TRANSCRIPT

"EDUCATION IN EMERGENCIES: EXPLORING INNOVATION, OPPORTUNITIES, AND CHALLENGES"

A conversation with Zeinab Adam, Linda Jones, Donella Rapier, and Sherrie Westin

Interviewer: Dean Brooks

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ANNOUNCER:

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CLAUDIA MAISCH:

Thank you guys so much for coming. We're gonna get started now. I first wanna thank our panelists for s-- being here tonight and s-- sharing their knowledge and their expertise on education in emergencies. This event is being hosted by the Education Support Program at Open Society-- and in partnership with BRAC U.S.A. and the United Nations Young Professionals Group. And I'm here-- to introduce myself a little bit.

My name is Claudia Maisch and I'm with-- I'm wearing two hats tonight. I'm representing the Education Support Program at Open Society, but also-- with the United Nations Association for Young Professionals. And I just wanted to give you guys a little bit of information-- a little background on our young professionals group. We are a network-- of young professionals that works to support the mission of the United Nations.

We host events like this, we also host advocacy events-- volunteer events, and happy hours. So you guys want a little bit more information feel free to chat-- chat with me afterwards. But we are also pushing-- one of the central campaigns that we're advocating for this year is the Adopt a Future campaign. And this campaign-- developed in r-- response to the refugee crisis, and it's something that the United Nations Association and UNHCR has partnered to--

bring awareness to-- the refugee crisis that's happening worldwide, but also-- directly s-- help support two refugee camps that are-- taking place in Kenya-- two camps that are supported by UNHCR. So-- if you want-- more information about the campaign, how to get involved how to support, please feel free to connect with me afterwards.

But most importantly, we're here for our wonderful panelists, and I'm really excited to hear more about the work that these great organizations are doing-- around education in emergencies. So-- I'm going to bring to the stage our moderator, Dean Brooks. Dean is with-- the Interagency Network for Education in Emergencies, and he'll be leading our discussion tonight. So-- without further ado, Dean. (LAUGH) (UNINTEL). (APPLAUSE)

DEAN BROOKS:

Thank you, Claudia. Before I invite our speakers up I wanted to-- to open-- tonight with a couple of points. First of all, as-- as mentioned-- I do lead the Interagency Network for Education in Emergencies, and I'm very curious, how many of you are members, if you could raise your hand? One, two, three, four, five, six. Okay.

Pretty good. Just to invite you-- INEE is a global network for those who care about education emergencies, who want to advocate for education emergencies, for those who work on education emergencies. And it's the best deal in town. It's actually free.

(LAUGHTER) So just go to INEEsite.org, and you are welcome to join. You just fill out a form-- and we check to make sure you are who you say you are-- and that's how you become a member.

And you can become as engaged as you would like to-- you can avail yourselves of all the different resources and tools. And tonight you'll actually hear from a number of our members-- who will be sharing what they do. So I would like to encourage you to look at that. And now I just wanted to start off with a couple of points.

UNESCO-- Institute of Statistics says in 2016 there are 263,000-- sorry, 263,000 children out of school-- sorry, million. Yeah. I was like, "That's wrong. It's much more." Education Cannot Wait, tonight, will be talking about the numbers of children who are out of school who are living in conflict zones. And they say 75 million. UNICEF two days ago just rec-- released a report that says there's 303 million children out of school.

And if you look at how they got to that number, they added just one-- one more year. They counted kindergarten-- they counted children who were five years old, and that added 40 million more children out of school. UNHCR just a couple of weeks ago launched their education report. Four million children in refugee context not able to access school-- children and youth. That's half a million children more in just one year. What do all these numbers tell us? Are they just numbers? And that actually, I think, is important to think about, and I think that's why this video that you're about to see will tell you something about that. Could we show the video?

(VIDEO NOT TRANSCRIBED)

DEAN BROOKS:

Tonight's event is called Education in Emergencies: Exploring Innovation, Opportunities, and Challenges. When I watch that video I was like, "I don't know. It's too-- too much." But that's what it's all about. And if you talk to any of those children, the first thing they're gonna ask you is, "Can I go to school?" And what are we gonna do for the-- for these children's future if we don't address this? One thing that INEE does is it helps create global guidance and tools that help practitioners respond to the needs of these children. We have the minimum standards for education.

Just this summer we launched global guidance on psychosocial support and social emotional learning to provide the key principles to respond to children, like we saw in this video. There's the Child Protection Alliance-- the Alliance for Child Protection that has standards for child protection response on how we can ensure that these children are given the tools they need.

As you saw in that video, these are resilient children, and they will continue to be resilient if we support them in the right way. And tonight we're gonna hear from BRAC, who's actually responding to the needs that we saw in that video.

So the question to really frame tonight's discussion, "Why does providing education in emergencies matter? How do education and emergency programs support (MIC NOISE) children and youth, and communities who are living in conflict and crisis contexts?" As INEE we have some key messages, you can find those on our website.

And I'm just gonna read those to you before our speakers arrive. First of all, education is a human right, and it's a human right even in emergencies. And that stands across the globe. At the same time, wars and disasters deny generations their right to education. We look at the statistics coming out of-- of UNHCR on the length of displacement: up to 20 years, even longer in many contexts.

Here in this video we saw Bangladesh, and this just started. How long will those children be there? In emergencies quality education enables children and youth to survive and to thrive at times of great uncertainty and vulnerability. I just last night-- arrived back from Central America, where it's not even making the news. While I was there ch-- there were young people that were taken and killed in the fields because they were protesting in schools. Or in Venezuela, nobody wants to talk about it, but the millions of displacement-- and now the figures are actually looking like displacement-- like we see coming out of Syria.

What's gonna happen to all of those young people? We're not even talking yet about education in Venezuela. Education is one of the first services demanded by families and children and young people in all of these settings. And I can tell you, about 20 years of work that I've done in emergencies, and this is always the first thing that I've seen.

And I-- I 'member being on a plane one time and somebody said to me, "So why do you do this?" And I was like, "Why do I do this?" (COUGH) And it's because of those kids and those young people who tell me, "We want an education, and we want it to happen now.

We cannot wait for education." And that's what tonight's about. I'd like to welcome our guests-- guest speakers, some experts who've been doing this work for a long time across the globe. And they have some hope to share with you tonight. So please, come on up. (APPLAUSE) (MIC NOISE)

So tonight we have-- Done-- Donella Rapier, who is the president and CEO of BRAC U.S.A. We have Sherrie Westin, the president of the Global Impact and Philanthropy Division at Sesame Workshop. Linda Jones, senior advisor for Education in Emergencies, based here in New York at UNICEF. And Zainab Adam-- the senior advisor for Education Cannot Wait-- and she'll tell you all about this exciting initiative.

And I have to apologize, Zainab followed me here, and I have a tendency to get lost, so we ended up wandering the city for quite a while. But luckily we made it in time, so. So tonight we're gonna start with-- (CLEARS THROAT) I'm gonna actually ask some questions and then-- our speakers will come up. Just so you know how tonight will flow-- after they do their presentation-- we will open up the floor for some questions and-- and we'll have some time to really discuss this-- this further.

So-- so tonight's first speaker is Linda Jones, and I'm gonna just frame some questions for you real quick, Linda, and then you can come on up. So my question-- is-- well, actually there's-- they are, what are the major challenges to addressing education in emergencies worldwide? What are the most successful approaches to delivery? And who are the key actors that UNICEF and other UN agencies engage with, and why?

LINDA JONES:

Good evening everybody. Lemme adjust this microphone to my height. So I'll be addressing those questions in the two parts. So starting with, "What are the major challenges to address in education in emergencies worldwide?" The first one, funding. There is simply not enough money being dedicated to education in emergencies globally. I think it's about four p-- just less than 4% of humanitarian funds goes to education in emergencies.

And when you look at the big plans that are developed for emergency response for0 education, they are always well unfunded. There's a massive gap always. But you can't just throw money at the problem. It's not just about money. Children affected by emergencies face multiple challenges ranging from the availability of services, the quality of the education, socioeconomic obstacles, discrimination, and language barriers.

For many children, going to school is an impossible prospect when the language of instruction is neither their mother tongue or a language they understand. This is particularly true, of course, for children on the move. Attacks on schools, students, and staff have

become more widespread over the last five years according to the Global Coalition to Protect Education from Attack.

Their recent report identifies more than 12,700 attacks on education facilities from 2013 through to 2017, harming more than 21,000 students and educators. That's mainly in conflict areas and includes girls just walking to school-- just going to school. We need to address the impact of the crisis not only on children, but teachers too, and how we support them. Not only much-needed psychosocial support, but also as governance breaks down due to conflict, the ability to pay teachers is a significant challenge, which is clearly critical in upholding education systems.

Generally speaking it ends up the second-highest budget item in any response, and it's one that you have to pay every month, every month, every month, just to keep a education center running for the whole school year. (MIC NOISE) Just for an example, in Turkey right now UNICEF provides financial incentives for 13,200 Syrian teachers to support the integration of Syrian refugees into the Turkish education system. That's just one example. I have many.

In our experience, supporting education innovation in emergencies we find there are many, many pilots, some of them ver-- well, many of them successful. But there's not a lot that go to scale, and we need scale of quality programs if we want to make a difference for every child and young person affected by emergencies.

It's often difficult to get to scale without multiyear and predictable funding, and also there are challenges in investing in the programs with-- the necessary research and ongoing corrections in the programs. Global evidence on the impact of education in emergency programs on learning outc-- outcomes still remains very sparse, particularly at scale.

Before we can report on how many children have repo-- improved their skills, we need assessment instruments that are feasible to implement in those contexts. There are lots of other challenges, but I just wanted to outline those ones. "What are the most successful (MIC NOISE) approaches to delivery?" Well, the first w-- thing I look at when I see that question is, how do we measure success?

We have evidence that if children go to school-- just simply going to school has big benefits on future life opportunities, even-- for example, better child survival rates. But most of us want our children to engage in life productively, to have a healthy, happy life, and to contribute to a thriving community. This is true in emergency settings as anywhere else: communities and children regularly prioritize education in emergencies. So with regards to getting children to learning opportunities there have been great strides and in t-- enrollment in schools.

And that's relatively simple to measure. Programs such as community schools in Afghanistan where education is brought as close as possible to the villages so that girls don't have to travel long distances has proven very successful. Incentives such as those given to the Syrian refugees in Lebanon, cash transfers, has resulted in increase in enrollment, but also has increased in children not skipping meals and attending schools regularly.

It's important to take a long-term view, which can be a challenge in emergency settings, if you consider the large education reforms-- successful ones around the globe, they usually have champions, often presidents. But that's true in emergency settings as well. We need champions of education. And so for those champions they're often from local leaders, (RUSTLING) inspirational women, community members that are part of-- involved in the design of the program.

F-- we also work, of course, closely with local authorities, governments, civil society organizations, academia, private sector, donors. And for all of that, for UNICEF the coordination of those efforts is really important. So everything is supportive and efficiencies are maximized in emergencies. And that's why we co-lead the education cluster with Save the Children and participate in local education groups and work so s-- closely with partnerships and-- networks such as INEE.

Preschooling, evidence shows it's a really important investment for children's cognitive and physical development. It's also really important for the key social emotional support to learning. Language of instruction-- talked about that mother tongue, really important. Better teaching methods. A teacher who can teach skills to individual needs of a child is a great teacher. It's a real challenge when you've got 90 children in your class. I know, I've tried it. (LAUGH)

It is difficult but there are w-- there are people that have managed that. But more funds, more teachers can help solve that issue. Maximizing teacher time is really important. The number of burdens we put on teachers to attend workshops, to attend teach-- trainings, to go to the bank to pick up salaries can often take teachers away from what they need to do.

And being able to measure those results, course-correct, investing in research, real-time monitoring so we don't find out after three years that everything has resulted in no learning for the child, the ch-- child still can't read. One of the most innovative projects currently being developed by UNICEF (this is my last point) is on the assessment of learning outcomes in the whole of Syria initiative. It aims to equip teachers with a battery of contextualized, quick, easy-to-use instruments in the context that they're in, with all of the difficult variations in the delivery of the education, and all of the different settings that children find themselves learning. I'm not sure if that's given any hope. I hope it has given some ideas. Thank you. (APPLAUSE)

DEAN BROOKS:

Thank you, Linda. And-- just to put in a word, they do partner with INEE, but actually UNICEF, UNESCO, and UNHCR founded INEE, and actually Linda sits on INEE's steering group. So-- so it's-- it's a little more than supporting us. (LAUGH) so at this stage-- I'm very happy to be able to introduce Donella to come up and-- and talk a bit.

And-- the floor is yours, but lemme give you your questions. I'll set the stage for you. So first of all, what is BRA-- and she already knew these questions before, so just so you know.

(LAUGHTER) "What is BRAC's approach to supporting Rohingya children and their families? How has this crisis affected the host communities in Bangladesh? And in times of crisis how can education programs contribute to peacebuilding, tolerance, and acceptance of new arrivals?" So welcome. Thank you. (APPLAUSE)

DONELLA RAPIER:

Thank you so much, Dean. It's such a pleasure to be on a panel with such a distinguished group of organizations, so thank you for having me. And I-- I also wanna just say a special, special call-out to our hosts, Open Society Foundations-- because they have been an amazing partner for BRAC and-- we are so grateful for everything that OSF has done-- to promote visibility around the Rohingya crisis and about reg-- refugees more broadly.

So I'm going to tell you first (MIC NOISE) a little bit about the Rohingya crisis and our play-to-learn model, which we really believe has the potential to revolutionize education in humanitarian and emergency settings. You're gonna hear a lot of similar themes to what Linda just talked about.

So as most of you will recall, and as you saw very visually in that video at-- at the start-- as-- in August of last year, in a matter of weeks one of the largest humanitarian crises erupted and began unfolding in Myanmar-- causing hundreds of thousands of Rohingya to-- to flee into the region of Cox's Bazar in Bangladesh. Now, there were nearly 700,000 who arrived and they joined about 300,000 who were already there.

So there are close to a million people now, which is basically the size of the-- population of Washington, D.C. And if you think about Bangladesh, Bangladesh is one of the most populous countries in the world-- it's like, the eighth most populous c-- country in the world, but the geography is very tiny. So it's basically like taking half the population of the United States and putting them all in the state of Louisiana.

Because it's very low-lying, very subject to climate change, and so in addition to everything that Bangladesh is facing, they are now have this-- one of the largest refugee camps-- in the world. Now, it's especially notable that half of the refugees are children, and when I visited there earlier this year-- I was-- it was staggering because when we got out of the car there were literally hundreds of children and-- coming from-- a leafy suburb-- outside of Boston where-- we have all helicopter parents seeing all these hundreds of children unattended by adults was really quite staggering. (RUSTLING)

So Bangladesh is the home of BRAC. We're very unusual in terms of the scale of our organization, that we're-- we're the only NGO of our scale that was actually founded in a developing country, in Bangladesh. Our roots date back to the brutal civil war that-- that led to the founding of Bangladesh as a country in 1972.

So our staff were working in Cox's Bazar in that region for-- for decades, but it's one of the most marginalized and one of the poorest areas of the country. So we've taken a multifaceted

approach to-- to working with the r-- Rohingya refugees. We provide a number of services, including health care, water, sanitation, protection, counseling for women and girls, shelters-- provisional clothes, and-- help for new mothers, pre and postnatal care.

And our res-- the scale of our response is quite remarkable. For example, we've provided clean water to about 800,000 people. Now, in terms of education more broadly around Bangladesh and in our other countries-- BRAC has been a major provider of education throughout the country and-- we are the largest private, secular education provider in the world. We've graduated more than 11 million students from our programs, and they-- they-- continue to do better on the tests than-- than people who-- than young kids who've gone to their government school counterparts.

But as more and more research has come out to show just how important the very early years on brain development, and also just how important play is in the learning environment, BRAC has moved more and more down into the early child development space. So-- so together with the LEGO Foundation-- the BRAC Institute for Educational Development at BRAC University has pioneered a new model for low resource settings-- with-- very much a play-based model.

And we're currently running the p-- these play labs in Bangladesh, in Tanzania, in Uganda, and also in Liberia. So the core elements of the model include-- a rigorously tested curriculum, which is all around play-based learning, a play leader who's generally-- an adolescent girl from the community, which also has a side benefit of providing a livelihood opportunity for young girls-- deep engagement with the parents and the communities to un-- to help them understand the importance of play, and child-friendly spaces that are architecturally designed to be as-- as low-cost as possible, but as stimulating to brain development and learning as possible.

We have architects that are involved with this, and it's funny to think about when you see one of them, the corrugated tin and all of that and you think th-- "Really? An architect was inv--" (LAUGH) but-- everything that they've done has been to design the space so that it's environmentally friendly, they use all-- recycled materials, and-- they're beautiful spaces with lots of colors, and painting, and-- really stimulating for the-- for the brains.

And-- and then there's also robust-- research is a huge part of what we're doing as we'll-- that we're-- so that we can illustrate the effectiveness of the model across-- three of our countries. So as we look at-- sorry, as we look at education in Cox's Bazar specifically-- we're-- we're really eager to implement many of the elements of the models that I just described.

Though-- though there are restrictions that we need to take into account because it's working in a refugee setting. So we're currently implementing two different models: child-friendly spaces and learning centers. So the child-friendly spaces-- and the learning centers both provide a holistic support for the Rohingya children, and also for their host community counterparts.

In fact-- one of the unusual aspects of our response is that we're the only-- NGOs who's martialing a response in both the host community and in the camps. The child-friendly spaces are open to children of all ages. They're designed to build resilience, establish a sense of normalcy for the children, and-- and to-- to really-- use structured, play-based activities. Our staff engage the children in changing Rohingya rhymes, and songs, and other play-based activities.

And-- it-- it's very fun to see the-- the-- the-- the-- the local-- Bangladeshis actually have learned from the children their rhymes and their songs, and-- and they now are teaching the children the same things that they've actually learned from the children. So it's been a wonderful way for the-- the culture to be-- to be continued, and that's been also very reassuring to the children to actually be doing this in their own culture. (COUGH) 'Scuse me.

So the BRAC learning centers-- offer more than just the play-- s-- structured play-based activities. They're actually much more like our primary schools that we run around Bangladesh. And-- they're for age four to 14, and we're running those in both, again, the host communities and in the refugee camps. And-- for many of the children in both cases-- this is the first opportunity they've ever had to have any kind of education.

So the curriculum (UNINTEL)-- focuses on math, on science, on literacy in both Burmese and English, and also on life skills, on play, and on and rhymes, and stories. And you can't have a conversation about this without-- talking about child protection. As most of you probably know refugee camps are prime targets for traffickers.

So (CLEARS THROAT) and children are v-- extremely vulnerable to all sorts of abuse, and violence, and trafficking in these settings. So-- all of our work incorporates child protection measures and messaging to make sure that each child is safe. We also work with the parents to make sure that they-- promote children's safety and-- we conduct frequent head counts of the kids when they're in our care, and-- and make home visits if we notice that children are frequently absent, or if they're displaying any signs of-- of stress or trauma.

And to your question about the host community, this is-- this is a big issue because the members of the host community, they live in a very poor area. And s-- especially when the-- all of the challenges were erupting, you know, the people in the host community see these trucks whizzing by with all sorts of supplies, and food, and like, there's a little bit of jealously (LAUGH) there.

And you could see that with this in-- increasing pressure, where now the refugees actually overwhelm the host community, that-- that it would cre-- begin to create tensions between the two. So one of the things that BRAC has done that is-- is quite unique is for each of our-- our-- either the child-friendly spaces, or the BRAC learning centers, we've paired together a local Rohingya refugee person and someone from the host community, and we train them and they work together in that center, whether it's in the host community or in the refugee camp.

And the idea there is to really promote relationships between the two and provide opportunities between the two. Now, in terms of the political landscape-- because this is something also that is always challenging in refugee situations, that-- and of course BRAC has faced a number of political challenges, as in every situation.

Syria, as Linda was-- was talking about, and in-- in other-- other places. And it's largely because the type of education that a refugee population receives has implications for their long-term settlement. So we have found-- that-- so we are-- are in-- only allowed to do the instruction in the local Rohingya dialect-- or Burmese or English; not in Bengali, not in the language-- in Bangladesh-- because otherwise that-- that-- you know, that has implications as to what they-- y-- to-- to them potentially s-- staying. And-- it's a very challenging situation for the Bangladeshi government, who now suddenly has another million people on their hands.

So-- so what we have been doing is working very closely with the government and-- and respecting the restrictions, and making sure that we try to do as much as we can, keeping the children in mind, and at the same time understanding the perspective of the government. And then in terms of the-- the-- at the political le-- level we are sponsoring and-- and helping with research and assessments that illustrate the needs of the people, so that the research itself then can demonstrate to the government what those needs are.

So in terms of what's next-- so for our early child development work we're really validating research tools from the-- from the field for use in Cox's Bazar, and we've identified the need for a long-term sustainable model in early child development-- which is a big shift from what's typically done in these settings, which is more short-term and emergency-based-- protection provided through traditional child-friendly spaces.

But with an average stay in a refugee camp worldwide of 17 years, (LAUGH) which is what the statistics are, we think that we should be looking more for the longer-term. So we've designed a comprehensive-- humanitarian play approach that adapts many of the elements that I spoke about at the beginning-- to the humanitarian setting.

And-- and the approach is designed to help the Rohingya children with their development needs, to build resilience and provide some stability in their lives. So our goal with this is to provide a flexible model that can be used not just here, but in other humanitarian settings.

And then with these tools we'll build an evidence base so that others can-- can adapt it-- and-- and use it in other settings. And then also in the coming year we're looking to develop-- an entire curriculum for the Rohingya children, age four to 14, when I mentioned about the BRAC learning centers-- so that we can really-- you know, do more of the-- you know, it's still nonformal education, but do more, you know, real education in basic skills.

And-- and that also will incorporate the play-based approach that we use in all of our other programs. So in closing, I would just say that this generation of Rohingya children really deserves a chance to succeed in life, and-- we are very eager to scale the-- up our programs.

And-- we're excited about engaging with many of the partners who are here on that, in terms of scale-up. So-- thank you again for having me. (APPLAUSE)

DEAN BROOKS:

Thank you, Donella. Years ago when I worked in South Sudan-- sorry, in Sudan, in Darfur-- we implemented a program-- I was with the International Rescue Committee at the time. And-- a program we worked on was-- working on the psychosocial support that's needed for children. And the theme of that work was play is the work of children, and I think that's-- that just kept coming to my mind as I heard you speak, about how you have really taken that forward.

And it's true. I mean, we've seen that when we're there in the field. And I think another really interesting thing for all of us here to-- to look at is-- is BRAC has such a f-- an important model where they are addressing acute education in emergency, and creating that pathway to the formal. And we can't forget that. And I think sometimes agencies might do more acute response, and then others more development response. And-- and BRAC is actually, with their child-friendly spaces, with their youth-- or their centers for learning, they're creating that pathway.

And even when you talked about the political dimension, how can we work under that-- and make sure that the kids are first? And-- and I think that's just-- just a beautiful model. And that's why we gave you more time. (LAUGHTER) So-- we will keep going. So I'm really-- we're gonna go to another model that's actually quite interesting.

And I 'member couple of years ago getting a call from Sesame Workshop. And I was like, "Wow, Sesame Workshop. I grew up watching Sesame." And-- had a wonderful meeting with-- Nada, who has moved on to UNICEF since they stole her from you, but that's okay-- 'cause you're still working together. And-- and then I got to-- to meet Sherrie at the-- the World Humanitarian Summit later that year. And some exciting things happened with the International Rescue Committee if you haven't heard about it.

So my question actually talks a bit about it, so I'll-- I'll frame it for you. Sesame Workshop-- how many of you grew up watching *Sesame Street*? Okay, almost everybody. How many of you watch it now? (LAUGHTER) Sesame Workshop and the International Rescue Committee recently received 1-- 100 million from the MacArthur Foundation to education young children displaced by conflict and persecution in the Middle East.

So my questions for Sherrie is, you know, why do you think it's critical to invest in early childhood education and development in emergencies? Why has investing in ECD been overlooked in the past? And what-- it's just starting, so you don't have to say what have you learned, but what are we starting to learn? Yeah, what are we starting to learn (THUMP) through this partnership? And it's a unique partnership with IRC and Sesame Workshop. So please, you're welcome. (APPLAUSE)

SHERRIE WESTIN:

Thank you so much. (MIC NOISE) So I'll t-- I'll try to address each of those questions. But first of all, I really do wanna thank BRAC and OSF for giving Sesame the opportunity to be here. We are always grateful to have a chance to talk about our work. And it's true that the MacArthur Foundation grant does make it even more exciting. So you've raised a number of questions, but lemme start in the order that you did. And I'll start with the importance of early childhood education.

So a lot of you did know *Sesame Street* whether you're young enough to have grown up on it or not. But-- but I think it's no secret that Sesame has always focused on young children. And we are almost 50 years old-- but I think the other thing that's worth pointing out (and you'll understand why later, but) is that *Sesame Street* has always also deliberately set out to engage adults as well as children. And I don't think everybody understood that that was-- a strategy with a purpose, because even 50 years ago our founders believed that if an adult were watching with the child that the learning would be deeper.

And so I am actually constantly amazed at their prescience, because (MIC NOISE) as many of you here know, we now have the research to show that actually reaching children in those early years is critical to their healthy development, and that the most important thing in a child's brain development is engagement with a caring adult. And so I think, again, that Sesame, you know, was onto something all those years ago.

The other thing I would say is that we know from the brain science (MIC NOISE) that for a child to experience adverse childhood experiences, to experience trauma, particularly in those early years can have a deves-- devastating impact on their brain development, on their ability to learn. And that, again, what is the-- the most important antidote? What is the most important thing to help those children?

It is, again, engagement with a caring adult, what-- what we often call nurturing care. So when you think of the trauma and the conflict, the experiences that children in refugee situations-- that they've coped with displacement, often conflict, how much that impacts their long-term opportunities, how much it affects their development in terms of-- a healthy brain development.

We realize that investing in early childhood education and nurturing care for those children has the greatest return on investment. And I think the other thing is that when you think about the long-term repercussions-- and there's so much research on this-- for children who've experienced these situations without intervention, it affects not only their cognitive ability, but it affects their long-term health and their economic prospects.

So how are they expected to reach their full potential if we're not focusing on those youngest children, and helping to build the resilience, and give them the ability to cope? And-- and h-- what does that mean for society as a whole-- with you-- when you look at those

repercussions? So-- when you ask why investing in ECD has-- has been so small-- I think Linda said less than 4%. And you know, I think that in some ways it's understandable.

When you think of refugee crisis you first think of immediate response, and that is how the humanitarian sector has-- responded. It's-- it's security, it's safety, it's shelter, it's food, again, understandably. But now that the refugee situation is no longer a short-term issue-- you said the average-- time is 20 years. So if we're not investing in reaching the youngest refugees, giving them a path forward, giving them that early education that is so important, then how can we expect them to reach their full potential, much less rebuild their societies?

And so I think it's the great irony that those that are affected the most in terms of refugee crises receive the least in terms of humanitarian aid. And when we talk about less than 4% being education, a tiny sliver of that is early childhood education. And I have to say, that's why I think programs like BRAC and-- and learning through play are so important. And I really do applaud what you're doing in Bangladesh.

Then you mentioned our partnership with IRC and MacArthur, so I-- I would like to tell you a little bit about it and what we've learned so far. (MIC NOISE) And I'd also first like to say that we have a new managing director of this initiative and our partnership, and he's here tonight, Rene Celaya. So Rene, I've you'll just stand in case people wanna talk to you later. (APPLAUSE)

And I'd be remiss if I didn't mention Katie Murphy, who heads our education and content at IRC, working so closely with us. (APPLAUSE) And I-- I'm thrilled Rene is here period, and also tonight. But just (LAUGHTER) to have him finally on board. So in-- in terms of what we've learned so far, I would say first and foremost-- and what I find the most-- inspiring in-- in many ways, is how much the-- demand there is for what we're offering, and how receptive parents are to us giving them tools and strategies, and how much they want education for their children.

This is-- this is-- you know, this is critically important to them. And so many have had to leave this behind and don't have those opportunities. So I think it helps to give you a sense of what it is that we're doing and what MacArthur funded in terms of our proposal.
And so it's really in some ways simple. I mean, it's very complicated. But the elements, first it's Sesame Street Mass Media, and we will create a completely new local version of *Sesame Street* in Arabic, designed to meet the needs of children in their culture, imagine new Muppets that children can identify with-- and all of this will be able through media, through YouTube, through broadcast, through mobile, to reach millions of children across Jordan, Lebanon, Iraq, and Syria.

And I think one of the important learnings we've learned so far-- and we've only been at this, you know, a little less than a year-- is how important it is for us to reach displaced children side by side with local children in these countries. And we can do that with messages of respect and understanding, and acceptance of differences, which Sesame does so well, and is so critically important.

In addition to the mass media, working together with Katie, with the IRC we are creating Sesame content that will be used in IRC's incredible home visits, in learning centers, in health centers. And we believe that by bringing the-- the proven-- impact of Sesame content together with IRC's-- experience on the ground and their direct services is a wonderful and powerful combination.

And really, to help these caregivers and parents understand the importance of play, understand the importance of engagement with their children, and then giving them the strategies and tools for just that. I-- I-- and last-- it would be remiss if I didn't say that a significant part of this-- work will also include measurement and evaluation. We are partnering with NYU Global Ties, and again, to c-- contribute to that body of evidence on what does work best for children in conflict settings.

So to give you a sense of the program-- just (MIC NOISE) I think it will-- give you a little bit of-- an understanding of what we're doing, I do have a brief video of an IRC home visit. You'll see some Sesame characters, local Jordanian-- (MAKES NOISE) that was done in Lebanon, right Katie, just-- just a few months ago. So I-- I think this will give you a sense, if we can roll that.
(VIDEO NOT TRANSCRIBED)

SHERRIE WESTIN:

(APPLAUSE) And-- and one last thing. I would just like to take the opportunity to say that, you know-- the MacArthur Foundation has not just given us this opportunity to-- to create, as I said, the-- the largest early childhood intervention in the history of humanitarian response (which is huge), but it has also-- (MAKES NOISE) put a spotlight on the importance of focusing on early childhood in these settings.

And I think that is so powerful. And we believe it's a catalyst for others to take notice and to follow suit. And-- and I'm thrilled to say we have just recently-- agreed to work with the UNHCR in Bangladesh and have a pilot program to work with the Rohingya, which is inspired by this work.

And-- and had conversations with BRAC, and hope that we'll end up working with you as well. So-- I think in success, you know, this really is about all of our work being a model, being replicable, and helping to transform humanitarian response regardless where these children are. And I-- lastly will say, if it were not for OSF I do not believe we'd be standing here today. Because they invested in our original-- that-- (UNINTEL) world humanitarian summit when we were-- they-- they invested in our original partnership with the IRC and the pilot program, without which I do not believe we could've possibly won MacArthur. So thank you. (APPLAUSE)

DEAN BROOKS:

Thank you. Yes. OSF is a longtime partner of INEE as well. (LAUGH) And also just to say-- Sesame Workshop is also a member of INEE, so if you're not yet a member (LAUGHTER) tonight-- but also I was just thinking, Linda talked earlier about how we need champions for education in emergencies. We've got some out there, but if I think back I never would've guessed Elmo (LAUGHTER) woulda been one of our biggest champions.

But now it all makes sense, yeah. No, exactly. Speaking of champions, our next-- speaker represents-- a work that has been going on for quite a long time that was led by a number of champions-- many, many world leaders who started to recognize that education in emergencies needed to be taken into account and we needed to respond.

And in specific-- Gordon Brown, who-- who helped to launch this, and a number of world leaders, and UN leaders, and NGO leaders. And at the World Humanitarian Summit we saw the launch of the first global fund for education in emergencies-- which is known as Education Cannot Wait. And we're lucky to have-- tonight Zainab who's representing that.

And Zainab, before you come up, couple of questions. So Education Cannot Wait is relatively new. Just so you know, INEE used to have a working group called Education Cannot Wait. So-- but we don't have that working group now 'cause we have a fund, so. (LAUGHTER) But we've all been working-- many of you even here in the room have been working hard to see this come about. So Education Cannot Wait is relatively new, so people here may not know about its role yet in the field.

So what we'd like you to do is explain what is Education Cannot Wait, and talk to us a bit about is f-- there's more that bilateral and multilateral donors could be doing to prioritize education in emergencies. And then how about practitioners and others? How can we incentivize them and bring new players to engage, and support, and elevate education's role, like Elmo has already done, (LAUGHTER) so you know. Please come up, Zainab. (APPLAUSE)

ZAINAB ADAM:

Well, thank you, Dean, for this introduction. And-- it's great to actually be following-- suit-- following Elmo and-- *Sesame Street* to the-- forum here. For those of you who don't know-- INEE-- Dean himself is also on-- the ex-com-- the committee for-- our executive committee at ECW. But yes, let me-- lemme say that I'm delighted to be here with you-- today.

In particular I'd like to thank of the Open-- Society Foundation to give g-- by giving us this opportunity to be able to-- provide some insight to what-- ECW does. ECW is a very young fund, so the-- the more visibility that we can get, the more people know about us, and the more (UNINTEL) people can-- you know, start to understand how they can relate to us in the area of education in emergencies.

So Education-- Cannot Wait-- it's the first and o-- and only global fund-- dedicated for emergencies-- for education in emergencies-- and crises and in protracted crises countries. It is a key initiative-- that came out of the World Humanitarian Summit in ninet-- in 2016, so that's two years ago. When world leaders-- and-- leaders from-- the-- international community, CSOs-- the United Nations got together and-- pu-- and actually decided to place-- education essential to-- essential to emergenc-- to-- to humanitarian response.

And this was because-- education was underfunded-- before that. Education was seriously, severely underfunded-- in humanitarian response. So Education Cannot Wait was-- created to meet the needs of 75 million children and youth deprived of education in-- s-- in emergencies and-- protracted crises countries.

Just to give you an example-- I figured out I'm not actually clicking the-- clicking the-- presentation. So just-- (BACKGROUND VOICE) no, it's okay. Now that I know it's here, I didn't see it. (LAUGHTER) I can do it. So just to give you-- just to give you an example, just in 2016 less than 2% of humanitarian aid was invested in education, and that's really-- that's what we consider severely underfunded.

Education Cannot Wait is guide-- is headed by, as-- Dean mentioned-- Gordon Brown-- the right, honorable Gordon Brown, who is the former-- prime minister of-- the U.K. It-- Education Cannot Wait is guided by five strategic functions. And that-- and those are aspi-- inspiring political commitment, in other words-- making sure that we have a high level political leaders that are champion s-- that are champions for advocating more funding towards education in emergencies.

And it's all about promoting. We promote joint responses and joint plannings-- when we invest in edu-- in education in emergencies in the field. We also are committed to raising and dispersing additional funds to existing funding. In other words-- we're not there just to provide funds, but we want to create additionality. There are already funds out there in emergencies that are-- allocated through-- the HR-- the humanitarian response plans and-- and so on.

But because that's not enough education in emergency-- Education Cannot Wait has been created to provide additional funds. But we need to also raise those funds. We're there to also strengthen capacities-- to respond in the field for education in emergencies, and also-- last but not least, we're all about accountability.

It's not just providing funds, but those funds have to be accounted for-- to the donors-- that provide those funds. And-- we very much put a lot of emphasis on accountability, quality reporting, and making sure that-- the funds are well-used. Education Cannot Wait has three types of (MIC NOISE) windows-- funding windows. I'll just go over these very fast. That-- one is the acceleration of facility window, and this is a window that focuses on-- investing in-- global products for education-- such as ensuring that research is-- is done on how to-- how to-- to improve learning outcomes in the field.

We also look at best practices that are taking place through the investments that we make in the field so that those then can u-- be used to-- provide better responses to education in emergencies-- globally. We've got the first w-- the first emergency response window, and this is a window that provides rapid assistance to the onset of crises.

So when there is an onset of crises-- the-- the-- appeal is announced within a country, education in emergencies is there-- sorry, Education Cannot Wait is there to-- look at the situation, asses the situation and-- provide additionality to any underfunded-- response. And then our flagship window is the multiyear resilience window-- which is-- the window that actually responds to the call to the-- to the world humanitarian response-- sorry, summit-- 's call for the way-- for new ways of working.

How do we provide-- more funding in emergencies, but-- in a predictable manner? How do we coalesce, bring together all partners so that everybody is working in a collaborative way to-- provide funding over a period of three to five years, so that we can ensure that education is not interrupted?

We don't want to see s-- education interventions-- s-- start up and then after-- six-- weeks-- sorry, six months or one year the education th-- the humanitarian-- funding comes to an end, and then-- kids cannot continue with education. So this is-- this is one of the-- serious things that we need to be disruptive about and we need to promote. So that is our flagship-- (MIC NOISE) window for funding.

Now-- Education Cannot Wait is committed to the new ways of working-- the grand bargain agreement. And this is all about making sure that we are working together to collectively achieve-- outcomes, to achieve pos-- positive education outcomes. It's no more the way of-- you know, we-- we encourage joint programming, joint planning, and as based on that joint planning and joint programming that's presented to us from partners in the field, that then we say, "Okay, fine. We're going to look at funding-- those interventions."

And then the predictability comes in there. We also ensure that-- humanit-- that it's-- it's an inclusive process, in that we're not working in silos and that al-- we're not-- although we're hosted-- I just want to say that we are hosted by UNICEF, we are not UNICEF. We are there to provide-- additional additionality to education in emergencies in the field, which means that we look at-- being a catalyst and bringing together-- humanitarian-- actors-- development actors, donors, private sector where possible, around the table to develop-- a-- an education-- program for educa-- for the needs to respond to education in emergencies.

And then we-- what we do is we provide seed funding to ki-- to-- to kickstart that-- those programs. So we're there for everybody. Anybody who is-- you know, a key actor in providing education in emergencies is key-- is key for us. We work through-- existing humanitarian coordinat-- coordination architectures in the field, such as the cluster-- the education cluster-- and the education in emergency working groups.

We're not there to-- establish or to create new mechanisms-- parallel to anything that's already existing. So we-- we use existing coordination mechanisms. We also encourage--

that these multiyear programs that are being-- developed-- to respond to education in emergencies are used as-- resource mobilization tools. In that-- ECW facilitates-- the development of a big-- of a multiyear resilience program over three yes, with partners including-- including-- government.

And it provides seed funding to kickstart that program. It doesn't cover the whole program, but then it works with all the partners in the field and also globally to add-- to bring in more resources to finance the unmet needs that the seed funding has not been able to cover. So in that sense-- we ca-- we work-- in-- in a very disruptive manner and we insist on joint planning circles and joi-- joint-- programs. Just to let you know-- just to give you an idea of where (MIC NOISE) we have come so far, we have been operational for just a year, although the world humanit-- it was a key-- initiative of the World Humanitarian Summit in 2018.

W-- the-- Education Cannot Wait has b-- was-- has been operational for a year-- just over a year now. And within that period of time-- of course with-- the-- supportive partners, collaboration, and so on-- we have-- managed to engage in-- actually that's a wrong number there. It's actually 16-- we're actually in 16 countries. So those are four initial investments, these are two-year programs in Chad, Ethiopia, Syria, and Yemen.

And then we have 12 first response countries-- there they are: Afghanistan, Bangladesh, the-- Central African Republic, the Democratic Republic of-- Congo-- the-- occupied Palestinian territory, Madagascar, Nepal, Peru-- Papua New Guinea, Somalia, Uganda, and Ukraine. Now, these first response countries, they're-- as I said, there are 12, not f-- 15-- there's a mistake there. (COUGH)

But these first response countries are not all conflict affected countries. These are-- we respond to natural disasters as well as-- conflict affected countries. Obviously the-- the-- (COUGH) the countries of-- the ta-- the-- of a protracted nature in which we are working are mostly conflict affected countries.

Then we have-- six multiyear programs that we have-- de-- some of which we have developed and have been approved this year, and others that are in-- in the course of development for this year. These are Afghanistan, Bangladesh. They-- Central Af-- African Republic, the-- OPT-- o-- the occupied Palestinian territory, Somalia, and Uganda. And I can happily say-- and actually say that-- that-- the first three-- oh no, actually the s-- three of them: Afghanistan, Bangladesh, and-- Uganda, multiyear programs (and these are those programs that provide predictability) are-- have been approved, and we're looking to implement those with a multitude of partners in the field.

Now, to answer the questions-- I hope I have enough time. I know I'm going a little bit above. But I thought I'd better give an idea of what ECW is because it's quite new. It's-- it's a new player in the arena. So in or-- in terms of-- what-- what more c-- b-- can bilaterals and multilaterals do to prioritize education in emergencies, we feel that education is a right.

And education in emergencies is lifesaving. So we s-- we see that there is a consensus with-- donors that education is central to humanitarian response, but there has to be more pressure-- with donors to multiply funds to education. Making the case for-- the fact that educations, the r-- the-- the-- the returns for education are high, and supporting global funds such as ECW that bring-- that have brought into the fore-- the-- multiyear programs that can provide predictability-- predict-- predictable funding so that we can scale up, and we an promise those children and youth-- that need education in these-- difficult situations, we can promise them education that goes beyond a year.

We also think that multiyear programs should be supported because-- these are-- programs that actually-- bring c-- that-- that-- (MAKES NOISE) somehow they-- they-- they avoid fragmentation of-- funding, in that they're bringing all the actors together-- humanitarian, development, and so on-- under a framework in which-- that framework then is used to fund the needs for education in emergencies so that you don't have-- different-- partners and different-- actors doing their resource mobilization beyond that framework.

And we would also like to encourage donors (MIC NOISE) to have more appetite for risk in-- ris-- in environments that actually-- do pose higher risks. The environments that we are working in are-- higher-risk environments-- than most, since the cri-- emergencies and conflict affected countries. So we need donors to be a little bit more committed towards that risk-- not that we are going to compromise on accountability.

We want to strengthen accountability, make sure that we know where those fund is-- funds are going, but we also would like to encourage donors to do that. (COUGH) We would also like donors-- bilaterals and multilaterals to encourage-- an increase in domestic s-- funding for education in emergencies. We have noticed that very little m-- v-- very few education plans have (UNINTEL)-- even mention conflict or natural disasters within the edg-- within the national education plans.

I know I'm out of-- can I-- two more minutes, just to go to the next slide and then I'm done. (BACKGROUND VOICE) Okay. (LAUGHTER) So how can we as-- how can practitioners and donors-- incentivize new players? I think we can incentivize-- they can-- we can incentivize new players by making sure that we make a compelling case for the benefits of investing in education. Peace and stability for one-- better opportunities for children and-- youth, and self-fulfillment and dignity.

Ensure that we are-- working out there collectively to ensure complementarity and avoid duplication. And-- more than anything, emphasize the centrality of leaving no one behind. After all, we're all about achieving the agenda 20-- 2030, and we need to reach the most vulnerable. Thank you very much. (MIC NOISE) I could go on but I have to go. (APPLAUSE)

DEAN BROOKS:

So you can see we care a lot about education emergencies, everybody on the panel-- and you don't need your drinks yet. (LAUGHTER) We're only five minutes late. So we have-- we have a couple minutes for questions. But I just wanted to say-- I mean, Education Cannot Wait-- which sometimes feels like another job because I'm on all of your committees and you call me all the time-- but it's 'cause I also believe in it. And I think-- you know, Education Cannot Wait asked me to go with them on one of their first missions to Uganda. I used to work there years ago and I was excited to go back, and-- and went back to Uganda with ECW and-- and actually very soon-- we're gonna see-- (MAKES NOISE) some great things happening there because of ECW. But the keyword for me f-- and what I learned from that experience was this fund is catalytic.

And when I went in there and talked with partners on the ground they would say to me, "Okay, let's build a school, and then we're gonna put all the kids here, and then we're gonna build a high school." And I was like, "But wait a second, ECW only has a couple million dollars. How can that be catalytic?" And every partner on the ground said, "Oh. Well, first we go talk to the ministry, and then we do this, and then all of a sudden we can get kids who didn't access education for three years, they can go into this program and they can access education."

And then I went up to the north where I used to work in a local NGO that I'm still in touch with-- a little school for disabled children and-- went back to see them after many years. It was-- it was very touching and-- to be able to go back. And when I went back what did I see? I saw NGOs and organizations had left-- rainwater harvesting, but it was broken. The kids were all wearing t-shirts from another NGO, but that NGO wasn't there.

They didn't have money to pay the teachers. Nobody had sat down with them and talked about multiple years of funding and, "How will you sustain the school for disabled children?" And still today they're not receiving funding for their teachers, and they're facing closure. And that to me showed me, ECW is important and we've gotta do something to make sure that it continues.

Now, ECW is here, but that doesn't mean that we've got the answer. So Zainab is not accepting your proposals tonight for programs that you've created. What she will accept is some great ideas on how can we scale up ECW and make sure those teachers are paid in Uganda? That's what she needs to hear from you. If you do have programs in the field-- if you have listened closely, what she talked about was you're gonna have to work in your country with the existing mechanisms to access those funds, 'cause that's how it works.

It works in collaboration, making joint plans, and thinking about multiple years of funding so that we do no harm, that we don't leave children in the lurch. They don't get to finish their cycle of education 'cause humanitarian funding ended in-- in a one-year cycle. Education's much longer than that. So I'm excited about Education Cannot Wait, and excited that we can actually talk about it now tonight. And-- it's-- it's really just beginning. So please-- if you d--

haven't noticed, Education Cannot Wait did launch an appeal for great ideas. So hopefully some of you have submitted for that. We can open the floor for-- we're gonna do a round of questions 'cause I know we've been talking at you, and good methodology is to listen back.

So-- we have some folks who have some microphones, right? Okay, Claudia, we've got a few hands. We're gonna take a s-- series of questions-- and then we're gonna let our panelists do their best. And then we'll see how much time we have. So over here. If you could tell me who you are and-- keep it brief 'cause we still wanna go have our drinks. (LAUGH)

ZAHARA MCNATT:

Sure. Thank you so much. Thanks for your presentations this evening. My name's Zahara (PH) McNatt, I'm a doctoral student at Columbia School of Public Health in the program on forced migration in health. And I work in three settings: in the Congo-- Tanzania, and Jordan in response to-- (MAKES NOISE) refugee crises in all of those settings. And I guess my-- I have many questions, I'm only gonna ask one, and that is about how each of the-- the programs and organizations you've described are managing education in urban environments.

So I saw a lot of the sort of-- like, the photographs and stuff were in camp settings, and yet most children are in the urban settings. And so maybe tie to the topic of-- of sort of-- planning and coordination, how are you working with both host countries but then also home countries for the education experience to be-- sort of continuous over time--

DEAN BROOKS:

That's (UNINTEL)-- yeah, good point. Thank you. We had another hand over here.

DR. YAEL DANIELI:

I'm very tempted to take the floor and tell you that we as kids were encouraged to teach new immigrants who all were refugees how to sew, how to cook, how to use all kinds of utilities that they didn't know existed. And-- and there was nothing more empowering for kids than to teach adults.

But I have-- actually one question (UNINTEL PHRASE). There's an assumption here that the teachers are trained. And n-- none of the countries you listed-- I-- I don't want to-- to exaggerate, but let's say nearly none of the countries (LAUGH) you-- you listed have-- has good training for teachers. So th-- that is a huge challenge that must be added to your chil-- to your list of challenges.

And-- and one more point. I-- I'm Dr. Yael Danieli (PH). One of the things I do-- I've-- I have-- represented the World Federation for Mental Health, International Society for

Traumatic Stress Studies, and the International Organization for Victim Assistance at the UN, and actually has-- have been advisor to some of the SGs on victims.

One of the things we learned (MIC NOISE) is that when parents identify themselves as victims, and that is the main message they give the children, put the children in long-term risk for multigenerational effects of the traumas. So that's another challenge I am putting to you, train-- and-- and-- and I was delighted to see y-- a Sesame-- I mean, come on, and doing things at home.

I mean, this is wonderful. It's not only engaging the parents, it's actually empowering the parents to be parents. So-- in some ways you're addressing some of this challenge, but I would like it to be far more mindful and incorporate a lot of our database studies, and models, and theories, so--

DEAN BROOKS:

Thank you, thank you. Let's take one more question. (MIC NOISE) Well, we got two right here. We'll do these two and then we'll go to the panel--

SELMA:

Hi, good evenin' my name is Selma. I have a question-- I'm-- I'm a developin' practitioner but I wear an evaluator hat, M&E and so on. And I was wonderin' what are some of the tools that you use? I've recently facilitated an (UNINTEL) trainin' in northern Syria-- usin' (UNINTEL PHRASE) that were developed by Save the Children. And so 1) what are some of the tools that you use? 2) Why every organization has to develop their own tools? Why can we not use the same too-- if a tool works it's not a competition. If a tool works we can just, like, use it across the board and be like, "Hey, this has been workin' for social and emotional learning," whatever, AGRA, early grade readin' assessment that was developed by RTI and the World Bank. But I felt that there was a very strong lobby even behind evaluation.

And that's why I was curious because I'm sure that, like, each one of your organization is probably usin' a different tool, many-- probably many different tools. And then the other question is, like, everyone is, like, talkin' a lot about evidence base. And I used to live in Washington D.C. for eight years before recently moving to New York. And what do we do with this evidence?

Write beautiful reports? Hire consultants like me to write those reports? And I'm not even chargin' that much money. (LAUGHTER) Because I believe in development. I'm from the global south, I haven't moved to the state to make money out of development. But honestly, what are we doin' with this evidence base? How many more reports do we need in our drawers to be, "Oh, this is what we find out, and these are the outcomes, and these are the lessons learned, and these are the best practices?"

Maybe we should be in the corridor of the Capitol Hill and just lobby as people to be like, "Okay, we need more funding" But why do we need more funding? To justify my salary and yours? Or do we really need more funding to go into programming. So these are just very big questions. I recently moved from the field, and bein' back to the States I can tell you that sometimes I'm, like, mad. (LAUGHTER)

DEAN BROOKS:

(UNINTEL). Thank you. (APPLAUSE) We have one more question. Just come up for me-- right. Yeah.

MALE VOICE:

Hi-- my name is (UNINTEL) and my question is for Linda Jones, but anyone else is fee to-- to comment on it too. So I work with-- an NGO that does educational media in cartoons for children-- in Haiti, where everything is adapted in the-- in the local language. So my question is, how do you reconcile-- education challenges in countries where there are two or three languages-- that are recognized? Some are official, some are not.

And at the younger years it may be, for example, Creole that is widely spread, and so it's critically important to use that as-- for education. But as they get older that's not really the language that the state recognizes, whether for laws, whether for textbook. And how do we reconcile this gap and difference-- in the languages? Thank you.

DEAN BROOKS:

Thank you. So I'm gonna turn to our panelists. We have-- we have a series of questions. And-- you know, first we were asked about urban environments-- and then-- discussions around these assumptions that teachers are trained-- as well as-- the whole aspect of how do we be mindful when it comes to looking at-- parents who might be victimized, and how then they are working with their children. An example, maybe from Sesame Workshop, on-- on-- on the work happening-- with parents.

Some questions around-- tools used. Why are we competitive? Good questions. And the passion that came with that question-- is part of what has led to the development of Education Cannot Wait. And so if we can try to answer that. And then really looking technically at the-- at the question around language issues and transition. So would you like to start, Linda? Okay. (MIC NOISE)

LINDA JONES:

I'm guessing the question about tools was directly because I mentioned about the tools in Syria-- the whole of Syria response. It's a very good question. We see again, and again, and

again this proprietary nature to-- "Well, this is our unique selling point as an organization so we're gonna use this and we're not gonna share it." And it's the worst approach: it has to be collaborative.

So if I can just expand a bit on the whole of Syria thing-- I was running out of time, but-- it is in collaboration with a number of organizations. It's building on the research already developed with AGRA and AGMA. It's in partnership with Save the Children. It's all about contextualizing the tools so that they are applicable for the conditions that the teachers are working in, and also the skill level that the teachers have, taking-- linking in with the point about not all teachers are fully qualified teachers.

So it's about the main innovative part of that is the contextualization of the tools so that they can be used very quickly, very rapidly to feed back information to the teacher to improve their learning, and to feed information to the children and the parents. It's not about gathering information for donors or for us as organizations to put in our reports. It's all about improving learning on the ground for those children. So I hope that addresses that. I just wanna touch on the teachers. Years ago I arrived in-- Sierra Leone-- sorry-- I-- I w-- did work in Sierra Leone, but I arrived in-- South Sudan. And I was working with a Norwegian refugee council an accelerated learning program-- that was-- we were just starting up in South Sudan at that time.

And we would be lucky to find anybody with primary grade two who could be a teacher. And so you have to put and develop with the-- local population, and people who have worked there for many years, training programs in place that make sense for the people you have in with the education level they have. Because of course we can't equate education level necessarily with intelligence.

So pulling those trainings together and-- and quite often you would end up training a very large number of people who could then hopefully be beneficial for other programs. But one of the biggest problems with that is who recognizes that training? How is that valued? How is that of value? It's the same as the education that many children get in these emergency settings. How is that valued by an employer? How is that-- valued if they move onto another country? How does that become certified and recognized? And it's one of the challenges we have.

DEAN BROOKS:

Great, thank you. Just to say, a number of these questions I'm happy to talk with some of you afterwards-- because-- INEE has created global tools related to teacher training, look-- we have members looking at urban-- situations. But I'm gonna ask our panelists-- 'cause we really are short on time now-- to try to wrap up-- kinda some wrap-up points, and see if you can address some of them. So if I can ask-- Donella, if you could look at the-- (MIC NOISE) the issue of urban context.

If I could ask Sherrie to-- to talk a bit about-- you know, (MIC NOISE) mindfulness and how you're implementing and working with parents. And then I would-- I think it's actually really-- we've touched on tools, but if-- Zainab, if you could talk a bit about the importance of advocacy like our c-- our colleague in the back had asked.

And should we be in Washington yelling in the halls? (LAUGH) Maybe we should. And-- and then we will have some time to discuss. Yes. Language of instruction question, yeah. You didn't capture that yet. You wanna quickly, before we go to the rest? Okay.

LINDA JONES:

Yes, language of instruction. There are many, many different country examples of how that issue is dealt with. There are some countries with 70-- mother tongue languages and-- and still done in a successful way in the classroom on having the medium f-- of instruction, and then ways to support the mother language as well. But I think perhaps we could take this after this on a one to one. Thank you.

DEAN BROOKS:

Thank you. Go ahead.

DONELLA RAPIER:

So I'll just touch briefly then on the urban environments. BRAC has actually-- increasingly doing more and more in urban settings because so much poverty actually is urbanizing-- though less so in education than in other programs. Because what BRAC has tended to do is fill gaps, and the gap in education has largely been in the rural areas where the government has not been able to get out to. And actually, interestingly enough, as Bangladesh has-- has done better and better for itself since its founding-- we are actually-- able to turn over a lot of the schools that we've been running to the government now.

So there's less and less need even in the rural areas. But I would say, in the urban environment we work heavily with the readymade garment industry, in the factories with the young women, and-- and oftentimes-- children working in the factories.

We also have a really powerful program that helps women get out of-- ultra-poverty-- over a two-year period in-- in a orchestrated, multidimensional, interm-- intervention. And that we have adapted for the urban setting to help people get into-- into wage earning jobs as opposed to being-- necessarily (COUGH) entrepreneurs, like we do in the rural areas.

We also do-- do tremendous amount around skills development with adolescents and young people, and helping them to apprentice and find-- wage earning jobs-- in their communities. And so all of those programs are much more in-- urban areas now than in rural.

DEAN BROOKS:

Thank you. Go ahead, Sherrie.

SHERRIE WESTIN:

I'll try to-- address the caregiver and parent issue that you raise. And so I do think that one of the opportunities we have in reaching caregivers-- and-- and your point about their own-- social emotional needs as well. And w-- particularly when you think of displaced families, those-- those parents also have experienced tremendous stress and trauma. But I think 1) we have the opportunity through the programs I mentioned-- home visits and others-- to enlighten parents on the importance and the need for this engagement, as you saw in-- in the video.

The other thing I'll say—a recent learning-- we've been in-- in Jordan and Lebanon doing curriculum seminars, cre-- creative seminars. And I found it so interesting, because across the board throughout these countries we got a very consistent-- point of view from practitioners and educators that social and emotional learning was as important as literacy and numeracy. And that these children and the adults too, to your point, absolutely need a way to express their emotions.

That it is hard to-- to help them cope and build resilience if they can't express and communicate about what they've been through, and that parents themselves need the same. And then I will say there was a bit of a disconnect, because our research with parents say that the number one priority is literacy and numeracy. So it is the academics. So I think, again, it's a great opportunity for us-- (BACKGROUND VOICE) yes, but it's a great opportunity for us to be, as I said, even enlightening those parents and caregivers. And-- I think-- I hope that addresses what you're saying, but--

DEAN BROOKS:

Thank you. Thank you, Sherrie. Zainab.

ZAINAB ADAM:

Yeah, well, in terms of advocacy I think from a perspective-- from a funding perspective there needs to be more advocacy--
(OFF-MIC CONVERSATION)

ZAINAB ADAM:

So from a funding perspective I believe that-- it is critical that-- we create-- there are more alliances-- to create networks to advocate, and to make the case for investment in education.

And I think by doing it collectively rather than doing it-- you know, separately we can make a better case. We need to be able to collectively show what the benefits of investing in education-- is or are. We-- there are economic benefits, development benefits.

And we also need to put out there the fact that the risk of not investing in the-- of-- of education-- what-- what is the risk of not investing in education? We're crel-- creating-- we're actually-- more prolonged, protracted crises-- more children that are in dire situations that don't have education-- and the financial cost becomes greater, and greater, and greater.

So I think-- the platforms for advocacy and to do joint advocacy is essential-- for-- for-- you know, from the perspective of different actors. Everybody does joint advocacy from-- you know, with-- the objective of getting in more funding, but-- with-- with also the objective of addressing the needs for education in emergencies from different-- angles.

DEAN BROOKS:

Thank you. Tonight's event-- isn't ending now. We actually have a nice reception organized by our hosts. And you will have the chance to talk further. I wanna thank you-- not only our hosts-- Open Society Foundations, our great speakers, BRAC for inviting me to-- to-- to be your-- your host this evening in terms of-- of leading the panel. And-- (APPLAUSE) thank you. (LAUGH) And a friend of mine said, "You know, you're kinda like a salesman," 'cause I keep telling people, "INEEsite.org." But it's true.

I joined INEE in 2001, and that's why I stand here today with the honor of leading this incredible network. Because it's one of the only spaces that I know of where agencies, like everybody we see here, take off their institutional hats and we work together. And I would really like to encourage you-- if you'd like to learn more about education emergencies, what you can do, please-- please do visit the website, consider joining INEE. Again, best deal in town. (LAUGHTER) Everything we make is free. You can download it, you can use it. It's all global tools and resources to help you in your work. And-- again, thank you. And I'd like to invite you to the reception. (APPLAUSE)

* * *END OF TRANSCRIPT* * *