. We are going to put this online, in hopefully, easy to access, easy to use web portal. The picture you have here is a pencil drawing that one of our data scientists did in the agency. She has since left. But we are in discussions with our tech folks in the agency to figure out how we can build and where we can house a web portal for all of this, so that it's easily accessible. We do aim to make it available both internally to USAID staff, but also externally to our partner community and the general public. This is the kind of stuff that I think researchers and students, partners, a lot of people are interested in. You can imagine how valuable this would be, for example, to local organizations in the countries where we work, who don't necessarily have good access and understanding to how we work. Next slide, please.

Danielle Reiff:

So as promised, we have over 130 DRG Data Portraits available. Just last night, they went live on USAID's IDEA website. Matt just posted a link to the DRG section of the IDEA website in the chat box for anybody who wants to jump right in. But even if you don't have the link, if you're back at your desk later, and you've forgotten, you just google "USAID IDEA" This is the agency's website where they keep all the datasets related to international development, that they can get their hands on. It's all very nicely organized. It's quite a resource and an asset, the IDEA website. And of course, you'll see once you go there, on the left-hand column, there will be a section for democracy, human rights and governance. If you go there, you'll see the list of countries. You click on your country, and that's where you will be able to find the DRG Data Portrait. As I mentioned before, all the other sub-sector ones they're not ready yet. You'll see places where eventually you'll be able to get access to them.

Danielle Reiff:

They're not there yet. But we do have the overall data portraits already online. So enjoy those, share with your Missions and give us any feedback. This is our launch for those. If you have comments about the indicator selection itself, about the format, about the utility, any of it, we'd be happy to hear from you. And with that, I will turn it back to the marvelous Matthew Baker.

Matthew Baker:

That's just me. No marvelous. Thank you, Danielle. That was really helpful. I see a question here, but I'm also going to invite ... But before I pose the question to you, Danielle, I'm going to invite Shelah to post another poll, very quickly to us all. And the poll is going to ask basically, "Which of these components do you think might be most useful?" Of course, they're all very helpful, but we wanted to get a sense from the folks in the room about which one they felt maybe have most immediate utility in their day to day work. Shelah just posted that poll. If you're having trouble finding it, it's just the set of three shapes that are at the top, that you can find at the top right of your screen.

Matthew Baker:

And I'll just give you a moment to take a look at that and select the option that makes the most sense and we'll share the results momentarily. But I thought I just ask you Danielle, a quick question that Julie has posted here on the chat. And if others have clarifying questions or follow up questions based upon the content that Danielle just posed and present it to us, please feel free just to post that in the chat box and we'll try and cover a few of them right now, before we move on to our next little section. But she asks, how often will we update the DRG Program System?

Danielle Reiff:

Yeah, that's a phenomenal question. And I'll be honest. We haven't settled on an answer yet. Different pieces of the program system may need to be updated at different intervals. For example, the Technical Approaches Inventory, once we figure out what the universe is every few years, we'll probably want to go back to it. And if, for example, there are new and interesting approaches being employed that aren't captured. The fact that they're not in the old inventory, will be one way to know that this is actually a new and innovative approach and we'll be able to update as we go along. But we shouldn't need to update the technical approaches inventory every year. Obviously, once new evidence is available, that's something we would want to get out to people and make it accessible on a more regular basis. Most of the external data sets are published annually. At a minimum, we would make sure that those are up to date and always have the latest indicator data available. Short answer, we don't know yet, but we're definitely thinking about it.

Matthew Baker:

I have a couple more questions and then we're going to move on momentarily. Shelah, if you wouldn't mind just posting the results to the poll. Oh, there we go. Oh, okay. So we're getting clear [inaudible 00:31:10] for the evidence summary from the learning harvest work that was mentioned, which is very interesting. We just have a couple of other questions I just wanted to cover before we move on. Heather asks, I think you mentioned you were able to track which technical approaches are being used in the field. And she was just asking about how we did that.

Danielle Reiff:

Yeah. That question came up in this morning's webinar as well. We hired some consultants and asked them to gather program documents for as many DRG programs as they could find between the years, 2015 and 2017. But surprise, surprise, our partners are not doing a spectacular job at submitting their reports to the deck. And this is a general problem that we hear from researchers and our consultants all the time. Sometimes it's even hard for us to access our programmatic documents internally. Multiply that by a thousand, for people who are outside the firewall. The amount of program documentation that's available in the deck and elsewhere it's a struggle. So anyway, we ended up having to go back to the technical teams in the DRG Center, and particularly to the AORs and CORs of our central mechanisms, which have task orders and associate awards around the world and we asked them to call their files. So we did a massive transfer of program documentation either from the DRG Center files, or in some cases, we went directly to the implementing partners and ask them to fork over their paperwork. And they were all very gracious to do that.

Danielle Reiff:

After that, we had the consultants sit down and read it all and pluck out the programmatic approaches. They developed a first draft list based on their own reading. And then that list was submitted to the technical teams in the DRG Center, who then across the board said, "Wait a minute. That's not a good

representation of what we do." And so the teams in the DRG Center themselves put a lot of thought into what does the inventory of technical approaches look like for their sector and developed, built on what had already been done and develop their own version. We sent those back to the contractor who then reclassified all the program documents based on the inventories developed by our DRG Center team.

Danielle Reiff:

And then finally, I should add, the methodology includes a validation workshops. For each sub-sector, we are gathering a group of 20, no more than 20 handpicked experts who will be able to look at the materials and sort of validate that they do represent more or less the state of the art in the sub-sector. We're also going to work with them to extrapolate and discuss theories of change. When we employ these technical approaches, what outcomes are we achieving, what outcomes are we not achieving, what are some of the lessons learned and what's working and what's not working? So those workshops, we haven't started them yet. We've got the first one scheduled. And we're very excited to take the technical approaches, which right now is basically a list of approaches and frequencies and have some robust technical conversations about them.

Matthew Baker:

Great. Thank you, Danielle. And there were a couple of other questions which I've tried to address in the chat. If I've done a bad job of that, please tell me so that we can surface them and try a better job. But one of them was regarding what was going to compliment the technical approaches. I just mentioned the theories of change work, and then how the technical approaches work actually feeds into the evidence gap maps. And what we talked about in terms of the framework that's used to actually look out and call all and collate all of the evidence that's out there. And then also we had a question with regards to, funds and exploring new learning questions. It's a good question because I'll be talking about that in a little while.

Matthew Baker:

But before we do that, We've heard a lot about the DRG Program System and the different components. And I wanted to offer a perspective from someone who's been working alongside us to help produce the different components. That person is Andrew Solomon, who is a senior Rule of Law advisor in the DRG Center. He wasn't able to join us today, but we did shoot a very short video which we'll share with you right now. And I asked him a few questions. And the first question I asked him to do was to share, provide a brief introduction of himself. Thank you for there Shelah

Andrew Solomon:

Hi everyone. I'm Andrew Solomon. I'm a senior Rule of Law advisor in the DRG Center in Washington where I sit on the newly developed reconstituted justice and rights team. In a nutshell, I provide technical leadership and expertise in the area of Rule of Law. Primarily into Missions, but to anybody within USA and also the within the agency that requires it.

Andrew Solomon:

Well, it's something of an open secret though. I'm actually quite bullish on the DRG Program System, and I believe it has several concrete benefits to those of us in Washington, as well as those of us who are in the missions. Basically, it's learning that I can believe in, because I can use it on something like a daily basis and in a variety of ways. And by that, I really mean that it's, first and foremost, a knowledge management tool. Specifically in how it inventories and organizes a representative sample of program

designs of authoritative evidence, and also measures across the technical areas in the DRG space on the basis of clear typologies that we've developed.

Andrew Solomon:

I also think it's an important and very useful analytical resource. And here I have in mind how we can use it to make some observations and even perhaps draw some conclusions about the nature and the scope of our programming and the frequency of specific interventions. In addition, I think we can use the system to relatively, quickly identify good practices in addition to the authoritative evidence of what works and what doesn't. While at the same time, really starting to discern where the gaps are and how we can fill those gaps.

Andrew Solomon:

I'm somewhat regularly using the elements in their current form and several Rule of Law program designs that I'm working on. I have to confess that, I'm not as strong on developing theories of change and also measurements as I should be. But in this regard, the technical approaches inventory and the data portraits. These sources in particular have been quite handy to me and of real practical use, as I have to work on both those types of issues and activities. The resources have also helped me better articulate to a variety of audiences of both within the inter agency and the larger Rule of Law community of practice, including international donors. A more clear picture of what USAID, in this context Rule of Law programming, looks like and how we are applying more rigor in how we're doing it.

Andrew Solomon:

And actually, I feel like I really benefited by the program system that's being developed in my dialogue with several international donors as we are really exchanging best practices and what we're doing at this time to do development better. No element of the program system elements have actually been quite timely and useful to those of us who are working on developing USAID's Rule of Law Policy and related doctrinal materials. Now obviously, policy, like our programming should be driven by data and evidence. Our DRG Program System elements are resources that provide us with both. I mean, very briefly the DRG Program System is allowing us to do both smart programming as well as smart policy

Andrew Solomon:

Once the elements are finalized and made available on the online platform, I believe it'll serve something like a one-stop shop of technical and programmatic information. The first place to look as opposed to a stale folder structure or any of what even googling something about USAID programming. And I think it'll save everyone from having to draft an extra email to people like me looking for information. Although I'm always happy to receive those types of emails and to respond. From my side, it's been very useful and pleasant collaboration, and working with the learning division. But thank you.

Matthew Baker:

Thank you to Andrew for doing that. I always like to make sure the phrase pleasant interaction gets involved in anything that I do revolving around in the DRG learning division. So I'm very thankful for that high compliment. Shari if you could put up the slides for the next little section. Thank you. So we've heard a lot about the different components of the DRG Program System and many of their benefits. One of the chief benefits of the DRG Program System itself is to help ground the next generation of the learning agenda. And chiefly, that's done through the use of the evidence gap maps that we've been hearing about today. Shelah, if you could skip down a few slides. I wanted to preview the process that

we'll be embarking on as those evidence gap maps are completed, and that will be happening for each of the sectors over the course of the next six months. I'll mention a few sort of key dates and milestones in the next slide in closing, just as a way to remind us about when some of these things are going to be happening.

Matthew Baker:

Now, in each of the sectors, we'll be developing a set of sector specific learning questions that will feed into the greater DRG Learning Agenda. And in order to produce those learning questions, we'll be using this four step process, which I just wanted to briefly cover. For each of the sectors, we'll be looking at identifying those learning priorities, using the evidence gap maps and other appropriate resources and inputs. Once we've done that, we'll begin to brainstorm an idea of what all the best and most appropriate learning questions to address our learning needs. We'll get them go through a process of refining those learning questions in order to make sure that they are useful and feasible and timely for our use. And then we'll elect, this aside, which of those we want to prioritize and feed up into the DRG Learning Agenda itself.

Matthew Baker:

As I mentioned, this process will be beginning in the next month or two, beginning with the Rule of law. Once we've completed the evidence gap map, we'll be transitioning into this mode of leveraging the work of the DRG Program System to inform the next iteration of the DRG Learning Agenda. But I also wanted to mention a couple of other things which will also be coming down the pipeline. And the first of which is the DRG Learning Summit. We've been looking forward during the session, but at the same time, we've also been looking backwards and conducting a sentinel retrospective exercises with regards to the DRG Learning Agenda, as well as the work that we've done on impact evaluations. In early 2021, we'll be conducting a DRG Learning Summit, which will present a lot of the findings and insights from those two retrospective exercises. And then we'll get to share what they are, allow people to reflect on their implications and provide an opportunity for us to talk through how we might leverage and use those findings.

Matthew Baker:

In June 2021, we're planning on completing and rolling out the DRG Program System. It will have a formal rollout likely coinciding with the DRG Program Offices Conference. And then following this summer as well, we'll also be launching the first, an overall DRG Learning Cycle Training. And this training comes from the DRG Learning Division and focuses on taking DRG staff and colleagues through the learning cycle, which is a set of phases, from developing learning questions, to identifying the best methodology to address them. And then conducting relevant learning activities and disseminating and using that information. Now, all of this information, obviously, is helpful to you, but the one thing that I mentioned at the beginning, which is most critical, is ensuring that we get stuff engagement with this process.

Matthew Baker:

The benefits of the DRG Learning Agenda will only really accrue if we have staff engaged in the process throughout. What I'm going to do is, we have an invitation for you to help us in that process. Shelah is going to share a very short Google Form with you all momentarily. And that Google Form is intended for you to help sign up and sort of self-select and to be involved and stay engaged in the formulation process for the learning questions for up to each of the six sectors. You'll have an opportunity to choose

one, two or more of these factors that you're most interested in. And I want to invite you to basically just identify which of those you may be interested in. And as we go through the process that I just articulated through the four phases, we'll be reaching out to you and bringing you in to help us construct and develop and refine those learning questions as we proceed. Shelah has just posted that Google forms. I would highly encourage you just to click on that link and just complete it.

Matthew Baker:

There also a few additional questions as well, just for us to get feedback from today's session, as well. As people are doing that, I wanted to invite Danielle to come back online and just share a little bit about the learning harvest because I think that may also be of interest to people. And we haven't talked about it yet.

Danielle Reiff:

Yeah. Great. Sorry I missed that talking point in my presentation. So remember when I said I dug through the files two years ago when I started with the learning division and I couldn't find a lot of our very valuable learning that we'd done over the years. As a result, I worked with the learning team. We commissioned what we call our DRG Learning Harvest, where we basically got consultants to dig through all the files and pull together a master database of all the research and learning that we have conducted over the past decade or so in the DRG Learning Division. You have not only just files in the database, but you can search the database by sub-sector. If you want to know what has the learning division ever done in terms of Rule of Law work, you can sort by Rule of law or by civil society or by human rights, to have a quick and easy way to just get a sense of whether we've done impact evaluations or other research in those areas.

Danielle Reiff:

You can also sort the learning harvest by region. If you want to know, "Have we done any literature reviews about Africa," you can sort in that way. And what will pop up is not just the actual links to the files, but we've also summarized everything and given easy links to the executive summary or activity briefer. The whole idea is to pull everything together and make it easier for us to access the learning that we've done. We've spent a lot of money and a lot of time and really produce some good, good work. What we really need is to make sure that it's getting out to the people who need it, in time to make important decisions. Matt has put a link to the learning harvest in the chat box. Right now it's in the form of a database on our pages site. Not necessarily the most beautiful, beautifully accessible format, but it's better than nothing at this point while we work on building the broader DRG System Web Portal.

Matthew Baker:

Great. Thank you very much Danielle for that. So I want to encourage people to take the form, to click on the form link and just fill it out before they decided to leave. And I wanted to leave this space for the next few minutes open to anyone else who wants to ask any additional follow-up questions or clarifying questions based upon any of the content that you've heard here today. We've certainly presented a lot in a relatively short period of time. You'll be pleased to hear that you don't have to remember all of it, because we'll be sending it out in a follow-up note with links to all of the relevant resources and information that we've been talking about today for your reference. But I did want to offer up that opportunity for anyone who has any other additional questions to ask now in the next few moments, before I thank everyone for today's session.

Danielle Reiff:

And while we're waiting to see if any last questions come in, I will take the opportunity to thank [Madigan 00:51:44] also to thank Shelah who's been on the producer side, doing an amazing job as usual. To thank Stu Hickman from our GROW contract, who helps design these online meetings in a way that hopefully has kept everyone engaged. The primary reason that we are doing these webinars is because we want the DRG cadre to get involved in generating and utilizing evidence, data, and learning. We all are managing programs that we can leverage. And if you contact us in the learning division, we can help you figure out. What is it that you really need or want to know to be able to design and manage better programs in the sector. We can help you figure out what you want to know.

Danielle Reiff:

We can help you figure out what the best learning methods are, to answer your questions. We've got learning contracts that you can buy into, with really talented contractor staff who specialize in doing good quality research and evaluation. We've got lots of resources in the learning division at your disposal to help you leverage your programs to advance learning. But in general, we want our work to be useful to the cadre into the field. We really are sincerely asking you to join us as we develop the next generation learning agenda, as we figure out what are the key questions that we need to be asking and researching, and what is it we really need to know in order to make our programs more effective.

Danielle Reiff:

And the folks in the field who are facing these questions on the day to day, we really don't feel like we can be effective if you don't join the effort. So anyway, encouraging everyone to foster a culture of learning, get engaged, reach out to us. We want to work with you. We want to do more generation and utilization of high quality learning in the DRG sector. This is our sector, and there's a lot of work to do to build the evidence-base. And I think we all have somewhat of a moral responsibility to do that, but it's also a lot of fun. So anyway, that's my plug for the final words now.

Matthew Baker:

Thank you very much. Thank you very much, Danielle. And thank you Danielle for today's session. I'm going to thank Andrew as well for his virtual contributions today and echo your thanks to both Stu and Shelah for all of their help. And with that, I'm going to allow folks to leave a few minutes before the top of the hour. And thank you all for your time and attention and participation. I'm looking forward to working with you in the future on the next DRG Learning Agenda. Thank you.