Re: MDM leaders in USG & external

slajaunie@usaid.gov Sophia Lajaunie Thursday, November 10, 2022 at 12:02:40 PM Eastern Standard Time
To: vzakem@usaid.gov Vera Zakem
Cc: jowalsh@usaid.gov Johnny Walsh

Thanks so much Vera, super helpful. We chatted offline but just for visibility on the thread:

1. The ACVFA meeting date is Friday Dec 2nd from 9am-12pm. I'll be sending around an invite and more details on the agenda early next week.
2. We are still shifting things around in terms of speakers & agenda for the breakfast - we likely won't be able to accommodate an external speaker but thanks for the great suggestions. And while we likely won't have the time to do a big focus on MDM it will still be incorporated (as it will in one of the panels), and ideally we can do an MDM focused conversation with you and relevant members very soon. We'll chat through this early next week!
3. Thanks so much for sharing the white paper, going to take a closer look over the weekend.

Talk soon and thanks again!
Sophia

On Wed, Nov 9, 2022 at 3:07 PM Vera Zakem <vzakem@usaid.gov> wrote:

> Sophia,
>
> You beat me to the punch! Was going to email you, but I've been on a 2 week TDY and this has slid.
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> I think this is a great idea and I'd be delighted to join for the breakfast and the public event. Have you settled in on a date?
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> For high profile speaker (def not USG).. I mean.. it's kinda me here and it's state it's a bunch of random people so far. Johnny - you may have an idea for IC.
>
> I would actually go with an external voice on this issue. I have 2 obvious choices. One is one of the members - Kristin Lord. She is excellent on this topic. The second is Peter Pomerantzev. He is brilliant. Works with the agency as well. Longtime friend. Peter Pomerantsev : Stavros Niarchos Foundation SNF Agora Institute at Johns Hopkins (jhu.edu)
>
> He is BRILLIANT.
>
> Also, here is the white paper that we sent to the NSC about our efforts. Note on me - we are in the process in finalizing my title. It won't be what is on this form due to some risk factors but something slightly different.
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> Cheers, Vera
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> On Wed, Nov 9, 2022 at 2:55 PM Sophia Lajaunie <slajaunie@usaid.gov> wrote:
>
> > Hi Vera and Johnny,
> >
> > Hope you're both well. We are thinking through potentially having MDM be a main topic to discuss in the upcoming ACVFA meeting, during the private breakfast conversation between members and SP (that will happen before the public component). If this is the case, of course would love to have you join, and we also would like to invite a high profile expert/leader in this area either from elsewhere in the USG (NSC or State) or an external expert in this space / digital democracy more broadly. Would love your thoughts on potential names and who we may be able to tap here, and who would be willing to join this conversation (to both share with members some of our major challenges we're facing in this area but also hear from them what they're seeing, things that may be working, ideas on successful approaches, etc.).
> >
> > If we don't go with this for this meeting, regardless we plan to cover this with the committee sometime soon and would love to pull you in then (Vera for your brief presentation to them that we've been discussing), but I will keep you posted regardless.
> >
> > Thanks so much!
> > Sophia
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> > --
> > Sophia Lajaunie (she/her/hers)
> > Executive Director of the Advisory Committee on Voluntary Foreign Aid (ACVFA)
> > Public Engagement Advisor

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