1. The top ask is for Youtube to add Belarusian as a supported language. Presumably there is a fixed cost here for Youtube as well as some ongoing ones -- the costs needed to add and maintain a language on the platform (subtitles? interface elements? content recs? customer support? regional compliance)? And presumably Youtube commercial=ly trades this off potential revenue based on potential demand, and evidently that cost-benefit analysis has not historically been in favor of Belarusian. Do we have any sense of how much the costs would be to add it (whether fixed or ongoing), such that they could even consider it out of corporate social responsibility?
We do not have a sense of how much the cost would be. However, it is tied to how big the market is in a particular country. That determines how much YouTube wants to invest in a particular country. So correct, this is why monetization in Belarus and Moldova has been a lower priority for YT. The areas as you outline above are tied to labor / level of effort of YT staff and product features. Once YT decides it wants to add a language, product folks will do that and they will take care of subtitles, interfact, etc. For other issues like policy compliance and customer support, I think it would be a lower level of effort and won't be tied to 1 country. Typically, there is 1 regional program covering a sub-region for Eastern Europe from a policy perspective. It is unclear how many staff will need to support Belarusian language from the customer support side to ensure that when issues arise, YT can support its users and ensure it is compliant with content \YT's terms of service, but again, customer support personnel do not support one country, typically. I do think this could be part of TY's broader social impact / google.org efforts to increase access to information and opportunities to rising democracies.

2. When we say that adding Belarusian could support independent media, would this be for (1) for media actors to pay youtube to play ads promoting their content, or (2) media actors to upload content and then receive ad revenues based on its popularity, or both? If it is both, am I understanding correctly that in order to do
(1) you NEED for the language of the ad to be a youtube supported language, whereas they are free to upload content in Belarussian currently, and even get ad revenue for it, just not for views from inside Russia?

It is for both. It is for content creators to be able to place ads, promote their content, receive revenue for it, and reach their targeted audience. In Belarus, right now the content is mostly in Russian, not Belarussian, and is perceived to be controlled by the Lukashenka regime. Content creators can currently upload / publish content in Belarusian, but they also need to be able to promote (e.g., place small dollar ads, run ad campaigns) and make $ off of content in Belarusian to reach a targeted audience inside Belarus and sustain their operations. The lack of support for Belarusian language coupled with the regime's blocking of websites makes it very difficult for users to discover content in Belarusian language from independent media and civil society organizations through search results or content recommendations.

In Russia, it is a different story. As I understand, YouTube is available and the mobile market is dominated by Android. Google does not have a physical presence or the ability to process payments for people located in the country to our sanctions policy on Russia. We have been working with exiles of this country living in Eastern Europe to be able to communicate and

broadcast credible information inside Russia. YT may be able to help in this regard, however, I don't know how much given the current inability to process payments inside of Russia.

3. Question in terms of monetizing content from viewers inside Russia. as a policy position, do we hold the view that the marginal benefits of having Belarussian content creators get ad revenue from viewers within Russia would be greater than the marginal costs that occur when malign actors outside of Russia profit by spreading disinformation to viewers inside Russia? Also, is Youtube even able to separate the deactivation of "in russia" views for channels located outside the country vs. those located inside the country, or does it simply have to deactivate monetization at large for views inside Russia, regardless of where the channel is located? what I'm trying to get at is that any policy that allows content monetization for independent media outlets fleeing authoritarian regimes is also going to allow content monetization for other groups as well, and making sure we're making a recommendation based on how things net out overall.
We cannot make a policy recommendation on this. This is up for YouTube to decide. However, I would agree with this assessment. We simply are hoping that content creators have equal access to opportunity to reach their audience and monetize their content.

4. There is also an ask for youtube to allow monetization in Moldova. Could you please clarify what this means? Presumably it's not a language issue as individuals can both upload content and push out ads in Romanian? It's a geographical issue where youtube simply says that channels in a certain geography cannot do ads? If that is true, would welcome any information we have on the costs of adding a new geography (regulatory, etc.).
This is not a language or geography issue - it is purely an access and an opportunity issue. Moldova is not currently a part of YouTube's Partner Program which allows local creators to monetize their content. We hope that YT considers allowing small independent media outlets and content creators to monetize off of their channels in order to reach a broader audience in Moldova and sustain their operations.

Commented [1]: @galam@usaid.gov - you may want to avoid bringing up russia.

Commented [2]: Suggest taking out Russia entirely. It's a complicated issue and totally separate from Belarus. It should not be conflated. Best to not raise Russia at all. We have tried and tried, without success, so we've determined it's best not to push.

Commented [3]: As noted, please take out Russia mention entirely from the conversation.