Raj Kumar: Morning. Come on in, guys. Good morning. This is a very wonky topic we're about to get into. We're talking evidence. It's exciting to see this much interest early in the morning to talk about evidence. I know a little bit of this must've been the administrator. We're going to feel pretty good for being here as well with all of you.

[00:00:30]   I think we're an interesting moment when you think about evidence. I'll relate to you a little story just from the last few years. Some of you might remember John Paulson, is a well known hedge fund billionaire. He gave a very generous gift to his alma mater, to Harvard University, the engineering school. He probably thought like many donors who have, who gave a large gift, 400 million dollars in this case, that he'd get a lot of applause for that, that people would be thanking him for it. Instead, he got torn up pretty badly on social media maybe some of you in the

[00:01:00]   room who work on these kinds of issues, saying, "The evidence shows this is what you can do with 400 million dollars. Why are you giving it to a wealthy university?"

                On the other side of the coin, there was a group of graduate students including at Harvard, who started a group called Give Directly, which had this audacious idea to give a little bit of money directly to people needed it. I think they started in East Africa. Originally, a lot of people in the development community said, "This flies in the face of everything we know. This can't be the right way to do it." As they

[00:01:30]   started to do impact studies and show the evidence that it works, they began to get more credibility including in this community and give directly, I think, to date, has raise over 100 million dollars and given that out to people around the world who need it.

                We're in an interesting moment. We want to have a conversation today about that moment that we're in and what it means for this community, the work that we all do. I'm joined by Cindy Huang, who is a senior policy fellow at the Center for Global Development and Michael Miller, who's a partner at the Kyle House Group. I want

[00:02:00]   to start with you, Michael, because there is an undercurrent here we should address directly first, which is we're in this interesting political moment. There's fear, anxiety among people who do the kind of work that people in this room do, that there's a sense maybe that [inaudible 00:02:15] doesn't work. Where does evidence fit into this debate? You've spent your career on Capital Hill, in the executive branch, you helped to design and launch the president's malaria initiative. You've been at the center of this. You've worked with Bob Corker for years as policy director.

[00:02:30]   Where does evidence fit into the moment we're in today?

Michael Miller: Thanks, Raj. Nice to be here. Nice to be back at USAID and to see that it's just as difficult to get in the Reagan Building as it used to be. I made it. Evidence and evaluation, I think to answer your question directly, is fundamental right now. I think this anxiety about the United States' commitment to global health and

[00:03:00]   development is very real. There's a lot of uncertainty in terms of the direction, what the American public wants, what's the mood of Congress, what leadership in the administration, and evidence and evaluation and demonstration of outcomes is critical. What I mean is in our experience ... I help run this organization called The

[00:03:30]	Consensus for Development and Reform, and CDR is a group of liked minded, mostly conservative Republicans who are pro-engagement, pro-development.
Raj Kumar:	The administrator was a co-chair of that.
Michael Miller:	Right. Mark Green was our past co-chairman. It's now co-chaired by Rob Mosbacher, former head of OPIC in the Bush administration, and Mark Dybul, who many of you probably know. There's two things that we found the most important being the support or the lack of support for global health and development, and I'm speaking more specifically about on Capital Hill here, but also the way the attitudes and perception on Capital Hill are really a reflection of the United States more broadly, is that it's not that people are opposed to foreign assistance. In fact, in most cases, Americans and law makers are very much in favor of the United States demonstrating to the world what we believe to be true about ourselves, and they're in favor to it.

The main source of uncertainty and lack of support is a belief that it does not work and that it's a waste, in effect. Evidence and evaluation is essential for filling in and addressing that most important and most decisive factor in the political sustainability of the United States government commitment to global health and development. I'll use one very well-known example, is PEPFAR, it's an example for a lot of things, but I'll be more precise here. Here you have a program that is on the bilateral side, four and a half billion dollar approximately yearly outlay. If you add the global fund contribution, another 1.2, 1.3 billion dollars a year. This is money that the United States and the American people really expect and don't get a direct return in an investment sense. There's no clear implication for national security and things like that. It's something that started as a humanitarian gesture and is supported that way.

Why is it that this giant program-

Raj Kumar:	It's big enough to get real attention on Capitol Hill.

[00:06:00]

Michael Miller:	Endorse anything. It's real money that can be used for other things. Why does PEPFAR have a degree of political sustainability that, be honest, other global health and development programs and sectors envy? Part of that is what I just said that it answers something that the Americans think of themselves in terms of humanitarianism and generosity, but it also is known to be innovative and it works. It's based on a series over time of very clear targets, towards which progress can be measured and demonstrated in a fairly straightforward way. That evidence is what I would call ... It seeds a virtuous cycle of political sustainability and has grown what, in Congress, I call the results constituency. It's changed people's, not by itself, but it's changed people's perceptions about what we can expect and what we're willing to put money behind. In that respect, it defies the convention, the largest program, with the least direct return, if you will, to the United States public, is in fact one of the most robustly supported. I think evidence and evaluation is the key to making that.

Raj Kumar:

[00:08:00]

That's a great example to point to. We'll come back later in the discussion to what do you do for those programs which are not so easy to measure. Cindy, Center for Global Development started around the same time as Devex. I remember when you began one of the main areas of focus was this gap in evidence. There were very few impact studies happening around the world, maybe some more performance evaluations, but even then, there wasn't much of a focus on independent evaluation to know what works or what doesn't. About 15 years in, where are we? Are we at a point where the PEPFAR example is the standard in global development? What do you see?

Cindy Huang:

[00:08:30]

I do see a strong trajectory of progress. Alongside PEPFAR, as you all know, the Millennium Challenge Corporation, was started, which has a very strong commitment to evidence and evaluation. That was also so inspiring to hear from Mark Green, who was the longest serving board member from the private sector at MCC. I think we see strong examples there. Moving forward, a lot of progress for example, in 2011, the release of the evaluation policy here at USAID, development innovation ventures, which combines innovation with tiered evidence so that you have higher standards of evidence as innovations are tested, so that they can be then scaled.

[00:09:00]

I think there has been a lot of progress, but I do think there's a lot more room to grow. I'll highlight two areas. The first is, as you mentioned, CGD has focused a lot on impact evaluations. A few recent studies have shown still a very small percentage of evaluations are impact evaluations.

Raj Kumar:

It's interesting, because there is a bit of a theme out there, a narrative in the global development community, that there's been almost too much emphasis on impact evaluations. Everyone's doing them and we're spending a lot of time and money. Actually, we're not doing that many.

[00:09:30]

Cindy Huang:

[00:10:00]

That's right. I think we still need to improve. It goes back to a lot of what the administrator said and what Michael's just said. If you want to create results in terms of enabling self-reliance, we need to see the evidence base and that's not only for our own programs as a U.S. citizen, but also to share those learnings with host governments who will eventually run these programs themselves, and for the political sustainability. I think that's really critical. I think that's one area. I've seen some estimates that it's as low as one percent of all evaluations are impact evaluations. Really getting to the outcomes and not just the inputs. The people trained, it's really income-

Raj Kumar:

The alternative besides impact, the 99% will be performance evaluation. Did the project achieve its goals? We don't know if the original idea of the project was good to begin with.

Cindy Huang:
[00:10:30]

The second area is on cost efficiency and cost effectiveness. You mentioned cash, give directly. I think it's been a disruptor in showing, again, there might be

programs that do a lot of great things, but how do they compare to giving cash directly. That's been enabled by technology, through mobile money, as the administrator mentioned, and I understand there's exciting new work at USAID to say, "Let's look at interventions vis a vis cash." Again, while I would say there's been a lot of progress, there's still a lot of room to grow.

Raj Kumar:
[00:11:00]

Just to Michael's opening discussion here about the Hill and the political situation, if you were called to testify to the Hill, given the amount of data evidence that's out there today, could you very confidently testify and say, "Foreign aid works"? It's not that we don't know if it works, but underneath that issue, there's the question of what should we be prioritizing or focusing on. What would you say if you were called to the Hill?

Cindy Huang:

[00:11:30]

I think it's important on many dimensions. There are the humanitarian components and there are other investments that we make for more national security reasons. I would say that you would have to qualify the question and say works toward what end. I do think it is very clear that our investments have made a huge difference in terms of human well-being and we have to look, then at each sector and kind of project and really dig down into what works and invest in that.

Raj Kumar:

[00:12:00]

Michael, I'm just thinking listening to Cindy that there's a lot of data collection happening now. It's hard to find a project that isn't collecting data. Obviously, data's not evidence, so getting from that to the next step matters. Also, and we've talked about this, using data to try to figure out what works best is one approach. It seems like the more common approach, and it gets back to the politics, is to use data and evidence to police what we do in this space. To make sure we don't waste a penny. Talk to us about that dynamic.

Michael Miller:
[00:12:30]

[00:13:00]

There's a lot of challenges in there. I used PEPFAR as an example. I do recognize that it is exceptional in many ways. It lends itself to the kind of quantification and demonstration with accessible, I think what Mike Gerson called the virtuous body count, where you can show this having an impact that you can be proud of and you can be assured that it's doing what it says it set out to do. It meets those. Not everything in development, in fact, probably few things in development, at least in my experience lend themselves to the same kind of straightforward, if not challenging to undertake, evaluation.

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[00:14:00]

I have two thoughts on this. One is how we use data and evidence and evaluation to determine what it is we undertake. In other words, a lot of people think of evidence and evaluation as something as you're implementing or after the fact. Was it successful? Is it doing what it says it's doing? There's this whole challenge about using evidence and evaluation prior to making a commitment and prior to determining what I think is perhaps, the most important thing, which is the targets, which can lead to outcomes rather than just outputs. You can evaluate that. The challenge of using evidence of is this something that's going to work. Is this something that contributes to our strategic objectives? Is this something that shows potentially greater value over what we're doing now? That's something where it's a much greater challenge to use that evidence and evaluation effectively

	because you have to anticipate that. I think that lead in is perhaps, the greatest challenge.

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[00:15:00]

I would say there's on example that people are talking about now where I see this as a real world challenge. That's the idea of universal health coverage. If you ask people what that means, you get a lot of different answers. Sort of like health system strengthening, it means 20 things to 25 different people. What kind of evidence and evaluation say, if we embrace, as Dr. Ted [inaudible 00:14:52] would say, "Embrace the goal of universal health coverage," what is the evidence that what we might undertake as a program would be more effective than what we're doing? What is the evidence that this, as a policy objective, might be able to deliver? Is there a body of evidence now that can help frame that and drive a policy commitment to that?

Raj Kumar:

[00:15:30]

We need to ask those questions even on things that seem so intuitive, because there's a long history of initiatives that seem intuitive, but at the end you realize, actually it had some other knock on effects of something that we didn't intend that went wrong.

Cindy Huang:

[00:16:00]

I can't resist jumping in to say that CGD has worked recently on a book on universal health coverage, What's In, What's Out. It builds on the work of the International Decision Support Initiative, which is looking exactly at this question of it all sounds great, but what's the evidence on cost efficiency and cost effectiveness on the exact package that each government is able to offer. Recommend that to all of you. I also waned to jump in and say that I think there's another challenge that we haven't yet covered, which is around, what you were suggesting, around the proliferation of data.

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[00:17:00]

I remember even when I was working at MCC and we'd say, "Let's take a look at foreignassistance.gov, the dashboard." We had real experts trying to sift through data saying, "It's hard to make heads or tails of what's in there and the different categories." I know the people at USAID who work on these programs are aware that it's a very complex set of data. I do think we can't, of course, mistake the quantity of data with the lessons that we're drawing from it, how we're conducting the analysis, and then really importantly, and it's quite difficult to do, is the culture change around everything from training and performance incentives to how do we overall shift. It's not about just that accountability of saying, "Did we get those outcomes or not?" It's having a culture where people are asking the right questions, able to design quality evaluations, and really incorporate that into the many partnerships that they develop.

Raj Kumar:

[00:17:30]

That culture change is really tough, especially at a place like USAID, because what it really requires, if you're honest, is to also talk about failures. If you're really evaluating things, you need to be able to say, "This didn't work." That's a hard thing to say. To go back to the Hill where you used to work and say, "That money you appropriated was effectively wasted." Are we realistic? You talked about a risk framework. How do we decide where to use evaluation, where to take risks, so we get out of the mode of being so careful to track every penny that we can't do

anything innovate?

Michael Miller: I think that's the real challenge. Some of us sort of joked, there's this fetish around data. You collect enough of it and it will do something. Data in and of itself is not

[00:18:00]   innovation and transparency in and of itself is not reform. You have to have some quality to it, it has to have relevance to the decisions you're making, and it has to be something that informs what you're doing. The question of risk, I think this is really critical because risk and innovation are two sides of the same coin. The United States government handles and approaches risk very poorly. The reasons for

[00:18:30]   that are many, but I think in terms of helping drive innovation, we have to ask is data, is evidence and evaluation helpful in this case. How might that be used? If it's not, how might that be used to be helpful?

                    What Raj was hinting it, and in my experience on Capitol Hill, and then working at

[00:19:00]   USAID, is I observed the phenomenon of a zero risk tolerance approach to global development. What that does is ... We always laughed back in the 1990s when I was a Senate aid, we would go and do oversight of USAID projects. We would joke and say, "They're all great. They're all 100%. They do everything." It was like, this can't possibly be true. There was a real reluctance to say that anything, "Maybe it

[00:19:30]   didn't quite do what we hoped or we're learning our lessons," stuff like that. That's not the fault of USAID, at least not solely.

                    In fact, it's more the fault of the culture around this oversight in policing the waste, fraud, and abuse culture, as I would call it, which is important to be good stewards of taxpayer money, but we do have to ask if being a good steward is oversight and

[00:20:00]   data collection and demands for data collection that actually stifles innovation. That tolerates no risk and no loss. You see that not just in USAID. I think you see it OPIC's portfolio, which is heavily in middle income countries, is how do we use data, evidence, and evaluation to start developing or engendering a risk doctrine

[00:20:30]   for the United States government or more specifically, for global health and development. We're definitely not there.

                    I think there has to be something where we say, "Evidence and evaluation can demonstrate when we try something new and we accept a risk that this might be a

[00:21:00]   loss, a complete loss, and represent some liability to the taxpayer, but we are confident enough in our ability to evaluate and collect data on this, that we know why it failed and we can use this data, this evidence to make improvements that not only help avoid that loss in the future, but actually give greater value for money because you've improved design and improved design." You're driving innovation.

[00:21:30]   If you ask venture capitalists in Silicon Valley their tolerance for risk, their doctrine of risk, that's the magic.

Raj Kumar: How much of this is a cultural issue that people work at OPIC or USAID or federally funded agencies have to be cautious with the money for cultural reasons? They've been trained that way. How much of it is legislative? How much of it is they are living within the constraints of the rules?

[00:22:00]

Michael Miller:	I think most of it, and I don't know exactly how you crack it, but like the lab and this embrace of innovation that Ambassador Green is talking about, that is so important. If USAID and USAID's implementing partners can go to Capitol Hill and say, "This is what we're looking to do to help drive innovation. Some portion of our ..." However the best way to say. "And we don't know if it's going to work. We do
[00:22:30]	know the potential benefits of helping do this." It's certainly not been a big part of the relationship down Pennsylvania Avenue. I think that's what can change, because people, I think, would basically understand. If you're stifling innovation by saying, "Broach no evidence of loss," then there should be some allowance within
[00:23:00]	100% of your portfolio, some allowance for a loss that might be able to teach you a lesson that will get greater returns later. Some enlightened legislation would be very helpful. Articulation from USAID and state department leadership along those lines would be very helpful. I think now's the time and the leadership is the right leadership to do that. It's going to be very hard not to crack, I think.
[00:23:30]	
Cindy Huang:	This goes back to your original question of in a time when the budget proposal of the Trump administration was to cut foreign aid by some 30%, do you then get into this crouched position of showing off all the successes to try to build support? I do truly believe, as Michael has also suggested, that's a mistaken strategy, because there will still be failures and people and groups like Devex will elevate when things don't always turn out right. I do think taking this model of we do need a risk
[00:24:00]	doctrine, a risk framework to be very transparent about where are we taking greater risks. Of course, those would be presumably the smaller amounts of money and then you study them rigorously and then you can start to scale from there.
	I do think that it needs to be, and we have the right leadership to have a more transparent conversation around that. Especially the way that Administrator Green has articulated this goal of self-reliance in transition, it's particularly important in
[00:24:30]	that case because then you really have to know what achieves the results and not just some of these interim measures or nice posters.
Raj Kumar:	Is there a risk here, unintended consequence that this focus on evidence is going to push us to fund ARVs and bed nets and the things that are easy? When you think about self-reliance, so much of that is democracy and governance and things that are a bit tougher to measure. Do we potentially skew our aid budgets in the wrong
[00:25:00]	direction if we take on this narrative? Thoughts about that, Cindy or Michael?
Michael Miller:	There is that predictable highest return on investment, I think, certainly does present challenges for what I think we can call, we have different names for it, but
[00:25:30]	building greater country ownership graduation from assistance. Also, expanding the types of programs that you're doing. If you say, "We're doing this narrow set of things and we're going to continue to do that because we're demonstrating outcomes and we're assured of funds and we know we can obligate them by the end of the fiscal year," which as I'm sure everybody here knows, you don't want
[00:26:00]	unobligated funds. Talk about one place where we could change the way we do business, pushing money out the door at the end of the fiscal year.

Raj Kumar:	If you don't spend it, you'll never get it again, right?
Michael Miller:	Then it'll all be taken back. Those things, they are sort of a ball of wax that do not lend themselves to taking chances and pushing the envelope on things you said. I don't want to step too much into a fairly contentious issue, but when we were working on getting the president's malaria initiative started, at that point, the part of USAID, when Tim [inaudible 00:26:37] came on board, I remember talking to him some years later about the idea of this lack of tolerance for loss, so taking on risks that might lead to loss, how that affects building country capacity, because there is argument that we have to be very careful in terms of who we make grants and cooperative agreements and contracts with because the closer you get away from the experts here who know how to deliver to untested country domestic mechanisms, if you will, the much greater risk you have.
[00:27:30]	Tim gave a very interesting answer. He said, "That's true, but that's kind of a risk you have to take because otherwise, you'll never build that capacity. They'll never be able to do it. You might have some failures and you have to be prepared and be on top of that. Otherwise, you're not really doing what we say we're setting out to do, which is work ourselves out of the job and hand it over to the country to do themselves." The ultimate goal of foreign assistance, right?
[00:28:00] Cindy Huang:	I agree. I do think that there is a risk and in the example of health, it's easier, to be a little bit crass about it, it's easier to take a Codel to visit an ARV or HIV AIDS clinic and say, "Here are the lives that are saved," than to say, "Here's a health system strengthening. Look at these better trained health workers. Look at the better decision making." It doesn't make as compelling of a story sometimes. At the same time, I think that there are more sophisticated measurements. PEPFAR itself has developed a sustainability index. I think there is a way to harness data to capture some of the broader improvements that we're seeking.
Raj Kumar:	The other challenge, and the administrator talked about this, is the immediacy of the humanitarian crisis. I think another possible critique of the focus on evidence is we've got to rush and get food out the door. We've got to take care of people who have urgent needs. We don't have time to do a randomized control trial. How do you think about, in the humanitarian space, in particular there's a lack of evidence-based studies, we should approach it?
Cindy Huang:	At CGD, I've been doing a lot of work with IRC, which is led by David Milliband. He has some great points on this topic. I've learned a lot from him. I think there are, of course, these immediate, the urgent crises, and that grips us to day. In fact, most humanitarian assistance, a couple of years ago, there was a study that said some 75, 80% of humanitarian assistance is spent on protracted crises, the average length of which is seven or eight years. In the refugee context, the vast majority of refugees are displaced for, the average is 10 years, and for those who are displaced for more than five years, which is the majority, the average is 20 years. I think there are some-

Raj Kumar:	What's an emergency?

Cindy Huang: [00:30:00] Exactly. What's an emergency? I think we have done ourselves a disservice. In fact, there's a very small percentage of our CTs or impact evaluations that have been conducted in humanitarian or complex crisis settings. I do think the first step is busting that myth, that it's too urgent. We can't measure anything. Again, the vast majority of the situations where you could take time to be more deliberate and set up studies, and there's in fact, the very fact that we're spending so much money on complex crises and humanitarian crises is why we should, because there's never

[00:30:30] going to be enough dollars to meet the need, so there's an even greater imperative to study and use that money wisely.

Raj Kumar: In the end, aid effectiveness depends on knowing what the right thing to do is. It does always run up against this political issue, because in the humanitarian world, there's a lot of evidence that shows the smartest thing to do is to give away more direct cash or currency to people who need it. It's currently something like five percent, six percent that is given in that way out of all the money spent on

[00:31:00] humanitarian relief all over the world. Doing more of that seems obvious, but then you've got to go to potentially skeptical audiences and parliaments and legislatures around the world and say, "We want to give cash to people."

Michael Miller: [00:31:30] Very skeptical audiences. This is one of the most interesting questions in the politics of development and humanitarian assistance. As people know, the famine is more often just a human creation.

Raj Kumar: That has been proven. It's new evidence.

Michael Miller: It's not so much for lack of rain or lack of soil. It's for lack of stability and lack of access to markets and things like that. I remember back in the 1990s working on

[00:32:00] Capitol Hill and then at National Security Council in the USAID, in and around south Sudan and seeing year upon year upon year of kicking food out the back of C-130s. Completely unsustainable. Talk about value for money, a low proposition of value for money. It was essential and we would joke that it would be better to fill one of

[00:32:30] these C-130s with palates of five dollar bills and kick them out over south Sudan because people knew what to do with it. It is a very tough political proposition to say, "Something that is usable for you ..." It almost puts too fine a point on the cost of it, rather than someone that's hungry that needs food, someone who's hungry, give them some dollars. It's sort of the same challenge that non-communicable

[00:33:00] diseases have. It crosses some perception threshold-

Raj Kumar: Why are we trying to deal with cancer over there? We're not dealing with it here.

Michael Miller: Exactly. Why are you talking about hypertension in Africa? Why are you giving cash out when we have needs back home? It's very challenging politically. This is another way evidence and evaluation, there's a very good case to be made for this

[00:33:30] in certain situations. You can demonstrate that people know better than the aid agencies where they need to find relief and how to get it. You can empower them to do it in the thousand of different ways that they will know how to do it, rather

than the one way we know how to do it, kicking it out of the back of a plane.

Raj Kumar:

[00:34:00]

In the administrator's story at the beginning points to this. Times have changed. He talked about having to make a phone call versus having the cellphone. We're at a different era where it is much easier to track. You don't literally have to push the cash out of the C-130. You can now send mobile money, you can send in small amounts, you can see how it's spent. There's a lot you can do to give confidence to the appropriators that we know how this is being done.

Cindy Huang:

[00:34:30]

I actually have a question for Michael on this, because I was struck when, in the U.K. where they have a lot similar questions about giving cash directly. Recently, Teresa May and Priti Patel have stood up for it and said, "The evidence works. It also boosts local economies." There are all of these secondary benefits to cash. At the same time, the number is still I've heard as high as seven percent. We can say it's a very small fraction of humanitarian assistance that's given by cash. My question to you is what do you feel, given your knowledge of Congress and the dynamics between Congress and their constituents, what else beyond more evidence do you feel could help push that conversation?

[00:35:00]
Michael Miller:

I think you need champions, people who know how to be a leader on it, frankly. Who are inspired by it and say, "This makes a lot of sense. It actually shows greater value than doing it the old way. It's an innovation and it's supported by the evidence."

Raj Kumar:

It's fiscally conservative.

Michael Miller:
[00:35:30]

Right. Now, good luck finding that person. It really does take leadership. It has some political risk associated with it. U.K. seems to be in a fairly acute crisis in terms of working at home versus doing development. In some ways it's much tougher for politicians there, we've found, working with our colleagues in the U.K. than even it is here at the moment. It's good to hear that you have to take that step and test it. If there are people who can say and be, what I was always called, barometers on Capitol Hill. If someone says, "If he or she is okay with it, we know that they've probably spent the time to make sure it works."

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Speaking about it in terms of giving greater value, greater efficiency, in the current environment saying, "This use is market forces and some of the basic positive human behavior aspects that we know about that people will do, first help themselves and help their families and they'll do the right thing." They're not going to blow it on beer. Some of them might, but you got to take that risk, right? I think it's going to take someone articulating it correctly.

Raj Kumar:

[00:37:00]

My own view about this is the mistake Teresa made and Priti Patel made is continuing to call this cash aid, which in people's minds is the palates of cash coming off a C-130 or backpacks. You've heard all these stories. We should be calling this something like digital currency, because is a different thing. It's not just handing out money to people.

Cindy Huang:	Thinking out loud and based on what you were saying, I was thinking that using this example, there are several elements that come together that make it a potential winner. You need some champions, you have the evidence, but you also have the market base, you have the private sector and innovation, which are all agendas that both conservatives and liberals can champion. I think there are several
[00:37:30]	elements there that could present a really compelling package.

Raj Kumar:	I agree. I wonder, if you think about this audience and people who work in this building and what they take away from this discussion, is there something you think we ought to be doing differently? Is there something we should be doing more of, less of, as we think about the broad arc here? Is that, yes, evidence has become more important. We're collecting more data, we're more thoughtful about impact, but what should we be doing? What's the next phase of this?

[00:38:00]	
Cindy Huang:	I have two quick ideas and then I'm sure Michael will give me more than I wanted to share, but I do think there is the what we were just talking about of it's not evidence alone. How does it operate in a broader bureaucratic and political ecosystem and how can you be thoughtful? You can't do everything, so how do you bring together the pieces to take some of these disruptions like cash and really be
[00:38:30]	able to scale them? I think that's one piece. Another is about the mainstreaming and the bureaucratic change. I know that having worked on several whole of government initiatives-

Raj Kumar:	You led Feed the Future, your agency process.

Cindy Huang:	I think it's always great to have the innovation shop or the evaluation shop that's doing good work, but of course, there are people, experts in sectors, in countries, who are doing fantastic work, so what are the structures and the incentive systems
[00:39:00]	that are needed to really start to bring people in? As you were talking about Hill champions, who are the internal champions who are really going to carry this agenda forward? This morning or yesterday, CGD put out a policy note. Again, this might sound bureaucratic, but it's a proposal to say that this research, evaluation, and learning should be part of the administrator's office. I'm very skeptical of proliferation of special envoys, so it can be taken with a grain of salt, but I do think
[00:39:30]	given the challenge of this time, the questions that will be asked, the push for value for money and efficiency, there is something about what's the strategy, then, to infuse that throughout not only USAID but other agencies engaged in development assistance?

Michael Miller:	It's actually a very hard question because in the current environment we're not
[00:40:00]	really sure where, back to our very first point, where global health and commitment to global health and development stands. I think it's not something that was visited in the last election. I think it's a reflection of a lot of what we in Consensus for Development Reform have addressed for almost 10 years now, is
[00:40:30]	that skepticism. Evidence and evaluation is an important part of that. In the Consensus for Development Reform we talk about, our slogan is, there are reforms

[00:41:00]	that can provide better value for the American taxpayer and better value for the people we're trying to help. Embracing those reforms and saying, "We're willing to change the way we do business." It's not just about innovation. It's about saying, "We can do something better. We can try reforms. This sort of larger prioritization questions. The larger political body."
[00:41:30] [00:42:00] [00:42:30]	There's also the imperative of ... I think we all observe it, but don't know exactly what to call it, but this, what I would call a national interest test that I think a lot of spending and programs have to meet now. In the development community, people are torn. Are we doing this for development for development's sake or are we doing this because we have an obligation that we must fulfill as a very wealthy country to people who are less fortunate? Or are we doing this to advance our national interest? The reality is we're doing it for many reasons and it's not one or the other. It is a fact that a lot of what we do, we don't explain in terms of how, even if it doesn't help us, it doesn't have some national security component that people are scrambling to declare that they have a national security component to it, even if it doesn't have that, but speak to what is it we do that does advance the interest of United States, you can do them simultaneously.
[00:43:00]	We can be a charitable country and that charity can advance our own interest. I think that's the real challenge in terms of speaking to policy makers and filling in that space that's now filled with skepticism to say, "There are other many good reasons we're doing this." It's not waste and it's not a giveaway, or not entirely a giveaway. It's in our interest as well to be a generous and innovative people. We need to do a better job of that.
Raj Kumar: [00:43:30]	I think if we want to get out of this long term rut, you said it's been 10 years you've been looking at how to address the skepticism. If we want to get out of that, we also need evidence around the national interest piece, because so much of the conversation nowadays is looking at global health and calling global health security. Or looking at some other program and calling it countering violent extremism. Trying to fit it into a mold that suggest it meets some national interest. We need evidence there too, to be able to have a deeper discussion about how it connects directly to national interest. Otherwise, that thin veneer is going to wear away quickly and be very vulnerable.
Michael Miller: [00:44:00]	In fact, that thin veneer can potentially do more harm than good. I think if skeptics think they're being spun, and everything we've done is now global health security, wait a minute. It looks a lot like what I saw five years ago, that you were not calling global health security. We do have to be careful, even though there is validity in a lot of these global health-
Raj Kumar:	There's a great case to be made.
Michael Miller: [00:44:30]	Absolutely. In terms of basic surveillance and things like that. To go back to ... I hate to keep going back to PEPFAR, but it's big and people know it. PEPFAR is a great example of the national interest. When people think, "We have to talk about the national interest. How does it make China get tougher on North Korea?" I'm not

[00:45:00] talking about that. Something much less tangible. PEPFAR is very interesting. It goes back to this reason why it's an exceptional thing how people understand Americans are proud of it. They're maybe uncomfortable with the size of it, but they're proud of it and see this is something that only the United States could really do, and we like that leadership. I don't think that's lost, even in this time of skepticism.

[00:45:30]

[00:46:00] PEPFAR started from a humanitarian impulse, really. It's grown to this giant program over 15 years now, but what it was not intended to do but has done is profoundly changed our relationship with Sub-Saharan Africa in a very positive way. When I first started working in African affairs in 1992, at first it was going to Africa. Now it's much different. There's many lessons in there, but there's a really good lesson in there in terms of for us, something like this, something that's just based on generosity and the humanitarian impulse, can advance our national interest in a very real way. That definition of national interest doesn't have to be so real politick. It can be something that reflects our values.

Cindy Huang: I really appreciate what you said about we have to go a couple of levels deeper. I think the top lines of, "Oh, South Korea used to receive assistance and now they're our largest trading partner" and these very high level, or taking the CVE. I think we start to lose we have different forms of assistance and development cooperation

[00:46:30] that have different purposes. I do think we have to get to that level as you were saying. Not all of global health is global health security, but surveillance systems, what we did around Ebola. That does directly touch Americans. And humanitarian. Often times people conflate those assistance, but as we've heard today, there is a lot of support for that direct humanitarian assistance. I think there you can appeal to the moral, but not conflate and say, "Then that's the justification for all kinds of

[00:47:00] assistance."

Raj Kumar: Absolutely. I think we can end on that point. This conversation has been very interesting for me in part, because evidence can seem like an academic debate. This can be something we need to think about in terms of how to structure and design a study. It has a very real world and very immediate implication as this discussion has hopefully highlighted, that we're living in an interesting moment. At least in a former life, I used to do political consulting and worked on campaigns all

[00:47:30] over the United States. Candidates, whenever you polled foreign aid, it always polled pretty low. It was always a pretty easy thing to go hit. A coalition has been built over the last 15 years or so, private sector, faith groups, a wide coalition. A lot of the organizations listed on this global innovation week poster have come together and said, "This actually matters for a lot of reasons."

[00:48:00] It's still a potent political issue. It still has that core group of people who are skeptical. It's a small group, I think, but they're noisy. For those who believe in these issues and understand the importance of what USAID I does, for example, getting to the point of talking about evidence really does matter. We're out of time here, but this has been a great discussion and I appreciate both of your thoughts. I know there's a lot more work and thought leadership that's going to be coming from the two of you. We at Devex are covering this issue extensively, so we appreciate all of your interest in this today and enjoy the rest of Global Innovation

Week.

Michael Miller: Thanks.

Cindy Huang: Thank you.