

Beyond Good Intentions

Lakshmi Iyer: Welcome to Beyond Good Intentions: Ensuring Your Economic Mobility Strategy Creates Value for Your Company and Communities. The conversation in today's webinar is about how business leaders can move beyond good intentions to clearly define, communicate, and deliver value for their companies and for the communities they serve. My name is Lakshmi Iyer and I'm a managing director at FSG. Before we dive into the content, just a few housekeeping items as we gather. We are recording today's session and we will be sharing the recording and slides on fsg.org. To turn on live captions today go to Live Transcript at the bottom of your screen and select Show Captions. If you have difficulties or need help with anything technical, please email info@fsg.org. I am really excited to be joined by my colleague, Dane Smith, who's a senior advisor at FSG and you'll hear from him shortly. We're also joined by five really vibrant and amazing business leaders today. Cindy Chao from Sun Life, Abby Hollingsworth from Bank of America, Beatriz Polhamus from Banco Popular, Michael Stroik from 3M, and Reema Jweied-Guegel from AARP. Before we dive in, a really quick word on FSG for those who may not know us. FSG is a global nonprofit dedicated to advancing strategies for equitable systems change. We have staff in the U.S. and in Asia and deliver on our mission alongside our clients and partners through customized consulting with companies, foundations, and nonprofits. We have programmatic initiatives and communities of practice and we also share our learnings and insights with the field through research and thought leadership, like the webinar today. So much of what you'll hear today comes directly from the work in the field. Let's dive in.

About five years ago FSG began asking a seemingly simple but a hard question. Why do so many corporate impact strategies struggle to deliver the results that the leaders intended to create? So we interviewed about 70 corporate social impact leaders across regions and industries globally. And what we heard from them that it wasn't a lack of ambition or investment. Leaders had clear strategic intent, but again and again, it was that the intent was being undermined by interference. And that led us to this equation. Strategic intent minus interference determines impact. I'll say that again. Strategic intent minus interference determines impact. It is that a strategy alone is not enough, right? A strategy can never reach its full potential if interference is left unexamined. So the more you can lower that interference the more you can increase your impact. So when we say interference what do we mean? We're not talking about failure. We're not talking about bad actors. We're talking about the very real internal and external forces that get in the way. So you may have misaligned incentives or unclear ownerships, competing business priorities, skepticism from executives, or pressure to show results before the impact or the value fully materializes. You may also have external interference like lack of trust from community partners and nonprofits. Most business leaders can name these interferences, right? What was missing was sort of a space to actually work through these interferences, roll up your sleeves to compare notes, pressure test approaches and then learn from your peers who are facing similar challenges. Business leaders really needed an enabling environment where they could surface the interference honestly and learn how to navigate it together. And it was that insight that led FSG to create the Purpose Studio. So many of you know that FSG, you know, you probably know FSG for our deep one-on-one strategy and implementation work that we do with companies and foundations and nonprofits. And that still remains. The Purpose Studio builds on that foundation and adds something that leaders told us that they were craving. A structured peer-based environment to work through those interferences together in real time. The Purpose Studio is a carefully curated cohort of about 20 leaders from companies like the ones you see below here. We bring leaders together for a few days in person

working through real challenges that they're actively facing and provide them with tools and frameworks to navigate those challenges. And we also learn from them on what tools might stick or not stick given the environment that they're working in. It's deeply experiential. It's team based and participants learn with and from one another. The focus of that experience is that it's not theory. The focus is practical insight that you can apply inside your organization immediately. So with that, I'm going to welcome one of our panelists to have a conversation and also give you, after that, give you an overview of what the webinar is going to be like. So, Abby, welcome to the webinar. You lead workforce development at the Bank of America. Can you share a little bit about what motivated you to have your team participate in the Purpose Studio?

Abby Hollingsworth: Sure. Thank you so much for having me and thanks for this incredible Purpose Studio. To give a little bit of context for kind the work we do and why we thought that this is a great opportunity for our team to participate in. I lead workforce development at Bank of America and so what does that mean? It means that my team is responsible for thinking about all of the things Bank of America can do to help people get jobs in the community. That starts by understanding where are the good jobs that are going to pay livable wages, and then understanding who are the organizations, community colleges, nonprofit training providers that are successfully getting people into those jobs and then looking at what are all the ways we can help. We can help with philanthropy. We can help with career readiness resources. We can help with loaned executives. We have leaders we will loan to nonprofit partners. And then we can help by hiring. We hope some of those people come to our company. Our goal is to get people jobs across every industry, but we hope a good amount of those people will come to our company. And a way that we kind of, we have this national strategy of investing in jobs and a big part of how we deliver that is through our local markets. So we work nationally as well but we have 97 different cities where Bank of America operates and we have 97 different people that are in charge of the community impact in that city. So my team is tasked with supporting them. They do many, many other things in addition to community impact. It's a very small part of their day job. So my team is tasked with giving them tools and resources they need to be strategic and drive jobs outcomes. So as you can imagine the work is incredibly complex and my team is new. This team was formed really a year ago and while they came from a learning organization at the bank and they have a really great understanding of kind of career readiness in the workforce, navigating all these stakeholders is challenging even if you have years of experience, it's really challenging. Internally, we're trying to influence these folks at a local level to be as strategic as possible. Internally we also have to coordinate very closely with different lines of business. We have to work really closely with our HR teams, with our policy teams, our communications team, so there's a lot of internal coordination. And then externally for us to effectively drive this work we want to engage employers, understand what they need. We have to work with community colleges and nonprofit training providers to see how we can best support them and ideally bring them all together so we can kind of create ecosystems where we've got great pools of trained talent and employers taking advantage of it. So figuring out how to make that system change is very hard, and as you can imagine there's a lot of interference both internally and externally with competing priorities. So when I heard about the economic mobility Purpose Studio, I thought this is a great opportunity to kind of think through what are those points of interference within a case study environment, right? Because it kind of makes a safe space to create a very analogous situation to say OK, what are the challenges that are blocking our progress, whether it be lack of capacity, lack of time, lack of trust, and how do we address those. So having this experience (a), was really helpful to hear what other companies are managing and dealing with and kind of share best practices, but it was helpful for

my team to kind of really identify what's blocking our progress both for our local teams and then for our external partners, and how can we design solutions to kind of move past that interference. Also, how do we get the right people at the table, all the right stakeholders at the table, and then how do we communicate effectively both long term and short term the relevance of this work in a way that's going to come in from the right messenger where it's going to be credible, and also speaking to the needs that all of our stakeholders have to get them engaged and get them in the right direction. So it was a really helpful framework for the team to kind of think about the work and also gain some real great tools to move it forward.

Lakshmi Iyer: I love that, Abby. One of the things, was great to meet your team and what I'm hearing is there is a big ambition but also your team deserves the space to take a step back and think about what are the tools they need to reach that ambition and do that work impactfully. So it's wonderful to hear that you created that space and thank you for sharing that. Also, Abby, thank you for helping me set the context Just to give the audience a flow of the rest of the 40 minutes that we'll be together, we want to keep this conversation practical and dynamic. So as you heard from Abby and me in this opening segment you'll also be hearing from different leaders at different points in the next 45 minutes. So in the next segment I'll be welcoming Dane to lead a conversation with Michael from 3M and Cindy from Sun Life on how leaders can clarify value and I'll be coming back with Reema from AARP and Beatriz from Banco Popular on stakeholder engagement and then we'll coming back together. So with that, Dane, over to you.

Dane Smith: Thank you, Lakshmi, and thank you, Abby for that. So I'm going to talk a little bit about value. In our work with dozens of companies FSG has seen that they invest in economic mobility for different reasons. Maybe they have a passion about demonstrating shared prosperity. The company is doing well so they want to demonstrate that the communities around the company are also prospering. Or maybe they see opportunities to drive business results. Perhaps new revenue growth, finding new customers, entering new market segments, capturing greater market share. Or maybe they see opportunities to lower cost by improving efficiency or filling unfilled jobs or improving their distribution system. Maybe they're doing it as part of their strategy to increase employee engagement, the emotional connection between employees and their company. Or maybe they're trying to capture incentives or government support. All of these are very legitimate reasons. No question about that. One of the things that we've observed is that there's often an opportunity for companies to better clarify their intent. Why precisely are they prioritizing economic mobility? To what ends? What would define success? For some reason perhaps because this is a social impact strategy some companies do not develop and implement the strategy with the same rigor they would use with a conventional business strategy, and this creates space for interference to emerge. So one of the things that we like to say is that when value is not clear interference emerges and when the company can do something to make the value more clear ways to navigate the interference appear. What are some examples of that kind of interference? Maybe your economic mobility strategies are not aligned with company priorities. So it becomes hard to get the resources that you need to sustain the strategy or to grow the strategy. Maybe the work is seen as being quote-unquote reputation work by key leaders within the organization instead of business value. Maybe you have metrics for the work that you're doing but the metrics don't end up telling a story that ends up being compelling with your critical stakeholders. So taking all of that in mind we urge companies to be more specific and more rigorous about the kind of value they are trying to create. So let's talk about those kinds of value. There may be tangible value. Tangible value is value that

is more readily measured or quantifiable. And if you're thinking about tangible value, you consider ways that the tangible value might be relevant to your company strategy. Can this economic mobility initiative increase revenue or increase margins? Can it lower cost or improve efficiency? Could it open up new markets? Can it give you access to new customers? Can it lead to the development of new products? Also, within this space around tangible value make a special effort to think about how you can work to shape the market in a way that will increase the tangible value to your company. You don't need to just accept the market or the demand as it currently manifests. You can shape that in a way. You can shape the return. For example, can you find partners that can help you increase your scale or accelerate your program or lower the cost that you need to invest to expand your program and to make sure it has the impact that you're looking for. So be specific about the tangible value that you're trying to create and really think about ways that you can maximize that. Then let's talk about intangible value. So intangible value is value that cannot always be easily measured or quantified, but it can still have a powerful impact on company results. And here as well, we urge companies to be specific about intangible value. So it should be more than just about the general reputation of the company, more than just trying to secure what some people call social license to operate. Instead we urge companies to think carefully about which stakeholders are strategic and consider how the economic mobility activities can cause those key stakeholders to behave differently toward the company. For example, will the activity cause employees to be more engaged and thus more productive? Will it allow employees to be more compelling brand ambassadors? Might it encourage local government to reach out to the company for new opportunities to partner? Could it make NGOs or other companies more eager to seek you out to partner on new ideas? So think very specifically about the kind of value that you're going to create and ways to maximize the value. At FSG we call strategies where companies increase profitability by addressing social problems shared value strategies. Sometimes because the companies are trying to do something new with these shared value strategies the tangible business value comes a little slower. And when there's a delay in achieving tangible business value sometimes what we call a credibility gap can arise. A credibility gap is that period between when a company begins its shared value or social impact initiatives and when the expected financial business results appear. Leaders of economic mobility strategies need to be very intentional about anticipating and managing this credibility gap. One way of doing this is to shape the expectations of key stakeholders ahead of time. Tell senior executives what the short-term indicators of success will be if they are not the conventional financial metrics that executives tend to look for. So for example, it might be instead of overall revenues in the short term, it might be the number of partners you have or the number of distributors. If you don't help key stakeholders define short-term success then they will decide for themselves and that may not be all that helpful. The other thing is that you will want to be very intentional about identifying and communicating the intangible value. Is there enthusiasm among employees, customers, partners of the programs that you are leading, and how might that be changing the way that they're behaving toward the company? So with that as an introduction, now I'd like to invite a couple more of our Purpose Studio participants to comment on this. So I'm inviting Michael Stroik, vice president of 3M community impact and Cindy Chao, assistant vice president of sustainability for Sun Life to join. So for Michael and Cindy, a question and Michael, maybe you can start. As you reflect back on the Purpose Studio experience and as you've gotten clear about distinguishing between tangible value and intangible value, has this changed or influenced the way that you are thinking about pushing your economic mobility initiatives forward?

Michael Stroik: Yeah, thanks Dane. Absolutely it has. It's challenged us in some big ways. I want to thank you and FSG leadership team for engaging us. I got to engage with these amazing peers everybody's

going to hear from today. I'd say as I was listening to you introduce this thing, we were in the mode of really emphasizing that social impact side of the strategy for economic mobility over the last, I think, of the last five years and that's always going to be our number one imperative is to maximize our impact in our local communities and think about how we can drive economic mobility. But we've recognized and this is what the Studio helped us think about was OK, engaging business leaders within our company and getting them involved in our work, that's the way we can truly drive the next-level impact that we're going to have and maximize the amount of impact we can have. Our core focus at 3M around economic mobility has centered around workforce development that's focused in STEM, skill trades, notably around how the world of manufacturing it is evolving. And for us, from a social impact standpoint it's been important to take partners to think about how we inform where we're going to invest and how we're going to build partnerships. Ramsey County was a big partner, a new partner over the last five years that influenced us. We built social return on investment analyses that helped us look at our social impact with a group called Ecotone Partners who was amazing in helping us articulate the social impacts we were driving and inform where we were going to invest. What I've learned since the Studio is the need for that specificity when we think about business value as we define what this means for 3M company overall. I think that as we've evolved as an organization we've shifted from STEM for all, we're going to invest in STEM programs and we're going to engage all to be actively involved in this to more hyperlocal, hyper-integrated approaches to how we integrate with supply chain, with HR, to ensure we're building skills in geographies that one, we have a hard time filling talent from a manufacturing standpoint where we're investing in technologies for the long run and thinking about that as a talent ecosystem, and so as you think about how you guys are framing this and the—I have in my notes more efficient hiring was one of the tangible sort of benefits. Making connections to that between some intangible values that we've been creating and some of the more tangible value that we create overall. Lakshmi before was talking specifically about sort of disconnected business goals. That's another thing that we're thinking about. What are the business goals we have around workforce and how our community partnerships are one, maximizing our impact in our local communities where we operate but connecting to that talent ecosystem and needs that we have as a company.

Dane Smith: Michael, that's terrific and it's very easy for me to imagine as you're telling the story about increasing the specificity that makes it easier for you to communicate this to key executives within 3M that you depend on for the support. All of a sudden as you're describing it, they immediately think, oh, yeah, that ticks off this problem, that addresses this challenge I'm having. Boy, more power to Michael and his team. Let's go forward on that. Thanks very much for that, Michael. Cindy, over to you. What would you like to share with our audience?

Cindy Chao: Thanks, Dane. Well, for us, good health and financial security are vital to economic mobility yet we know that barriers to individuals actually achieving those outcomes are quite uneven. So really for us it was quite straightforward to actually make that macro business case on advancing women's health and financial security. Translating it though into specific business interventions, well, that's what really put us squarely into what you refer to as that credibility gap, Dane. And so for us, level setting on expectations was and is critical for us and we were able to in some cases go the full mile. So for example, we actually have a menopause health care product launching integrated within our virtual health care platform on Valentine's Day. But in other cases we actually started with a pilot first. So as an example, we were able to deploy a continuing education-accredited, one-hour introductory psychology of money training to 450 retail wealth advisors to help them better serve underserved clients and we're looking to build on that momentum. But what I would say though is in all cases there was lots of intangible value

being created. Whether it was as simple as enhancing collaboration and innovation within and between business units, helping them connect dots that were never connected before or it was enabling our CHRO's platform on women's health where she spoke alongside folks like partners at McKinsey and leading clinicians at the top women's health hospitals across Canada or it was catalyzing business-led women's health working groups and a women's financial security committee where we really harnessed the energy, innovation, and intellect of the folks that are actually working on the products every day to identify where there could be income-positive opportunities for us to close that gender gap or it was creating systems change partnerships using our philanthropic dollars to help us build trust and credibility in the domain like supporting clinicians, about 100 clinicians across Canada, to gain their menopause certification. But I think really the real learning was to ensure we also didn't forget to ladder back up to that quantifiable North Star, especially as we were going through multiple rounds of organizational restructure and so reminding ourselves and our executives what are our longer-term revenue targets. What are our cost saving targets? How will these micro or short-term wins ladder up to those macro goals? But when we actually peel back the onion layers, we also learned that different types of value resonated with different leaders differently. So understanding each of our business leaders' motivations was critical to getting to their yes, and that takes time and effort. But what I would say is that the funny thing through all this learning with my colleagues on this session and others who were in the room in the Purpose Studio, it actually felt like we all worked for one gigantic company. It didn't matter which sector we came from. We were all facing basically the same challenges, and we all concluded there's a time and place for tangible and intangible value. You just have to know your stakeholders well to really apply it effectively.

Dane Smith: Thank you for that, Cindy. I really like several things about what you shared and thank you for characterizing the dynamic within the Purpose Studio and how it facilitated those conversations but specifically what you were doing in Sun Life, I like the way that you actually got key stakeholders involved in what you're trying to do as far as economic mobility so getting senior executives to participate in some way oftentimes allows them to be more enthusiastic and understand in more detail what you're doing, and then what you said about understanding how different kinds of value are important in different ways to different leaders and so shaping your conversations accordingly, especially when you're able to target, tie it to things like revenue goals and cost goals and that kind of thing. Terrific. Well, I would love to be able to ask both of you a bunch more questions but I think we're going to have to push forward now, and I'm going to pass it back to Lakshmi to talk a little bit more about stakeholders now.

Lakshmi Iyer: Wonderful. Thanks, Dane. I know that up until now we have been talking about how business leaders need to clarify the value of their economic mobility strategy. At the same time, that clarity alone is not enough, right? We need to communicate that value in a way that it lands, right, so it does not become background noise, and that requires a second shift. It really requires understanding what your stakeholders actually care about and both Michael and Cindy talked about what those priorities are, right, that the business leaders actually care about but figuring that out sometimes can be tricky and that's why it requires a little bit of planning. So what I'm going to share right now is a framework to plan your stakeholder engagement. So at the center of this framework is the stakeholder itself, right? So this could be an executive, it could be a business peer. It could also be a community partner, right, anyone whose support or alignment really matters to the success of your strategy. And the core question here you're asking is what does value look like from their point of view. So we start the framework at the top left with Purpose. So the question here is what is the value that they are trying to create so it includes the goals of their unit, their leadership priorities, the outcomes that they are ultimately accountable for. When you anchor here, you are positioning your strategy in relation to sort of their strategic goals, not just your strategic goals. The next one on the top right is Pressure. So these are pain points that they are navigating, the constraints, frustrations, risks or worries that shape how they

make decisions. Purpose and Pressure together, when you combine them, they really help you understand the strategic trajectory that the stakeholder is operating within. Let's move to the bottom half. So on the bottom left, and in fact the bottom half of the framework shifts the focus to their environmental influence. We'll start with People on the bottom left, and this is about a stakeholder's network. Who are they connected to? Who influences them, and the resources or credibility that they gain from those relationships? Ultimately a lot of this influence and building buy-in is about figuring that out. And on the bottom right we have Perceptions. So this captures what they hear and see from their colleagues, from their trusted advisors, the media, and just other people in their orbit, and these signals really shape how your message is interpreted even before you say any word. When you put all these four dimensions together, you really move away from sort of broadcasting your value generally to really meeting the stakeholders where they are, and that's when communication stops sort of feeling like noise and that's when you start building alignment. So I'm going to invite Reema from AARP and Beatriz from Banco Popular to have a conversation about how this framework is sitting with them. So, Beatriz, I'll start with you. When you are thinking about, in your position, communicating about value with your strategic stakeholders, how do you understand sort of, how do you approach understanding what type of value matters most to them? Can you provide an example of how this framework might be helping you to think about value for the stakeholder differently?

Beatriz Polhamus: Yes, thank you, Lakshmi. So to give you some context for us at Popular, a strong entrepreneurial ecosystem is really crucial for economic mobility. So back in 2021, we launched Scale Up Popular to address some gaps in our local entrepreneurial ecosystem in Puerto Rico. There were no capacity-building programs designed for businesses that were from three and a half to five years of operations. We built the program with a strong structure, the best nonprofit partners that we had in the island, clear KPIs and understanding what, you know, Popular's product offering was for S&Es. This came from interviews with ecosystem experts and also colleagues across the bank, and as the program grew, we connected it with other units across the bank such as our social impact fund, marketing, commercial banking, commercial credit, and giving them full participation and eventually we all created a bank-wide entrepreneurial strategy called *Emprende con Popular*. Now to answer your question specifically, in terms of understanding what type of value matters most to our stakeholders, our initial thought was that CEO approval will automatically secure buy-in from the C-suite and relevant business units to our strategy but, you know, they didn't really see it as a business priority nor feel the ownership in the beginning. And the reason was very simple. We had designed the program with an intense focus on our external stakeholders which are our entrepreneurs and our nonprofit partners but really without engaging internal stakeholders with the same depth and consistency, and the Purpose Studio really helped us realize that internal stakeholders as just as important as external stakeholders, and that they define value differently, right? So business units prioritize strengthening existing client relationships and generating new business while the C-suite focuses on strategic alignment and long-term enterprise impact, particularly around economic mobility. This insight really showed us that internal stakeholders need to be actively involved from the beginning of program design, not just consulted. It also broadened our understanding of value. It's not only about revenue or job creation but also about long-term relationships with our client entrepreneurs' insights into their needs and meaningful cross-unit collaboration, especially with our business banking team. So although with being strong and understanding and supporting external stakeholders for many years, we recognized that we haven't always connected the program clearly to internal business priorities. So now we are much more intentional about creating alignments so our work can both advance economic mobility and also support business objectives. And I would say that the biggest takeaway for me is that successful programs require balancing both worlds, strong ecosystem impact and strong internal alignment. When both are

integrated from the start though it might take a little longer, the strategy really becomes powerful, more scalable, and more sustainable.

Lakshmi Iyer: I love that, Beatriz. Two things are coming for me. One is this insight around just the sequence or, you know, the timing of and the investment that you do in engaging those internal stakeholders, and the good news at least in this case is like you guys already have the muscle of engaging stakeholders in the process and how do you apply that internally is the next step. So that's one thing that's coming for me about the timing of doing that and the process of the engagement. The second is that's really beautiful is actually the value, the comment you made about how the definition of value broadened. Something about you usually have a program design, you believe it creates value but when you actually try and understand where your stakeholder is coming from, that can influence your program design and actually create more value for both the stakeholder, internal and external stakeholders so I love that connection between what we're talking right now and the previous conversation we just had with some of our colleagues so thank you for that. Reema, I'll pivot to you. How is this showing up in your work at AARP?

Reema Jweied-Guegel: First of all, Lakshmi and colleagues at FSG, thank you very much for this opportunity. This is my third year. It's your third year, my third year of being an active participant in the Purpose Studios and I can wholeheartedly say that this has been worth every minute, and what's interesting is that the relationships and the lessons learned continue well past the Studio's end so thank you for that. I totally agree with everything that Beatriz just said. At AARP it's interesting. We're good at the top part of the framework. We're very good at data and how do we look at the different metrics, how do we measure those metrics, and then how do we iterate or think about where do we need to modify or reevaluate what we're doing as we proceed toward strategic goals. What's interesting for me, what came out of this Purpose Studio and for my colleagues that participated is the bottom part, and really, it's the sequencing piece that you described, it's the idea that there's the perceptions of our internal stakeholders that we need to meet first, and in order to do that we need to know their own sphere of influence. How do we think of them in terms of where the pressures are coming from their sphere of influence, how do we engage with those that may be able to help them see the value. You mentioned and I quickly scribbled it down, this disconnected business goals. That's where I think the struggle is real for us, and we're addressing it. We are working toward how do we start to see the holistic integrated picture of our strategy. I'm very fortunate where I sit. I have a perch that I get to see across the enterprise, and our enterprise is rather large. But when you get down to individual dashboards and individual goals and metrics, that's where things can become tough and convoluted. So I think coming out of this Purpose Studio, what has been the big aha moment isn't just, yeah, OK, internal stakeholder, I've got to address their needs but really seeing them in the moment, putting them at the center like Beatriz said, bringing them to the table early and often, and engaging them to make sure that the design of what we're working on and the goals are shared and the bigger picture is understood by all.

Lakshmi Iyer: I love that, Reema, and I think it's, there's something in the way you describe how your strength is in the top half of that framework and the bottom half, how do you use that to get more buy-in. You know, it's a lot. Like imagine doing this for a lot of stakeholders but there is something about that systematic planning that can go a long way and thinking about their network. What is also coming to me is a lot of this sort of building buy-in and alignment internally is about some basic negotiation principles. There is a quote that we talk about internally at FSG that, you know, the real art of negotiation is not about convincing others but seeing the world through their eyes, and so there's something there about coming back to that principle and figuring out how your design can be influencing, how the process of bringing them along can be influenced. So with that, first of all, thank you to both of you for making this conversation so practical, and maybe what we can pivot to is let's maybe bring on the rest of our

participants and talk about overarching insights on the work. So let's take a minute to just bring other people on the screen. Wonderful. Welcome back, whole group. Dane, over to you.

Dane Smith: Great, so would love to go to all of you and just ask you to weigh in a little bit more on both what happened at the Purpose Studio and your reflections afterwards as well. So the question is what is one concrete step that you would advise business leaders to consider to strengthen the connection between their economic mobility strategy and intangible business value, and maybe we can start with you again, Abby. Maybe we'll come back to Abby, and Beatriz, can I go to you then to kick this part off?

Beatriz Polhamus: Yes, thank you, Dane. So I'm sure viewers will know what my one concrete step will be and that will be to involve your key internal stakeholders, business unit leaders, from the inception of the economic mobility strategy and jointly define KPIs that reflect both business value and also social impact. Engaging strategic stakeholders early and often during design, execution, and review really builds shared ownership, and I would add something else. Co-creating KPIs really helps address the initial credibility gap that Dane was mentioning in the beginning by setting clear expectations, identifying both tangible and intangible values, and defining what success looks like for each stakeholder. So I believe that this approach really enables measurement of early wins such as increased stakeholder buy-in, evidence that entrepreneurs are learning and improving, and really visible growth of participating businesses.

Dane Smith: Thank you for that, Beatriz. One of the things that was coming to mind as you were answering is that the conversation, the bringing the internal stakeholders along early on, that probably requires you to be somewhat flexible as well, right? Because you might anticipate using the framework that Lakshmi laid out, that you have a clear idea about what's important to them but the context is always changing and maybe something new has come up, and they may mention something else and so you have to be ready to pivot, right, and understanding that those business priorities change from time to time instead of just anchoring on one of those.

Beatriz Polhamus: Exactly, and you're always tempted to go it alone because, you know, our teams are usually a lot smaller so we can be more agile because we're just less people and move quicker and faster. Obviously involving our business colleagues makes it all the more difficult but it's worth it if you want a sustainable and impactful strategy for everyone involved over time.

Dane Smith: Terrific. Thank you for that, Beatriz. Cindy, would you like to go next?

Cindy Chao: Thank you, Dane. I think one concrete step that I would recommend to folks is creating a theory of profit that shows executives the magnitude of the opportunity if we do this right and really ensuring that there isn't a mismatch of expectations on short- and long-term outcomes. I have a former colleague who is now working at a large bank who was tasked with solving the housing affordability crisis. He complained to me about an executive who was upset with him because he hadn't solved the issue and it had been six months. So, you know, if we step back, we all know that over the last 15 years or so there was an increase and then a bit of a retraction on corporations taking a stand on societal issues, and I think what we're seeing is a pare back to how is this work actually creating shareholder value, and so it's not just about doing good but also how we're creating win-win value for our communities and for the business. So I think in summary, making sure that we clearly communicate both the short- and the long-term expectations with executives so that they aren't disappointed next quarter when the initiative's plan don't meet their expectation of having solved the gender gap or the housing affordability crisis. I think setting those realistic expectations are so critical to maintaining their excitement, their trust, and their sponsorship over the long term because we need that time to be able to really demonstrate those results.

Dane Smith: Nice. Cindy, thanks for bringing the theory of profit into it. I appreciate that, and appreciate what you're saying as well about, you know, what you're talking about is kind of navigating that credibility gap and being creative about what kinds of metrics and what kinds of indicators you can use to demonstrate that your program is on the right track even if it's not always going exactly as planned because as we know, that's not the way that economic mobility work, really, really works. OK, Michael, over to you. What would you share with us?

Michael Stroik: Yeah, for sure. I shared a little bit earlier about workforce development as our focus area, and a key thing I've learned really over the last few months. A few months ago we shifted from a public affairs organization in our company to human resources, and what I've learned is that structure matters as you think about the story you're going to tell and the narrative you're going to drive. So I think of, you know, just last week had a meeting with the head of HR for all of our plants across the world. She has teams all over the world that are leading plants, and we shared about some of our workforce programs that were driving around manufacturing, skill building, and developing that talent ecosystem, and I saw the light bulb go on, and she was so excited about sort of engaging with us on where and how we're going to invest and I left that meeting realizing, excited that that light bulb went on but realizing that I need to be consistent in how I communicate this because that leader left my meeting and probably had seven more meetings that day, right, and just pulled in all these different directions, putting out fires, doing all of these different things that they're doing, and so the consistent communications on that narrative and the value connection is going to be really important, and in my eyes it's something that like, to do it effectively I should be sick of talking about it and if I'm not, then I'm not saying it enough and driving that connection. And then just to close on my comment, I would double down on something Beatriz mentioned, and it's about engaging leaders early and often. One of the big takeaways I had from the Studio itself, from leaders that are on this call was that proximity really matters, and I got a great idea to start thinking about site visits differently, that it's just me and my team out with partners. I started inviting our executives, our business leaders, those that we want to show that tangible value, that building that proximity and that engagement is a way we can do that more effectively so that's something that we're looking at right now and I thought it was a really great way to do that as well as volunteerism. We just had an amazing year. We reported more than 144,000 hours of volunteerism among 3Mers, and we now have a goal to drive 160,000 in this year and so thinking intentionally about it as we curate ways for people to engage in volunteerism. How can we leverage that to help drive some of the goals that we have around economic mobility as well?

Dane Smith: Wow. I really like that answer, Michael. You kind of mixed aspirational things about being proximate, being close to leaders with really tactical ideas, the notion that you have to be prepared to be boring yourself if the narrative by repeating it over and over again, and having something that is easy for people to remember and to repeat because if it's too complicated a story, then people aren't going to repeat it, right, and it gets lost along the way. That's great. Let's go to Reema and then we'll go back to Abby after that. Thanks, Reema.

Reema Jweied-Guegel: Thank you, Dane. So there are a couple things that have sprung out of this workshop for us, for me in particular. I want to go to the credibility gap first and one of the aha moments. One of the ways that we've been looking at how do we address that credibility gap internally because it's just as often that you have that credibility gap with your stakeholders inside your organization than with your stakeholders outside of your organization. The thing that has been important for us is really looking at the relationship-building piece so it's not going the transactional way with a relationship, really looking at relationships as authentic versus transaction. What does that mean for us? Well, the transactional relationship feels very operations and process-y and it is. In many cases it is. That's the thing you need and the moment you need it, it's maybe your legal team review, etc., but to

get the thing you need in the process phase of the relationship, you need to build the authentic relationship first, and that's the strategic part of what we took away from this workshop but also where we focus our efforts in that sequencing, in building and addressing, well, strengths and credibility in the relationship and mitigating that gap. So that was one thing, and the other thing is, and it's exactly what my other colleagues on this call have said, it's that story, it's that headline. Don't bury the lead. People are coming in and out of meetings. I'm in back-to-back meetings all day, and if you bury that lead, if you don't start with what's important to that stakeholder in that moment, you're going to lose them. So that's the other piece that I would say. Start with your headline.

Dane Smith: Thanks. Knowing you, Reema, I know that anybody that works with you knows that that authenticity is always front and center with you but helping your colleagues identify different ways to follow up and deepen those relationships in a way that emphasizes the authenticity sounds like very good practical advice. Thank you for that. Abby, sorry we missed you earlier. Please jump in.

Abby Hollingsworth: No, that's quite all right. I think my fellow panelists have really covered it. I will just double click on a couple themes. I'd say having a great—one example of success that you can bundle as a story, right, that helps to bridge the credibility gap. If you say, hey, we sat down with this client, we helped them with X, Y, Z initiative, 10 minutes later they picked up the phone and brought us more business, right? That story kind of helps people from a concept to a, oh, this is really working and this is happening and then thinking about the messenger and getting champions to tell your story. If I can have a line of business leaders say workforce development has been incredible for building relationships with clients and it's been helpful to my business, that carries 10 times more weight than me trying to go make the case. So thinking about having a good story that hits what people care about, an example. Even if it's one tiny example that you can use, and then trying to get other people to tell your story for you is really helpful.

Dane Smith: Oh, I really love that, and it fits so well, Abby, with some of the other things that others were talking about. If you want to help craft that story that will allow one of your partners or one of your champions to tell that story, then the only way you're going to do that effectively is if you are paying really close attention to what's important to them and what they want to talk about with other colleagues and with other critical stakeholders. Thanks. I love all the real practical advice that our panelists have shared with the audience. OK, well, with that I'm going to pass it back over the Lakshmi now.

Lakshmi Iyer: Yeah, we were looking, taking a look at the questions that came up before the webinar when people registered. It looks like there's a question here so I'm just going to ask, and anyone can answer. It was a question about, you know, just how can a nonprofit partner who's working with a company to really move from being an implementer or executor of programs on the ground to really being a strategic partner to drive economic mobility. So I don't know if any of you want to take that. It's like I think what's underlying in the question is also like what are signals of a strong nonprofit corporate partnership. Would love to hear some thoughts on that.

Dane Smith: I'm going to actually, oh, go ahead, Abby.

Abby Hollingsworth: I was going to say I can take that. I would say understanding what, kind of similar to what we're talking about, interference, understanding what the company is trying to achieve, and if you're best positioned to help them achieve that, right, because we partner with NGOs for a number of different purposes but if you believe your mission and your work is really aligned and you can do more together and you're the best partner for that, then I think you have a case to be made to say, hey, we're driving things that you care about. Is there more we can do together? So I think understanding that, and

relationships, right? Continuing to build relationships with your contacts at the company to see what they care about, and not to creep your mission to fit it but if you are that good fit and you build the relationships, I think that partnership will evolve and grow.

Reema Jweied-Guegel: I'd like to add just one thing to that. As a nonprofit I think the way that we've operated across our collaborations and we've partnered with I think almost every colleague here on the call in one shape or another is having the private sector partner at the table in the co-design phase, not bringing them a baked solution to a situation or a challenge that we're trying to address but rather engaging them in what it could look like if we design something together, and I think that is maybe the first step that can help to make you a partner and not just an implementer.

Michael Stroik: This would add on top of that. I love the question, and I think it's like broached the topics too with us, right, of looking at that social value creation and engagement but are there unique ways that you're building business value as well because Lord knows we don't have it figured out. Lord knows I don't have it figured out. I can use all the help I can get in terms of doing this but I think of myself as an intrapreneur within the company trying to advocate and engage so I think from the start, much like we're thinking about from the start, how do we engage internally within our business leaders. Think about that with your partners and how do you broach some of these topics and some of the value creation things that you see on some of those first slides that Lakshmi and Dane were speaking to I think would be a good way to go for it.

Lakshmi Iyer: The other thing that came up in our discussion in the actual Studio was just like humility and openness to really understanding what the problem is and really being in relationship with the problem so that you can do a good job of actually explaining and connecting the dots between the problem and then what the company is trying to solve for. So that was something that I know came up when we were talking about collaboration models and things like that in the Studio so just want to highlight that. Maybe we have time for one more quick question which was about what do you do, and I think this is more from a corporate social sort of impact business leader, what could a leader do when you know that there is going to be some sort of a leadership transition. I think it's in the context of internal communication or internal sort of stakeholder management. What can you do with that which we know happens very often so who wants to take that? Cindy, go ahead.

Cindy Chao: Yeah, happy to take that one. Thanks, Lakshmi. I think firstly, leadership transitions are inevitable and expected I think, especially during this time period. I'm observing it a lot in our ecosystem. So I think getting clearer faster with executives on how your initiatives are aligning to their business strategies is really critical. I think we made the mistake of waiting a little too long to get in front of some executives after some leadership transitions, and waiting until they set their strategy to see how we could then position our strategy in the context of their strategy but I think if we were to do it again, we would actually go right in there right at the beginning instead of waiting too long because I think it is critical to understand who those new leaders are through a transition period and what they care about but I think equally it's important to have that headline clear and go in there very early on to level-set with those executives. So I think, you know, on Reema's earlier point about entering with a headline, I think getting that buy-in really early on is critical before others are creating the narrative on your behalf, right? Sometimes it could be about putting a new coat of paint on the initiative that you're working on based on how you start to understand how that new leader is becoming in relationship with the initiative that you're working on and the issues that you're working on.

Lakshmi Iyer: I know we're at time so I'm going to just thank all of our speakers here for joining the conversation but also all the audience who has been virtual and thank you for joining the conversation today. Please let us know what you thought of the conversation. There will be a short survey that will

pop up as you close the webinar so please take a moment to give us your feedback and stay in touch.
Thank you.