

Cheyenne:

Okay.

Luis Felipe Duchicela:

Thank you very much and welcome everyone. Very happy to be here. Cheyenne says, this is our last webinar of a series of three webinars that we've been having since March. But be sure we'll talk about this, be sure that this will not be the last webinars series that we're planning, there'll be more coming your way. This webinar series is called, Exploring Partnerships and Opportunities between USAID and Indigenous Peoples. Next please.

The webinars series started in March of this year, March 23rd, with the first webinar on, How does USAID operate? I think many of you probably attended that webinar focusing on the policies, procedures, and operational programs of USAID. In April we had a second webinar which showcased seven projects funded by USAID from around the world that focus on indigenous peoples.

And this webinar today May 18th is, titled Partnership Opportunities for Indigenous Peoples and USAID implementing partners. Next please. In this webinar, we'll be covering the following areas through four panel discussions. In the first panel, we will have two colleagues from USAID telling us about how indigenous peoples organization can actually participate in USAID initiatives. These are two of the main programs that USAID is implementing right now that can definitely help indigenous peoples to participate in USAID programming.

The second panel is going to focus on which are those capabilities and competencies that the indigenous peoples shouldn't have in order to become effective USAID implementing partners.

The third panel will focus on how to build effective alliances, how to build effective coalitions and partnerships between indigenous peoples and NGOs, and USAID contractors, and international NGOs, et cetera, in order to participate more effectively with USAID.

And finally, the fourth panel it's experiences from two colleagues who have recently gone through a process of building an alliance for funding with USAID. And they'll tell us their stories and they'll tell us their advice on how to do that. So we're calling that, What are the steps to build an alliance for USAID?

Before moving on, I would like to recognize the fact that USAID has now the USAID policy on promoting the rights of indigenous peoples, a PRO-IP policy. That's the reason we're doing this webinar series. It was approved in March, 2020. It's a policy that began four years before that with my predecessor, Brian Keane, and greatly supported by many colleagues at USAID including my colleague Ravi Lam who is present here, who is an advisor for indigenous peoples, Lauren Baker, Lorian Miles, and other colleagues that supported this process of having the first policy on promoting the rights of indigenous peoples of USAID. And that's the whole reason we're doing this webinars series.

So thank you to them, and welcome everyone. Welcome the entire audience from Africa, Asia, Latin America, and everywhere. It's really great to have you here. So I hope you enjoyed this webinar presentation. Next please. So let's begin with our first panel. So how can indigenous peoples participate in USAID initiatives? So for this, we have two colleagues with a lot of experience and a lot of passion for their jobs and what they do here at USAID especially focusing on indigenous peoples, Arjun Tasker, who is a lead of New Partnerships Initiative at USAID, based in Washington D.C. and Joyce Friedenber, who is a lead for the Locally Led Development Initiative of USAID also based here in Washington, D.C. So Arjun please go ahead.

Arjun Tasker:

Thank you so much Luis Felipe for inviting us. Like Luis was saying, my name is Arjun Tasker, and I am the New Partnerships Initiative lead in the Local Faith and Transformative Partnerships Hub at USAID, which is where both Joyce and I sit. And that hub focuses on supporting USAID missions to partner with a variety of non-traditional partners, might be cooperatives, new partners, local foundations, faith-based organizations, diaspora.

And like many of the hub's efforts, my team has both an internal and an external area of focus. Externally we look to engage with all types of actors to help them understand how they can access the agency. To help us understand how we can lower barriers to entry. Internally we provide missions, USAID missions, with technical assistance and tools and resources to help them find different ways of developing partnerships, engaging local actors and supporting them to build relationships that embody USAID's values.

So rather than issue opportunities for funding ourselves in D.C., we try to make sure that mission opportunities emphasize locally led development or marketed beyond the grants.gov and are targeted to make sure they are inclusive of local voices and our opportunities that indigenous people can take advantage of in the context where that makes sense. This is really important right now as the agency looks to emphasize inclusion and equity in our partnerships and our programs. We're looking explicitly at how we do, and don't empower actors across the chain of our funding. This challenge is particularly relevant for indigenous people. They are among those whose voice is often least heard, whose priorities might be ignored or missed possibly for the simple reason that we failed to ask.

I noted a question in the chat about processes that USAID might have to mitigate certain risks associated with partnering with actors who may or may not be sort of anti indigenous people. And we don't have great processes for that because unless we are communicating effectively with indigenous people. I think that the policy Luis Felipe was mentioning is an excellent expression of how we ought to behave. Now for NPI and particularly because Joyce is going to speak a little bit about partnering directly with different types of local actors, I want to emphasize one of the things that NPI looks at, which is how we engage any kind of prime partner and think about the subawards they're making, the sub-partner relationships.

In general, USAID is not great at having visibility on what is happening to our sub-partners and what subawards are doing and how, whether or not the accountability systems we build in at the top are carrying through all the way to the ground. So NPI looks at how we can build some of that and some of what the indigenous peoples policy talks about into our solicitations and awards.

We want to speak directly to our prime partners, in particular, most traditional partners to ask more. Given our internal constraints around how effectively and how frequently we can partner directly, it's very important that applicants who will be engaging with local actors, because we can't include things like accountability and feedback plans in their applications. We as USAID need to ask our prime partners and we'll be asking our prime partners, how activities will elevate local voices, how it will tap into local networks, how feedback practice might be embedded throughout the life of an activity, how prime partners can distribute decision-making power closer to the ground and to the ultimate constituents.

I think you'll hear in some of the later panels, different ways that indigenous organizations can set themselves up to be effective partners to international primes. And I acknowledged that's not always ideal. And there are situations where that relationship can be fraught. And I think these panels do a good job about explaining how to do that effectively, how to build effective alliances. But I want to say that USAID has to play its part in helping the enabling environment for effective alliances. And we are, especially at moment, with an accelerating conversation around decolonizing aid and around reimagining international development in non Western terms, or what humanitarian assistance might

look like. Engagement with indigenous people is essential, especially to ensure we're not repeating earlier mistakes. And so USAID will be building and NPI is testing out different ways to build in language that tries to ensure we're doing that in our work. But let me turn it over to Joyce who can maybe speak to more specific opportunities that her team works on. Joyce?

Joyce Friedenber:

Thanks, Arjun. And thanks Luis Felipe and Dee for the invitation to be here and to share with you about the programs that Arjun introduced that I specifically work on. I have been asked to provide overview of the Local Works program, and I'm lucky to have some participants here who work in front of it. And also to describe how indigenous peoples organizations can participate. So the first thing you should know is that Local Works was created by the US Congress to provide funding to organizations that traditionally have trouble competing with the big development partners. So to be eligible for any Local Works funding, an organization must have received less than \$5 million from USAID over the previous five years. So that sort of sets aside a pot of funding specifically for partners that are relatively new to aid to be, let's say, the awards are also what we at USAID would consider small, understanding that it's not necessarily small to everyone. The, the awards are capped at \$2 million each.

The second thing that you should know is that Local Works is separated into two distinct parts. The first part is the traditional local works program where USAID missions compete among each other for funding and technical assistance, specifically to work with a diverse range of new and non-traditional partners. We have a number of missions, all of the let's say, I won't even go into it. We have about 32 missions participating in Local Works, and the application period is open right now for new missions to apply. You can find information about it on our website, on which 32 missions are currently participating. And right now, missions are sending in letters of interest to let us know that they want to become part of this Local Works community.

We provide the missions and the country offices with sort of a low pressure opportunity to use new tools and try new development approaches that are a little bit more flexible, they're more locally responsive, and they're focusing on sustainability of the development results and of the organizations. We help the missions deepen relationships with local actors, and then we share lessons learned to benefit the whole agency. If you all work in a country that's not already participating in Local Works, in those 32 countries, you can certainly contact your mission in the country where you're working and encourage them to apply and to focus on indigenous people's issues.

So the second part of the program, Local Works, is what we call unsolicited solutions for locally led development, and recognizing that sustainable and locally driven ideas come from organizations of all types and sizes around the world. The program was created to ensure that these ideas have an opportunity to be supported. So we set aside a portion of the Local Work's annual budget to provide USAID missions with the funding needed to support grants from unsolicited applications that advanced locally led development.

And like I said, we have some folks here in the call today who are in the process of working with missions on awards that will come out of this unsolicited solutions for locally led development. Our office accepts the applications from partners like yourselves in a short concept format through a form that you can find on our website and those that meet our criteria are forwarded on to the mission for their review and their decisions. So we're not actually making the decision, we're just checking to see if the concept meets our minimum criteria. And the mission in country, it's the decision maker.

In order to spread the resources equitably across the globe, once a mission selects an unsolicited application to fund, the mission has to wait until the following year to support another

unsolicited application. And that way we don't have all the money going to one particular mission that may have made the opportunity public.

Let's see, what else can I tell you? In terms of which concepts we forward to missions for consideration, all of the eligibility criteria and the details about what we consider are on our website. I'll just highlight that we want to focus on concepts that show that beneficiary communities are involved in identifying the challenge and designing a solution. We want to look at ones that show local leaders are empowered to own and implement the activities. We look for ones that are innovative and go beyond or improve upon the traditional development practices.

We're looking for efforts to produce results that are more sustainable over the longterm compared to existing practices. And we look for ones that present a strategy for how the organization will monitor its activities and respond to potential challenges and adjust if necessary. So understanding that this all sounds very overwhelming, the program is really about those aspects of development where you all indigenous people's organizations have a comparative advantage. So I urge you to check out the website. If you just search for USAID and Local Works or USAID and unsolicited solutions for locally led development, you can find all of the details.

And I think right now for the unsolicited piece of it, out of the 11 missions that we're currently supporting, I believe two of them are focusing on indigenous people's organizations. And Luis Felipe is very familiar with all of that information as well and those two missions that are supporting indigenous peoples organizations. So he's also a resource. I believe Luis Felipe has all of my contact information and all of those details on the websites and can share that with the conference material. So with that, I will turn it back over to you, Luis Felipe. And thank you.

Luis Felipe Duchicela:

Thank you very much, Joyce. Both of you, Arjun and Joyce, I think you've really set the overall framework for our discussion today. And yes, absolutely, we're very happy that as we speak, two initiatives of indigenous peoples and local partners or partners, have gone through a process of co-creation and are very close to being awarded one of the Local Works grant, they'll be speaking today actually. So we'll be learning a lot from them as well.

Just a reminder for the participants, please, your questions, there's a Q&A or a chat in Zoom where you can post your questions. My colleague, Rita Spadafora from IPARD will be moderating later on the Q&A. Also, if you happen to put it in the chat, we'll capture it there too, in the chat box, in the normal chat box, but it's preferable if you put it in the Q&A.

We'll go on to the second panel discussion right now. So we're going to be exploring, what are those key capabilities and competencies that indigenous peoples organizations should have in order to become effective USAID implementing partners? So to shed light on this, we have invited three colleagues of excellent experience and hands-on work on the ground.

First is Greg Jacobs, who is a Senior Director for Latin America and the Caribbean Regional Business Unit of Chemonics International, base here in Washington, D.C. We also have Limbani Phiri, who's a Senior Capacity Development Advisor, of the program, Advancing Rights in Southern Africa, ARISA, from Johannesburg, South Africa, and also Ramiro Batzin, who is Executive Director of, Sortz'il Organization, which is a indigenous organization, based in Chimaltenango, Guatemala. So very happy to have them here. We'll start first with Greg.

Cheyenne:

Luis Felipe, I'm so sorry. This is Cheyenne. I'm going to interrupt just for a second. For our interpretation, Ross, please connect your language booth back to Spanish. You're coming on in English booth right now. I think now it's, we're good to go. Thank you very much. Sorry about that.

Luis Felipe Duchicela:

No problem. Sure. Okay. So let's start with Greg Jacobs. So in a very brief way, if you were to highlight two or three key capabilities for indigenous peoples organizations, which would they be? Greg?

Greg Jacobs:

Great. Well, first of all, I would like to thank Luis Felipe, USAID, and the organizers and the participants for such a great series of webinars. It's really exciting to see and hear from so many different voices from all over the world. I think the most important thing to highlight is that when pursuing any opportunity with USAID as an implementing partner, we're always viewing it from a competitive point of view, since almost all of USAID funding is competed amongst different organizations.

There's a lot of excellent local and international organizations that work as partners with USAID, and to be successful in winning any award with USAID, you need to put together the best technical approach and also have the best set of partners possible. Here is where many IPO's have a lot to contribute and there's lots of opportunities. USAID's vision is one of inclusive development, and it recognizes that indigenous people have unique experiences and backgrounds.

IPO's often bring new thinking and approaches and understand the needs of their communities and can find creative ways to meet USAID's objectives. Thus, in order to be effective partners on USAID's contracts and grants, there are three main competencies to highlight.

The first is relevant technical capacity in order to achieve the results that USAID is looking for. You can analyze this through elements, such as who and how many people are working for the organization, what projects have they implemented and what were the results, and what is their local reputation. We need partners that are culturally sensitive with diverse ideas, but also that are very focused on achieving results.

The second is financial and administrative capacity. USAID funds come from taxpayers in the US, and appropriately, there's a very high level of scrutiny for any development partner receiving funds. You need to be able to show you have systems and processes in place to account for every dollar, sol, rand that you spend of USAID money.

Finally, and this is an area where many organizations struggle, is MEL, monitoring, evaluation and learning. The first two are very important to be able to demonstrate impact. So the third one, learning as a mindset is critically important for adapting and improving in real time when you're implementing tough development projects. Thank you.

Luis Felipe Duchicela:

Thank you very much, Greg. Let's move on quickly to lean Limbani Phiri from South Africa. So Limbani, in the ARISA project, advancing rights in Southern Africa, what has the ARISA project done in order to support indigenous peoples organizations to build their capacities, please help us by describing these tools and approaches very briefly, and welcome again, Limbani. Go ahead.

Limbani Phiri:

Thanks Luis Felipe. ARISA is working with three indigenous peoples organizations, among the cohort of organizations that we're working with. And two of them are grassroots, rural community based

organizations with very low capacity levels. So the first type of engagement was to understand the capacity gaps, the challenges and existing strengths of the organizations. And we use part two main capacity assessment tools, and these are the integrated technical organizational capacity assessment, the ITOCA, and also the organizational performance index, the OPI.

So the ITOCA was specifically used because of its unique methodology and participatory approach, which emphasizes on the process more than the outcome itself. So the methodology allows the organizations to visualize the ideal and efficient way of operating and then reflect on the current situation to understand and identify the existing capacity strengths, the gaps as well as the challenges. So one of the ITOCA flags out the capacity strengths and challenges and helps identify areas of priority for capacity support, the OPI sets the organization's performance baseline, and it helps us now track the capacity improvement over the years of engagement.

So, although various challenges were identified across the 10 capacity areas that we are assessing in the project, the process reviewed a common trend of critical capacity gaps for IPOs, especially in governance and leadership, finance management, resource mobilization, and M&E, with varying levels of challenges for different organizations. Based on these identified gaps and challenges, we assisted the organizations to develop individual institutional strengthening plans, which are capacity development action plans, outlining the actual capacity development activities to be conducted and the level of support that ARISA would be required to provide, to address the gaps and also help the organizations improve their capacity and performance, against the set baseline.

So the capacity support that ARISA is providing is guided by these respective, ISPs, or capacity development action plans. The initial phase of engagement or ARISA capacity support, strategically now focuses on strengthening the core capacity areas identified above, and the reason is to ensure that the organizations have proper institutional frameworks, and they have the structure that is now allows them to engage in the actual technical work.

So once the basic institutional framework is in place, we will integrate the technical capacity areas into the process. And these are like advocacy and community engagement. And this is now to develop the organization's competence in creating the actual impact in the field. Thanks Luis Felipe.

Luis Felipe Duchicela:

Limbani, thank you so much. This is very useful, and congratulations on that work in Southern Africa with the ARISA project. We'll come back to you a bit later with one more question.

Now we have Ramiro Batzin with us, Ramiro, again, remember he's the Executive Director of the Sortz'il Organization in Guatemala. Sortz'il has had an extraordinary performance as an indigenous led local NGO, implementing now million dollar programs in Latin America. So Ramiro, what concrete advice can you give to indigenous people's organizations to achieve that level of competencies and capability? And also, please tell us a bit about yourself and about Sortz'il. Please go ahead.

Ramiro Batzin:

[crosstalk 00:28:33].

Luis Felipe Duchicela:

Wow. Thank you very much Ramiro. Quite an example, and quite an inspiration for many, many other indigenous peoples organizations from around the world. Thank you. So we're going to have to catch up a little bit with time. So I'm going to ask Greg and Limbani and Ramiro, let's try to be very concise. I

know I've been taking a little bit of time as well. So what are your recommendations, Greg for indigenous peoples? Go ahead.

Greg Jacobs:

Thanks. I think this is a critical question for any organization, and while it's hard to answer in a couple of minutes, I can share that from my experience, it's really important to have an effective understanding of where you are as an organization, and to have a clear plan for what improvements you want to make. And I think this is very similar to the comments of my fellow panelists, Limbani and Ramiro. There are many types of organizational assessment tools, such as USAID's organizational capacity assessment, OCA, and human institutional capacity development, HICD, which can easily be found online and adapted for use. Chemonics has developed and used in Peru, Columbia and Panama, a tool called [foreign language 00:33:48] or [foreign language 00:33:48] in Spanish, which roughly translates as, assessment of the state of an organization. Currently we're working with the national drug agency in Peru that has implemented this tool with over 200 organizations.

In my experience, what is powerful about this tool is that it's a self assessment process that facilitates organizations working together to analyze their strengths and weaknesses and provides objective recommendations for areas of improvements in five core areas, which are business and services, human development, finance, democracy, and participation, and management and administration.

We have found that this tool has been very powerful in helping organizations build a roadmap for institutional strengthening and supporting new voices in groups that use it, especially women and youth. We have worked with indigenous organizations using [foreign language 00:34:43] before, and are currently collaborating with six IPOs in Peru, to make improvements to the tool, to adapt to indigenous realities and belief systems. Specifically, we're adding a sixth evaluation element, which is focused on connection with the land and protection of the environment. This should be ready in July, and we're happy to share experiences and information with groups that would be interested in learning more and exchanging ideas. Thank you.

Luis Felipe Duchicela:

Thank you very much, Greg. So, Limbani, what have been the main problems and challenges that you have faced, and also the opportunities in ARISA? Please go ahead.

Limbani Phiri:

Thank you. I find that most IPOs are deep rooted in the community and they represent more than just organizations within their communities. And this is reflected in the way they elect people into governance and leadership positions. So you find that board members are not necessarily elected based on the knowledge or experience or skills they possess in organization governance, but rather on other attributes like seniority in the community or indigenous knowledge, or representation of a specific group within the community.

As a result, you find that there is generally, low competence or literacy levels, especially in governance and leadership. So the challenge then is to balance the need to have people on the board who are able to absorb new knowledge and effectively engage in the capacity development process at the same time, maintaining the leadership structure that is comfortable and makes sense to the community and the organization itself.

I would say there's not textbook approach for this type of challenge. As a capacity development practitioner, you approach each case differently. And I think the idea is to co-create a solution with the partner. For one organization that we're working with, the approach we used was to revise the constitution to strategically allow election of more board members who now bring the required skills in governance.

Secondly, capacity development for IPOs can not be a quick and once off activity, through maybe one workshop or one training. It is a gradual and intensive process that requires working closely with the organization, and the best results are achieved through learning by doing. Assisting the organization to create a resource mobilization, for example, in a two day workshop is not enough. You need to mentor and coach the organization through the process of engaging potential donors, writing concepts, writing proposals, budgeting, and [inaudible 00:37:23] and all that goes with writing proposals and resource mobilization. And that's how sustainable competence in resource mobilization is developed. There has to be a lot of patients I think, working with IPOs in terms of capacity development.

Looking at great opportunities, I have observed that IPOs have a high level of social cohesion, a strong sense of community and convening power within their communities. And these are very useful attributes for community engagement and advocacy. There's also a huge appetite and eagerness to learn and absorb capacity development than other CSOs that are probably in our cohort as ARISA. And there is this positive agency to transform into high-performing organizations, which makes them receptive to capacity development. And yes, there are general trust issues, especially in the beginning, in the early phase of engagement, but once the trust is cultivated and earned by the capacity development practitioner, the engagement is generally amazing. Thank you.

Luis Felipe Duchicela:

Wonderful. Thank you, Limbani. Ramiro, for your last question for you. As an indigenous leader and professional with all that experience, what personal recommendations can you give to other indigenous peoples organizations? Please go ahead, Ramiro.

Ramiro Batzin:

[crosstalk 00:39:36].

Luis Felipe Duchicela:

Thank you very much Ramiro. And thank you, Greg, and Limbani. We're going to move on to our second panel. So we're going to focus on how to build effective alliances now. For that we have invited three excellent speakers and people with a lot of experience. We have Adele Wildschut from the Indigenous Peoples Africa Coordinating Committee. She's a trust board founder and trustee of IPACC, based in Cape Town, South Africa. We have Levi Sucre, indigenous leader from the Talamanca region, the Bri Bri nation in Costa Rica. He's the coordinator of the Mesoamerican Alliance of Peoples and Forests, AMPB for its acronym in Spanish, and Pia Escobar, who is governance officer of WWF Columbia, and she works with the Amazon Indigenous Rights and Resources Project in Columbia.

We're going to start with Pia first. So Pia, welcome. And based on your experience in Columbia with the AIRR project, implemented by WWF, please tell us about the partnerships that you have made with the indigenous peoples organizations in Columbia such as OPIAC. Over to you Pia.

Pia Escobar:

Thanks, Luis Felipe, and thanks for having me here. So we can say that it's important to align our agendas, the agendas between the NGO, in this case, WWF and the indigenous organizations. And it's important to try to find common interests in order to be able to work in what indigenous organizations really need to be supported. And we have to make sure that WWF or the NGOs, or the supporting organizations have enough technical and political capacities to address it. And for example, we are working together with the OPIAC and other indigenous organizations to support advocacy effort in international events, such as the Climate Change Corp, and with the national institutions, such as the Ministry of Environment, to highlight the contribution of the indigenous territories for fighting climate change.

Also it's important to provide technical support to indigenous organizations, to strengthen their political advocacy and incident action that's based on qualified information. And that we don't think that indigenous organizations have to abandon their political role to [inaudible 00:43:12] the technical role, but they can use the technical guide and the technical support from NGOs to become more influential and to achieve larger impacts in their work

Luis Felipe Duchicela:

Thank you Pia. Excellent advice. So, Adele Wildschut from the board of IPACC, so based on your experience as board member of IPACC, can you highlight a few specific objectives that an indigenous organizations, such as IPACC would like to achieve through a partnership with an NGO seeking funding from USAID? Please go ahead, Adele and welcome. And good afternoon over there in Cape Town.

Adele Wildschut:

Good afternoon and greetings to all participants. Thank you Luis Felipe. Allow me to also welcome the chairperson of IPACC, Dr. Muhammad from Morocco and the director of the secretariat, Dr. Sena from Kenya. Thank you for your support. IPACC is a membership-based continental network of about 114 African indigenous peoples community organizations in six regions. Now we are currently implementing a regionalization strategy to strengthen IPACC support to members at regional level.

Now, the capacity of IPACC members to fundraise and administer grants is uneven across the network. In many cases, the lack of capacity to comply with administrative and financial requirements of major donors, such as USAID, has impacted on the ability to raise funds from these sources.

Recently, IPACC has partnered with a local NGO, Natural Justice in Southern Africa, and with WWF in the great lakes region to access these resources and has partnered to benefit from the administrative and financial management capacity in order to access funding from donors, such as USAID. So the objectives of these partnerships would enable us as IPACC to demonstrate our capacity to implement large projects at regional level, as well as to develop our own administrative and financial management capacity across the continent. Thank you.

Luis Felipe Duchicela:

Thank you very much Adele, and we'll come back to you in a little while. But for now, let me welcome Levi Sucre, who is a director of the Mesoamerican Alliance of Peoples in Forest [foreign language 00:46:11] Levi. And give me a few examples of what makes excellent partnerships, based on your experience in the Mesoamerica Alliance. [foreign language 00:46:26].

Levi Sucre:

[foreign language 00:46:25].

Luis Felipe Duchicela:

Thank you. Thank you very much Levi. So moving on to Pia, again, back to Columbia and OIAC. Based on your experience, what have been the main obstacles for a more effective partnership? Go ahead.

Pia Escobar:

Thanks. We, some challenges in the work with the indigenous organizations. And one of them is that the capacity building processes, for them to be able to manage resources from donors, such as USAID, tend to be longer than expected, and often go beyond the project times. And it requires from us, a longer time to address that difficulty.

And the capacity building has not to be only a set of tools and ideas, but it has to be a holistic approach to build enabling conditions for financial and technical sustainability of indigenous organizations. And is based on previous identification of real needs as we talked earlier. An additional challenge is making those processes really intercultural. And we have to find how to adapt our own policies, processes and tools to making them culturally appropriated for indigenous organizations interest.

One example of our work in the project, is that we had to expand our field team in the Putumayo region, including indigenous members of the team to better support [inaudible 00:53:44] another indigenous organization in the field, for them to implement correctly, a grant signed between them and WWF. And that's considering the amount of money and the complexity of activities under the grant that we are implementing together.

Luis Felipe Duchicela:

Thank you very much Pia. Now back to you, Adele. So can you give two or three specific recommendations for NGOs and USAID implementing partners in the Africa context, to become more effective partners with indigenous peoples. Please go ahead, Adele.

Adele Wildschut:

Thank you, Luis Felipe. I would recommend to NGOs and USAID missions, co-creation as an approach. Co-creation at best can mirror how the partnership would work in practice. IPOs are often wary of forming alliances and partnerships with NGOs, for fear of being overwhelmed and dominated by them. Therefore it's important for partners and allies, first of all, to share, the values and principles that will form the basis of the partnership. The co-creation process should seek to build trust, demonstrate respect, and have open communication. It's important to make sure that there's a clear roadmap for the co-creation exercise, and that there is sufficient time allocated to the process. It might also be necessary to provide mentoring support and accompaniment to enable NPOs to participate effectively. Thank you.

Luis Felipe Duchicela:

Thank you very much, Adele. So finally, in this panel for Levi Sucre, what advice can you give to other indigenous peoples organizations to better prepare, to become more effective partners for USAID? [foreign language 00:56:29]

Levi Sucre:

[foreign language 00:56:29].

Luis Felipe Duchicela:

Thank you very much, Levi. And thank you, Adele and Pia for your excellent recommendations. Now we move on to the fourth panel. And in the fourth panel, we're going to be talking more concretely based on the experiences from two colleagues that have recently gone through a process of co-creation for USAID projects. Josh Lichtenstein, who's a program manager, Panama and Guyana of the Rainforest Foundation, US, and Francisco Souza, who is the managing director of the Forest Stewardship Council Indigenous Foundation based in Panama, and where also the new program, Indigenous Peoples Alliance for Rights and Development is being implemented.

So first to Francisco. So the IPARD program, this new Indigenous Peoples Alliance for Rights and Development implemented by the FSC indigenous foundation, it's really the first program that fully embraced USAID, these PRO-IP policies principles. What specific recommendations would you provide to other IPOs and partners about the co-creation part that you had gone with USAID in 2020, in early 2020? Please go ahead, and welcome again, Francisco.

Francisco Souza:

Good morning, everyone, and good afternoon. Thank you Luis Felipe, USAID for the invitation. The Indigenous Foundation is a global indigenous lead organization, part of the FSC of Panama. We work for indigenous people worldwide. As a new program of the IPARD or the Indigenous peoples Rights and Development, was created to put at the center from the beginning through the program implementation, to support indigenous people to achieve self-reliance in the long-term, which is a core component on the USAID PRO-IP.

For the IPARD co-creation process, I'd like to share three main recommendations based on our experience working with the USAID. The first is the indigenous lead co-creation process provide actually the basis for more inclusive impactful programs. Try to use co-creation as a program development tool to empower indigenous people by under the guidance and leadership co-design, co-planning. You co-implement the programs together with your partners. Put indigenous people at the center of the planning in decision-making phase of the program, was inclusive in management principles that guide the Indigenous Foundation during the IPARD co-creation process. Management through this principle, should increase the likelihood for long-term impact on the ground. You also push us as the Indigenous Foundation, to amass up our capacity for cross sector collaboration, learning, adaptation to a specific context.

The second recommendations is about the flexibility negotiated partnership building essential for co-creation and program implementation. Flexibility can facilitate co-creation by find ways to achieve common goals, image, your institutional target goal with the goals of your partners, USAID.

Negotiation and open-mind are key to create a shared vision, your objective for the program, which will be the base, not only on your experience, the priority of your organization, but also those of the partners involved. Multiple partnership will increase the feasibility of collaborative solution towards the indigenous people challenge. Drive by or long-term institutional goals, the Indigenous Foundation co-facilitate a co-creation process that is built in the IPARD program and maintain its commitment to work for indigenous people worldwide by collaboratively identify, key priorities in strategic areas to be included in the problem.

The final point that I want to share is, common understanding the consensus of the challenge towards us, is critical for a successful program or proposal. Don't not limit the discussion, the co-creation process with your partners, USAID, to what you would like to achieve, but what is actually possible given the context, the resource and the time available. Make sure that you consider all potential constraint it provide, and feasible technical strategy solution to a solid ground partnership. Thank you.

Luis Felipe Duchicela:

Thank you very much, Francisco. Very, very good insights. So Joshua, again, welcome and thank you for participating here. Rainforest Foundation US, is a relatively new USAID partner. You have gone through a co-creation process with USAID Guatemala and Alianza Mesoamericana de Pueblos y Bosques, please tell us, a few of the learnings from that experience that you think would be useful for other NGOs and IPOs. Over to you Josh.

Josh Lichtenstein:

thank you, Luis Felipe and good morning, good afternoon and good evening to everyone. I'm Josh Lichtenstein, Rainforest Foundation US, and we've been partnering with the indigenous peoples for the last 30 years or so around issues of land rights and forest conservation, and are in fact a brand new, USAID partner, just began receiving funding this year.

In terms of the learning coming out of the co-design process with the Mesoamerican Alliance and the mission in Guatemala, there's a couple of things I would mention. One is being really clear at the outset on the purpose and the outcomes and the process, both internally between NGO and indigenous partners and together with the USAID mission staff. And that, that can really make the difference between success and failure in a co-design process. And this is both understanding the why, that why you're in there, and the how you're going to implement.

And because co-design is a very new process for most of us, and that the process steps and particularly the expected products and results were not immediately clear, and can vary from co-designed process to co-design process.

Another learning that came out of the process specifically in Guatemala was really, that having a balance between USAID introducing technical issues such as smart indicators and how to work on a theory of change, how to work on results frameworks, as well as creating more open spaces to talk about what we wanted to accomplish and the best way to accomplish that, were really key to creating a successful outcome. Balancing both of those things during the co-design process.

A third point I would mention would be that patience is required, and these can be long processes. The process with the Mesoamerican Alliance, it's been just about a year now and we're in the final stages.

Lastly, I would mention that, it's important not to underestimate the complexity of the logistics and the scheduling and the internal organization, and translating of documents, and important to clearly define who's the technical team that's writing and participating in the co-design, what are the moments that are important for leadership to be present in those discussions and decisions, and to build time, to translate documents, to create internal consultations, briefings for leaders, and to make sure that the indigenous partners have time to sign off on any documents that get submitted to USAID. Thanks, and back to you, Luis Felipe.

Luis Felipe Duchicela:

Thank you very much, Josh. Back to you Francisco. The IPARD program, the Indigenous Peoples Alliance for Rights and Development, it's a new GDA, a new Global Development Alliance co-funded by USAID and the Forestry Stewardship Council. Please tell us, what kind of activities are you going to be implementing that could be useful for indigenous peoples organizations from around the world? Over to you Francisco.

Francisco Souza:

This is a very important question, Luis Felipe, that can bring, it's opportunity for collaboration with us. The IPARD, we work at the country level, but adapting approach for each specific context. The complexity is scale of the challenges faced by indigenous people worldwide. You mentioned actually on this webinar today require a multi-sector approach. The IPARD is a five years program. We are going to create a space where different actors can come together to find collaborative solutions, to support indigenous people, to overcome key challenge.

This require a shared vision, which can only be build to common understanding. IPARD is committed to create understanding among all the stakeholders on indigenous people mission and vision in national, international context to strong capacity development and strategy, which is a core aspect in terms of the activity the IPARD is going to implement. Honestly [inaudible 01:08:04] each other and agreeing on sharing plan IPARD, we work with them to strengthen the [inaudible 01:08:12] condition that we allow, the private sectors to work with indigenous people, engage in productive for a sustainable economic partnership that can bring the needs for indigenous groups to assure their rights and make their own decision while contributing to sustainable development of their community, in the country that they leave in. The Indigenous Foundation is available to exchange and find way of collaboration. Thank you very much, Luis Felipe.

Luis Felipe Duchicela:

Thank you very much Francisco? Back to you Josh, and you're the last panelist, so... But that doesn't allow you to take longer than the others. Josh, so based on your co-creation experience with Alianza Mesoamerica and USAID recently, what few recommendations can you give to other non-conventional USAID partners or, aspiring to be partners of USAID, in terms of effective partnership with indigenous peoples? Go ahead.

Josh Lichtenstein:

Thank you Luis Felipe. I'd mentioned a couple things, and one I think other panelists have touched on, is the need to choose partners and allies that you trust and that you have a good working relationship with. And that that trust is usually built over long periods of time and requires transparency and mutual accountability. So approaching USAID for funding without that long track record of partnership between an NGO and an indigenous peoples organization, is going to be more challenging.

The other, I would say, would be really to plan the process and make sure that the timelines and the workflows are clear. Be aware and honest about your own capacity constraints within small NGOs or within large and small indigenous peoples organizations that can create strains to completing all of these technical documents on a short schedule. And that's especially so if the NGO is taking the lead in the writing and you need to schedule in time for IPO colleagues to review and input and approve documents. So that internal time for consultation needs to get built in.

A third thing I would mention is to do your research and know the lingo. USAID funding opportunities use a lot of acronyms and technical language that can leave indigenous organizations and NGO leaders and staff not quite understanding what's being requested or discussed. So I think other panelists have also mentioned too, that organizing a briefing for leadership ahead of the co-creation process can help bridge that gap and build understanding of the tools and methodologies and requirements of USAID.

Lastly, I would just say that it's important to also identify your weak points and ask for help, and then it's not necessary to understand everything ahead of a co-creation process and that some of the tools and methodologies and other things are going to require practical experience in applying and

implementing them to gain a full understanding. So if there are things that you're not understanding, then just simply reach out to a USAID staff and ask for help. And in our experience, that's been very forthcoming and welcome. Thanks Luis Felipe.

Luis Felipe Duchicela:

Thank you very much, Josh. So with this, we have concluded our panelists session. So we have a few minutes for some questions and answers before we conclude today. So my colleague Rita Spadafora is going to help us moderate. And I apologize. We're not going to be able to take all the questions, but Rita, maybe a couple of questions, a few questions. Go ahead, Rita.

Rita Spadafora:

Sure. Hello to all the participants and panelists of today's webinar. Like Luis Felipe said, we just have a few minutes. We tried to answer some of them in the question box already, but we still have a few for the panelists. The first question here from Gini Lama, IPs have been historically excluded from human capital development education and training opportunities that build IPOs that can have the capacities to speak up. What help can you offer? These question is Felipe, perhaps for, Francisco Souza?

Luis Felipe Duchicela:

Very quick Francisco.

Francisco Souza:

I'm not sure if I'm the right person to respond this question, Rita. Can you repeat again?

Rita Spadafora:

The question is, what opportunities for capital development can we offer to indigenous peoples organizations?

Francisco Souza:

Okay. That's a key aspect that we work with USAID, I think. Because when we try to submit, elaborate on proposal to work together with diversity, we need to think internally as an organization, in terms of our ability, potential to engage with different stakeholders. To elaborate in technically feasible ways on proposal.

So in that theorem, I think key areas that we need to think in terms of the capacity development, the key knowledge we experience to strength to engage with USAID, is in terms of the program and management capacity, financial management capacity. We should have a stronger clarity in terms of the vision and mission of the organization, but the most important I think is to have the ability to build up cross sector collaboration to strength your proposal, your engagement with the USAID. That's bring to us a set of the key areas in terms of the capacity development that the IPARD for instance, is going to organize [inaudible 01:14:26], it will provide tools you can use to support indigenous people to improve on these different areas of potential collaboration to work with the USAID. Thank you.

Rita Spadafora:

Thank you. Thank you Francisco. Do you want to mention something else Luis?

Luis Felipe Duchicela:

Rita. Yeah, no, just very quickly. I think in this webinar, we have shown that many projects funded by USAID are already working on capacity development. We've seen here today, In ARISA, Chemonics, mentioned. There is capacity assessment tools, there's methodologies that are being used. So I think for indigenous peoples organizations, it's important perhaps to, on the one hand, I think Joyce Friedenbergs suggestion at the beginning of this webinar is that there are some opportunities for indigenous peoples organizations to access some resources, for instance, through the Local Works. That's one definite way, and to contact the mission in your country.

Keep in mind that USAID is a very decentralized organization. So not all things are managed or directed from Washington D.C. A lot of the programming is done at the mission level, meaning the country level. So a good relationship with the mission in your country is very important. And then once you get into that door, as Joshua was mentioning, and Levi Sucre and others here, then you can have an opportunity to shape that capacity development program, for instance, some of the panelists have mentioned, like Ramiro Batzin mentioned, what aspects should be covered in the capacity development. But that's very important. Rita, any other question?

Rita Spadafora:

Yes. I think we have time for one more question. And this is for you Luis Felipe, from Nepal. It says, "Thank you for your important speech. Dalit is critical in Nepal. Please try to recognize Dalit of Nepal in South Asia region. Dalit issues are very critical.

Luis Felipe Duchicela:

Yes. I would like to refer to that, and I would like to, first of all, welcome the colleagues from the Dalit community from Nepal. I met some of the leaders when I was at the World Bank years ago. Yes, you can definitely also apply. Everything that we've talked here about indigenous peoples, it's open for you as well. I mean, this webinar is about indigenous peoples, but it's not constrained only to indigenous peoples. I mean, USAID is interested in other marginalized groups, groups in vulnerable situation, groups in disadvantage position in society.

So, yes, absolutely. You're welcome to reach out to the missions and to us directly, if you will, to help you give some guidance on that. The same applies to the Afro-descendant community in Latin America, by the way. And the Afro-descendants in many countries in Latin America are already recognized constitutionally almost with the same rights as indigenous peoples in many countries, Colombia, Peru, Honduras, Ecuador, et cetera, so applies the same to them. So, please, yes. And hopefully in the future webinar, we'll have more, perhaps, range of actors so that the Dalit community can also participate more directly.

I think we're running out of time and we have just a few more minutes. So I don't know, Rita, do you have any other pressing question there? Or..

Rita Spadafora:

I think we're going to have to have more seminars to be able to answer more questions and that's the plan. Over to you, Felipe.

Luis Felipe Duchicela:

Okay. Let me cover one aspect that is important for us to cover before we end here. So can you please bring up the slide Cheyenne, with the points. Yes. So, there is a link to a survey in the chat that we would

love for you to please, answer the survey. It's very important because we need to know how we did in this webinars series. What would you like to see in the future? What things work well, what things did not work well. What topics would you like to cover? et cetera, et cetera.

So we are thinking on the next USAID webinars series, directed also for indigenous peoples, but with this comment by the Dalit community, we'll definitely include other communities such as the Dalit, the Afro-descendants of Latin America and maybe others, but the survey responses will help us to design that next webinars series, which we don't know yet, if it's going to be in the fall, meaning, September, October, November, or maybe next year, March, April, may, but please keep yourself in the loop so that you get to know that.

Also there will be upcoming IPARD webinars. So keep in mind, IPARD is the Indigenous Peoples Alliance for Rights and Development, is Francisco Souza, is the managing director, and also Rita Spadafora, who just moderated the question, she is actually the capacity development and inclusion lead of IPARD. So you can write to her for those of you who asked about capacity development.

They're based in Panama City, Panama, beautiful country of the Republic of Panama. And they have an office there. It's a USAID funded program that is directed to provide capacity developing for indigenous peoples organizations and other stakeholders. So, the IPARD will start with their own webinars, first in June. Focusing on indigenous economies. So keep yourself in the loop.

Finally, I would like to thank very much, our panelists. All of you did an excellent job and you have devoted a lot of work into this, your talking points, your presentations, your rehearsals, et cetera. So thank you so much. all the panelists, of course included my colleagues, Arjun and Joyce who have participated here. The grow team, [Suji 01:21:22] and Cheyenne, Mary, thank you so much for all your help. The IPARD program, especially Rita Spadafora, Mary Donovan, Alejandro Perez, Francisco Souza. Our dear interpreters. thank you so much. And of course the participants.

I would like to just say that I know that some dear friends are here from Kenya, Agnes, I see that you're here and I'm sure, from the DRC and Cameroon and other countries, and of course from Latin America as well.

Rita Spadafora:

Luis Felipe, Joyce Friedenbergl would like to say a few words, a few seconds.

Luis Felipe Duchicela:

Yes, Joyce, please go ahead. We do have a few minutes. Please go ahead.

Joyce Friedenbergl:

Makes sure to remind folks that if they are looking at the unsolicited solutions for locally led development opportunity, that they should feel free to submit the form, the answers in the form in local language. As long as there's someone in the USAID mission that can read that local language, that's fine with us. We want to make it accessible. Right now the form is only in English, but it should... The language is very straightforward, so you can feel free to translate it and then put your responses and replies in the local language. I just wanted to put that there before we update the website.

Luis Felipe Duchicela:

Thank you, Joyce. Thank you very much. Can we put the next slide please with some of the links there. Yeah, so by the way, you all are going to have access to, we have prepared the takeaways of each panel.

This transcript was exported on May 20, 2021 - view latest version [here](#).

So the main conclusions, let's say, the main points of each panel. There's going to be in a PowerPoint presentation that you will have access to later.

Also these links, not to worry, you will have access to those also when you later access the PowerPoint presentation, that's going to be available. So you can further explore for instance what Joy, just said, Joyce Friedenber, it's in the Local Works website that you see here.

And also if you want to hear prior webinar recordings, the other tool that we had the recordings there, in this website. And also if you want to write to the Indigenous Peoples Alliance for rights and development, the IPARD, here's their email.

And also of course, the first one is the indigenous peoples USAID page, which I really recommend that you look at. There, you'll find the policy, the PRO-IP policy, you'll find other material. The policy is translated in English, I'm sorry, French and Spanish, I believe at this point. And I reemphasize what Joyce just said. The application for the unsolicited proposal, she said, you can write it in your own language, of your country, as long as there's someone at the USAID mission that speaks and understands that language and can later translate it, it's fine. So you don't have to write it necessarily in English.

Okay. So thank you again. And with this, we finish our webinar. I know that, maybe some of the participants would like to have more of this, so we're planning, hopefully in the fall or next year, more of this webinars series. Thank you again.