

Center for Strategic and International Studies

The Humanitarian Agenda

“Accessing Vulnerable Children and Young People in Conflict”

Featuring:

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KIMBERLY FLOWERS: Good morning. Welcome. Today's event is part of a CSIS program I direct here, called the Humanitarian Agenda. As we look at the challenges to effectively delivering aid to the most vulnerable people in the world, one of the issues that's surfaced to the top has been access – unfettered access to life – so that lifesaving assistance can reach those who are suffering, especially from manmade conflicts. This issue becomes even more urgent when you start to consider children and young people who are victims of war. The stories and images from Yemen right now are, to me, the most heartbreaking. More than half of the population there is facing pre-famine conditions. Mark Lowcock, the U.N.'s top emergency relief official, stated last week that we're on the edge of witnessing the greatest famine in living history.

Responding to complex emergencies in fragile states can be just that – complex and fragile. And aid organizations, like UNICEF, who work for every child everywhere, are more important than ever. And thank goodness that UNICEF has a leader like Henrietta Fore at the helm. Executive Director Fore's distinguished career includes being the first woman to serve as the USAID administrator and the director of U.S. foreign assistance. Her government experience also includes senior positions at the Departments of State and Treasury. She's also a businesswoman and a former CEO of a manufacturing, consulting and investment company. She's also lent her leadership and time and wisdom to a number of boards in the development space, including the Overseas Private Investment Corporation, many know this as OPIC, or the Millennium Challenge Corporation, many known as MCC.

Henrietta Fore has been a dear friend for many, many years to CSIS. She is far from a stranger in this building. She has been a former trustee, as well as an affiliate. Our president and CEO Dr. John Hamre sends his deep regrets that he couldn't be here today. It's only because he's traveling out of the country. He has great admiration for your leadership, Henrietta. He reminds – he reminds us that in her role at UNICEF she brings business efficiency to the noble purpose of helping children all around the world. I was sharing with Henrietta just before that I remember the first time I met her, which was a little over a decade ago. I was living in Ethiopia, working for USAID. And she was visiting as the USAID administrator. And my job was to hand her a bag of leafy vegetables from an urban garden project that was funded by PEPFAR.

And I was young and nervous and excited and completely inspired by meeting this strong female leader in, you know, a field that I so wanted to have a career in. And it never occurred to me at that time that I would be here a decade later. And I'm just – I'm humbled, I'm honored to introduce you, to listen and learn from you, but also, to talk with you, especially about the best way to deliver aid to vulnerable children and youth in conflict settings. Henrietta, thank you for being here. The floor is yours. (Applause.)

HENRIETTA FORE: So Kimberly did that very nicely. And it just shows you that leafy green vegetables do have a purpose in our lives. (Laughter.) So thank you very much. It is great fun to see so many familiar faces and friends in the crowd. And it's wonderful to be back at CSIS. So thank you very much for inviting me. Thank you to OFDA and USAID for your strong support for programs like this, and for inviting us here.

I do believe that it is important to think about America's leadership – global leadership in the world. And it is important because leadership changes, the world changes, and we have to adapt to it. So in my remarks today, we'll touch on a number of areas that I feel are important for UNICEF and for our humanitarian work. But it is all seamlessly woven into our work in development.

It is a very good time for CSIS to have a program like this. Humanitarian access is an important issue in our world, and it is important that there is a taskforce so that one delves more deeply into the issues of how we can have access, how does humanitarian access work in the world, and for those of us who are working on the ground, in the field, with many partners, there are many issues and it is complex, and it is fragile.

But this issue demands far more attention, especially as the world contends with a rising number of conflicts, the largest number of conflicts since the Cold War, with unprecedented levels of migration. And for donor governments, with the need to help fund these surging needs. UNICEF responds to about 300 emergencies a year. But our world is unstable, unpredictable, and often violent. And we cannot do all that we must do, we cannot serve all that we must serve, without access.

UNICEF understands this. And for over seven decades, we've been on the front lines of serving the needs of children and young people living in emergencies. Delivering nutrition, vaccinating children, providing water, emergency health care, education, and protection services to the displaced – the list goes on and on.

I understand that UNICEF's deputy executive director, Shanelle Hall, was part of a panel discussion yesterday on the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. As she outlined, our work there is a good example of how we can work with authorities to access hard-to-reach areas in a difficult humanitarian environment. Despite a significant funding shortfall, we're delivering immunizations, nutrition services, and treatments for diarrhea, while also working to improve water supplies over the long term.

Through our work in country after country, we're not only delivering support and help. We're building relationships with communities and with specific ethnic and religious groups. We're building bonds of trusts with governments who come to rely on our advice and support. And we're reassuring communities that our only concern is for the children. We have no political motive. No desire to choose sides or favor one group over another. Only an overriding mission to deliver health, help and hope to children who need it – period.

Beyond our work in emergencies, we're a trusted development organization, helping communities and countries climb the development ladder, supporting them as they construct schools, hospitals, and resilient water and sanitation services – all the ingredients that are needed to support healthy, educated, and prosperous populations over the long term. In countries wracked by conflict, long-term development can seem a distant dream. It is hard to imagine that development will ever take hold. But at UNICEF, we believe that by gaining access step-by-step and service-by-service, we can help communities gain a foothold toward a better, more resilient future.

Even in Yemen, as Kimberly said, today's worst humanitarian crisis, where basic services are collapsing, where I saw hospitals staffed by workers who have not been paid in two years, but they continue to work in the hospitals and deliver much-needed assistance. And one of them said: It's because the people keep streaming in with children who need help, cholera and malnutrition, so we must be here. We are part of the health workers of this country. But there aren't enough respirators or medicine to go around. Malnutrition and cholera stalk the young children. Mothers hold malnourished bodies of their babies, often helpless when they die in their arms. And where children struggle to understand the horrors of what they've witnessed or endured. So there are scars internally as well as externally on many of the children.

In the face of these growing needs, UNICEF and our partners are there, strengthening community water systems, immunizing children against diseases, and providing cash transfers to families to help them through the crisis – all investments in people and communities that can serve both immediate and longer-term future needs. But the first step in achieving these results is a relentless focus on access, and actually reaching the women, children and young people with the help and the hope that they need.

The sheer number of young lives affected is shocking. Currently 245 million children live in fragile and conflict-related and -affected countries. It's nearly 80 percent of the population of the United States. As we go about our daily lives, we must never forget these children's lives – the children who are malnourished and sick because the conflicts have destroyed hospitals and made roads impassable. The children who risk being maimed or killed by a landmine or deliberate attacks on schools or hospitals. And those who've been separated from their families, left vulnerable to violence, exploitation, or abuse, and terrified to be separated.

Reaching these children means first overcoming a range of barriers. Bureaucratic barriers, like the direct denial of humanitarian access to deliver aid and relief supplies, or the denial of travel permits and visas for humanitarian workers. The barriers of acceptance, when communities for political or cultural reasons mistrust global humanitarian organizations, believing that we are not acting in their best interests, but with ulterior political motives. And in these communities, our humanitarian aid workers can be targeted.

These are the barriers of direct violence and intimidation, the direct targeting of basic civilian infrastructure like hospitals, roads, and water systems, or humanitarian workers themselves. The use of explosive weapons in heavily populated areas, making safe travel impossible. The use of women and children in conflict zones as bargaining chips in negotiations. UNICEF doesn't have all the answers, but through our new institutional access framework, funded in part by OFDA, we're applying these lessons that we've learned in overcoming some of these barriers—lessons that we hope could help inform the recommendations of your taskforce as it moves forward.

So, first, we've learned the importance of building incremental trust among local communities and all parties to conflict. In Syria, for example, our work with partners to incrementally repair critical damage to water plants has helped build trust and confidence in our intentions and in our abilities. As a result, we were able to negotiate access to more areas, including to Raqqa and to Aleppo, allowing us to begin water disinfection campaign. We were able to train partners to deliver mobile nutrition, immunization, education, and child protection services in dangerous, hard-to-reach areas of Syria. And when we were granted temporary access to besieged areas, we were able to conduct vital assessments and monitoring, to better shape our programming and services.

As we build trust through these results, we also build it through constant communication and advocacy efforts. Using social media, radio and television, UNICEF is reaching out to communities that are cut off by fighting, providing vital information on how to stay healthy and safe, and where they can find help. And we're working with religious and other trusted leaders who can travel to communities where their programs and our programs are being questioned or opposed on religious or political grounds, another important tool in building trust required to begin negotiation in hard-to-reach areas.

Second, we've learned the importance of using one service or program as an entry point to deliver other services. In the Philippines, for example, we used an immunization campaign as an entry point to initiate programs in an area controlled by a nonstate entity. The group was initially skeptical of the work of humanitarian organizations. But once they saw that UNICEF and our partners could deliver the

vaccine effectively, we were able to expand the delivery of other services like health and education. And more, we were able to start a dialogue that resulted in a group agreeing to demobilize child soldiers and end their recruitment altogether.

Also, in Yemen, Syria and Iraq, our successful polio campaigns have built trust among all parties to conflict, paving the way for immunization campaigns, including against measles. Cash transfers in Somalia and Yemen have opened the door to support additional UNICEF programming. And water and sanitation services and initiatives in the Central African Republic have helped increase acceptance of UNICEF's work, allowing us to scale up the delivery of vital supplies, like emergency shelter kits.

And third, we've learned the importance of working with a range of partners and employing innovative tools to join up access, field support, security and analysis in new ways. Our work with the Global Polio Eradication Initiative is a good example of this joint security initiative approach in action. Starting in Afghanistan, then expanding to other polio-endemic countries – like Pakistan and Nigeria – we introduced third-party access advisors and coordinators who can help us reach insecure, hard-to-reach areas, that U.N. personnel cannot always access.

These coordinators and advisors are often former senior military and police officers with strong links to local authorities and stakeholders, who can help negotiate humanitarian access arrangements and build better ties and trust with local communities and authorities. To better target and shape our work, JBI partners have also developed a database and a web-based approach to remotely track and report security and access barriers that can affect our immunization campaigns.

The result? In Afghanistan, only 48,000 children out of 10 million that we aimed to reach with vaccinations remained inaccessible. In Pakistan, we've limited the virus to just a few areas, and no new cases have been reported this year. And in northeastern Nigeria, only one local government authority, in Borno, is inaccessible. There's much more work to do, but the progress is undeniable.

And fourth, in fast-moving emergencies, where every day counts, we've learned the importance of creative and rapid responses to reach those in need. In South Sudan, for example, our country office and our U.N. partners in the country have adopted a rapid response mechanism, or RRM, to quickly overcome barriers and deliver urgent aid as quickly as possible. Since 2014, we've conducted 155 joint RRM missions, reaching over 2 million people, including 400,000 children under the age of five. These efforts include mobile clinics to reach children in areas of conflict, direct cash assistance to affected people, and cross-border missions from Uganda to reach people in opposition-held territory. And to maintain supplies, we've prepositioned items in warehouses spread across the country to overcome supply routes that are cut off by violence or by the rainy season.

And fifth, throughout our work we've learned the importance of staying and delivering, despite the dangers. In the world's most dangerous places, UNICEF constantly tries to avoid suspending programs or withdrawing staff unless absolutely necessary. In Yemen, for example, we've been able to respond to urgent humanitarian needs within two days. And in areas of Somalia that we cannot reach, we've worked with private contractors to maintain a baseline of service until our staff and partners can safely return to the field. All demonstrating that we are a reliable, effective, and visible partner, dedicated to supporting the most vulnerable populations throughout these crises.

These are some of the lessons that are guiding our work on access, which UNICEF considers to be one of the defining humanitarian issues of our time. As we consider the immediate impacts of continually gaining better access, we cannot forget the cost of failing to do so. Without access, we cannot

serve and support children in their hour of need. We cannot serve and support children, so then how can we expect them to build healthier lives, healthier futures for themselves and their societies. How can they build more peaceful futures for their countries if they've never known peace at home?

In his lifetime, a Syrian child may never have known a peaceful Syria. An Afghan teenager may never have known a peaceful Afghanistan. Consider the devastation in Yemen – the biggest humanitarian crisis of the world today – and its impact on young Yemenis. And consider the children of South Sudan, who have endured and continue to endure as they mark the country's seventh year of independence.

During my visit to Juba, I met a mother who'd walked for days to get treatment for her malnourished baby. I spoke to a young boy who was forced to join an armed group at the age of 10. I met two siblings who'd been separated from their parents since 2014. But today, thanks to UNICEF and our partners, the malnourished child is on her way to recovery, the former child soldier is back at school and he wants to be a doctor, and the two siblings have been reunited with their mother for the first time in four years. In fact, we can all be proud of what we're working on together on the ground in South Sudan with our partners – 1.8 million children vaccinated against measles, almost 200,000 treated for severe, acute malnutrition, and nearly 300,000 children accessed education last year.

In other words, the commitment, the funding, and, above all, unconditional, sustainable and regular humanitarian access, we can reach more and more children in need. We can improve and save lives. We can put in motion a cycle of hope and even peace by investing in children – those who will hopefully carry peace forward in the future. And we can do so even in the midst of conflict, even as we continue to urge all warring parties and those who can influence them to put peace first, to put children first, and to put the future first. To come to the negotiating table and to end these conflicts.

As CSIS continues to find new and creative ways to open more doors of access to people enduring conflicts, please know that UNICEF stands with you, ready to help, and ready to lend our expertise and our experience. So thank you very much. And thank you for the invitation today, Kimberly. (Applause.)

MS. FLOWERS: I'd like to start by drawing on your experience within the U.S. government. You understand the power of diplomacy, and how that can be married and used for humanitarian solutions. Many of the crises that you mentioned and that are there today are – the solutions in the end are political, right? But at the same time, as the head of a humanitarian organization, you have to safeguard those humanitarian principles and, like you said, don't favor one over the other. So how do you – how do you deal with that balance of the political versus the humanitarian, particularly in your role at UNICEF? Or on the ground, do you have any of those struggles?

MS. FORE: Well, thank you, Kimberly. Yes, of course, we have those struggles. And it is an everyday occurrence in the field, as many of you who I see here, have worked well in the field. It is always a balance. And the quality of the people, the experience that they have, makes an enormous difference. But the one thing we need in the world today is peace. I mean, for all humanitarian work and for, certainly, in the life of a child it is that we need peace. So we need to work on every diplomatic channel, every development channel, and to bring peace to this world.

MS. FLOWERS: What about the nexus between – since you bring up peace – between peace and humanitarian and development? You described UNICEF as a development organization, and I know that you work on making those linkages between humanitarian aid and long-term development and how that can lead to peace. Can you talk a little bit more about that?

MS. FORE: So as many of you know, the U.N. has agencies that are just humanitarian, agencies that are just development, and UNICEF is one of the rare agencies that does both, and so very similar to USAID. It is important for a child's life, if you look at the world through a child's eyes, that they have help in times of emergency, but that you plant the seeds of development in that emergency, in that humanitarian crisis, so that there is something longer term for them.

So one of the areas that I recently saw, since I mentioned South Sudan and in Juba, was we were using trucks to deliver water. As you know, water is one of the commodities that is often scarce in a humanitarian crisis and is one of the areas that if you begin to lose a(n) urban water system you really invite in diseases of all sorts, and the children are the most vulnerable. So we in UNICEF really care about these systems.

So we ask if German aid would give us a grant to build a pipe that would go from the Nile River into the city of Juba, and they did, and so we built one pipe. But then when you look at it – that was with humanitarian crisis funding – when you look at it, it would be good if we had made it a development project. It could have been something that was a public-private partnership. It could have been operated by a private company. We could have put guarantees and loans and grants together. We probably could have put in five of these pipes. We probably could have had a system that delivered water to the households.

But there are lots of ways that you can look at these. But if we can plant the seeds of development, of longer-term sustainable development, into these humanitarian crises contexts, it would be enormously powerful for the world because at least in our humanitarian work there are more crises, they're longer lasting, they're more violent than they have ever been. So what they need is the help on the development side.

MS. FLOWERS: Let's dig into that a little bit deeper, because it does feel like that, doesn't it – that things just – the crises just are so bad today. I think about Yemen as sort of the worst. But what are – what are the crises that are most on your mind when you go to bed at night?

MS. FORE: Oh, there are so many, Kimberly. (Laughter.) But, you know, if you just start with the life that the Rohingya have had in Cox's Bazar, I mean, this is one that the world has paid attention to. But it does not have enough of the development seeds in it. It's difficult to give the children an education and that's what they need. It's difficult to give them clean water and health and immunization programs and that's what they need, and they need safe spaces because for many of them the psychosocial support is what's needed. They have had a very tough time. So that worries me.

Afghanistan and the polio – the fact that it's not eradicated and there is polio fatigue in many of these communities – so we're now coming in with a suite of services so that we can address malnutrition and general immunization as well as health services within Afghanistan. But that is always a worry.

We are, clearly, deeply worried about Syria. I know that your task force is looking at this.

MS. FLOWERS: Yeah.

MS. FORE: It will be very important work that you do. How we can bring so many internally-displaced people and refugees back to Syria is going to be an enormous challenge for our world at large. Iraq is still a country that needs a great deal of our attention and thought and help as a world. Yemen, clearly. South Sudan, Somalia, the Horn of Africa. We're now exceedingly worried about Mali and

Central African Republic. Libya is a concern just because of the – well, for many reasons but because of the number of children in the trafficking. It's very difficult.

Most recently, we've seen it in this hemisphere – Venezuela, Central America. So we're worried about a number of areas but we have a lot of solutions, as a world. There is not enough funding. That is still an issue. Most of our humanitarian programs are funded at somewhere between 50 percent and 70 percent. It's just simply not enough, and development programs are not getting enough funding.

So everywhere we look there is a chance to do more, to help more, and with our partners, hopefully, we can.

MS. FLOWERS: Where do you see those greatest pockets of hope?

MS. FORE: Oh, it's everywhere. (Laughter.) I was just in Kazakhstan this past weekend and we were launching primary health care with WHO and one of the programs that they've developed in Kazakhstan are in schools where they're asking peers to look after each other who might have some mental health issues.

So, as you know, most young people have been bullied in the past week. Many are experiencing physical and sexual violence, and so Kazakhstan has a very high rate of young people suicides. So three years ago, UNICEF and the government of Kazakhstan developed a program in which young people would look after their friends and they developed a series of items that you look for in your friends to see if they're getting depression, which would be an early warning signal, so that you could catch them before there's even a thought of suicide. And with this, they now have a very robust program.

It began in a hundred schools and moved to a thousand schools. We're now moving it out all over the country. It has reduced suicide rates by 62 percent. So there are lots of these programs. They're all over the world, and if we can just scale them up to reach more children and young people around the world, we really will have a better place.

MS. FLOWERS: So speaking of scaling up, let's talk about scaling up nutrition. I can't not bring up nutrition. On my food security side, we're working a lot more on that right now. And I know you're the co-chair or the chair of the SUN Leadership Council. So talk a little bit about scaling up nutrition, the council, and what are some of the things you're working on or priorities in that area.

MS. FORE: Kimberly, it's a good thing you have not left your leafy vegetables behind. (Laughter.) So scaling up nutrition is, indeed, a very important part of the world today. I've also just been in India and Thailand and in Indonesia, and in all of those countries the prime ministers and presidents were very worried about stunting.

It is an issue because there are still too many children who are either born stunted or get stunting later. So right now, we see a difference in Africa. In Africa, babies tend to be born healthy. Their mothers are healthy. But then as time moves along, they get stunted because there is not enough, usually, good nutrition for the children.

In South Asia, it is that the adolescent mothers are often not well nourished to begin with so the children are born stunted. So we need to reach the adolescent mothers as well as the children. So in the Scale Up Nutrition initiative, we are focusing on the first thousand days of life for a child and what kinds of nourishing foods we can get them, what kinds of good local nourishing recipes we can encourage in

every country, and then we are also focusing on the age group – the vertical rise – for an adolescent young mother; how do we get good nutrition to her so that she has the chance to bear a healthy baby.

MS. FLOWERS: As a businesswoman, you must think about the private sector and how to engage them but also just as an entrepreneur you have that mindset of, like, how do you bring in innovation and really scale it up. So talk a little bit about, one, what innovations, whether it's drone technology or biometrics – what has UNICEF been using that's new and different and what are some partnerships that you're most excited about right now?

MS. FORE: Well, we are using drones and in Kazakhstan they now have a drone corridor, as we do in Malawi and in Vanuatu, and for these drone corridors they are to either carry blood that might be needed to a community's health center or it might be vaccines or it might be that they are samples so that you can see if there is a disease that's beginning to spread. But drones are very new and we're just beginning to understand how we can use them.

But they're very good for mountainous hard-to-reach areas and they're good for islands, we've found. So drones are, indeed, part of it. We also have an interesting program called Magic Box that we do with a number of private companies and its purpose is to try to use big data as a way to anticipate where we'll be needed.

So in Ebola or in Zika it allows you to use the data for where people migrate to and where their cell phones are connected so that you can see in an outbreak where people might go and then you can preposition supplies and people to help address what that emergency is. It's helped us stop Zika. It's helped us address Ebola.

But I think there's going to be a lot of use of big data in ways that can help us in the years to come that will be very exciting. But we need innovations of all sorts. We need products and services. We need platforms. We are gathering now a list of the innovations that we hope someone somewhere in the world will create.

But right now, to meet the sustainable development goals by the year 2030, we are not going to get there at the rate we're going. We need innovations. So anyone here who knows any companies who've got some innovative products, UNICEF wants to hear from you. We work in nutrition and health and education and sanitation and water and protection. So we are wide open for ideas and great ideas from private sector.

MS. FLOWERS: Before I turn to the audience, I want to go back to access. I appreciate that you've said it's the defining issue of our time and you gave some wonderful concrete solutions that UNICEF is doing to sort of counter these impediments. I'm curious whether it's the U.S. government or the U.N. Security Council or others. Are there solutions on that level that has helped UNICEF on the ground, whether that is sanctions or whether – you know, laws or is there anything that you've seen that's helped you get to these solutions that are sometimes local and specific but from the bigger scale the things that either a donor government, whether it's U.S. or other, or the international community has done to help you come to those solutions?

MS. FORE: The number-one issue that's helped us is building trust with the community.

MS. FLOWERS: OK.

MS. FORE: If they trust you, you will get some level of access. The difficulty is that often it's not enough. I mean, take Syria. I mean, there are cross-border restrictions – there are cross-line restrictions in funding and in approvals of access. This makes it very difficult, and if you can only reach a few children you feel that you're not doing your job as a humanitarian.

There are far too many that we are not reaching, and once you do not reach them things just do not improve in a community. They need clean water. They need hygiene kits. They need nutrition. They need to have education because these conflicts are lasting so much longer. But being trusted in the community is the one thing that you can rely on. It has – it has a chance to give you access.

MS. FLOWERS: Mmm hmm. Thank you.

Let's turn to the audience for a round of questions. Please raise your hand high and come up here to the front over here, to the side first. And then, Haley (sp), if you can come on up here to the front, too.

Please state your name and where you're coming from, and be brief. Thank you.

Q: Thank you so much. My name is Hanna Kasahara. I'm studying international peace and conflict resolution at American University.

I think the U.N. is moving forward the discussion of how children and youth can be positive – can contribute to the peace, and I think you have been – encountered many very encouraging children and youth before. So can you share a story of very, like, strong children and youth under the humanitarian crisis contributing to rebuild the society?

MS. FLOWERS: Great. Let's take a few more questions before you answer.

Q: Thank you. I'm Tom Reckford with the Foreign Policy Discussion Group.

Henrietta, it's wonderful to see you again. In your opening remarks, you mentioned financial shortfalls as a problem. Would you explain, please, what you're referring to?

MS. FLOWERS: Great. Let's take a few more. There's one right here, Hailey. See that one? Thank you.

Q: Hi. Thank you so much. My name is Leitu (ph). I come from South Africa. I'm a medical student at Stellenbosch University.

So thank you for your delivery. That was very informative and the work you're doing is truly remarkable. So I just want to know – I know Africa is a country with 60 percent of the population being the youth, right, and with all these issues that have been mentioned today, how is the youth involved in coming up with solutions in contributing to the progress and resolving all these issues? I just want to know the involvement of the youth or how it can be incorporated within the whole conversation we're having today.

MS. FLOWERS: Excellent. Go ahead and respond, and then we'll come back to those in the audience.

MS. FORE: All right. Well, so thank you for your question. So since two are on youth, why don't we do Tom's first, so funding. Funding, for us, is related to two things. One, we get about two-thirds of our funding from government sources and one-third from private sources. We have to raise our entire budget every year. So, as a result, it means that funding is always on our mind.

But we put out a humanitarian appeal every spring and we hope that it will be filled. We are lucky when 30 percent is filled by June. Sometimes this time of year maybe we're at 45 percent, 50 percent. It just means we're always lagging and it means in the field that all of our partners don't have the surety of knowing that there will be funding.

So people are put on three-month contracts or six-month contracts. And yet, for most of these humanitarian situations, they've been going on for three years, five years, seven years. It makes it very difficult to hold people, to hold supplies, to preposition them, and to keep the trust of the government that you'll be there – that you'll stay.

So funding just remains a continuing problem, and for development partly what happens is that everyone worries about the humanitarian emergencies and so the funding rushes to the crises. But then they forget that there is a life that needs looking after and so you need the development.

On young people – so we've had a number of cases of examples where they've helped in humanitarian situations. So one is when we have a crisis – so let me just take the – we had a number of mud slides and earthquakes this past year in a number of countries. We ramped up a group that we have called U-Reporters, so that's the letter U-Reporter, and they're online and they can send us messages for where they are and where roads are closed and we can tell them that a certain community looks like it's cut off and can they get information and services there, and they do so and they go on motorbikes. They go with their bicycles. They deliver information. They've really been helpful.

It's also true for Ebola and getting information out to their villages and communities. So they teach elders what they need to do in looking after people that have Ebola and where they need to go and how they need to protect themselves. They've been very helpful.

A South Africa example is that we have a number of young people who are in HIV/AIDS groups. So they build awareness with each other about how to stay safe but also how to talk to each other in class, so that if you're the only individual who has AIDS, do you tell your classmates? How do you tell them? What do you tell them? And if they ostracize you and will not talk to you in class, what do you do about that? It makes an enormous difference if it is a young person telling a young person.

It's also been very helpful in child marriage. So whether it's in India or if it's in the eastern part of Africa, there have been groups that have gathered where they are young people talking about how they have spoken up in their communities and with their parents about not wanting to get married.

When I was in Mali, there was a girl who was 12 who was asked by her father to marry one of his friends and it was because this friend had wanted to marry her older sister, who was three years older, and her older sister had refused. So her father said it was now her duty to get married to him. But she didn't want to.

So her older sister came to her and said, we can – we can talk to our father about this and we can really stand up to it. Her father just did not want to talk about this. So she ran away and entered a shelter. They've now gotten back together. They've now talked about it and her father understands that she

really wants to be in school. She wants to learn, and he's understood it and appreciates it now. But it's very difficult at the time and when you're 11 or 12 and if you have a big sister or if you have a friend who will help you talk through an issue, it makes a big difference.

So can you help? Yes. If you have not yet found Generation Unlimited or, as it's called, Gen U, online, please go. Please visit it. We are looking for a number of education solutions that we can scale up – digital learning, classroom learning, life skills, work skills – and we're looking for young people to be part of this.

So we want your ideas. We want your efforts. We want your hands and feet at work to help each other. So, please, join Generation Unlimited.

MS. FLOWERS: Let's take another round of questions. Raise your hand high. There's one over here, one there, and one over there. Yeah, there you go.

Q: Hi, Henrietta. Tom Cynkin, formerly at State, and thank you for your service.

MS. FORE: It's very nice to see you, Tom.

Q: Good to see you, too. And now at the Daniel Morgan Graduate School.

Often time, children seem to be caught in the nexus between national security and humanitarian disasters, and you touched on North Korea. And I'm wondering specifically there if the international sanctions are impeding UNICEF's work in North Korea or are we talking apples and oranges? Thanks.

MS. FLOWERS: Great question.

Q: Hi. My name is Jacqueline Rojas and I'm a Master's candidate at Georgetown University's global human development program and also a USAID Payne Fellow.

My question is about data. So considering the challenges in reaching vulnerable children and youth in these complex emergencies, could you speak a little bit about how you actually collect data to measure impact and what are some of those strategies, because I imagine there are extremely complicated methods for that. So –

MS. FLOWERS: Great. Yeah.

Q: Hi. Thank you for your talk. I'm Meghan Hussey. I'm with the Global Youth Engagement Team at Special Olympics.

So the SDGs call on us to leave no one behind, and I was wondering if you could talk about reaching those children and youth who are particularly difficult to reach. At our organization, we're particularly concerned with youth with disabilities but there are other children – ethnic minorities, others – that may have particular barriers to accessing services. So I was wondering if you could talk about inclusivity in your programming.

MS. FLOWERS: Before you answer, Tom, I just want to point out that yesterday – and Henrietta mentioned this in her keynote – but Steve Morrison in our Global Health Policy Center here launched a

short video on North Korea and we had a UNICEF rep both in the video and speaking on the panel yesterday, and it does talk a lot about sanctions.

So I'd just encourage you or anyone else who's interested in that just Google CSIS North Korea food, you know, health team and it'll probably come up. But I do encourage you to look at that as well for further information.

MS. FORE: Yes. Great point. So and it's a wonderful video and Steve, as you know, does very good work.

So there's a bit of apples and oranges, to your point. It is – it is difficult to keep all of the programs going. Right now, we have been doing immunizations. We've also been trying to help tuberculosis. It's very hard to start programs like tuberculosis that might possibly have dual-use technology and so that then enters into the national security sphere. But it – there is a humanitarian issue and tuberculosis is one thing that everyone is worried about in a health crisis. So I would definitely watch this program and if you have any other questions or thoughts or ideas for us, we'd love to talk more deeply about it.

The other item that I think has been difficult in North Korea is just the movement of funds. So paying of staff and all – for anybody who is working in North Korea, and that is true for nonprofits as well as United Nations agencies.

So data. Data is a very interesting field and, as you know, we try very hard to have countries collect their own data so that they own it, that they want to know about their populations, they want to know where the people are that are most in need, and who they have in their country with what education level, what nutrition level, et cetera, et cetera.

Our interest in collection comes in a variety of forms. So sometimes we help the government to send out community workers who are doing door-to-door surveys. So similar to the Census here in the United States, there might be a census and it may be on a particular subject or it may be a very broad survey.

We believe that having multisectoral indicator surveys are very helpful and so those are the best if we can do them within a country. We're also now collecting quite a bit of data that individuals are sending in to us because they want to be counted on some subject. So it could be on HIV/AIDS. It could be on disabilities. It could be from nonprofit organizations who really want to talk about, let's say, the number of schools that are closed or the number of students who are girls who are left out of school.

So sometimes the data comes in voluntarily. Sometimes it's because we are going out. Sometimes it's with the government. Sometimes it's with contractors or nonprofit organizations. The field is growing – there's no question about that – and I think it's also changing. The power is now changing to the individual who wants to send information in. They want to be counted. They want to be heard. And this is particularly true of young people. Young people want to have their voice heard and so we are particularly hearing from young people.

One of the issues in HIV/AIDS is that for many countries there is a youth program and then there's an adult program. The ones who are in the youth program do not want to enter into the adult program. They want to stay in the youth program. So they want to run their own clinics and they want their voices heard. And so how do they do that? They send us data. So it's a very interesting field. It's a great area for research.

Disabilities – so we’ve got lots of new programs on disabilities. One is very simple and very old school but it really is wonderful for places like Afghanistan. So we have these suitcases that look like a metal 1940s suitcase that’s School-in-a-Box, and School-in-a-Box has a number of articles in it and one is a blow-up ball that is also a(n) atlas of the world so you can learn about the world and you can use it as a ball to play with. We now have a rattle inside so that if you are blind you can play ball with your fellow students because you can hear where the ball is going. There’s a multiplication table and so when all the children are there pointing to one item or another, there’s Braille on this package.

So it’s small but it’s really important for a young child’s life who is disabled. We’ve gotten a number of programs now that are online on a Tablet in which the same software program can be used by sighted children or unsighted children. So you’ll see the cow jumping over the fence or you’ll hear the cow mooing and going over the fence.

But it’s a wonderful way that you feel included, you’re learning at the same time, you’re in a classroom with differently-abled children, and that’s very important for life. And so there are lots of programs. It’s an area of increasing interest and we’re starting to get some government donors and that’s very important for all of the programs.

There’s also a big role for private sector to play because a lot of the items, products, and services that are used, let’s say, for autistic children are now being developed by the private sector. So this is an area, I think, that we will have a burgeoning number of new services and products in the years to come.

MS. FLOWERS: Great. In the last minutes, I think just sort of final thoughts but I’ll lead you with a question to go there. You know, when you – again, when you look at the spectrum of crises that we have today, for those in the audience – and we always have a spectrum, as you can tell – you know, policy makers and students and advocacy groups – what should they be thinking about? What should they be looking at in their role of how they can help? What’s some advice that you would give so that we don’t continue to feel a bit overwhelmed by the number of crises that we see today?

MS. FORE: Well, innovations is definitely one. So when you’re in a refugee camp you’ll see lots of innovations that someone has just done right outside their tent. If we can pick up on all of those, the world can be a better place. That’s one. And if you can tell us where they are or tell us what you see, those innovations will help change lives in a very significant way.

The second one is what we talked about for South Africa. It’s Generation Unlimited. There are 1.8 billion young people in the world between the ages of 10 and 24. It’s probably the largest cohort in the world today. They need education. They need skills. They need a lack of violence.

We need to look after the girls, but there’s a demographic crisis that is around us and if we can focus on that, if you can spend some time on that generation, it’s going to make – it’s going to be very powerful. What they say is, we’re 25 percent of the population but we are 100 percent of the future, and they’re right.

MS. FLOWERS: That’s a good one. Great way to end.

Henrietta, thank you for your many years of leadership and support to CSIS. We’re so grateful that you are in this role at UNICEF and we will continue to engage you in our work on this – on humanitarian assistance and particularly access.

Thank you so much. (Applause.)

(END)