



Coalition for Racial & Ethnic Equity in Development (CREED)

Learning Hub: Component One - Policies and Systems Learning Event

July 11, 2022 - 3 to 4 pm EDT

As part of CREED's efforts to build racial and ethnic equity (REE) in international development, we are launching our Learning Events Series with a focus on Component One (Policies and Systems) of the CREED REE Pledge. While there is much documentation publicly available about building diversity and inclusion, strategies for developing REE approaches at the organizational level are at early stages. In this event, we will hear from the CREED Learning Hub Component One team about their aspirations and considerations in building a measurable REE policy. Specifically, we will:

- (i) discuss the purpose of building REE and the rationale for creating an REE policy, and
- (ii) dialogue about how to create an REE policy.

In the spirit of CREED and learning communities in general, this event will provide a safe space for us to learn from each other as we work towards fulfilling our commitment of signing the REE Pledge. This event will *not* be recorded; instead, key takeaways will be shared after the event.

Agenda

- Introduction to the CREED Learning Events Series
- Panel Discussion

Speakers

Indira Kaur Ahluwalia, Introductory Remarks



Indira Ahluwalia has founded, led, and advised organizations and coached leaders to strengthen equity, effectiveness, and achievement. Indira leads KAUR Strategies to enable authentic and transformative growth through advisory and coaching services for federal government contractors and the private sector. Previously, Indira founded Development & Training Services, Inc. (dTS), and inculcated equality (gender and social inclusion), accountability (monitoring and evaluation), and sustainability (learning and capacity building) in 90 countries under USAID and State Department auspices. She then facilitated dTS' acquisition by Palladium where she remains a Senior Advisor and provides strategic





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and advisory services. Recently, Indira founded and chairs the Coalition for Racial and Ethnic Equity (REE) in Development (CREED) which created the REE pledge to advance racial and ethnic diversity, equity, and belonging in US based organizations with accountability.

Indira published her first book *Fast Forward to Hope: Choosing to Build the Power of Self* in 2021. The book recounts Indira's journey from fear to hope as she faced stage IV advanced breast cancer, and serves as a tribute to finding one's own power, and cultivating life's trajectory.

Indira earned her Master of Arts in International Relations from the University of Chicago.

Paul Weisenfeld, Moderator



Paul Weisenfeld is an Executive Vice President at RTI International, an independent nonprofit research institute dedicated to improving the human condition by turning knowledge into practice. In this position he leads RTI's international development practice, which designs and implements programs across a wide range of sectors to help lower- and middle-income countries and communities address complex problems and improve the lives of their citizens. Mr. Weisenfeld also provides executive oversight of the RTI Government Relations function, leading the institute's engagement with elected officials and senior government policymakers. He also serves as Chairman of the Board of RTI India, an incorporated subsidiary of RTI.

Before joining RTI, Mr. Weisenfeld served as a foreign service officer for the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), achieving the highest rank of career minister in the Senior Foreign Service, and led high profile initiatives across various international development sectors. During this time Mr. Weisenfeld directed the Bureau for Food Security at USAID, which led President Obama's Feed the Future Initiative. He also led the Haiti Task Team, charged with coordinating relief and reconstruction planning following the devastating earthquake in 2010 and served as USAID Mission Director in Peru and Zimbabwe. Mr. Weisenfeld received the USAID administrator's Distinguished Career Service Award, the agency's highest award. He served in Africa, the Middle East, and Latin America.

Mr. Weisenfeld holds an honorary Doctorate in Public Administration from Monmouth College, Illinois. He also holds a J.D. from Harvard Law School and a B.A. from Queens College of the City University of New York.





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Ajay Kalotra, Panelist



Mr. Ajay S. Kalotra is the President and Chief Executive Officer for International Business & Technical Consultants Inc. (IBTCI). He oversees the successful delivery of technical assistance and training to global clients in a myriad of sectors, primarily in global health and humanitarian assistance. Over a two decade tenure at IBTCI, he has served as lead for technical practices and operation departments including: Monitoring, Evaluation, Research and Learning, Banking & Finance, Business Development, Organizational Development & Communication; and Talent Acquisition. He has served as Project Director and Quality Assurance Officer for U.S. based and field projects, including in conflict and post-conflict settings.

Prior to joining IBTCI, he served as U.S. Head of a boutique financial research firm with primary operations in the U.S., U.K., and Singapore. He managed acquired companies' integration into the world wide group of companies. His primary responsibilities included the content design and management of foreign exchange, fixed income and equities research delivered through intranet, internet and mobile platforms. He also spearheaded the business-to-business and business-to-consumer global sales teams, as well as the U.S. based traditional sales team to sell-side and buy-side institutions.

Mr. Kalotra holds a MBA from Cambridge University, UK, and a BA in Economics from the University of Virginia, USA.

Misti French, Panelist



Misti French (she/her) serves as a senior international human resources manager at International Business & Technical Consultants, Inc. (IBTCI), an international development consulting company based in Vienna, VA, with an expertise in monitoring and evaluation and institutional support. Misti has championed international development for more than 15 years through a broad spectrum of human resources focusing on customer service for organizations' biggest asset - Their People. She holds a B.S. in Biological Sciences, and certifications in Movement Analysis, SHRM-SCP, and Diversity, Equity and Inclusion.





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Ricardo Michel, Panelist



Ricardo brings more than 25 years of international finance and leadership experience in both the private and public sectors. He is responsible for oversight of and leading Palladium's business in the Americas, with a focus on finance and investment, market systems, private sector engagement, and business transformation.

Prior to joining Palladium, Ricardo served as Managing Director of FHI Partners, a subsidiary of FHI 360, as well as Executive Vice President of AMEX International, Inc., an international development consulting firm. He was a presidential appointee in the Obama Administration to the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), where he was responsible for public-private partnerships

and played a catalytic role in the launch of the U.S. Global Development Lab. He also directed the Office of Innovation and Development Alliances (IDEA) and served as Senior Advisor for economic growth and trade in the Africa Bureau.

Before serving with USAID, Ricardo spent several years structuring project finance transactions at the Export-Import Bank of the United States. He served as a Senior Trade and Investment Advisor for the U.S. African Development Foundation and was instrumental in establishing the foundation's trade and investment initiative for small and medium enterprises. Ricardo worked for several years as an investment banker for J.P. Morgan Securities and began his career as a certified public accountant, working as an auditor for Arthur Andersen, LLP in their Philadelphia, and Bermuda offices.

Ricardo earned a Master of Business Administration from the University of Pennsylvania's Wharton School and holds a bachelor's degree in accounting from Temple University.





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Afiya Bey, Panelist



Afiya Bey (she/her) is senior manager of equity, diversity, & inclusion at [Palladium](#), a global impact firm, working at the intersection of social impact and commercial growth. In this capacity she works with Human Resources, Talent Acquisition, and across business teams to advance the company's equity, diversity, and inclusion efforts in the Americas region. Prior to joining Palladium, she served as diversity programs manager at an international medical organization and was previously workforce development manager for a regional non-profit organization in Pittsburgh, Pa.

A graduate of the Pennsylvania State University, Afiya is passionate about people and affecting positive change through her more than a

decade of experience and professional focus in diversity, equity, and inclusion initiatives, strategies, and programming.

Mustafa Kudrati, Panelist



Mustafa Kudrati is the President and CEO of [Plan International USA](#), an international humanitarian and development organization that partners with girls and their communities around the world to overcome oppression and gender inequality. Mustafa joined Plan in April 2022 following four years at EngenderHealth, where he served as vice president of programs, and more than a decade at Pathfinder International in a variety of roles. For more than 30 years, he has focused his work on reproductive health rights, social inclusion, local ownership and diversity, equity and inclusion.

Born and raised in Tanzania, Mustafa began his career as the co-founder of the Kuleana Center for Children's Rights, which focused on integrating homeless children into their home communities and formal education. UNICEF has recognized Kuleana with the Maurice Pate Leadership for Children Award for exemplary innovation and inspirational leadership, and the organization went on to become one of the largest nonprofits in Tanzania.

Mustafa holds a bachelor's degree in development studies from Hamilton College and a master's in public administration from the Harvard Kennedy School.





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Audra Thurber, Panelist



Audra Thurber SHRM-CP (she/her) is the People & Culture Sr. Generalist at [Plan International USA](#). Audra has been involved in Plan's Diversity, Equity, Inclusion initiative since its inception in 2019, and is currently co-chair of Plan's DEI Council.

In her position at Plan, Audra partners with organization leaders across all functions, implements people and culture initiatives including performance management and compensation management and facilitates training and development for employees. Married with two children, you can find Audra running, reading, or practicing yoga in her spare time.

Audra holds a bachelor's degree in Psychology and a Master's degree in Labor Relations and Human Resources. Audra recently earned a Diversity and Inclusion Certificate from Cornell University Online.

