

# GOALMAKERS 2022

CO-CREATION & PARTNERSHIP



## 2022 CONFERENCE SUMMARY REPORT



## INTRODUCTION

### Now is the time for Co-Creation

This was a conference with purpose. The conference theme, co-creation, wasn't just a thread contrived to unify disparate interests. It was part of a full-scale shift in the field of global development toward decentralizing institutions, respecting local knowledge, and working to give more power to grass-roots organizations.

In response to disruptions in travel from COVID-19, several organizations moved decision-making authority away from their central offices based in the U.S. and closer to the people the organizations served. Many meetings which had been done in person are now remote. The workings of the Global Washington conference itself also shifted. For the first time it was a hybrid format, with people logging in from around the world on the first day, and then gathering in person the second.

But it wasn't just a matter of shifting logistics. There's a growing consensus that this is the most efficient thing to do, it advances the mission to improve lives, and it's the most equitable and just approach. In doing so, we can center and amplify new perspectives and innovative ideas of people who are often excluded in program design.

In the past few years, a variety of organizations pledged to change how they work. In November 2021, USAID administrator Samantha Power gave a speech in which she pledged to make aid more responsive to local communities. And, Goalmaker keynote Degan Ali is building a coalition of U.S. based INGOs to pledge a more equitable relationship with their partner organizations in-country.



Meanwhile, a group of business thought-leaders, including Jane Wei-Skillern of the University of Berkeley's Hass School of Business, have articulated a framework for "Network Leadership" as a way of making change in the world that is non-hierarchical and works using these principles: "trust, not control; humility, not brand; node, not hub; and mission, not organization." In fact, Wei-Skillern and others have been training leaders in the network mindset for decades, which is an essential prerequisite to co-creation.

The result is co-creation; a vision for trusting and purposeful collaboration on an equal basis to define and solve problems. The definition is broad enough to take in a whole range of partnerships. Among the examples of successful co-creation talked about at the conference: women's economic empowerment in Fiji, a collaboration with Nigerian small-holder farmers to come up with better varieties of cassava, and an improvised partnership between Save the Children and Amazon to deliver supplies to Ukrainian families affected by war.

What all these things have in common is a direction away from old assumptions and red tape and toward responding to people in low- and middle-income countries, and different perspectives. It's about leadership through service and collaboration. It's a real change, and it may be just what the world needs.

# CONTENTS

## DAY 1

- 04 Opening Remarks: A Challenge to Change our Mindset
- 05 Opening Keynote: Trust-based Philanthropy
- 08 Powering Youth Employment in Africa (SDG 1 and SDG 4)
- 11 What Changed in Global Health Systems and What Stayed the Same (SDG 3)
- 14 Community-driven Solutions for Food Security (SDG2)
- 18 What “Co-creation” Means to Those Living in Low-and Medium-income Countries
- 22 Plenary keynote: Africa Forward
- 24 Closing Keynote: Co-creation with Youth Movements

## DAY 2

- 28 Opening Remarks: The Concept of Co-Creation
- 29 Fast Pitch
- 31 Opening Keynote: Small-holder Farmers as Universal Co-creators
- 33 Opening Plenary: Co-creation for Global Development
- 36 Co-Creation for Economic Growth (SDG 1, SDG 8)
- 39 Fighting Corruption Through Co-Creation (SDG 16)
- 41 Rebounding from COVID-19 (SDG 3)
- 44 Access to Education (SDG 4)
- 48 Global Hero Award: Dr. Chris Elias
- 49 Lunch Keynote: Decolonizing Global Aid
- 51 Operating and Funding Highly-Regulated Environments
- 52 Co-creation for Climate Justice (SDG 13, SDG 7)
- 55 Using Local Knowledge to Fight Hunger(SDG 2)
- 59 The Many Factors Behind Gender Inequality (STG 5, SDG 10)
- 63 Afternoon Plenary: Virtual Remarks from USAID
- 64 Plenary Panel: Building Trust
- 67 Afternoon Keynote: Co-creating for Rapid Response
- 70 Closing Remarks: Forging New Relationships
- 71 Conference Host Committee
- 72 Conference Planning Committee
- 73 Conference Sponsors

## DAY-1 OPENING REMARKS

### A Challenge to Change our Mindset

On December 7th, **Kristen Dailey**, Executive Director for **Global Washington**, opened the first (virtual) day of the conference, with an explanation of the conference theme. When COVID halted global travel and laid waste to supply chains, agencies started rethinking how they did work around the world, and how to increase their staff capacities outside the United states.



Kristen Dailey

*It forced us to think about the processes of how we do things differently, which included having more decision-making made in proximity to where the work is done.*

~ Kristen Dailey



Organizations don't want to go back to the way it was in 2019.

So, though the worst of the pandemic is over, the drive continues to have more people outside of headquarters involved in defining problems and finding solutions.

"That's what today is really about. It's hearing from people all over the world to figure out how we create a better model for global development," Dailey said.

"It is a way to change our mindset and think differently about how we do our work so we can take advantage of the tools that we have, the technology that we have, and the way we have come out of COVID to do things differently."

## OPENING KEYNOTE

### Trust-based Philanthropy



Naina Subberwal Batra

Trust is an essential part of building partnerships that support powerful local action, said **Naina Subberwal Batra**, CEO of the **Asian Venture Philanthropy Network (AVPN)**, which is embarking on a project of trust-based philanthropy. AVPN, which has 600 members active in 33 different markets, is administering millions of dollars in flexible grants for impact organizations in the Asian Pacific region.

This started in January 2021, when six corporate members came together to establish a fund for primary health care and COVID-19 resilience. In the days of the pandemic, it was an urgent need, Subberwal Batra said.

“Very quickly our members recognized that a lot of people and organizations were slipping through the cracks.” Organizations needed to be sure that as their priorities changed in response to the crisis, their funding would still be there.

*“If all our funding had been tied up in programs we would have not been able to, 1) deliver or, 2) survive. We knew there were many other organizations like ours that would also benefit from unrestricted resources or trust-based giving.”*

*~ Naina Subberwal Batra*

Among the impact organizations that benefited was a health organization that “managed to quickly change the target of their health and vaccine training to focus more on the urban poor communities when they identified the collective reluctance towards providing the vaccine in this part of the community.” The funds have grown.

“We have mobilized more than 11 million US dollars in unrestricted funding across seven different funds, focused on thematic areas like sustainability, gender equality, digital transformation, and STEM education. We are also in the process of raising a \$25 million gender equality fund.”

For this kind of philanthropy to work, communication and transparency between donors and grantees is paramount. Recently AVPN held its first “sharing circle” for funders and impact organizations from one of its pooled funds.

“In the lead up there were nerves on both sides about how it would go,” Subberwal Batra said. “By the end of the session, they were speaking as equals about issues that they might not otherwise have brought up.”

For example, grantees were able to explain what it meant for their organizations to have unrestricted funding. And funders were able to confide about the challenges to get colleagues and superiors to “buy in” to the concept, rather than sticking to funding for projects to measurable outcomes.

Another essential part of this kind of philanthropy is that the grantee organizations set their own goals for what they aim to achieve with the money. “They too are able to do the same and define the outcomes by listening to their end beneficiaries,” Subberwal Batra said.

While trust-based philanthropy has been in action in the United States for years, it is new in Asia, and some donors are cautious about it. “Different funders have different trust thresholds,” she said.

Grantees, too, have to do some “unlearning” to make the new relationship work. “Grantees are used to receiving and reporting on programmatic funding. They’re used to certain processes themselves and are accustomed to having the power imbalance tilt towards the funder.”

This holistic approach doesn’t work well with the kind of numbers-based goals that can be common when funders are bankrolling individual projects. Sometimes the results might be something that’s hard to quantify. “We need to be more concerned with outcomes than outputs,” Subberwal Batra said.

Having this sort of funding has been a lifeline to some organizations dealing with uncertain times. She talked about how a representative of the Center for Indonesia’s Strategic Development Initiatives (CISDI) described the impact of money from the flexible health care pool.



*They spoke to how if they had to deliver a budget report each time they had to pivot or adjust their plans to address their needs and objective, they would have been so tied up in paperwork that they would have struggled to focus on necessary urgent interventions.*

*~ Naina Subberwal Batra*

Subberwal Batra believes that the kind of communication that comes with trust-based philanthropy is necessary for taking on the world's challenges. "If we are to have any chance of achieving the SDGs even beyond 2030, we need to harness all our skills, resources, and networks, and we need to align our ambitions and work together."



## BREAKOUT SESSION 1

### Powering Youth Employment in Africa (SDG 1 and SDG 4)



African nations have a huge population of youth, and finding employment for them – even for those who are university educated – is an uncertain prospect.

Session moderator, **Chimdi Onwudiegwu**, Associate Partner at **Dalberg Global Development Advisors**, framed the conversation by highlighting that Africa has the highest number of youth per population compared to anywhere in the world. “How do we support the job creation space to ensure that a lot of youth are entering the job market and ensure that we are catalyzing inclusive growth?”



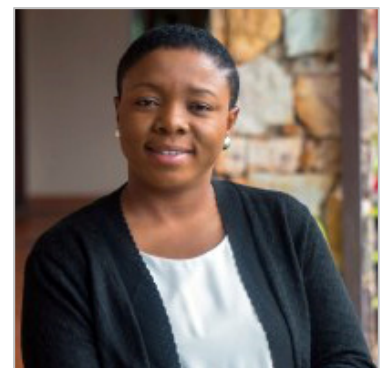
Chimdi Onwudiegwu

**Abigail Welbeck** is Director of Career Services at **Ashesi University** in Ghana.

Welbeck said that educators and job-creation program designers need to be “a bit more intentional in our approach to things.” For educators, that means recognizing that it takes more than technical skills such as coding to produce graduates ready to change the world.

“You have to have the critical thinking skills, and also the concern for others, but you have to be concerned about what is happening around you, and also the courage to make that transformation happen.” For those coming up with job creation programs, that means keeping careful track of the programs’ impact.

Youth should be given the opportunities to solve problems in society, and governments should take a hard line against corruption and set a good example for civically responsible



Abigail Welbeck

behavior. “Let them see the right kind of behavior so they model that – to act with integrity, to be concerned about others,” Welbeck said.

**Teddy Nalubega** is an Electrical Engineer and Solar Photovoltaic Trainer for **Remote Energy**. She is based in Kenya. Renewable energy, information technology, and entrepreneurship are all growing areas with lots of opportunities, though they don’t yet match the need for youth jobs in East Africa, Nalubega said.

She’s chairperson of WISEe, or Women in Solar Energy and Energy Entrepreneurship, an organization formed in 2015 by the first all-female solar photovoltaic training class. They formed the group because not enough women were pursuing jobs in renewable energy.



Teddy Nalubega

“At the time there were so many men running after it and the women were not catching up, so we thought, ‘OK, how do we go about it?’” Nalubega said.

Since then the number of licensed women technicians has increased from 2 to more than 30, and women are taking work in the industry in other roles.

One powerful strategy for attracting women is to hold women-only online trainings. Nalubega said research shows women in these trainings are five times more likely to end up working in the industry. And the women prefer the classes to co-ed ones. “Most of the women log in and express their gratitude to be in their classes.”

It’s also important to provide women role models. And trainings for women and men need to go beyond the technical details of how to put up solar energy. Her organization, Remote Energy is adding a leadership and entrepreneurship module for its technicians. “We realize we need to be job creators,” Nalubega said. She also notices that graduates of engineering programs are often short of hands-on experience.

*I am very optimistic because we have the resources, we have the youth, and the youth bring along a lot of wealth; we have seen that youth are creative, inventive, and they are agile. We need to create an ecosystem that gives them an opportunity to work.*

~ Teddy Nalubega



**Zulumoke Oyibo** is a film executive, movie producer, and Co-founder of **Inkblot Productions**. She talked about Nigeria's booming film industry.

"Right now what is fantastic about the space is that there are no barriers to entry for someone with ideas to get up and go."

Because many jobs are short gigs, it is hard for people to find steady employment. Oyibo would like to see more structure in the sector, for example having unions that could set standard rates of pay for particular work.

She would like to see the government do more to stop piracy, and take steps to provide more education in movie related trades. She would also like to see more collaboration between African countries. "We need to be more Pan-African in our thinking, I think," she said.

There's a lot of creative talent in Nigerian youth. For example, a group of teenage boys in Northwestern Nigeria has gained international attention, and an appearance in a Netflix film, with their online skits. They reenact the trailer using basic materials they have, such as using a wheelbarrow, instead of a track and dolly to move a camera.

"They are very creative, just being who they are with the resources that they have."

Their success makes her optimistic. "That is the type of thing I am hoping to see."

Session moderator, Chimdi Onwudiegwu, closed the session stating:



Zulumoke Oyibo

*I've spent the past one hour learning, but also smiling because I've been inspired, and a lot of what has been said resonates deeply with me, and leaves me with a lot of hope and optimism for the future.*

~ Chimdi Onwudiegwu





## BREAKOUT SESSION 2

### What Changed in Global Health Systems and What Stayed the Same (SDG 3)



KJ Zunigha

When the COVID-19 pandemic hit, with its restrictions on travel, many global health organizations scrambled to move more resources and decision making in the countries where they worked. Moderator **KJ Zunigha**, Associate at **Linksbridge**, reflected that the pandemic has been a catalyst for good: “The pandemic has devastated our world but the organizations you work for have really found ways to leverage that.”



Anurag Taneja

**Anurag Taneja** is Director of Global Development for **SightLife**, which before the pandemic had all its decision-making in Seattle. Now all the program leads are in local offices, with 90 percent of the leadership based in India.

“COVID has been a catalyst for change, and most of these changes have been for good,” Taneja said. “Having decision making at a local level, we have been able to respond to a changing environment much better.”

People making decisions are able to hear a greater range of perspectives, or “diversity of thought,” he said. “We have a happier team and a more productive team.”

SightLife changed its training procedures, which formerly had relied on U.S. experts. At India’s two training centers, they trained new trainers, revamped curricula, which they offered online during the worst of the pandemic, and shifted to hybrid later.

*The talent was always there. We just had to give it the right push.*

~ Anurag Taneja

Decisions were made very quickly. Updating the standards for eye banking took three weeks. The last time the organization had done that task, it had taken seven years. “We can get a lot more done in a lot shorter time.”

They were able to collaborate between regions. Hong Kong’s National Eye Bank has a renowned culture of quality, and staffers from there shared their procedures with other eye banks. A team from India and Nepal is now helping set up a new eye bank in Mali.

“It’s the first time a we have taken up a new project without the U.S. involved at all,” Taneja said.



Shripad Desai

**Shripad Desai**, Senior Director of Asia and Eurasia Programs for **Americares**, said his organization had always planned to decentralize, but the pandemic made it happen. Desai said Americares went from having most of its staff in New York and Connecticut to employing people in the countries where the programs are. “We’ve moved away from the expat model,” Desai said.

Within India, Americares supported 240 COVID care centers across 50 states. They delivered oxygen and protective gear, and set up telehealth appointments for patients to get treatment for other problems besides COVID.

With time their priorities have shifted, though Desai rejects the idea of a “new normal.”

*One thing COVID has taught us is there is nothing like normal. Rather, change is the only constant.*

~ Shripad Desai

They work on helping health care workers with infection control. This year they launched a free online course in infection control for nurses. It is available in six Indian languages. They are also working on improving mental health care, aiming to have at least one mental health care worker in each Indian district by 2025.





Dr. Rotafina Donco

Dr. Rotafina Donco, Mozambique County Director for VillageReach, said that two years ago, 28 percent of VillageReach's leadership was in Africa. It is now 50 percent and the organization aims to increase it to 80 percent.

Her team was able to coordinate with two different government departments (which otherwise wouldn't talk to each other), provide news updates about the pandemic, and, when vaccines became available, organize transportation to the last mile. As of December 2022, more than 96 percent of Mozambicans over 18 have been vaccinated.

"The countries with the strongest response to COVID 19 are not always donor countries," she said.

In Mozambique, the health care challenges are mounting. The disruption of COVID meant that regular childhood vaccinations fell behind, and the country faces outbreaks of polio and measles. It is also vulnerable to cyclones which can fuel cholera outbreaks.

All this is more reason for VillageReach to move more decision-making power to Africa, Donco says.

*We need to make sure that we have local skills strengthened and that we have local strength on the ground.*

*~ Dr. Rotafina Donco*

## BREAKOUT SESSION 3

### Community-driven Solutions for Food Security (SDG2)



Moderator, **Robin Barr**, Global Lead, Development and Community & Indigenous Rights at the **Earthworm Foundation**, started this conversation by highlighting how wars, COVID-19, the climate crisis and natural disasters have combined to create what the World Food Programme calls “a food crisis of unprecedented proportions” with 49 million people in 49 countries on the edge of famine. Within this context, the panel talked about strategies for increasing local resilience, and enabling local communities to end hunger where they are.



Robin Barr

**Irene Naikaali Ssetongo**, Head of Programs for **The Hunger Project** in Uganda, said that when her organization works with communities, they ask people if they think that the world will achieve the U.N. Sustainable Development Goal of ending hunger by 2030. People say no.

They come back with another question. “How many of you believe within your households, you’re going to still be hungry by 2030?” They say ‘I think I can do what it takes to make my children and family be food secure,” Naikaali Ssetongo said.

What happens next is up to the communities themselves. “We are just coming in to facilitate and empower them.”

The Hunger Project leads people along a five-step process, starting with creating a growth mindset. The next step is building effective leadership. It is essential that there be effective leaders in the community.



Irene Naikaali Ssetongo

“If there aren’t, there are going to be cases of food theft and misuse of resources.”

Then there’s vision-setting, and getting all the community to commit to working together for that vision, putting action plans in place.

With everyone working together, they have a chance to avoid common pitfalls. For example, one area where The Hunger Project has seen a lot of starvation is in communities where they grow sugar cane for market. They don’t grow their own food, and the sugar that they sell may not bring in enough income to buy food, particularly if everyone in the area is also growing sugar.

The advice is to think about hunger first when planning what to do with farmland.

*Yes, the commercial bit is important, but first secure your food.*

~ Irene Naikaali Ssetongo

”

The whole process takes five to eight years. But when communities have success, their neighbors copy them. The Hunger Project now has 50 functioning hubs and counting in Uganda.

Naikaali Ssetongo would like to see Uganda work on “a balance within the food systems chain,” building infrastructure, and working with the private sector in order to allow better distribution and access to processing.

**Anjali Makhija**, Trustee and CEO of the **Sehgal Foundation**, talked about her organization’s work with small-holder farmers in India.

“Whatever we have worked on is based on the needs of the communities and the interests of the communities and linking it to food security.”

They work with the farmers on ways to increase agricultural yield and decrease the amount of money they need to spend on things like fertilizer. They work a lot on water saving mechanisms. They also support rural schools, funding drinking water and sanitation



Anjali Makhija



facilities, and paying for digital education. One outcome of what the kids are learning in school: they are telling their parents about government programs that would help them.

*These young children are great messengers of change, making it possible for their families to ask for their entitlements.*

~ Anjali Makhija

”

She would like to see more “public, private, and people partnerships” with the groups of farmers they work with able to engage with corporations and the government.

She’s excited about technical innovations to make “climate-smart agriculture” and crops that provide more nutritional variety, such as iron-rich wheat or millet, and golden rice. She’d like to see more support for the kitchen gardens women grow with vegetables for the household, “nutrition gardens,” she calls them.

But really, the key thing is knowledge. “Information – that is the gap that we really need to fill.”

**Jedidah Ganira** is Livelihoods and Resilience Advisor for **World Vision** in Kenya, which is facing one of its worst droughts on record, with four failed rains. The majority of livestock is dead – a terrifying prospect in a society of pastoralists – and 4.3 million Kenyans are faced with acute malnutrition. They are working with different partners to truck in water. In places where there isn’t food on the market, they are supplying food. In places where markets have food, they are giving families cash, “so that the households can make decisions and weigh their urgent needs.” And they are making plans to help farmers rebuild their herds.



Jedidah Ganira

“We are hoping and praying that we get out of this situation as soon as possible,” Ganira said.

World Vision also works with farmers long term to help them improve the soil structure, species diversity, and water conservation of their farms through a set of techniques they call “Farmer Managed Natural Regeneration.” It’s an approach that uses a variety of sustainable agricultural and agroforestry

techniques that work with small-scale farms and gardens.

The goal is to be able to have sustained yields, while at the same time building soils and avoiding paying for outside expenses such as fertilizer and seeds. Farmers work together to come up with watershed-wide plans on how to distribute water.

Farmers who have taken this approach with their land are more resilient in the face of disaster.

*There is a lot of correlation between the regreening approach and food security.*

~ Jedidah Ganira



She would like to see improved supply chains in Kenya so food is better distributed and it is easier for farmers to reach market. It would also help if public tastes shifted. For example, most Kenyan cooks choose to make their Ugali with maize, but sorghum uses much less water.

## PLENARY PANEL

### What “Co-creation” Means to Those Living in Low- and Medium-income Countries



Rebecca Ecwou

Panel moderator **Rebecca Ecwou**, Program Manager for **Geneva Global**, framed this session by stating that one hallmark of co-creation is that it doesn't involve fixed plans, but shifting arrangements. And the Dec. 7 panel participants talked about their work with differing communities; the idea of shifting, whether it be plans, goals, expectations, or strategies, came up again and again.



Semi Lotawa

**Semi Lotawa** is co-founder of **Rise Beyond the Reef**, which works for the economic empowerment of rural women in Fiji.

“For us it's about listening, adapting, and evolving together, being there as a long-term partner for our community, rather than just in short-term project lifecycles,” he said.

Working with the community, they have come up with their own approach to disaster preparedness. “Our work is not always about the last category 5 storm, but how do we prepare our community for the next category 5 storm,” Lotawa said.

That means looking for ways for communities to help themselves. Preparations include salvaging storm debris, using a portable sawmill, establishing community foodbanks, including seed stored for short-term crops in case supply chains are interrupted, and schemes for economic recovery, perhaps by making products for market from storm debris.

The COVID-19 pandemic proved the resilience of Fijian rural communities, Lotawa said.

“In the lockdown, rural communities were able to turn around and supply to those that were in isolation centers.”

Their approach of “radical listening” and bolstering the power of women in their households and communities doesn’t always mesh with international funders.

“Donors, when they are looking at funding, the funds come with certain criteria,” Lotawa said. Communities can have somewhat different priorities and different ways of measuring success.

“When we come in with an outside lens, it’s always hard to really see some of the transformational changes that indigenous or local communities are defining as an impact.”



Yussuf Sané

**Yussuf Sané**, National Coordinator in Guinea-Bissau and Co-lead of the Leadership Team for **Tostan**, described Tostan’s method for co-creation.

“We work with communities to design a vision of the future and support them in a process that enables them to navigate towards that vision,” he said.

When Tostan was founded 30 years ago, the focus was on providing people with access to information. But once people started talking, things started shifting.

*“This access to information enabled communities to better respond to their own aspirations in a holistic way.”*

~ Yussuf Sané

“It encouraged them to organize decision making in a participatory way, in an inclusive way, and in ways that eventually improved access to education, better health practices, economic empowerment, and their management of the environment.”

The typical Tostan plan involves working over three years with program facilitators living in the communities they serve.

“One of the main challenges we face is that communities, as they’re learning, their aspirations grow, even within the period of our three-year program, we may have a community develop a vision in the very beginning, and of course as they are learning about democracy and human rights, gaining new knowledge, their

aspirations become higher,” Sané said. “It’s a good challenge to have.” They often can’t keep up with what the community wants.

Tostan can be a link helping communities engage with the world. For example, last year, while working with 120 communities in Guinea-Bissau, the regional government was doing work on the UN’s Sustainable Development Goals.

“We realized the communities were not aware of the SDGs. Once they became aware, we started to see with more clarity how much of a contribution they had already made and how open they were to launching community-based initiatives for achieving the SDGs. Their contributions will now be included in the Bafata region’s development plan.”

As they spend more time with communities, Tostan facilitators start hearing different voices. Women and youth, for example, are often hesitant to share their ideas at the beginning, Sané said.

“We work through learning centers in communities and very often you will see that women have less confidence in sharing their ideas. Through time, gradually their confidence grows to the point where they’re organizing awareness-raising activities with the wider community. And by the third year of the program, you will see women who were once very shy in the classes are now organizing public declarations for respect for human rights on a national scale.”



Ivan Greco

**Ivan Greco**, the implementations lead for **Future of Fish** in Chile, said that Future of Fish’s style of co-creation has shifted over the years.

He showed a slide showing the style of co-design they used in 2018. There’s a crowd of people clustered around a model on a table.

“Our idea originally was convening all the stakeholders, bringing a lot of innovation into it in one marathon session like this one, pull out some models, bring a lot of ideas not only from the fisheries sector but also from other perspectives. Then we would pull out some raw material and our interdisciplinary team would go into a room and come up with ‘brilliant ideas’ that would solve the

problems that were brought by the fishers in those sessions.” Greco said, “It’s not that easy, of course.”

Since then they have moved to something Greco called “ontological design” using a term from Colombian political ecology thinker Arturo Escobar. Ontological design is a method that leaves the designer with a changed perspective. “By the simple act of designing, I am going to deconstruct or reconstruct my worldview,” Greco said.

These days most of the team is in Chile and isn’t dependent on people traveling from the United States. They are constantly in contact with the fishing communities that they serve, and gaining a new understanding.

“We are constantly designing in a different way and this is kind of reshaping our way to understand the problems.”

Either way, it takes time. It took three years to build the fish processing plant “co-designed” in the 2018 meeting.

Greco said that shifting from the top-down approaches to co-creation means being ready to question everything about how organizations function. “We need to deconstruct almost everything.”

For example, the term “development.” “What is development? Who says what it means to be developed?” he asked. “Who dictates that? Who shapes that? Who designs that? Humility is necessary, as is a willingness to admit to not having all the answers. There can be a situation of ‘OK we have a general goal, but in order to get to the goal, the paths haven’t surfaced yet,’” Greco said.

Panel moderator Rebecca Ecwou, said to keep in mind that true co-creation means being in a constant dialogue, with shifting understandings “deconstructing and reconstructing of partnership.” And that is necessary if it is going to be effective.

## PLENARY KEYNOTE

### Africa Forward

Dr. Wamuyu Mahinda, a member of the governing council of **Catalyst 2030**, and co-chair of its Africa chapter, talked about the **Africa Forward Initiative**, which she is leading.

Dr. Mahinda was joined by her colleague Nwando Ajene to talk about Catalyst 2030. Catalyst 2030 aims to create partnerships and use a “systems change approach” to achieve the UN Sustainable development goals by 2030. The Africa Forward Initiative is a strategy to put African social entrepreneurs at the forefront of achieving those goals. “We want them to drive the agenda for Africa,” Mahinda said.



Dr. Wamuyu Mahinda

Among the aims: a goal of 50 percent of the funding to be controlled by Africa-based organizations, a mark that will take some work to achieve. “A lot of funding is coming into Africa but unfortunately very few Africa-led organizations are taking charge of these funds,” says Mahinda.

Other priorities are fighting unemployment and supporting social entrepreneurs with training.

*We want to ensure that all the skills gaps that exist within the leadership of social entrepreneurs in Africa is looked into.*

~ Dr. Wamuyu Mahinda



The idea is to find people at work on the ground – field catalysts, as Mahinda calls them – and help them accomplish more.



It is particularly important to build connections between these organizations and government and business. Too often “working in silos” holds social entrepreneurs back, even though they may have their own technical experts.

An example of the approach: Collective Value Partners Africa works with a collective of women in South Sudan who are making peanut butter. It’s a promising project: the women grow the peanuts and know how to make peanut butter and sell it. However, there are problems: the technology they use is too slow, the prices they get at market aren’t enough to make the women a living, and the women’s leadership could use some business training.

“Using this model we are able to identify the gaps, and so we are able to fix things,” Mahinda says. And a similar approach could be used for some enterprise quite different from peanut butter. “It means we are able to transform communities doing different things.”

Making this happen requires support in terms of technical expertise, money and resources, but it’s important that things are funded the right way.

“We don’t want blanket capacity building, we want to be able to be able to identify the actual skills and the actual gaps that we have,” Mahinda said.

“We would like partners to come and explore the gaps with us, so it’s not determined prior to collaboration with us and we can co-create the solution to make sure that we have the correct solution.”

Mahinda said it may be the world won’t achieve all the sustainable development goals by 2030, but says real progress is being made in empowering local people, and that’s important.

“It cannot be business as usual if we are going to make the kind of system change that we are looking to make.”



## DAY-1 CLOSING KEYNOTE

### Co-creation with Youth Movements



Natalia Lozano

Natalia Lozano is Director of the Seattle International Foundation's Central America and Mexico Youth (CAMY) Fund.

Youth-led movements have a powerful history in transforming society. Current examples include the "Marea Verde" or "Green Wave" movement for abortion rights, the Chilean youth protests of the past three years, the protests for women's rights in Iran, and the global movement for climate justice. But youth-led organizations often struggle to attract outside donors.

When she was part of grassroots youth movements in Honduras, Lozano found outside agencies were dubious about whether they deserved support.

"We were always questioned as a partner. We were always questioned as youth leaders and we were always questioned as change-makers," Lozano said. "We were also questioned for strategies that were built from our own worldview, the way we knew change could happen."

The youth leaders' views weren't valued.

*We were forced to do activities that were a priority of the donor but were not for the community.*

~ Natalia Lozano

The Seattle International Foundation and the CAMY fund is working to change those attitudes, to "change the mistrust," she said, getting donors to treat grantees as partners, and

promoting flexible funds that can be repurposed as conditions on the ground shift. The Seattle International Foundation has a dual role here, as a donor for local organizations, but also as a grantee for U.S. based groups who want to reach local organizations.

The goal: “not just be donors but to be an actual part of change, of social change, not just handling money but having an active participation while trusting the organizations and the path that they want to follow.”

In general, in Central America and Mexico, youth movements are at a disadvantage when seeking funds. Most of the people making decisions are adults and are not friendly to youth movements. To be more youth focused, donors need to be open to working with groups who may not have an English speaker on staff, or anyone with much experience in working with donors. “We need to give access to grants in Spanish,” she said.

It’s helpful to have young people on staff, and staff based in the region where the funding goes. And it’s important to take feedback from the youth you are trying to help. “I remember being part of a project where they used to say it’s youth-friendly but the formats were crazy. They were asking so much information that was not even needed and there was no instruction on how to fill those formats.”

There’s one way to quickly find and fix barriers like this, Lozano said, “Create the spaces for young people to speak up.” Because if you can succeed in creating a trusting relationship, great things can happen.

*You will see the difference when you trust the people that you are funding in a different way, where you know that they’re doing what they are doing because they know how to do it.*

~ Natalia Lozano

Lozano sees that principle in action in her work with human rights organizations in Central America and Mexico.

“The work that they do is simply amazing, and we sit and learn because we know that we have the privilege of the money and the financial support, but the knowledge is based in the grass-roots organizations, and change doesn’t start with big actions but it starts little by little, step by step to make it sustainable through many other years.”

Finding that trust means taking a risk, but risks are what make things happen in the world.

“So let’s take a risk together,” Lozano said.







## DAY-2 OPENING REMARKS

### The Concept of Co-Creation

Kristen Dailey, Executive Director of Global Washington, said that although “co-creation” is a relatively new buzzword in global development, most people attending the conference are very familiar with the concept.

“I do think a lot of you are already doing co-creation,” she said.



Kristen Dailey

Some might know it from synonyms, such as “country-led development” or “human-centered design.” It represents an important set of principles about how to have a partnership in design and implementation of programs in low- and middle-income countries.

When the COVID-19 pandemic halted international travel, it pushed many organizations in the direction of co-creation, causing them to move their leadership away from U.S. based headquarters to people in closer proximity to service delivery.

“We want to take advantage of the COVID crisis, learn from crisis and move forward,” Dailey said. “We want to talk about a shift of mindset to understand how to better center people in low and middle-income countries.”

*It's about partnerships and collaboration.*

~ Kristen Dailey



## FAST PITCH

Representatives of six GlobalWA member organizations gave their two minute pitches to explain what co-creation meant to them and their organization.



**Dr. Brian Baird**, Chair and Founder of the **National Museum and Center for Service**, presented his vision for a dedicated museum of service on Washington D.C.'s National Mall, that would partner with university and college campuses and service organizations.



**Julie Budkowski**, Director of Operations for **Future of Fish**, talked about her organization's strategy for helping fishing-dependent communities in an era when 90 percent of fish stocks are fully exploited or currently overfished. Future of Fish has done co-designs in Peru and Chile working with local people to protect the environment and their livelihoods. "It's about feeding families, livelihoods, and sustainable ocean stewardships," she said.



**Sharon London**, Development Director for the **Forest Stewardship Council**, talked about how her organization rose to the challenge of defining and promoting sustainable forestry after the 1992 Rio summit failed to produce an agreement to stop deforestation. With 1200 member organizations representing 89 countries, FSC is able to use its checkmark logo to verify whether products come from sustainable forests. And it can help donors sponsor forests.



**Dr. Erin Meyer**, Director of Conservation Programs and Partnerships at **Seattle Aquarium**, introduced a new verb: "reshark," to describe the Seattle Aquarium's initiative to restore populations of sharks in the ocean. They now have two shark nurseries, co-designed and built by local communities, and the first shark babies (which are called pups) hatched in September.



**Alejandra Gonza**, Founder and Director of **Global Rights Advocacy**, described her organization's mission to provide free legal counseling to people whose human rights are threatened, including undocumented communities and indigenous communities.



**Jason Hatch**, Foreign Engagement Officer for **Operation Snow Leopard**, outlined how his organization works to get Afghans threatened by the Taliban out of the country. Using an "underground railroad" of safe houses they have successfully evacuated 1600 Afghans, most of them women, and are now trying to move 1000 more.

## OPENING KEYNOTE

### Small-holder Farmers as Universal Co-creators

Enock Chikava, Interim Director for Agriculture Development at the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, introduced a social group that is an essential part of feeding the world, growing economies, and addressing the climate crisis: small-holder farmers.



Enock Chikava

That is, food producers who often cultivate a mix of crops and livestock plots the size of a soccer pitch and smaller.

These farms grow most of the food for more than 2 billion people and provide most of the employment for sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia. It's a group so large and integral that Chikava called them "universal collaborators or co-creators," and said that for serious work in global food systems, they need to be equal partners. "You need to go to the core of their dreams and aspirations," Chikava said.

Yet they are too often overlooked by donors in the global north. "The disconnect today stems from a failure to appreciate fundamentally the way people view agriculture between here and Africa," Chikava said. While only 1.4 percent of Americans work in agriculture, farms provide employment for more than half the people in sub-Saharan Africa.

*For most Africans, agriculture is not just something that feeds their families, it's something that supports the families.*

~ Enock Chikava





He grew up on a small-holder farm, one of 11 children, who all helped with the work.

“For us, it was family enterprise. We needed it to raise money for education.” His 83-year-old mother is still running the farm. No one knows better than her how to make that land work.

“It’s been productive, it’s been successful. Those are the aspirations of every small-holder farmer,” he said. “She is managing that farm with sophistication and precision.”

If people listen to these local experts, and give them the money or technical help to accomplish their aims, the results can be powerful.

For example, the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation is working with many partners in Nigeria to create new varieties of cassava. Cassava is an “orphan crop,” one that hasn’t had much attention from agricultural scientists, despite the fact that it feeds hundreds of millions of people. To Chikava, that’s outrageous.

“The definition of food should be made by those eating the food,” he said. Growing crops for exports can work, but sustainable farming means growing food locally.

*If you eat what you don’t produce and produce what you don’t eat, you have a serious problem.*

~ Enock Chikava



“Export should not be at the expense of growing food for communities,” Chikava said.

It’s not just about agriculture. “Small-holder farming is connected to every other development priority.”

That goes for dealing with the climate crisis. Farms are vulnerable to shifts in climate, but they also have the potential to help lower greenhouse gas emissions. “When you understand the role of agriculture, the way you frame climate and its impact is different,” he said.

## OPENING PLENARY

### Co-creation for Global Development

The discussion in the opening plenary took on the broadest questions: what is co-creation and how do you go about doing it?

The consensus: it demands humility, it is hard to do well, but it is definitely worth it.



Ashley Jackson

**Ashley Jackson**, Team Lead for Sexual and Reproductive Health at **PATH**, said the organization strives to practice co-creation in its work for global health, for example working with Zambian women to figure out how best to provide them with child vaccinations and contraceptives. In 2021, when the organization made a commitment to equity, they worked with their partners to co-create an Equity in Programming Benchmarks tool to hold themselves accountable. It's a complex document, using 12 specific indicators over four topic areas.

They make use of other resources. One is Roger Hart's "Ladder of Youth Participation" with its eight rungs ranging from "Manipulation" with youth having no say, to "Youth-led activities with shared decisions with adults." Another is the work of the White Ribbon Alliance, which is centered on asking women and girls what they want, before taking action. "We are all of us on this continual learning journey," Jackson said.

Giving up control in favor of listening to other people can be difficult. "The work we do is only going to be effective if the people we work with help shape it," she said. But doing things the right way matters, she said.

*The work we do is only going to be effective if the people we work with help shape it.*

~ Ashley Jackson



Jennifer Butte-Dahl

Jennifer Butte-Dahl is the Senior Director for **APCO Impact**, a global advisory firm that helps organizations try and make partnerships. She said philanthropy has come a long way from the old days when Corporate Social Responsibility was something only done at corporate headquarters.

“We’ve moved into a more collaborative space.” But there are limits. “Not much of what we do is co-creation right now, truly,” Butte-Dahl said.

Real co-creation has certain characteristics, she said. One is intentionality: you have to decide to work on a specific challenge with a group of people. It has to be inclusive, bringing in the broadest range of stakeholders, who are involved in every step, framing the problem, implementing the solution, evaluating whether the solution worked, and using an “iterative process” to come up with the best possible fix.

“There’s a shared sense of power. There’s a shared sense of decision making. There’s a shared sense of accountability and responsibility,” Butte-Dahl said.

To keep everyone working together, communication is paramount. Partners need to be clear on the definitions, expectations, and process. “What are your design constraints? When and where will co-design happen? What is the timeline?” she said.

Everyone needs to understand how to speak up and give feedback. And everyone needs to understand how to deal with disagreement. “There I’d say ‘Be Kind,’” she said.

And once you start a co-creation process, you need to commit to abiding by what the stakeholders come up with. Butte-Dahl has been in a situation in which a funder decided midway through the co-design that they had already decided what the goals should be, and they weren’t going to abide by the process. “If you do it wrong you create a lot of mistrust.”



Katie Young

**Katie Young**, Senior Vice-President for Global Growth and Development at **Starbucks**, said that co-creation challenges people's mindsets. People are comfortable with simple collaboration, offering solutions to a problem, "saying, 'Here's my brilliant idea.'" But they are scared to identify a problem and then collaborate with people to find a solution.

"If it doesn't surprise you, and it doesn't scare you, you're not co-creating yet," Young said.

Instead of being concerned about getting all the players behind a particular scheme, would-be co-creators have to respect others point of view and expertise. And that takes humility and discipline.

*Human nature doesn't like it. You believe that you are smarter than the other people in the room. If you don't keep that in check, you're not co-creating.*

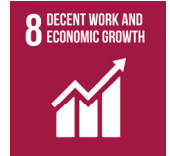
~ Katie Young

There are times when executive decisions are appropriate, Young said. But there are limits to what that can accomplish.

"If you're trying to create change, something complex, and something that is going to help someone, and you're not co-creating, you are doing it wrong."

## BREAKOUT 1

### Co-Creation for Economic Growth (SDG 1, SDG 8)



This panel, moderated by **Greg Snyders**, Partner at **Dalberg Global Development Advisors**, was about money, and how to work with local communities to figure out how best to invest in economic growth.



Greg Snyders

**Peter Battisti**, Executive Director for **Future of Fish**, said that a major flaw in many “sustainable seafood” projects is that they are centered on ideas like “stopping overfishing” and “protecting marine resources” but overlook the needs and desires of people who depend on fish.

“If we come into a fishery and say ‘Stop catching turtles,’ well, how do I do that if my whole livelihood is pulling fish from the water?” Battisti said.



Peter Battisti

Another problem: non-profits and other support organizations that launch into initiatives to help reduce overfishing, need to be aware of broader development and industry needs when pursuing strategies like alternative livelihoods. For example, a program they are involved to establish a seaweed industry in Belize has struggled to get traction given the difficulties of market access, product differentiation, and supporting services to establish a viable industry. The non-profit and fishers continue to work together well but the solutions are much more complex than anticipated to achieve the desired outcomes.

The way to avoid these pitfalls is to work closely with local people and ensure that you develop and deepen trust and capacities over time to increase the establishment of sustainable enterprises that can thrive. Future of Fish doesn’t always get it right the first time, Battisti said. Sometimes, when they start to execute the idea,

they'll find some way it's wrong and they have to work with locals to adapt it.

Future of Fish focuses on investment in technologies, loans to fishers, finding alternative livelihood methods for people depending on fisheries that are no longer viable.

In the short term, they aim to create the enabling conditions through grants from formal donors removing the barriers that local communities face in order to de-risk for private investment through formalized networks. In the longer term, they want to use the grants to grow the enterprise so that it'll attract private investors.

The biggest challenge is gaining trust of local communities. Battisti said that one of the artisanal fishery communities that they work in has had three NGOs rebuffed for pushing their environmental agendas. Future of Fish has ensured that their approach, which also has environmental goals, is balanced with social programs and has integrated community members as key stakeholders in the solutions that they are leading or supporting in the community. It has taken a lot of time, listening and building to establish that trust.

**Caroline Bressan** is the CEO for **Open Road Alliance**, a non-profit which provides quick, flexible, low-interest bridge loans for social entrepreneurs who are dealing with interruptions in funding. For example, they might have been counting on money from a foundation in June, but it isn't coming until September. Or there was the time a European investor got in a ski accident and couldn't sign off on the money, so Open Road gave a \$300,000 loan to keep the lights on.

It's about allowing people to make an impact, she said.



Caroline Bressan

*We can't solve these big climate problems if people are forced to sit on their heels for weeks waiting for financial support to come through.*

~ Caroline Bressan





For her, the biggest challenge of the whole donation system is how to put it on a footing where social entrepreneurs can rely on steady, flexible funds, without having to constantly qualify or appeal to organizations like her own. “Social entrepreneurs are out there doing backflips on a donor timeline,” she said. The result is highly inefficient, with groups unable to commit to long-term staffing or work.

When choosing who to support, Open Road looks for the impact of the work being done, not the potential for any return on the investment. “We are not maximizing for financial gain. Our focus is on getting paid back and recirculating that money for another project as fast as possible,” she said.

And this mission means its work is always going to require some philanthropy for support. “We’re trying to do risky stuff and we’re going to need blended finance in perpetuity,” she said.

**Tony Machacha**, Board Member for **Ecologists Without Borders**, described his organization as “the Geek Squad of non-profits.

“We provide expertise to projects in developing countries, researching and assessing the projects,” Machacha said.

For example, in response to invasive water hyacinth from the Amazon disrupting fishing communities around Lake Victoria, they are encouraging pilot projects harvesting the hyacinth for products like paper.

He said the most common time projects need funds is as the project is coming together, in the “proof of concept” phase, which is also the riskiest time.

The major problem is trust, he said, and there needs to be change on both sides of the donation. On the one hand, local organizations need to build some skills how to show donors that their money is going where it should go. (While working for the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, he helped train people in East Africa in how to conform with donor requests for financial accountability.) On the other hand, donors should listen to local organizations and amend their criteria to make it easier.



Tony Machacha



## BREAKOUT 2

### Fighting Corruption Through Co-Creation (SDG 16)



Maura Donlan

Fighting corruption and establishing the rule of law is essential to creating the kind of society where co-creation can flourish. And the best way for an outsider to help accomplish that goal? Co-create with a local organization.

Session moderator **Maura Donlan**, Director of Advocacy & Effective Social Investing at the **Chandler Foundation**, framed the conversation, stating “Co-creation for global development is a process that centers those in low- and middle-income countries in problem definition, innovative solutions, and program design. It is rooted in trust, relationship buildings, networks, and partnership.”



Reilly Martin

**Reilly Martin** is Senior Program Manager at **Open Contracting Partnership**, which supports drives for transparency and fairness in how governments award contracts. They work internationally. “We wouldn’t be able to do the work if we didn’t have local partners who wanted to work with us and wanted a change in their local governments.”

These local partners can work under terrifying conditions, as they challenge those holding power in their countries.

*I have the benefit of working in the U.S. and I’m not threatened on a daily basis for doing the work that I do, but a lot of my colleagues in other locations around the globe do face that reality on an ongoing basis when questioning the norm.*

~ Reilly Martin



It's hard work winning the trust of local partners. Reilly is mindful of breaking down barriers, demystifying the process, and involving local people in decision-making. But what does the most for trust is success.

"When people are able to see the change and see change happen quickly, particularly in public contracting, it breaks down those barriers, to say, 'Oh, people are being paid on time and people are being welcomed to the table,' it leads to them wanting to come to the table and put themselves out there."

Speaking of trust, too many U.S. donors would hesitate to give money directly to the movements that Open Contracting supports.

"We are still in a place where we need to have a U.S. presence to give to our international colleagues, unfortunately."



Dr. Serena Cosgrove

**Dr. Serena Cosgrove**, Board Member for **Seattle International Foundation**, and an Associate Professor at **Seattle University**, talked about how a lack of rule of law in parts of Central America is a "real push factor in migration."

"When we are trying to think about understanding the roots of immigration, or we are talking about how there aren't enough economic opportunities for folks in Central America right now is also really making that connection with how fear and not being safe is making folks, and especially women and their children, leave their homes."

## BREAKOUT 3

### Rebounding from COVID-19 (SDG 3)



Facilitator **Aaron Milner**, Senior Consultant at **Linksbridge**, framed this session, pointing out how COVID-19 was a shock to health systems, and that global organizations had to adapt quickly to support communities – while at the same time faced big questions of equity and power. Panelists talked about how their organizations rapidly decentralized, and worked closely with local people to adapt.



Aaron Milner

**Dr. Taruni Khurana**, Deputy Director for Malaria and Neglected Tropical Diseases at **PATH**, said PATH's response to COVID-19 was made possible by years of trusted relationships with communities and governments. Both malaria and COVID-19 are febrile diseases, where “workers measure temperatures and then give drugs,” Khurana said. Relying on their existing models and the WHO norms, PATH was able to act quickly, and they did it without staff traveling.



Dr. Taruni Khurana

“If travel had not been banned, we from headquarters would have been involved in the COVID response, but we could not, and it worked,” Khurana said. “Work still happened and sometimes with better representation and localization with communities. It's possible to have representation without the Global North being so dominant.”

For Khurana, co-creation brings up issues such as: who is in the room and who sets the agenda? It's about ensuring that people have the confidence to say what needs to be said, and have the resources to complete the work. “Build trust, have equity in decision-making, and ensure resourcing,” she said.

Sometimes these locally driven processes don't have easily measurable outcomes, but "as long as we accept they are hard to measure, trust is what drives processes forward; it means that I'm hearing the right info from the ground, and the team trusts me."

**Heidi Breeze-Harris**, Executive Director of **PRONTO International**, said COVID forced her organization to move forward with changing how it trained trainers for its program for improving care during childbirth. It was a change they had already wanted to make.

"For years we had been talking about a virtual space but had not been forced to [use one]," Breeze-Harris said.

During the height of the pandemic, the trainers they relied upon were suddenly busy responding to the urgent needs of their communities and PRONTO was forced to look inward. They conducted a deep audit of their existing training modules, and developed a new virtual training program with synchronous and asynchronous elements.

The new training program included a session where clinicians were recorded taking part in medical simulations, which were then coded. The results were sent to the participants, who then met in cohorts to share feedback and coaching among peers in a non-punitive setting. The approach worked. In fact, clinical educator skills improved faster than before. By adding videos in advance of the in-person training, they improved education outcomes and reduced the number of times trainers had to travel.

While the success is encouraging, Breeze-Harris offers some caution.



Heidi Breeze-Harris

*Everyone says, 'Great. Virtual, it will be cheaper,' but that is not true. Working with frontline clinicians, bandwidth is limited. Most are women and do not have the devices or the tech literacy.*

~ Heidi Breeze-Harris



In India, PRONTO also created “Super Divya” a comic starring a superhero nurse. The Super Divya comic helps medical workers focus on empathy and compassion through quizzes and modules they can do in their own time. PRONTO is now adapting the comic strip for the US.

Breeze-Harris thinks more can be done to incentivize true co-creation. She calls for an ombudsman that can serve as a neutral party between donors like USAID and partners, and watch the co-creation process from beginning to end.



## BREAKOUT 4

### Access to Education (SDG 4)



Kimani Nyambura

Session facilitator **Kimani Nyambura**, Co-Founder of Kenya Kids Education Fund, framed this session by reflecting that providing access to education is always complex – people don’t approach their lives as simply a “teacher”, a “student,” or a “parent.” There are intersecting and important aspects of their lives that must be taken into consideration. A student may be dealing with stress, trauma, or hunger; a teacher may also be a parent, may be in an unsupportive or abusive relationship, and may be facing economic hardship; a parent could be a farmer who is worried about their crops or the health and livelihood of their family. To make education available, you can’t stop at the school door, especially when that door is closed indefinitely because of a global pandemic.



Dr. Gabriel Walder

**Dr. Gabriel Walder**, CEO at **Alliance for Children Everywhere**, said that after the pandemic hit, the organization’s staff in Zambia surveyed the communities they worked with.

“What came out of that was the need for food support for kids in schools,” Walder said. So while the schools were shut, the lunch program continued. They also kept on building schools. “We were demonstrating that we were there for the sustainable long term.” When the schools reopened, 99 percent of the students returned.

Building trust is paramount, he said, and that means honesty, even when things aren’t going well.



If a grant falls through, tell the local people you work with, saying “Funding might be tight right now, but I’m not going anywhere,” Walder said.

“You can’t have trust without transparency.”



Hilda Nakabuye

**Hilda Nakabuye** is founder of **Fridays for Future Uganda**. One of her organization’s main activities is going to schools to educate youth about the climate crisis. When COVID-19 hit, that came to an abrupt halt.

Fridays for Future shifted to supporting the networks of people they worked with. Using GoFundMe, they raised cash to provide necessities such as food for children and some families. Because the pandemic was bringing a lot of anxiety to communities, they looked for therapists who could provide free services.

And, they kept up the climate message through small, socially distanced actions outdoors, such as lake cleanups and tree-planting.

*It’s so important for organizations to understand the environment we are in, acknowledging the challenges the communities are facing.*

~ Hilda Nakabuye

Working with communities can lead to powerful solutions, she said. For example, her group is working with local women to collect organic waste from Lake Victoria, dry it, and make biodegradable briquettes. This solution – based on local knowledge – is clean, healthy, and doesn’t cut down trees, while providing income that women can use to keep their children in school. They’re also working with 100 local women to build sustainable gardens, which can provide both food and income.

**Laura Baerwolf** is the Chief Operating Officer for the **Mona Foundation**, which partners with local organizations to alleviate poverty and promote education and gender equality. Baerwolf said she hadn’t heard of the term “co-creation” before the conference, but she was familiar with the idea.



Laura Baerwolf

“Mona has been practicing community-led development for 23 years.”

She said Mona’s role in the work was strictly as a long-term supporter to local organizations. “They create their own solutions. They know best what the needs of their communities are. It would take us a lifetime to gain that experience,” Baerwolf said.

For those eager to dream up solutions on their own, following a community’s lead may be a humbling habit, but it is a necessary one, she said.

*If it’s not something the community has raised as a need or envisioned as a solution, it’s probably not as sustainable as we might think.*

~ Laura Baerwolf

And lots of things that promote education have little to do with schools. For example, one partner they work with in Cameroon has an educational program helping small-holding farmers convert from monocrops to diverse crops.

“Tutors and trainers worked with women and men to take whatever spot they have and create multiple crops from it,” she said. The result: better food to feed families and take to market to generate income.

A member of the audience asked the panelists about if USAID funding should change to be more supportive of their work.

Hilda Nakabuye said USAID programs were simply out of reach for grass-roots and youth organizations like hers. “They have these long, long requirements, asking budgets of \$100,000 plus dollars a year.”

Gabriel Walder’s organization does have USAID funding, but only gained it after the organization had been growing its operation for a long time. Even so, they had to make some changes, including hiring an accountant full time in Zambia.

“It should not take 25 years of scaling and 100 employees on the ground in Zambia,” Walder said adding that there should have been another, more simple way to qualify for USAID money, perhaps as a sub-grantee.

But Walder is encouraged by large funders showing a growing interest in dealing with grass-roots organizations. He has had more interest recently in donors wanting to directly fund the work in Zambia.

## GLOBAL HERO AWARD

### Dr. Chris Elias

The annual Global Hero award went to **Dr. Chris Elias**, the President of Global Development for the **Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation**. Elias applied his training in public health and medicine to lead work in global public health, including serving CEO of PATH for 12 years. He has a long history of backing equity initiatives.



Dr. Chris Elias

Elias sent a video message from Kigali, Rwanda. He said that since he began studying global public health as a graduate student in the late 1980s, the field has transformed “from a niche interest of a handful of researchers and practitioners into a bold and inclusive movement to achieve global equity.”

The thriving network of global public health organizations in Washington State has played a key part in that, Elias said.

*Almost everything of significance is achieved through collaboration and partnership, particularly with the communities that we aim to serve.*

*The real hero that enables our collective success is this rich ecosystem that supports and fosters the work of everyone in this audience.*

~ Dr. Chris Elias



## LUNCH KEYNOTE

### Decolonizing Global Aid



Degan Ali

Degan Ali, Founder of Adeso, had an early introduction to how the system of global aid lets down local organizations. And that led her to a mission of change. She talked about her journey in a speech that prompted a heartfelt standing ovation.

Ali's mother, Fatima Jibrell, was a social powerhouse working for peace, environmental protection, and support for Somalia's pastoralist communities, through her organization, Horn Relief. Ali wanted to follow in her footsteps, and decided the best way was to work with the UN.

"After some difficulty due to some racism, I landed at the UN," she said. And with this position of power, she was able to accomplish a lot. But her mother still struggled to be heard. "While I was having doors open wide open for me and fundraising so easily, my mother was being humiliated."

Ali quit the UN and joined her mother in the organization, now called Adeso, and found that people gave her the same treatment as her mother. "I went from automatic trust, access and privilege, to a world where I was seen as being risky."

Ali wants to change that system so that no other grassroots organizers from the global South have to experience the same thing. She wants a new system with a fundamental shift in attitude "based on abundance and trust rather than scarcity and risk." The current reality is the most humanitarian dollars go toward supporting people from donor countries who then use intermediaries to bring aid to populations.



“There are layers and layers of intermediation, where the last mile groups get the least amount of support.” Sometimes these groups will get zero overhead dollars. “They’re expected to work for free.”

And those giving aid tend to think of getting people past an emergency, rather than building something sustainable. “It is rarely with the mindset of ‘How do we help communities thrive?’ but, ‘How do we help them survive?’” Ali said. They need to really engage with people they seek to help.

“Instead of going to communities with a needs assessment or a checklist, ask what they are already doing, and give them the money to do what they are already doing for themselves.”

The potential for transformation is huge. “Imagine if we find the entrepreneurs and invest in their solutions, and actually fund a global movement that insists on food sovereignty,” Ali said. It wouldn’t just be more equitable, it would be much more efficient, without the big international infrastructure to pay for. Grassroots organizations should be supported long-term so they can be financially independent enough to make long-term plans.

The MacKenzie Scott Foundation gave Adeso \$5 million. Ali said they will use almost all the money to create a permanent endowment. “We need to fund for self-determination,” she said. “We will only be real equals in the system when we bring our own money to the table.”

Adeso is helping grassroots organizations reach out to funders, and funders find local organizations, with a searchable online platform called KujaLink. They are also starting a group called “CORE” to help small organizations with the accounting and other bureaucratic requirements that some big donors insist on.



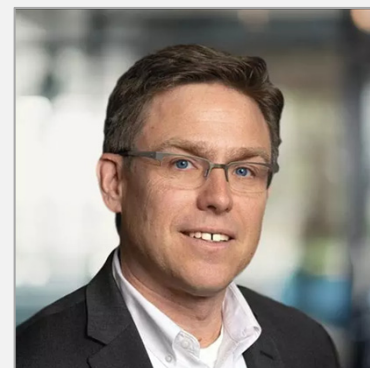
*Now is the time to fund courageously and  
trust generously.*

~ Degan Ali

## BREAKOUT 1

### Operating and Funding Highly-Regulated Environments

Global Washington convened a roundtable discussion for Executive Directors and CEOs to have an honest, off the record, peer-to-peer conversation about the challenges of working and funding in certain regions of the world. The group discussed that making grants into countries with highly regulated charitable sectors poses unique challenges to funders and NGOs alike. Participants shared experiences and discuss strategies for working in China, India, and other markets. Discussion Leads included **Birger Stamperdahl**, President & CEO, **Give2Asia** and **Eric Stowe**, Founder and Executive Director, **Splash**.



Birger Stamperdahl



Eric Stowe



## BREAKOUT 2

### Co-creation for Climate Justice (SDG 13, SDG 7)



Sun McElderry

It can be tempting to reduce the climate crisis to a problem that could be addressed entirely through technology, such as moving from fossil fuels to renewables. That's not the reality, said the speakers in this panel. To be effective, we have to work for climate justice, and support the people most at risk as the world warms.

This session was moderated by **Sun McElderry**, Founder & CEO of **esgEvolution**.



Taylor Leyden

**Taylor Leyden** is Program Manager, Energy & Sustainability at **Microsoft**. Microsoft aims to be using 100 percent renewable energy by 2025, and to be 100 percent carbon free 100 percent of the time by 2030. As it works on procuring renewable energy and investing in things like geothermal energy and improved battery storage, the company is increasingly focused on environmental justice.

"All over the world a lot of communities that have been affected by industrial pollution are not the communities that have created that pollution. We are starting to think through how we use procurement as a tool to right some of those wrongs," Leyden said.

For example, they have an agreement to buy solar energy through Volt, a Black-owned energy developer in D.C., with part of the revenue going toward bringing renewable energy to underserved minority and rural communities.

She said that companies should take an "all of the above approach" looking at energy generation, energy conservation, land

use, consumer habits, and more. She would also like to see a standard adopted that reflects the impacts of investments.

Consider this choice: do you purchase credits from an existing wind farm, or do you use your money get a new wind farm operational? Both are net-zero, using 100 per cent renewable energy. But they are not the same when it comes to the legacy for the future.



Laura Eshbach

**Laura Eshbach**, Program Manager for Corporate Engagement at **Landesa**, works with private sector companies to make supply chains that work toward land rights and social justice. She says that when it comes to supporting communities affected by the climate crisis, she doesn't like the word co-creation. She prefers "local-led." The best thing to do is ask communities what they need and listen to them. "Just have a conversation," Eshbach said.

Civil society organizations and companies don't talk enough, she said. When they do, they can benefit. For example, PepsiCo worked with a self-help group of women potato farmers in West Bengal, helping them lease land and giving them other supports for farming.

We have a lot to learn.

*The people that are most affected by climate change are already dealing with it on a daily basis and they are adapting, and they're surviving, and some are thriving and have made adjustments.*

~ Laura Eshbach



Ben Packard

**Ben Packard** is the Harriet Bullitt Endowed Executive Director for **EarthLab** at the **University of Washington**. He had another story about good things happening when corporations listen.

In 1999, he worked at Starbucks. Conservation International was lobbying Starbucks to buy coffee from the Chiapas region, in order to support the biosphere reserves there. He was part of a team that visited Chiapas to find how to make this work. They spent a lot of time there, talking and meeting with people. And farmers

them what they needed: access to credit.

“Starbucks wouldn’t have known what was the biggest issue if we hadn’t listened,” he said.

These days at EarthLab, they have a lot of conversations about what people need to do to adapt to climate change, so they can research some solutions. For example, in response to ocean acidification, researchers designed a pH meter that shellfish farmers can use to spot when conditions are most favorable for planting. And an interdisciplinary team of scientists is working with El Centro de la Raza on a plan on how best to use vegetation to fight particulate air pollution in Seattle.

When it comes to dealing with the climate crisis, we’re just getting started, Packard said.



*Are we doing enough? No. Are we doing more? Yes.  
Are we understanding the systemic nature of the  
challenge? Starting to.*

*~ Ben Packard*



## BREAKOUT 3

### Using Local Knowledge to Fight Hunger (SDG 2)



There has never been a single strategy to confront hunger. Instead, agriculture is site-specific, adapting to the climate, ecology, and cultures of specific places. The panel discussed the strategies and partnerships communities use to fight hunger, drawing on science, business, and local knowledge.



Tim Prewitt

This session was moderated by **Tim Prewitt**, CEO of **The Hunger Project**.

**Carmen Jaquez**, Agriculture and Livestock Advisor with **Mercy Corps**, supports pastoralists living in dryland areas. In East Africa, many are facing drought and crop failure, with some farmers losing 100% of their livestock. It's important to keep in mind the social context of livestock in these societies. For pastoralists, it's not just about food, but the family's financial future.

For example, she said, once you start talking to women about how they use veterinary care, a variety of issues come up.



Carmen Jaquez

"The women start talking 'I am the one that wakes up at night when you hear that cow coughing.'" Then she needs to do things such as grab three chickens, sell them, and go to town to buy medicine.

*How do we help her? Better access to animal health care so she doesn't have to sell the chickens? Better access to town?*

~ Carmen Jaquez



Those who depend on herds face an uncertain future. "We have

seen the erosion of traditional leadership, primarily because of government administrative leadership,” said Jaquez. “We can’t go back to what was, but we can create a future system that includes the voices of traditional leaders. It’s not about co-creation, but self-determination. My goal is to facilitate the direction that others choose to go. My purpose is to make sure the small-holder is represented and their voice is heard.”

To increase the agricultural viability in these communities, Jaquez champions promoting healthy soil and local ecology. In places like East Africa, local knowledge has often proved to be ahead of conventional agricultural science.

For example, the typical black and white dairy cow of temperate regions doesn’t do well here, but local breeds from dry regions can thrive and produce milk and meat with less need for water.

Jaquez shared an example where instructors from California went into the Turkana region of Kenya to try and bring back agroecology. “They did some demonstrations and the people from the community said, “Oh, that is what we used to do.” They had stopped because some outside experts had told them to stop.

**Jay Sehgal** is Executive Vice President for the **Sehgal Foundation**, which gives small-holder farmers in India access to current agricultural science, including technology that increases crop yields and resilience.

They work with the farmers, finding a few that are willing to have experimental test plots. When they see for themselves what Sehgal’s innovations can do for a farm, that’s when the ideas start spreading.



Jay Sehgal

*We spend quite a bit of time working with the farmers, meeting them, convincing them. But once they see the improvement others come along.*

~ Jay Sehgal



It takes years, but it works.

“Fifteen years ago, we were working with farmers saying ‘Save water.’ Nobody believed us. But now 90 percent are using drip irrigation or sprinkler irrigation,” Sehgal said.

Sometimes the information farmers need is as simple as a weather forecast, Sehgal said. Last spring, rains at the time of the millet harvest caused most of the crop to be ruined. With good weather information, more farmers might have had the change to harvest their millet, dry it and get it to market.

**Sarah Freed**, Global Social Impact senior manager for **Starbucks**, talked about the company’s work to divert food waste from its stores into food banks.

Starbucks’ U.S. stores are part of a “backhaul food logistics rescue program,” which means that when the delivery driver drops off the new food in the evening for the next day, they also pick up the old food and deliver it to a local food bank. The program is fully self-funded through a tax benefit, and their logistics partner works at cost as part of the company’s corporate social responsibility program.



Sarah Freed

“We started piloting in 2016. It took us five years and so many interactions to get it right. Initially it was very hard to find the right nonprofit partner. We found a great partner in Feeding America and Food Donation Connection, which helped us to run food negotiation at scale,” Freed said. “This doesn’t work without a very tight partnership with communities.” Starbucks hopes the idea spreads to other restaurant chains.

The Starbucks donations are popular with the people who rely on food banks. “We consistently hear from our NGO partners that since the food is prepackaged and already cooked, it is an experience that brings a sense of dignity,” Freed said.

Tim Prewitt said that though this has been a rough time for industrial food systems, it’s led to real innovation.

“What’s breaking down are the big commercial systems that we thought were indestructible,” Prewitt said. “It is a huge challenge that will lead to some great breakthroughs.”

For example, there's greater support for alternative grains of corn, teff, sorghum and millet, for growing them and for promoting their nutritional value.

*We have a group of women in Chiapas that have done tremendous service to the people by redefining their nutritional pyramid.*

~ Tim Prewitt

”

Instead of sporting an array of foods straight from U.S. supermarket shelves, the pyramid shows food available locally.



## BREAKOUT 4

### The Many Factors Behind Gender Inequality (STG 5, SDG 10)



Jeanne Anyouzoa



Kaitlin McGarvey

This session, moderated by Jeanne Anyouzoa from Every Woman Treaty and Kaitlin McGarvey from World Vision, touched on climate change, health, poverty, economic empowerment, the effects of these global issues on women and girls, and how to use co-creation to develop new models for engagement at the community level.



Sienne Lai Zaw

Sienne Lai Zaw, a Fulbright Scholar at the University of Washington, talked about the situation of women in Myanmar.

“Women have less ability to act on their own because their priorities are their husbands and their families, so their power and their opportunity for getting more power and knowledge is less, and they become less empowered,” she said. “Women often just accept unequal pay because they don’t have any other option.”

She said major household decisions are made by men who think that women aren’t knowledgeable or capable enough. But when a male head-of-household dies, the woman becomes the primary decision-maker, often borrowing money to keep the family going. She then must carefully manage every expense in addition to maintaining their family duties, which can undermine her self-esteem and lead to poor health decisions.





Emily Bancroft

**Emily Bancroft**, President of **VillageReach**, told the story of a woman named Isolina in Mozambique. She is a mother of twins and understands vaccination is important, so wants to make sure her kids have the right shots to live a healthy life. However, the nearest health facility is four hours away, which means that she'll be away from the family farm, so is responsible for making sure there's food, water, and care for other kids. Many factors affect her ability to get her twins vaccinated, including the needs of the farm, the ease of transportation, the availability of care for her other children, and the supportiveness of her husband. So finding effective ways to help her means understanding the whole situation.

An often-overlooked part of health system reform are the challenges that female health workers face. Bancroft said globally, more than 6 million women work as underpaid health workers. They face constant stress, have inadequate or non-existent training, and are often at the mercy of large bureaucracies. This often leads to conflict with women who are trying to get healthcare for themselves or their children. The problem is exacerbated when health clinics are far away from people's home communities, so clinicians don't have a natural connection to the patient.

*When considering gender issues in health, we also need to think about how gender dynamics are showing up for community health workers.*

*- Emily Bancroft*

She told the story of a woman who traveled to a health clinic to vaccinate her child, only to be turned away by a surly and unhelpful health worker who said her children were too dirty to be treated. When she returned a few days later, she was refused vaccination because there was a mistake – made by another health worker – on her vaccination card. Now she feels shame and is less likely to return to a clinic.

VillageReach is growing its focus on climate justice. Bancroft said climate justice is an essential part of improving health care.

“No matter what your organization is, what it is doing, you need to have a climate justice focus,” Bancroft said. “It’s something that we all need to be thinking about and considering.”

Mozambique is one of the most climate-impacted countries on earth. Cyclones that were once in a decade are becoming annual events. So now people face flooding, loss of dwellings, and loss of health services, all of which lead to a higher incidence of cholera and other infectious diseases. “We can’t ignore that health systems are going to need to adapt to account for climate change and new disease burdens,” Bancroft said. “The women we are co-creating with are often farmers who are dealing with loss of livelihoods, droughts, and so forth.”

Bancroft has recently joined with a group of 100 women leaders from around the world on Project Dandelion (the only flower species that thrives on every continent) to advocate for more resources for women at the local level who are working on climate issues.

“The solutions are out there, but it’s a question of how we drive resources to those solutions and make sure they are happening,” she said. “Women need this kind of support to help others rise up together.”

VillageReach and Legado, an international climate justice organization, discussed what it means to develop programs that focus on creating thriving communities that have healthy watersheds, good access to healthcare, income-generating opportunities for women, and better education.

**Miyon Kautz**, Director, Marketing & Engagement for **World Vision**, described how the Vision Fund – a microfinance facility – helps women around the world, more than 70 percent who live in rural areas.

“We’ve seen a number of women’s groups and have talked to the women about the importance of the loans,” said Kautz. “These are basically co-creation at its best. Sometimes the funding that families receive become a sort of social fund within the family, for example, is sometimes used to help people get the medical care they need.”



Miyon Kautz

One of the challenges with many microfinance mechanisms is that nearly all the loan officers are men, while nearly all of those borrowing money are women – an instant recipe for unequal power dynamics. World Vision has combatted this by hiring women field officers and giving them training in a central location where they can also bring their kids while they learn from one another.

## AFTERNOON PLENARY

### Virtual Remarks from USAID

**Michele Sumilas**, Assistant to the Administrator of the Bureau for Policy, Planning and Learning for **USAID**, appeared by video call from Washington, D.C. to talk about USAID's shift toward localization and community building.



Michele Sumilas

Last November, USAID administrator Samantha Power gave a speech outlining a shift in the agency toward working more closely with local experts. Sumilas said they are hoping to tip the balance of power and give local experts more of a say. “We really see this as a way of recognizing we don’t direct and drive development by ourselves.” Today, between seven and 10 percent of USAID funds go directly to local partners, but by 2025, that figure will be at least 25 percent.

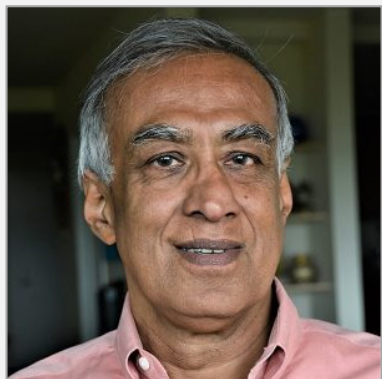
USAID is working to change requirements for promotion within its own ranks to encourage its employees to take a collaborative approach. The leadership would like to shed the idea that working directly with smaller local partners is somehow riskier than working with the larger international agencies they usually fund. “We also believe there is a risk in not working with new partnerships,” Sumilas said.

Starting with its “Local Works” program, USAID is trying flexible funding and hiring more staff to work with partner agencies at local levels. It is also taking steps to become more accessible. “Our new funding opportunities will be written in languages other than English,” Sumilas said.

They are looking at taking away some regulatory barriers that might exclude small donors who don’t have the resources to do the accounting, for example. “We are really focused on building an evidence base for how locally led development is more sustainable development.”

## PLENARY PANEL

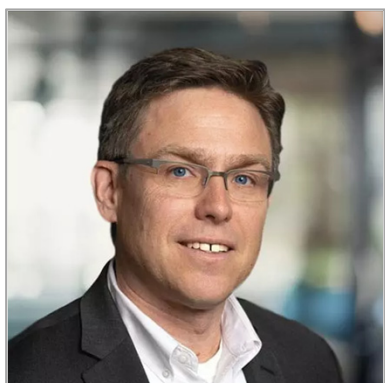
### Building Trust



Dr. Akhtar Badshah

The moderator of the session, **Dr. Akhtar Badshah**, Founder and Chief Catalyst for **Catalytic Innovators Group**, said donors needed to come to peace with their discomfort of the unknown.

“We cannot predetermine the outcome, we’ve got to trust the folks that are living the experience and are proximate to their own lives to determine the outcome.”



Birger Stamperdahl

**Birger Stamperdahl**, President and CEO of **Give2Asia**, said funders need to recognize that “trust is a two-way street.”

“I think we talk a lot about how do funders trust the local organizations enough to let them lead, but the other part of the conversation is the trust that local organizations need to see from international funders,” Stamperdahl said. “They need to know that the funders that are coming trust their leadership.”

In their role as “bridge-builders” between funders and local organizations, Give2Asia wants to create an environment where this kind of two-way trust can be built.

They work with donor-advised philanthropy and also create “Friends’ Funds” for local organizations, given chosen groups access to un-restricted grants.

In summer 2022, they launched “Disaster Link,” a way of driving more private philanthropy funding in the wake of disasters to local responders in Asia. Disaster Link has “at least four local partners that we’ve vetted in each market that can directly receive donations and are most likely going to be responding in the case of a disaster.”

They find that donor behavior is very different in disasters, a time when people are more ready to open their hearts and wallets.

During disasters, donors will be more inclined to break new ground, as happened during the COVID-19 pandemic when donors based in Hong Kong, for example, stepped up to fund PPE and health drives in the United States.

But in the absence of an emergency, people are likely to hesitate. What are the barriers? “Trust is certainly one of the big ones,” Stamperdahl said. “The other one is making sure the funders have the information on where to fund.”

And there’s a communication gap there. “Local organizations are not good international fundraisers, they don’t have internal capacity, and I don’t know actually that we want them to be good international fundraisers. We want them to stay focused on the work that they’re doing,” he said. It would be helpful if there were stronger national-level organizations that could promote the causes of local groups, and provide a way to get attention from international donors.

Stamperdahl has learned over the years about what is helpful in making an impact.

“*One of the key things that keeps getting reinforced is to truly let the local leaders lead.*

*- Birger Stamperdahl*

Stamperdahl gave an example: working in the Philippines, building homes in areas that had been hit by Typhoon Yolanda in 2013, they proposed some “best practice designs” from an architect. The local communities said the rooflines needed to be lower, because rain can drive in at a 90 degree angle, and houses with high roof lines would be leaky. They ended up going with the architect’s design.

“We made the wrong call,” Stamperdahl said. Six months later, the local partner contacted them, with pictures of water damage in the first 50 houses, and they had to go back, repair the houses, and change the design. “The local community knew best what they really needed in that house design.”



Another piece of advice for philanthropists: it makes sense to give money to support the leadership of organizations, rather than funding individual projects. “You are not just investing in their short-term success. You are investing in their vision of what they want their community to be.”



Jay Sehgal

**Jay Sehgal** is Executive Vice President of the **Sehgal Foundation**, a foundation that works with rural agricultural communities in India.

The Sehgal Foundation takes two roles: it works directly with farmers in India, and it also funds organizations in India and the United States. The organizations it chooses fit in with the broad goals of the foundation for protecting the environment, but they take on areas that the foundation isn't expert in, Sehgal said.

“Our philosophy is that we trust these organizations and get the money out to them.” Sehgal said. “They’re making an impact, they’re the specialists.”

The foundation started its work 23 years ago, when its founders, Dr. Suri Sehgal, an agricultural scientist, and his wife Edda Sehgal, invested a fortune Sehgal had made in the global seed industry. They started off funding other organizations but were dissatisfied with the impacts. So they consulted a group of aid organizations in India, and through the discussion concluded there was a need for people to do “last mile” work directly with farmers, improving agricultural practices. So the Sehgal Foundation decided to do just that.

Sehgal's advice to would-be donors? Be patient. Progress can be slow, and things may not work the first time. Sehgal points out that only 10 percent of startups actually succeed.

*We have always said don't be afraid of making mistakes.  
We always said try it out, if we fail we fail, we learn  
something from it and move on.*

~ Jay Sehgal

## AFTERNOON KEYNOTE

### Co-creating for Rapid Response

The afternoon keynote, moderated by **Linda Low**, Senior Director at **APCO Impact**, was a story about a partnership that came together quickly in response to the humanitarian emergency in Ukraine. When Russia invaded Ukraine and refugees surged to neighboring countries, it was a huge challenge for humanitarian aid workers to provide for their needs.



Linda Low

**Amanda Morgan**, Director of Humanitarian Private Partnerships for **Save the Children**, said the speed at which they had to work was intense. “We were there prepping families before they left, providing cash assistance, clothing, and getting them ready, but we didn’t know for how long,” Morgan said. Most refugees left with what they could grab.



Amanda Morgan

“Our staff were there at the borders in Romania and eventually Poland, along with local organizations working on receiving them.” Corporations came forward offering help, but the response team was too overwhelmed to respond to most of them. But then a call came from Amazon.

“I got woken up at 12:30 at night, because I had to make the decision of what do we do next,” Morgan said. Save the Children usually has rules and procedures they follow for vetting a partnership. But there wasn’t time for that.

“I said we’re not going to do that, and I’m going to take a personal risk and I’m going to make a call to the global humanitarian director to say ‘This is what’s on the table,’” Morgan said. And that brought the full strength of Amazon to bear on getting goods to Ukrainians affected by the war.

**Abe Diaz**, Senior Technical Program Manager for **Disaster Relief at Amazon**, said they started with money and questions.



Abe Diaz

*We started with cash: here's money, you're going to need it, get back to us within a week so we can understand what are the products that you need, the logistical challenges you have, what are the other assets we can come into the conversation with.*

~ Abe Diaz



While Amazon is experienced in disaster zones, they were mostly used to delivering their own products, while Save the Children had donations from other corporations as well.

Amazon made two logistical hubs, one in Poland and one in Slovakia for donations from Save the Children and corporate donors, and from there they distributed goods to families. What needed to go shifted as time went on.

“In the beginning days of the response, they needed gloves, they needed hats, they needed blankets, they needed diapers and wipes,” Morgan said. But they wanted to see to the educational needs of the children, so they started creating “bunker kits” with books and age-appropriate developmental toys.

It wouldn't have been possible without Amazon.

“All of these things need to come together to be packaged and they need to be distributed in the countries that they are in,” Morgan said. Amazon used its translation services and publication arm to produce books in Ukrainian, Russian, and Polish.

And it happened fast. “Books, in a response, [typically] come in months and months later, and in this response, it was just incredible to see how quickly they could pull it off,” she said.

Diaz was impressed too. “This whole thing happened at a speed that I've never seen before,” he said. It helped that Save the Children gave them specific instructions about what was needed.

“Trusting that you guys could do all the research and say this is the book we need, and us saying let's go do it, is magic in motion.”

Amazon has a philosophy called the “working backward model,” in which the starting point of any enterprise is writing a press release for the final product, describing its impact, and its customer base. It’s similar to co-creation, in that the most important thing is the impact on the customer – Ukrainian families in this case.

Morgan says that the kind of partnership that Save the Children has with Amazon requires three things: trust, honesty (“being drastically transparent”), and “business awareness” – comprehensive knowledge of your organizations’ strengths and weaknesses. And it takes constant communication.

“Sometimes the teams were working together speaking once or twice a day,” Morgan said. “I have colleagues who now consider Amazon as an extension of the response team.”

Diaz said building the kind of self-awareness necessary for quick work in partnership comes from years of being open to trying things out, “building and fostering a culture of iteration and trying things at small scale.”

And as the war grinds on, they’ll continue supporting families.

“The work that we do is hard, but at the same time nobody’s leaving the room. We are in it for the long run.”

*The work that we do is hard, but at the same time nobody’s leaving the room. We are in it for the long run.*

~ Abe Diaz



## CLOSING REMARKS

### Forging New Relationships



Kristen Dailey

In her closing remarks, **Kristen Dailey** said that while the response was quick, it came from years of groundwork between the two organizations.

“It was the relationships they built, the trust they built and all the communication they built before the crisis happened.”

And she urged those at the conference to forge new relationships.

*We have the spirit of innovation and open-mindedness in the Pacific Northwest. If anyone can do co-creation for global development, it's us.*

*- Kristen Dailey*

## Conference Host Committee

**Essa Sulaiman Ahmad**  
Divisional Vice President  
United States & Canada  
Emirates

**Akhtar Badshah**  
Author  
The Purpose Mindset

**Kathryn Compton**  
Chief Development Officer  
Strong Women, Strong World  
World Vision

**Abe Diaz**  
Senior TPM, Disaster Relief  
Amazon

**Scott Jackson**  
President & CEO  
Global Impact

**Susan Jeffords**  
Provost & Vice President for Academic  
Affairs  
Portland State University

**Marty Kooistra**  
Black Home Initiative Project Manager  
Civic Commons

**Melissa Merritt**  
Principal, Executive Search  
GoodCitizen

**Jane Meseck**  
Former Senior Director, Global Programs  
Microsoft Philanthropies

**Will Poole**  
Managing Partner and Co-Founder  
Capria Ventures

**Jeffrey Riedinger**  
Vice Provost, Global Affairs  
University of Washington

**Sara Rogge**  
Senior Advisor  
Philanthropic Partnerships Team  
Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation

**Sachi Shenoy**  
Co-Founder  
Upaya Social Ventures

**Birger Stamperdahl**  
President and CEO  
Give2Asia

**Leslie Tsai**  
Director of Social Investment  
General Counsel  
Chandler Foundation

**David Wu**  
President & CEO  
Special Olympics Washington

**Katie Young**  
Senior Vice President  
Global Growth and Development  
Starbucks



## Conference Planning Committee

### Jen Ankorn

Operational Excellence Manager  
Chandler Foundation

### Jeanne Mouiche Anyouzoa

Africa Co-Chair and Diplomacy Coordinator  
Every Woman Treaty

### Majd Baniodeh

Senior Associate Director  
APCO Worldwide

### Devika Batra

Manager, CSR and Fundraising  
SM Sehgal Foundation

### Kim Rakow Bernier

Managing Director and Faculty  
Global Leadership Forum

### Julie Budkowski

Global Operations Director  
Future of Fish

### Bridget Conroy

Intern  
Global Washington

### Kirsten Gagnaire

CEO  
Kati Collective

### Rowena Harper

Operations Coordinator  
Alliance for Children Everywhere

### Scott Hughes

Partnership Development Assistant  
PATH

### Derek Mathis

Engagement Manager  
Bridge Partners

### Kaitlin McGarvey

North American Fundraising Manager  
World Vision

### Anna Slattery

External Affairs, Thought Leadership & Influence  
The Hunger Project

### Mark West

Southeast Asia Senior Director  
Landesa

### Clara Yardley

Communications Associate  
The Chandler Foundation

### KJ Zunigha

Senior Consultant  
Linksbridge

# THANK YOU TO OUR CONFERENCE SPONSORS

## PLATINUM SPONSOR



## GOLD SPONSORS



## SILVER SPONSOR



## BRONZE SPONSORS



## PARTNER SPONSOR



## OTHER SPONSORS

Capria VC

Columbia Bank