Chris Burns:	Thank you for joining us at Global Innovation Week, and for this conversation around digital identity for inclusive development. My name is Chris Burns, with the Center for Digital Development within the U.S. Global Development Lab. And I have the distinct pleasure of kicking off this session and really pleased that you all chose to spend this hour and a half-ish with us.
[00:00:30]	
	Before we begin, I want to get something out of the way, up front, for the digital folks in the room. It seems these days we can't have a conversation without someone bringing up the B word, blockchain, as in what about blockchain? And I bring that up because when we look at the trends that are coming up these days and emerging in digital development, in using digital technologies to drive development outcomes, the two biggest trends that come up time and again are blockchain and digital identity.
[00:01:00]	
	Certainly you could draw parallels across the two. They are also two incredibly different beasts, and I imagine we could do a workshop later on that really focuses on where there are commonalities and where there are big differences. But I want to get that out of the way because today, most definitely, we are going to be talking about digital identity. And the reason we are going to be doing that is digital identity for us is a critical enabler for what USAID and our agency does and implementing partners do in our aim to lift people out of extreme poverty.
[00:01:30]	
	And we did that through a couple of ways. We develop unique identification schemes to better understand the impact of our programming to individuals. We support biometric voter registration efforts in the hope of establishing more credibility and transparency in our democracy and government's efforts. We push to streamline delivery of assistance in response to natural disasters and humanitarian needs, using electric cash transfers, electronic cash transfers.
[00:02:00]	
	Each of these hinge on the strength of their underlying systems, that allows us to identify exactly who is on the receiving end of those services and those transfers. And digital ID is increasingly serving as a backbone to digital economies. According to the McKinsey Global Institute, digital flows are now responsible for more GDP growth globally than the trade in traditional goods.
[00:02:30]	
	Sustainable development goal 16.9 also highlights the role of digital ID in development. It states, by 2030, provide legal identity for all, including birth registration. In order to achieve this goal ... some might even call it an inalienable right, or at least a true necessity ... we must recognize and elevate the role that ID plays as a critical piece of development infrastructure. And the role that digital can play in helping us build inclusive, sustainable ID systems, with greater potential for scale.
[00:03:00]	
	Tanzania illustrates this point perfectly, in how it might unfold to bring digital identities to life. In 2013, 90% of all Tanzanian children lived without a birth certificate. That is a remarkable figure. Without a birth certificate, obviously they are missing critical first steps in establishing official identity that paves the way to
[00:03:30]	

follow-on social services and economic livelihood opportunities.

[00:04:00] Soon after working in partnership, the GSMA, the mobile industry, the trade association, mobile operator TIGO, UNICEF, and the government of Tanzania implemented a mobile birth registration program, designed to increase the number of births that are registered and reduce the lag time between the birth and the point of registration.

[00:04:30] With the program, health workers send an SMS after birth to Tanzania's national registry agency, with the family information, the child's information, and the health worker then receives an automated response allowing them to issue a birth certificate. This shift took a convoluted, frustrating, and expensive process of well over three months, often not worth the hassle or the cost to the parents, down to mere days.

[00:05:00] In the first six months, the program increased birth registrations more than three-fold, from 9% to over 30%. And now over 800,000 children in Tanzania have been registered through this system, and there's talk of scaling it up at a national level. To be clear, at least in my mind, this is really, really exciting. It's a fairly straightforward process that demonstrates how digital technologies can add value to traditional processes by improving the speed and reach of data collection and its subsequent impact.

[00:05:30] Yet such a straightforward process doesn't just happen on a whim. And any subsequent utility for say, added value services and social services, create a number of particular additional layers and challenges. And building that system at scale, nationwide, has even greater complexity. So while we love this example, it's really important for us to recognize the complexities of each of these systems. Successful, sustainable scale requires so many supporting elements to be in place. A supportive policy environment, the capacity of key institutions and staff to manage, monitor, and maintain these systems, and linkages with multiple services to drive demand and expand reach.

[00:06:00] Here in the Center for Digital Development, within the lab, we strongly believe in the opportunities that digital technologies provide in maximizing the wants and needs of the most underserved around the world. But we also recognize that the digital solutions do not offer a silver bullet. In every respect, they are a tool to an end. Within the center, our strategy and research team was launched with the express objective of understanding how we can realize the full potential of some of [00:06:30] these digital technologies, and the promise of them, both today and tomorrow.

This requires an understanding of the technical needs, the technical aspects, and the social and cultural context that either preclude or support the use and scale of these digital technologies. In that vein, we are thrilled to announce today the launch of our new research ... hopefully you all picked up a copy at the front when you came in ... that they've carried out in the role of digital ID and development. [00:07:00] Looking at the ID systems of today, as well as with eyes to the future. It is simply one of the best-written, most easy to read pieces of research I have certainly read

| [00:07:30] | in my time at USAID. The report highlights multiple facets or digital identity systems. It showcases the role of both national IDs that we might traditionally think of as official ID, but also the many sectoral applications that rely on ID infrastructure. From patient tracking and health systems to humanitarian relief benefits. |

| [00:08:00] | The report is a reflection of the role that we have looked to our SNR team to play, to help equip us with the tools necessary to honestly evaluate emerging technology trends and understand where there's huge promise, and where more work needs to be done, to safeguard against the risk that these technologies might introduce. The report makes two things clear. First, we as part of the development community, need to work together across sectors and organizational silos to ensure digital ID systems form a cohesive infrastructure, rather than a fragmented landscape. Second, as digital ID is increasingly recognized as key infrastructure for development, we need to be clear-eyed, not just about the potential benefits of new technologies, but also about the risks and assumptions that come along with them. |

| [00:08:30] | Today we want to engage you in a critical discussion. Succeeding at both scale and inclusion means that we ensure that digital ID systems generate value for everyone. This is true both for the institutions that invest in them as well as the individuals we ask to participate in them. The push needs to meet up with the pull. |

| [00:09:00] | As you'll discover in today's workshop, achieving this balance is not easy. We don't propose to have all the answers today, but we do hope to leave you with a greater appreciation of both the potential and the complexity of digital ID systems. So thank you, and with that, I'll turn it over to Aubra, to run through the workshop and to start outlining some of these complexities. |

| Aubra Anthony: | Thanks again you guys for joining us. I think, as Chris mentioned, you know ... yeah, thank you ... We want to make sure that we're not just talking at you, today, about this. We really wanted to foster some discussion and conversation around this issue that we think is really of critical importance to the work that we do. |

| [00:09:30] [00:10:00] | So I will just walk you through kind of what to expect from the next hour and a half. First, we're going to dive into a discussion on what we're calling the basic digital ID value chain, and I'll walk through that in a second with you. And then after that, we're going to just do a quick pulse check around the room, to hear some quick readouts. And then we're going to do the same sort of discussion at your tables, led by the facilitators that you each have, around an emerging technology and the digital ID value chain. And we'll get into that more in a minute. And then I think, after that, we'll do another pulse check, and then Priya Jay-sen-gah-nee is going to wrap up for us. |

| | Okay, so Chris just framed some of the objectives that we want to do here today. So first, to give you all a hint of the complexity around these systems, with the status quo ID scenario. But then also to equip you with some of the critical questions that we should be bringing to these emerging technology situations, and |

as you encounter these systems in different contexts.

[00:10:30]   The two that we have chosen for today are blockchain and advanced biometrics in the form of voice recognition, but there are a plethora, and in the report, we get into a handful of them. So I encourage you to explore further.

[00:11:00]   But in order to do that, we're going to ask ourselves some key questions. First, as Chris mentioned, we want to look at where the value is that's being derived by different actors in these systems. Where are these systems creating value for both individuals and institutions? And then second, we want to look at what are some of the risks and challenges that we should be mindful of as we deploy these systems, and as we rely on them, and as we expect others to rely on them. And then finally, what are some of the assumptions that underpin a lot of these systems? So do we require connectivity for them to work? Do we require digital literacy for them to work? We want you guys to really think through some of these, together, and then we'll get some readouts from you.

[00:11:30]   As you go through this, keep in mind that these are fictional scenarios, so you'll see actual cartoon figures on the value chains at your table. These aren't meant to be real people. If you want to dive in more with the kind of angle of what a real person experiences, there's some great research that our colleagues from Caribou have put together, and we've got some handouts in the back of the room that will allow you to dive a little deeper into the felt experience of folks as they have dealt with these types of things [inaudible 00:11:49].

[00:12:00]   Yeah, fictional people, and then also just to note as we go into the emerging technology discussion, these are not emerging technologies that are meant to sub-plan the digital ID systems that are in place, that we're going to go through in this first exercise. They're really just adding on layers of complexity.

[00:12:30]   First I'm going to orient you to the digital ID value chain. This is the basic value chain that you all have at your tables. This is a tool that we have found to be really useful in our research, to help us kind of tease apart the different issues that arise over the course of the life cycle of an ID. So just walking you through it, and hopefully this will be ... If there are any questions, your facilitators at each of your tables will be able to answer specific questions. But just to give you an over-arching walk through.

[00:13:00]   So here we're talking about Joy. Joy is a fictional character who is a farmer, a small-holder farmer, and she wants to get a small loan to get her through the next harvest. Government subsidized loans are available, but she needs to present an ID to get one. She doesn't have a birth certificate or any formal ID documents. Her country has recently launched an enrollment campaign for their new national ID card.

And just for visual framing, there are three panels. Each vertical panel corresponds to a specific question that addresses a different stage of the ID life-cycle. And also notice this horizontal bar that we have across the middle of the diagram. This is

[00:13:30]	what we're calling the visibility bar. So anything above that bar, Joy has visibility into. She sees what's happening, she's taking part in it. Anything below the bar, Joy is not able to see. So that's something that is happening behind the scenes, that institutions are doing.
	Let's look at the enrollment panel. Here we're working to address the question, who is Joy and have we seen her before? Okay? So walking through the elements, Joy travels to the enrollment center, and she provides biographical information, her fingerprints, all 10 digits, and a village leader, who can vouch for her identity.
[00:14:00]	The national ID agency does quality control, that's happening at the bottom, and then her data gets added to the enrollment database. And so the enrollment database now contains all of this information that they've collected, that's needed to prove Joy's unique identity. Then the national ID agency issues her credentials, and Joy has to travel back to the enrollment center to get her card.
[00:14:30]	So moving on to authentication, now we're asking the question, do Joy's credentials match what was issued? Joy wants to get a loan. She goes to the bank, and the bank asks for Joy's ID card as well as a fingerprint scan of her right index finger. Now we have a new database, the authentication database, so this is different from the authorization database. It contains only enough information to confirm that Joy is the rightful owner of the card that she's attesting her identity with, and the fingerprint and ID number. So we have a query sent from the bank to the database, asking does this fingerprint match this ID number? And the reply follows, yes in this case, sent back to the bank.
[00:15:00]	So now on the authorization panel, where we're looking at the question of can Joy access these services? Can Joy get a loan? There is a query sent to this new database, which is owned and managed by the social welfare ministry. So they have a record of all ID numbers that are qualified to receive this loan. So the query is sent, is this number on the list? The reply is just a binary yes or no. And in this case, we have the correct individual and Joy is authorized to receive services, and so Joy gets her loan.
[00:15:30]	With that framing, I know that was kind of a breeze through for those who aren't as familiar with these systems ... please feel free to ask your facilitators for any clarifying questions. But with that background, we want you now to dive into discussion at your tables. And so the three things that we want you to keep in mind and work through, and your facilitators will help you through this, first just asking where is this system creating value for Joy? And where is it creating value for the institutions?
	Secondly, keeping in mind the risks and challenges, right? And then third, trying to identify where we're making assumptions that are critical for this thing to work.
[00:16:00]	Now I'm going to set you all loose, with your facilitators, for I think 10 or 15 minutes, and we'll give you a check-in at about the 5-minute mark. But please go forth and keep these in mind.

But I wanted to hand it over to Priya Jay-sen-gah-nee for a few closing remarks, our former center director, beloved former center director. So please come on up, Priya, and feel free to not be on the stage if you don't want to.

[00:16:30]
Priya Vora: Yeah, I was going to say, I don't think I need to be on the stage. Good morning, I'm Priya Vora, now.

Aubra Anthony: Oh yes, sorry.

Priya Vora: It's nice to see everyone here. So first of all, please join me in giving a big round of applause to all our facilitators. You guys did a great job.

[00:17:00] I ended up missing the first part of today and actually did this workshop last week, but I was over in the amphitheater, where there's a couple of other sessions on digital infrastructure. And one of the points I was trying to make, earlier this morning, was that our investments in technology, we need not be so mesmerized with the technology. And I know there are really interesting things with blockchain and censors and biometrics that are going on.

[00:17:30] But USAID and our family of partners, we have just a huge role to play in shaping everything that wraps around the technology. And I heard that from the readouts already. You know, these issues around privacy, user capabilities, who talked about user capabilities? You know, security standards, the motivations of governments and companies who are involved. All of that really matters, and I know I'm preaching to the choir when I say that.

[00:18:00] The other point I think we're trying to make, and you'll see this in the report, which I hope you'll all pick up, it's in the back of the room, the red report. Charlie, you want to hold up the report? Another key point we're trying to make is that if we care about digital infrastructure, the way in which we work and invest, as USAID and our partners, has to also evolve. And I showed a picture of three women who were holding their ID cards, in the amphitheater just earlier today, and said, look, we were a part of contributing to this wonderful program where we invested in a biometric ID system that tracked the nutrition outcomes of these women. It's [00:18:30] great. We're more able to accurately understand their lives in this dimension.

[00:19:00] But I went on to explain, we've also helped contribute to seven other ID systems, also in the country, also tracking different elements of health. And our role, therefore, has to evolve. That is like having blinders on and thinking about just our project, just our goals, just our reporting needs, and we have an opportunity to step back and recognize that these women are multidimensional. That they could use one ID that serves all of their health needs, allows them to register as a patient in all health facilities. It could allow them to vote, it could allow them to get a bank account and get a host of other services throughout their lives.

But this approach is a lot messier and requires working in partnership, which is a lot

[00:19:30]   harder. It requires working across sectors, which we're not all used to. We like our kind of verticals. And it really requires us digging into the topics you guys were talking about today, these issues of data management and privacy.

So it's a call to action, I think, for all of us, to really think about infrastructure in a more horizontal way, and I hope you'll join me in this cause and participate in a community that we're trying to build around this topic, starting with IDs.

[00:20:00]   I know all of you guys have on your tables a signup sheet, so if you'll trust us with your identity, give us your email, and we will send the report when it's available electronically. And try and keep engaged in this conversation because I think we have a lot to do to inspire the institutions we work with to take this more evolved, horizontal approach to infrastructure.

So thanks again, and a huge round of applause to the team and for all of you.