

Thank you, Secretary Clinton.

Let me start by saying how delighted the Rockefeller Foundation is to provide the funding for the Secretary's Innovation Award for Women's and Girls' Empowerment.

And thank you Secretary Clinton and Ambassador Verveer for your long time leadership and perseverance in keeping this issue at the forefront of public awareness.

I'd like to briefly answer two questions this morning:

Why this? And why now?

In other words: Why is this particular collaboration so important?

And why is now the time to pursue it?

The short answer is, in the experience of the Rockefeller Foundation, identifying innovation...scaling that innovation...and applying it to seemingly intractable problems ...has been shown time and again to be hugely effective.

And this approach is urgently needed with a focus on women's empowerment, because the gains we've made in this context have simply not been enough.

Women still do two-thirds of all the work in the world, but earn only about 5 percent of the income.

They harvest 90 percent of the world's food, yet own only one percent of the world's land.

And women are three times as likely as men to work in informal economies.

Abuse, sex trafficking, and the absence of legal rights and protections for women are unacceptably commonplace around the world.

We must do more, and with more urgency, to empower women...and a focus on scalable innovation can and will make a difference.

The Rockefeller Foundation is intently focused on leveraging and scaling local innovation to ensure that globalization's benefits are more widely shared, and that its burdens are more easily weathered...to encourage more equitable growth, and to strengthen resilience to risk.

Now, leveraging innovation doesn't only mean devising a great idea and implementing it from the top-down.

In our experience, scalable solutions are also found when we seek innovations where they occur – on the ground, in local contexts.

Let me share one of my favorite examples of this approach to problem solving.

Positive Deviance, one of our grantees, recognizes behaviors that enable outliers or “positive deviants” to succeed where others fail.

Then, they encourage the widespread adoption of these same behaviors.

In Southeast Asia, researchers at Positive Deviance visited an impoverished Vietnamese village and noticed that children in a scattering of families were in exceptionally good health.

Upon closer examination, they discovered that, in these households, mothers didn't wash away shrimp and crabs found in rice-paddies but, instead, cooked them along with their rice – adding protein to a carbohydrate-based diet.

This technique, once unearthed, was promoted in one village...and spread to thousands.

It was a small, user-generated innovation that made an enormous impact on regional public health.

The Rockefeller Foundation is encouraging and scaling exactly this type of innovation in a number of different contexts around the globe.

And that is why we are thrilled to partner with Secretary Clinton, Ambassador Verveer, and the State Department to create this new mechanism to seek out and then scale local innovations that are working. We must identify and spread what's working, investing more attention and more resources than we have been.

Many of these will come from women themselves.

Women the world-over – because of the challenges they are forced to confront – are instinctual innovators and energetic entrepreneurs.

Their drive and their ideas must be recognized, realized, and taken to scale.

With this effort I am confident we will be announcing, by the end of this year, and in subsequent years, scalable innovations of all kinds that enable more equitable growth...that promote resilience...that advance opportunities for women... and that empower women to shape their own future...and that of humanity.

We are excited about this award...about our partnership...and about the hopeful future we can empower women around the world to build...with our commitment and support...but most of all, with their own ideas and innovation.

Thank you.