

Luis-Felipe Duchicela:

Well, thank you very much Laura and welcome. Welcome everyone. Very happy that you made some time to be with us today. So, first of all, I would like to welcome Tim Meisburger who's the Director for the Center of Excellence and Democracy Human Rights, and Governance in USAID's Bureau for Democracy, Conflict and Humanitarian Assistance, who will give us some welcoming remarks. Good morning Tim, hand it over to you.

Timothy Meisburger:

Good morning.

Thanks to everyone for joining us on this webinar to learn about USAID's Policy on Promoting the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, which we refer to as PRO-IP. This is a truly groundbreaking policy for the agency and we're thrilled that you're able to join us here today despite your busy schedules and despite the challenges of COVID-19.

Timothy Meisburger:

While USAID has worked on indigenous peoples issues for many years, PRO-IP marked the first time that USAID has an official policy to guide how we better engage and partner with indigenous peoples on development programming through our missions around the world. I want to thank Luis-Felipe Duchicela and Vy Lam and the members of the Indigenous People's working group for their tireless efforts over the past five years to move the agency forward on this important issue. It's taken a long time, but we finally got there.

Timothy Meisburger:

PRO-IP signals a new era for USAID efforts to partner with indigenous peoples, the policy and related guidance documents provide a framework for engaging the indigenous peoples to ensure that USAID programming aligns to the greatest extent possible with indigenous peoples on development priorities. It provides our field officers with guidance to ensure that indigenous peoples are engaged in the development process from the earliest stages, through implementation and even monitoring and evaluation.

Timothy Meisburger:

Well there has long been a goal for USAID's programs, PRO-IP provides a concrete framework to put this vision into action in a more consistent and comprehensive way. PRO-IP is closely aligned with agency and administration approaches to inclusive development. Inclusive development is the concept that every person regardless of identity is instrumental in the transformation of their own society. And their inclusion throughout the development process leads to better outcomes.

Timothy Meisburger:

An inclusive development approach ensures that all people are included and can participate fully and benefit from USAID development efforts. This policy is also part of how USAID is reorienting the way it does business. It will help us to focus on how we support our partners on the journey to self-reliance or to put it in another way, the ability to plan, finance and implement solutions to their own development challenges.

Timothy Meisburger:

I highly encourage all mission to read the policy and to implement its guidance. As best and often stated by former administrator Green, "No USAID program or government can succeed, if it isn't turning to every community in its culture, in its society and in its country for the leadership and ideas that it needs." Thank you.

Luis-Felipe Duchicela:

Hey, thank you very much Tim and I want to thank you also for your leadership and your support throughout this process to have PRO-IP finally approved and officially announced. So, I'm going to now ... let me know about the agenda that we put together for this session. First of all, we're going to go through very quickly the policy itself, the objectives and the operating principles. This will be done by my colleague Vy Lam and myself.

Luis-Felipe Duchicela:

And then, we'll have a section in which we have invited our colleagues from the Guatemala Mission, Amy Koler and Aj'bee Jimenez, who will highlight and showcase what we consider best practices or practices that support the Indigenous Peoples Policy and they have implemented actually even before the policy was approved. So, we're very happy to have them here and be able to tell us about that.

Luis-Felipe Duchicela:

Then, we'll have a Q&A session, feel free to post your questions while we're talking and then we'll be able to take your questions at that point in time. And then we'll have a few minutes for a wrap up. So without further ado, I'm going to ask Aj'bee to please introduce himself and then I'll take it back to continue your presentation. (silence).

Vy Lam:

(silence) Hello everyone good morning. My name is Vy Lam. I am an officer in the Center on Democracy, Human Rights and Governance. I've been with USAID for the last eight years and during that whole time I have focused on working on human rights and promoting the inclusion and the integration for [crosstalk 00:06:46]-

Luis-Felipe Duchicela:

Thank you very much.

So, my name is Luis-Felipe Duchicela and I'm the Senior Advisor for Indigenous Peoples at the USAID in Washington, D.C. I started in June of last year and after six years of career at the World Bank, at the Global Advisor for Indigenous Peoples. And back many years ago, I was the First Minister for Indigenous Peoples Affairs in [inaudible 00:07:21] Ecuadorian in my home country of Ecuador. I've been very happy at USAID so far and a lot of support, a lot of great people.

Luis-Felipe Duchicela:

And above all, I found that my predecessor Brian Keane as well as Vy and other colleagues at the agency had already been working on this policy for a number of years. And I found the policy to be an excellent tool, having been at the World Bank for a number of years, I was quite acquainted with high standards in social safeguarding for indigenous peoples globally.

Luis-Felipe Duchicela:

And I can say that this policy, it's a very, very, very high standards and I hope that you concur with me that after we present the main aspects of the policy. So, the first thing that I would like to say about the policy, I'd like to actually ... if we go to the next slides here. I'd like just to quote what former administrator Mark Green said, "Working with indigenous peoples is a practical and a moral imperative in promoting peaceful, inclusive and democratic societies in the countries in which we work. We have much to learn from them."

Luis-Felipe Duchicela:

I really agree with Ambassador Green had to say about PRO-IP. So the main overall goal of a policy is to ensure that USAID has measurable or achieves measurable and sustainable impact in regard to indigenous peoples through the following strategies. One is to engage indigenous peoples as meaningful partners in development processes, safeguard against harm and enhance their ability to promote their rights, determine their own priorities and advance their self-reliance.

Luis-Felipe Duchicela:

So, USAID's PRO-IP takes up what I would consider a very innovative and comprehensive approach to inclusion of indigenous peoples into its planning to enhance positive impact on their lives and wellbeing and this is characterizes or is achieved through these four objects that you're seeing right now, which are interconnected and support each other. The first one is to strengthen the engagement with indigenous peoples to safeguard underlying priority.

Luis-Felipe Duchicela:

The second one is to integrate priorities and implement cross-sectoral approaches to programming. Instead of a very narrowly-focused sectoral approaches about the policy guides us to integrate priorities and carry out more cross-sectoral strategies. The third objective is to empower and build the capacity of indigenous peoples organizations and I consider this one perhaps one of the most important ones and typically ones to achieve actually.

Luis-Felipe Duchicela:

And finally the fourth objective is to foster an enabling environment to exercise their rights. This mainly has to do with the relationship of indigenous peoples with their national governments, with civil society at large, with the NGOs, the private sector, etc. So, as you can see these four objectives are totally interconnected. And as I said, I think USAID with these four objectives have taken a very powerful innovative comprehensive approach for the inclusion of indigenous peoples and for promoting their rights.

Luis-Felipe Duchicela:

We're going to go now to their operating principles. So the policy has five operating principles, again, I consider this excellent because the policy gives you a very pragmatic approach of how to implement the policy and connect to your program cycle. So as you can see there in this diagram that the five operating principles are to identify indigenous peoples, analyze opportunities and challenges, engage in consultations, safeguard against harm and build partnership for development programs.

Luis-Felipe Duchicela:

We're going to go quickly into each one of them. So the first one is to identify indigenous peoples and this could be something that is easy to do in some countries and difficult to do in other countries and

very, very difficult to do yet in other countries. So USAID has adopted these criteria that I'm showing here, which the majority of them are consistent with the UN Declaration of Rights of Indigenous Peoples on what multilaterals have in terms of identifying indigenous peoples.

Luis-Felipe Duchicela:

And they'll be helpful in your respective countries in carrying out these operating principle. But this is a very important first step. The second operating principle is to carry out comprehensive analysis of the indigenous peoples situations. And for that, we have in the policy a toolkit for inclusive development analysis. So, it's very important to carry out the proper assessment as deep as you think it's necessary in your respective country in order to really understand the situation of indigenous peoples, the challenges and the opportunities.

Luis-Felipe Duchicela:

The third operating principle is to engage with indigenous peoples, but in order to engage with indigenous peoples, there needs to be a mechanism by which you ensure an open democratic full and effective participation of indigenous peoples. And not just kind of a superficial or two distance, let's say engagement process. I think the policy is very clear that it wants us to fully engage with indigenous people.

Luis-Felipe Duchicela:

And for that, there's at least one toolkit in the policy which is a consultation handbook with the essential elements of consultation. But this is only like a bare minimum tool that you can use in order to fully engage with indigenous peoples.

Luis-Felipe Duchicela:

The fourth principle is to safeguard indigenous peoples rights and wellbeing. I would like to stress the fact that in many of the multilateral policies, safeguarding is actually I would say 90% to 95% of the purpose of the policy is safeguarding.

Luis-Felipe Duchicela:

I'm very happy to see that the USAID policy includes strong safeguard or guidelines. However, it's not the only thing that the policy asks us to do. So safeguarding is part of a broader comprehensive approach and I feel that's the best way to approach inclusion of indigenous peoples. However, we do have the safeguard's principle here that you can see. And we can talk a little bit more about it in a little while, but we have it as principle number four.

Luis-Felipe Duchicela:

And finally, the fifth principle is to build partnerships with indigenous people. So if you can see the logic behind the principles, this is actually the final purpose let's say of the operating principles, is to build partnership with indigenous peoples that haven't gone through the four prior principles. And for this, of course, we have a fourth set of tools which is the co-creation, I'm sure many of you are familiar with USAID co-creation processes.

Luis-Felipe Duchicela:

Well, this is the perfect place to use co-creation principles and methodologies to ensure that we build a open, very participatory partnerships with the indigenous peoples. So, in summary, for the implementation of the five operating principles, we have four tools, which are the inclusive development analysis, the consultation handbook, the social impact assessment and the co-creation.

Luis-Felipe Duchicela:

So Vy would you please come in here and explain about the policy mandate and also, the next one is to talk about the resources on the website. Go ahead Vy.

Vy Lam:

(silence) okay. Great. Thank you Luis-Felipe. So, in the policy we only have one mandate for USAID operating unit. That is for activities and projects that each one should have a documented analysis of impact on how the activity or project will affect indigenous peoples as stakeholders. So if the mission, after going through the identification step from the policy determines that indigenous peoples are a part of the stakeholder, then all programs and activities should have a documented analysis of impact.

Vy Lam:

And this analysis of impact can be obtained or recorded via any consultation step that is done by the mission with the community and also through any of the tools for assessment and analysis. And if through that process, the mission determines that there will be adverse impact on the community then mission should consult with the community to develop mitigation measures.

Vy Lam:

Now, in consultation with our LO, the Legal Officer, that there are significant adverse impacts. And that the mission determines that the prior informed consent is necessary, then the mission should document the process and the result of the free, prior informed consent for those activities or programs for ... those activities are implemented. Over. And here is a website that we have put up for USAID on the portfolio on indigenous peoples and the website is really easy to access, basically it's [usaid.gov/indigenous-peoples](https://www.usaid.gov/indigenous-peoples) and we have it on the chat screen right now.

Vy Lam:

And that website is now open to everyone, you can share that with our partners or our indigenous peoples colleagues and communities. The website, what you see on the screen right now, is the opening screen, the home page of the website, and then on the left will be a list of menu options which is further highlighted on the right of the screen, it starts with a webpage on the policy itself. And soon we will have translated versions of the policy, we are starting with French and Spanish translations and then we'll add additional translations later on.

Vy Lam:

The website will also have a webpage on implementing implementation toolkit. And this is where we have the optional social impact assessment toolkit, which includes three of the four tools that Luis-Felipe was speaking about earlier, specifically the inclusive development analysis, the consultation handbook and a example of the social impact assessment itself.

Vy Lam:

Next, we have an indigenous peoples blog and this is where we would encourage mission colleagues, implementing partners to submit blog post on how USAID is working with indigenous peoples. And then we also have regional and country profiles, this is reserved for our mission and regional bureau colleagues. If they choose to feature specific programs or approaches and highlight their success and lessons learned.

Vy Lam:

We have a brief roadmap for engagement which steps through USAID's program cycle and highlight interventions point where the different operating principles can come in to help guide USAID in implementing the policy. And we also have a webpage dedicated to sector guidances where we collect lessons and we learn best practices from colleagues who have worked in specific sectors. For example education, agriculture and food security [crosstalk 00:23:19].

Luis-Felipe Duchicela:

Hey, well, thank you very much Vy. But I must say that this really unique in the sense that this USAID policy for indigenous peoples is being launched at the the same time toolkit are already prepared and ready to use. And also Vy was describing sectoral guidelines that we're still working on and the regional profiles that we're still working on.

Luis-Felipe Duchicela:

One word of comment ... one word about these tools is that please consider them as living documents. They are just to get us started. This is a process by which the entire agency needs to participate and provide feedback, good practices, lessons learned and case studies as we move ahead. But this will get us started and then we will be able to enrich these toolkits and guidelines as we move forward.

Luis-Felipe Duchicela:

So, now, I'm very, very happy to give the floor to my colleagues, Amy Koler and Aj'bee Jimenez who were in Guatemala at the beginning of March and were so happy to see for ourselves what they're doing over there. And is quite excited to see everything that the mission has done. So, I'm going to ask Amy and Aj'bee to please introduce yourselves first and then take it away with your presentation. Thank you.

Amy Koler:

Thank you Felipe, I'm Amy Koler and I'm a Program Office Director in USAID Guatemala, I previously served in Iraq, Afghanistan and Pakistan. Aj'bee, do you want to introduce yourself? Oh, okay. Aj'bee and I have been invited to present an overview of USAID Guatemala's Indigenous Engagement Strategy. We completed it in February of 2019. So we have just over a year of implementation experience to share with you.

Amy Koler:

On the screen in front of you, there is a poll, which you're welcome to take moment to fill out. We came up with these to better understand the sectors that are directly-

Aj'bee Jimenez:

Go ahead I'll introduce myself when I start.

Amy Koler:

... engaging with indigenous people. Aj'bee, do you want to quickly introduce yourself before we launch?

Aj'bee Jimenez:

(silence). Sure. Thank you Luis-Felipe and team for inviting us to be part of this presentation. My name is Aj'bee Jimenez.

Aj'bee Jimenez:

So as Amy said there is a high percentage of indigenous peoples in the country and that might not be the case in other countries. But like elsewhere we face different development challenges that have had to do with historical marginalization or structural inequalities that tremendously affect our well-being. On the other hand, that presents an opportunity for us at USAID doing development work because we can honestly and meaningfully engage in different ways with indigenous peoples.

Aj'bee Jimenez:

So back to the mission to the work we've been doing at the mission, we're sharing their link for you to download the indigenous engagement strategy in both versions English and Spanish. And as you can see in the screen, the strategy itself is very brief, and completely within the mission's manage for interest.

Aj'bee Jimenez:

The broad objective is to move indigenous engagement from donor beneficiary to partners in development. The strategy has three main or three specific objectives. First, we would like to create and strengthen indigenous peoples partnerships because we consider that indigenous peoples have their own development priorities, but they also have many contributions to make to Guatemala's development.

Aj'bee Jimenez:

Second, creating indigenous professional opportunities because ... an indication of Guatemala, the highest [inaudible 00:30:43]-

Amy Koler:

The context that USAID Guatemala is that 44% of Guatemala's population is indigenous. And overall they have worse development indicators than the rest of the Guatemalan population. So, for that reason, USAID Guatemala activities have been working with indigenous populations for decades.

Amy Koler:

That was great in terms of our strategy, because activities and staff are very aware of the challenges that are facing indigenous populations in Guatemala. At the same time, the switch from beneficiary to partnering development represents a completely different approach to engaging with indigenous people. And impact nearly all the activities in their mission portfolio. So it represents a very significant change in the way USAID Guatemala does our business.

Aj'bee Jimenez:

So, one other important step that we followed was to carry out a rapid assessment or mapping of indigenous peoples organizations. So, we wanted to understand like how many women's organizations, youth organizations, NGOs, or cooperatives are out there, what type of indigenous institutions are, like the different types of indigenous authorities, structures or meanwhile for example for youth networks and all types of institutions even within the Guatemalan government.

Aj'bee Jimenez:

We also wanted to have an understanding of the types of leaderships or professionals, indigenous professionals that we had like the different academic backgrounds. And we would have liked to get deeper into this analysis, but it was down in our depth, so we couldn't get more deeper into that.

Aj'bee Jimenez:

But the main point was to see what is out there. What types of indigenous organizations are out there, and that is very important mission-wise, because that's a way to also identify possible partners and maybe explore opportunities to enhance impact. And it's also a way to identify a range of indigenous peoples development priorities in trying to understand who are the actors we could talk to once we start planning an activity related to indigenous people.

Amy Koler:

So mapping was a really important first step we took. I'm going to speak broadly about three components that we see as having been key to the success we have had so far. The first is [Aj'bee 00:34:03], having an Aj'bee or an indigenous advisor within the mission has been absolutely essential for us.

Amy Koler:

The indigenous advisor is able to sort of keep all of these issues, work on indigenous issues day-in and day-out, and advice mission staff and activities on interactions with indigenous people. It's been absolutely key to maintaining everyone's awareness on indigenous issues and pushing for the implementation work strategy. We absolutely would not be where we are with the strategy and implementation with the Aj'bee.

Amy Koler:

Our second key to success was establishing a working group with LI throughout the mission. When we got our working group which we call The Dream Team up and running, it has really helped ensure that out implementation is happening in a much more consistent manner because a broader group of people are working on the objectives with implementation regularly and it's really taken off in terms of our ability to implement consistently throughout the year.

Amy Koler:

Key for our working group, key for the members of The Dream Team were including an NDC goal for the SSN members. Including an NDC goal related to strategy implementation which made it formal, and their work could then be like in their annual review.

Amy Koler:

Finally, our third key to success is point off the support. Change is difficult in any organization, and having the front office backing your approaches has been very important to our ability to continue to move forward with implementation. Okay.

Aj'bee Jimenez:

Yes. So, another strategy that we followed was to seek the ambassador's support and USAID coordination on this topic. In our case or in the case of Guatemala, just as we began strategy implementation, the ambassador proposed an initiative to support the Guatemalan government to strengthen engagement with indigenous authorities.

Aj'bee Jimenez:

And that in itself became very important for USAID and USG colleagues. And that initiative was called The Route to Prosperity, or [foreign language 00:37:03]. As I said it's an inter-agency collaboration, has been key in supporting the Guatemalan government to develop a strategy to engage with Indigenous authorities. Currently we're supporting the government to engage with 24 indigenous authorities in the Western Highlands.

Aj'bee Jimenez:

And the goal of the [Ruta 00:37:28] is to foster a dialogue between the government of Guatemala and the indigenous peoples' communities. So to increase service delivery and address the environment priorities. Just because of the COVID-19, the latest we have heard for example is that there is a ... their focus, the indigenous people's priorities are on health and economic development issues.

Amy Koler:

So that's it for a very brief overview of our work on implementation of our strategy. I'll turn it back over to Felipe and absolutely welcome any questions anyone might have.

Luis-Felipe Duchicela:

All right. Well, thank you so much Amy and Aj'bee. Again I must say that from having seen first hand in early March the work that has been done in Guatemala, we're really happy and proud to see one of our missions taking these steps which they say are not free of challenges and difficulties in implementing, but they're continuing with good steps and plans forward.

Luis-Felipe Duchicela:

So this is all we have in terms of the presentation. So, right now we will move on to the Q&A part. So we'll transition into the QA portion of today's session. So in a moment you'll see your screen shift, and any questions that had been submitted throughout the session will appear on the screen. You are invited to continue to type any other questions you may have into this box. So, I will serve as a moderator for the questions and direct them to one of their presenters.

Luis-Felipe Duchicela:

So, well, let's get started with the questions. Okay, the first question is why are we using the term indigenous peoples which is term applicable to the Western hemisphere? Excellent question, thank you so much.

Luis-Felipe Duchicela:

So the reason we're using the term indigenous peoples is because after about 40 years of the 5,000 plus nations that we now use the terminology indigenous peoples, they managed to get the United Nations to recognize them as distinct groups in the world. And this was done through the Declaration of Rights of indigenous peoples for September 2007. Before that there has been other international legal bodies such as ILO-convention 169 and others.

Luis-Felipe Duchicela:

But really the definitive one has been the UN Declaration of Rights of Indigenous Peoples. More recently there has been the OAS, the American Declaration of Rights of indigenous people. But the rationale behind the use of the term indigenous, is that each one of these nations has its own name, they self-identify with its own historical traditional name.

Luis-Felipe Duchicela:

So they came to an agreement through much debate at United Nations for many, many years. And they agreed to use the term indigenous peoples. There's a full recognition globally now of the term, so I know it's controversial in some countries particularly in Africa and some Asian countries, because they're using the word, indigenous in a literal sense. They're just taking the word, indigenous from the dictionary, and they're seeing what it means in the dictionary and that's where it causes the problem.

Luis-Felipe Duchicela:

But we have to use the term indigenous peoples together, because it has a meaning according to the Declaration of Rights of Indigenous Peoples. Indigenous peoples therefore cannot be defined, there is not a definition, there is not a universal definition. The only thing we can do is to identify indigenous peoples in a given country using the criteria that the USAID policy has which is consistent with the UN declaration of rights of indigenous people.

Luis-Felipe Duchicela:

So we're not using a term that is only applicable in the Western hemisphere. Indigenous People is a term applicable universally. There are indigenous peoples representative organizations in all parts of the world, everywhere. All continents, Asia included and many, many countries. So we need to a little bit dig into that and we'll be happy to be at resource for you in order to know more about this. But it's an excellent question, thank you very much.

Luis-Felipe Duchicela:

The second question is, "How will a mission know if they have to conduct the impact analysis? Does USAID have a country by country database of indigenous people's populations that each mission should be taken into account in all of its activities?"

Luis-Felipe Duchicela:

To my knowledge, we do not have a database of indigenous populations for each mission. And the mission will know if they have to conduct the impact analysis. My recommendation is that if you follow the operating principles in the policy, and if you carry out the engagement part with indigenous peoples early on, meeting with the indigenous peoples' representative organizations.

Luis-Felipe Duchicela:

Depending on the project that you're trying to design, you're about to design, I think that you will have to decide on the level of analysis that you have to carry out. However, the impact analysis, meaning the analysis that will determine whether there could be harm to the indigenous peoples, or any sort of violation of their right, needs to be carried out, as we said, it's a policy mandate.

Luis-Felipe Duchicela:

The next question please. Okay, right. Question number three is, "How do the five operating principles map onto the four objectives?" Excellent question. All right, so, I can let Aj'bee help me answer this one, but in my view, you can see the four objectives as there are the terms that ... those are what you're intending to achieve in the longer term, right? The four objectives. You have to ensure that you achieve the four objectives in the longer term.

Luis-Felipe Duchicela:

The operating principles allow you to walk towards the achievements of those objectives. So I cannot say that there is a particular strict mapping or a strict relationship of each operating principle to each objective. Even though in some cases we use the same terminology. For instance we have a engagement objective and we have also a engagement operating principle.

Luis-Felipe Duchicela:

But the idea is that the operating principles gives us a cycle of how to approach the inclusion of indigenous peoples in a wholistic way. And by doing so, then we will achieve the four objectives in the policy. Keep in mind that by implementing the four operating principles, once you get full participation of the indigenous peoples, that will provide a lot more information for you. It will provide a lot more substance and context for you in the process of project design. And that will then guide your efforts towards the achieving of the four objectives.

Luis-Felipe Duchicela:

In other words let me give you an example. For instance, the second objective points to cross-sectoral approach, right? Cross-sectoral approach. Meaning that the idea is to try to design projects that include health, economic growth, education, agriculture, etc, in a wholistic way rather than just narrow sectoral projects for indigenous peoples. However, the question that you may have in mind is, "Okay, to what degree should we prioritize in this cross-sectoral approach health or economic growth or education or land issues?" So that's going to be given through the participatory approach that you're going to do through the operating principles.

Luis-Felipe Duchicela:

So by engaging the indigenous peoples organizations, you will get the information in order to properly design and achieve a good balance in your programming. So it's not going to be done from a desk, but rather by interacting with indigenous peoples themselves.

Luis-Felipe Duchicela:

Okay, move on to the next question here. So here is the question for Guatemala mission. How does the goal and sub-goals on the slide fit into their mission's overall CDCS, is the goal the mission's only DO or just one of several Dos? So Amy, you get a start in this one please.

Amy Koler:

Sure. So just to clarify, our indigenous engagement strategy is separate the seed into USAID Guatemala CDCS. We finished our strategy last year in February or our indigenous engagements last year in February. We finished our CDCS this year in March, and so the strategy was complete by the time we started our CDCS process.

Amy Koler:

The indigenous engagement little results framework we have doesn't map over directly into our CDCS goal, but rather the overall concept of having indigenous people and communities as partners did. Through the process, one of the key journey in self-reliance indicators we used related to the occupation, and so that was a key part of our strategy overall.

Amy Koler:

What we ended up with was having a strategy based on three underserved population groups, one was indigenous people, another was women and then a third was youth. And so it didn't translate directly, but it very much sort of reflected in the thinking and the final product of our CDCS.

Luis-Felipe Duchicela:

Okay, thank you Amy. So there are some other related questions here. I'm going to read them all so that you can ... I think you started already answering some of them, but it says, "Can you describe your work with the technical teams from integrating the indigenous peoples engagement strategy into their programming?" So that's one.

Luis-Felipe Duchicela:

The other one for you is, "How is indigenous people strategy in Guatemala being operationalized from a management perspective?" What has been the buy-in from technical teams? Given the linkages between different areas of development, success in access to health and education for example improves with improved economic opportunity and ability to exercise democratic rights. A unified approach to achieving these things will have a greater impact. But working on these issues through different programs sometimes atomizes efforts. It will be interesting to hear how USAID Guatemala is trying to address these sorts of issues." Amy?

Amy Koler:

Okay, so let me start with work with technical teams I think. I'm going to start and then Aj'bee I'll turn it over to you for your thoughts on work with technical teams as well. One, I think that when on-office support is very important, there's certainly a very clear development imperative in Guatemala that the development outcomes of indigenous people need to improve for Guatemala to continue on its journey to self-reliance. And we see our indigenous engagement strategy is making our work with indigenous communities more efficient and effective.

Amy Koler:

So, broadly having constant support in that has been key to sort of initiating some of these conversations, and having dream team members, working group members from across the mission. So, they have been integral [inaudible 00:52:43] of raising issues and being allies sort of on a office-to-office level in terms of integration, and again having Aj'bee are able to go talk to different AORs, CORs on

activity-to-activity, how to get this done has been incredibly valuable. So, those are some very initial thoughts and I'm going to turn it over to Aj'bee for his insights as well.

Luis-Felipe Duchicela:

But very short answer because we are running against time, deadline time.

Aj'bee Jimenez:

Sure. I think at the beginning of my presentation, I felt saying that most of the development challenges that the country faces is mainly from the indigenous peoples, and I think because of the nature and percentage of indigenous peoples population we cannot avoid working or taking into account indigenous peoples priorities.

Aj'bee Jimenez:

Fortunately, we do have not only different office support, but I think it's also very important to have technical office support as well. And I think one advantage we had at least for the last CDCS, we had a geographic focus that is occupied by the majority of indigenous people [inaudible 00:54:35] play this even as high as 98% of indigenous peoples population. So that has been key for success.

Luis-Felipe Duchicela:

Thank you so much Amy and Aj'bee. And we are running out of time, and I want to thank you very much all the questions, all are very insightful questions. I have to say also just one comment. For those missions in countries that have very small indigenous peoples populations, where it might be in a very critical situation. Cases of Botswana, cases like Paraguay and others, their policy provides for a framework in order to work in a very powerful way with those indigenous peoples.

Luis-Felipe Duchicela:

So, this is policies not only for countries that have large indigenous peoples population, but it's for all missions that feel that need the guidance for inclusion of indigenous peoples into their programs.

Luis-Felipe Duchicela:

So with that, I would like to again thank our presenters Amy and Aj'bee in Guatemala and Vy Lam, here in Washington DC. We will have other webinars. We're organizing webinars more directed to specific regional bureaus and technical bureaus. And also, if you have particular issues or questions or topics, please feel free to reach out to us. And we will be happy to organize video conferences to address some of your concerns. You can see on the screens our names and email addresses, and also through the website, you can participate.

Luis-Felipe Duchicela:

Also, in your reaching out to us with particular issues, I would be particularly interested to see what programs you already have for indigenous peoples in your country or that population to be benefited is largely or symmetrically indigenous peoples. So we can made available to help out.

Luis-Felipe Duchicela:

So, with that, I would also like to thank our production team which has been helping us throughout the process understand the technology behind this. And I turn it over to them then to close the session. Thank you again.