

[Ashley]: Alright, we're good. Sorry, thank you.

[Tiffany]: You... I think you need to count us down, Ashley like "Action!"

[Ashley]: Alright, three, two, one, and action.

[Tiffany]: Hello everyone and welcome.

[Carrie]: Um, Yes, so today we're excited to have Cecilia Maundu with us. She is an island girl, currently living in the jungle. Cecilia is a broadcast journalist and digital security trainer with her first love as film, she's actually currently working on a documentary on biometric identity, focused on data privacy issues. For Cecilia, digital security has led her love for user research, which is what we get to talk about today. She will share with us her story about how she came into it, and then also get to learn more about the field itself, and discuss how to mitigate some common challenges that we find and see across different cultures. We're super excited to have Cecilia speaking on the topic, we recognize in our work how important it is for folks like Cecilia to be the eyes and ears on the ground, so... Thank you all for taking time to participate. Thank you, Cecilia, for being here and offering your time and energy to host us and with no further ado, I'm happy to turn it over to you Cecilia.

[Cecilia]: Well, I am waiting for the drum role.

[Ashley]: Oh, hold on. [Plays applause sound]

[Cecilia]: Thank you so much, thank you so much. As they said, I am Cecilia Muandu, I am a broadcast journalist and I live in Nairobi, but my home town is in Mombasa, so as they say that my home... I'm an island girl. Film is my first love. I got into user research through internships coincidentally, and I remember when they sent in the application so that we could apply at first I was like, Oh, what is this? So out of curiosity, just went online and I googled, and I remember, I applied on the last day because I kept telling myself, No, this is not for me, and when I Googled and found out a bit about user research, you know, let me know more about it, you never know. And when I went for it, I can tell you for the first two days, I didn't know what they were talking about, you know, because I felt like these are times which I never get to use, especially my career. Then slowly by slowly I found myself very attracted to user research and held some here today with the guys from Okthanks, who have been very gracious and kind to hold my hand in this field.

Yes, so I have my presentation here and on to the next slide. So basically we ask ourselves what is user research, why we need user research, so basically user research focuses on understanding user behaviors, needs and motivations, for example, if it's an app you using, what is the motivation for using that app. Why, as a developer, you actually need to develop that app, what have you exactly that is lacking in the market that this app or tool needs to be there.

For example, right now, I wouldn't mind an app for washing utensils because it's what is lacking in

the market because of data research about it. So basically, it's just finding out like, if I develop this tool, what is the purpose for it? Will it be able to be used and who are the people that you're tagging and what is the environment that they work in?

Yes, and to my next slide. User research also helps us because you could have a very, very good tool at the same time, it's not being used, so what is the purpose of a great tool when it is not being used, making it redundant, while there is a way you could develop a tool which is very efficient, like maybe this might not be the best example, but WhatsApp is very... Like everyone, like basically, everyone has a smart phone including young kids use WhatsApp because people are finding it very useful regardless of the issues with WhatsApp. So yeah. So how do we conduct user research? Well, first of all, the types of user research that you can actually perform will depend on the type of side system or app you are trying to develop here, like if I give an example right now, we don't have like what you call them, subways, moving from one corner to the next, so there is no need for you to be developing an app for a subway because we don't have one, but we have a train that moves from Nairobi to my hometown in Mombasa, so then creating an app makes life easier for the travelers who are using that route.

So also then, the environment you are working in, we are talking about, like maybe if you have a smart phone you are able to... You're able to have a lot of apps on your phone, but not everyone, especially here, can afford them a smartphone, so meaning such people have also been left out.

So also when you are conducting user research, you will engage and start your target users how they interact, their needs, their behavior, and how they might relate your product when it gets to the market.

Next slide.

So what is the importance of user research? Why do we actually need to user research? So first of all, it's all about solving real life problems, like there's an App for maternal health in Kenya where people talk about Maternal health because we are trying to get to a point where mothers are not supposed to die when they are giving birth, but like we are past that. So people get a lot of information about it, and it is an app where I had the med family not only for the Narobians because it is the capital understand, but also targeting women who live in rural areas like suburu and Trukana. So trying to solve a problem that is there, that is the purpose of user research, but you can't solve a problem without knowing the call and how to go about it, and who are your target audience in the first place, because if you target a woman... You are targeting a woman in the rural areas, can she be able to download the app? That is the first point you need to ask yourself. Can she afford the data? Can she be able, with the language that you're using on the app, would she be able to understand exactly what you are talking about?

Yes, so that is the importance of user research. I will still repeat again, you can have a very great tool, but if it's not being used, then it's not important. Next slide. So there are many research methods that you can use depending on the information that you want to get, and also there's the issue of combining all of them so that you don't leave any local base quality, it is more descriptive and tends to depend on direct observation. You can go and mingle with the community just to find out more about it, and that is quantatative, which is data, which is measurable, so maybe using some

areas or questionnaires, so how many women have died in the recent past? What are we doing to make sure that these women, you know, we get to zero maternal deaths. And like that, I think there is attitudinal, what are their thoughts and feelings while sitting with mothers asking them about this issue or if you know anyone who has died of maternal health, how can we make it any better? Or maybe it's about an FGM female genital mutilation. So how are we trying to create this app where we can try and spread the information about the dangers of FGM, who are we actually targeting? We are trying to target the mothers who take their daughters for such things, and then there's behavioral... It's about gauging how the user interacts with the app.

I go back to WhatsApp, you know what happens, it's exciting, they are bringing in new features every day, there's a common telling in Kenya, "I'm going to WhatsApp you" because we are so used to it. I'm going to WhatsApp you from a or anything even for going out for lunch, so you realize how much people are going to interact with this tool, and when you try and maybe go and talk to human rights defenders and tell them like "can we move you to signal because of the kind of information that you share, you find it's a bit hesitant. One time I try to collect, to use a feedback through internews where our grant had got in through internews, and now when you listen to some of the things that they're saying, we think oh they really matter all Signal is blue, its too official. Green is inviting, so I feel comfortable with WhatsApp, things that you never think they could even make sense to you.

Next slide.

So what are the challenges in conducting user research?

Language. Why don't I bring in the issue of language? English is not our first language, and maybe it's a developer from California who is coming to Kenya to find out maybe there's an issue and they want to develop a tool for this region...

How are you going to make sure that the last person who needs to know about this is not left out, because we are trying to develop a tool that everyone is invited, everyone can be part of the crowd, so language, because sometimes we assume... Because we live in Nairobi... that everyone speaks English and English is known, so when it comes to how to communicate, you can try and find an interpreter, especially who lives among the community themselves, it makes it more easier and they're also comfortable because they feel like this is one of our own instead of coming with an interpreter from Nairobi, they're wondering who they could this be, and maybe also the issue of culture, you go there and you're talking to them, like where you talk to someone else, but that is not how they are approached. Maybe you're talking to an old man and he feels like he being disrespectful or something like that, so there's a lot of lack of interest or motivation to do user research.

Okay, that is bought in by so many things, I remember when were in the internews UXForum, and we saw a developer, I think it was Mailvelope or something. We did a Skype call and my jaws drop like they're actually real people, because you feel like if you're not part of the crowd, so you're like, Oh, why should I be interested? Is my voice very important in whatever they are seeing, so that is also what brings lack of interest, I feel how this can be mitigated is more people, if that is developing something that is international, trying to reach out as right as you can, and the issue of lack of resources, that is lack of funding, which is like the backbone of it. So one way is just trying,

maybe writing proposals and trying to get different donors to be able to fund. Or even crowd sourcing, I mean... And the lack of confidence. Like if you ask someone, so what do you feel about this? 'cause I remember even when I was collecting feedback, one of the participants asked me, So what do you do, with what we tell you on that or I'm gonna send it to internews and they might say, oh, so how sure are you that they are going to implement it? Lack of confidence and you feel somebody has no interest because they feel like oh this is just a waste of my time.

So if there's a way of how do we... We get this maybe like trying to show them that you actually- Your voice actually matters. Not everything you say will be implemented. We should also know that. But just trying to show that that's why we are here, to take this and hear your voice, and then the low demand for user research by developers... Yes, is the main challenge. Because maybe they have their own reasons. Also, this low demand is a challenge, how do we need to get this... Trying to get coming the develop present, so come in and ensure that we actually interested and then there's lack of mentorship... I'm lucky I have Okthanks and internews. So not everyone is lucky as me, so we need maybe to do more and try and mentor more people in this field.

Next slide. And I never end my presentation without a meme, so you can look at that meme why user research is important, users will also find a way to break things. Thank you so much. I hope that was not too fast.

[Tiffany]: Does anybody have any questions? Let's start there and then we can talk about some discussion questions. So we have a couple of people typing into the chat so let's see.

[Participant]: Can I speak?

[Tiffany]: Yes, please.

[Participant]: Cool. Yeah, thank you so much for that presentation. That was super interesting. So yes, I would love to hear more about your work or how is that in practice? What you explained to us like, do you go into communities? Do you really talk to people? Do you collect feedback... Hows that put into practice?

[Cecilia]: Okay. Collecting feedback, yes. Have done it for several tools, but as I said, sometimes collecting also feedback is not very easy because I also, we mostly do it in Nairobi because it's the capital. But so you feel like you will leave out other people and is at the same time you're not sure if that feedback is being implemented with th way you are sending it. As I said, there's a time I try to do for WhatsApp and Signal. Yeah, so I'm hoping in the future there will be more of this and trying to implement it and also trying to be listening more back home then the way this sounding like something so foreign. I hope I answered your question.

Then someone is asking kind of a personal one, so feel free not to answer, but how do you manage frustration, when you know users are using unsafe tools but are struggling to use more secure tools? Well, I also go back to something like WhatsApp, which is not secure, and most of the people that I meet in my training are people who -- is kind of work, or I coach right help people and human rights defenders, journalists, so sometimes I feel like-Or how it is like a disease that we have a habit of using Whatsapp and also there is the question of people feeling like when I introduce a new tool

like wire before you actually get used to it sitting, it takes time, but I always tell them to look at it from the point of view of themselves, what are they losing when they're using WhatsApp and what are they gaining when they're using wire, because sometimes digital security is a subjective, it's a personal choice 'cause you can... For someone to do it, it's them to decide if they want to do it, so the only thing you can do is advise them and even try and try and show them how the differences and how lucky they are to have a tool like wire and like WhatsApp, and you still tell them to maintain WhatsApp 'cause you're not telling them to leave WhatsApp, they can do at a in their friends group, but when they're communicating something very sensitive, then they come to this other tool, so they're left with an option themselves. Welcome.

[Participant]: Hi, oh sorry, did I interrupt someone?

[Ashley]: No, you go ahead.

[Participant]: Okay perfect. Thank you so, so much for the presentation, Cecilia. it's been super, super interesting and it's made me think about quite a few things. I think that one of the things that I've been somewhat thinking about as well has been UX research and ethics, and so some of the frameworks there, because I know that some of the commercial software that we use every day, or some of us use every day, contains a huge amount of user tracking sort of for UX purposes, so now it contains things like a framework that measures how long people take to click on a certain things like a heat map of user clicks and the like, and I'm guessing that a lot of privacy focused software is not partially comfortable with installing that, I'm just wondering what you think about first of all, using more user tracking perhaps for opt-in users, do you think I would, for example, be ethical to create more software that where people can opt in to have such tracking for UX improvements, and how do you think the general ethics would look like to have consenting users use so much heavy tracking heat maps and stuff like this while they're using it in order to improve such software, do you think that that would be... Okay, would this be too ethically merky?

[Cecilia]: Can you please repeat your questions?

[Participant]: Yeah, of course, of course. I'm just thinking of when it comes to using tools that are using quite invasive tracking... Okay, to sort of track how users are using this, do you think that there is any sort of acceptable scenario and to which we could be using quite invasive tracking especially, it's something that you just opt into, or do you think that we need to really, really step away from it. I'm asking because I know that a lot of commercial applications, they can do superlative stuff that can generate a really, really good data. So for example, I like where everybody is clicked, so there's this framework, I don't remember, it's called for Mobile app design where they let the create a heat, not of who has clicked where... And I mean this just as to super intuitive design, it's super, super unethical and wondering if it's as it possible to do this an ethical way or if not, if there are any sort of ethical alternatives to collect really, really deep data.

[Cecilia]: First of all, I would not because the fact that it is invasive, according to me, is very wrong, and sometimes when it's invasive tracking, you get the idea that this is the only thing that they are collecting, but they are collecting more than you know yourself. So if you ask me, I think it is not we... You should find another alternative instead of it as much as by the end of the day, they're trying to make it for our good, but I think we should get another another alternative. Because

sometimes you're dealing with the, let's say, common people who have... who don't know... Who don't have a lot of knowledge on technology, and they feel that it's okay, and you find that you have third party apps, which you don't know about, and they are reading your data every day, but if it is someone who is privileged to know about technology, then they are able to know such things, so if you ask me, no, but remember it is subjective, not objective. I hope I've answered your question.

[Participant]: No definitely, definitely. Thank you so much. I'm just not just honestly thinking a lot about where not even doing video recordings of people as they use the apps or the like, whether there's ever an ethical and interesting way of collecting the really, really deep data as an alternative to the super invasive stuff and... So if you'll talk about it helping really really though-provoking as well. So thank you so much for that.

[Cecelia]: You're welcome.

[Okhanks]: I wanted to add to that, there's a project we're working on in parallel with guardian that looks at how we can do some measurement within apps which we're using the term "measurement" to kind of disengaged from the term tracking, so because the kind of notion behind it is differently, but it's different, we're looking at ways to be able to collect some measurements and learn a little bit about how people are using things in a privacy preserving way, and I'll send a link to the project for those that are interested, but we are currently, we are doing some research around it and talking with communities to... kind of ask this very question about ethics and how comfortable do people feel about it if we do it in a certain way, and if it's very much like an opt-in scenario, and we're only collecting certain things or not just take to tracking everything you do within the app, but maybe there's particular things we're measuring for a short amount of time. I'm gonna link to that project.

[Cecilia]: Oh, someone was commenting here.

You said you personally have no problem in cases when development team as clear data privacy rules, specifically, if it's the data collected, for how long the data collected will be stored and wanting to be sure we can surely deleted at some point, not resort to that, but... Okay, that makes a lot of sense. But that one also takes trust, you know? Knowing that they will do exactly what they say, and then there's --- "t thanks for your presentation, Cecilia. As a tool developer I always struggle and getting back to communities with data about the search they ran, processes are often long, user feedback in prioritized in different ways, there are different agendas, specifically non-commercial product cycles are longer than regular silicon valley sprint integrations. I want you go... Did you get a good experience by developers reporting back something that successfully shows appreciation and also help to make strong connection in communities? Unfortunately no, and sometimes there are so many reasons why they don't come back to us.

Okay, we can see like what the feedback we gave was not good enough. Also sometimes it depends on the budget. Maybe someone is coming from outside, coming to do it for a few made weeks or months, and then after that they go back, so unfortunately no, but I'm hoping in the future, maybe we can have something like this when somebody comes back and even release their findings or even do it online. Actually, sometimes it doesn't have to be physical.

One thing I'm also thinking about is how the target audience, like it is like the more they try to do

privacy-preserving versions of features, people expecting messengers such as link previous, they boost the usability for a lot of users and perhaps attract new ones, but also sometimes alienates their more security-cautious fans. I find it absolutely fascinating how much that I get audience fan base with shifting.

Okay, I didn't know that. Did you know that?

[Tiffany]: Did I know if the target audience shifts? Yeah, so I think that's an interesting point to raise about how the audience can shift when maybe different features come out or privacy preserving features, maybe more people or different people choose to adopt it, but then they lose... you lose users in other areas because maybe they don't... they don't prefer it. I find that even with myself, there was something that changed recently, an interface, and it wasn't really for secure reasons that I knew of as the user using it, it was a new interface and for me, it actually became more difficult to use the interface, although there were some streamlined features and it looked prettier, it was more confusing for me as a long-time user, so I found myself using it a lot less because I just didn't prefer the new of updates that they had done.

So I think this... We do find that's happening from time to time.

[Cecelia]: And also, I feel like, Oh, it's supposed to be an ongoing process. And when you have a tool that is just basically the same year in, year out, it's gonna also be like nothing is new. So I think also they keep engaging more, adding new features to be able to sustain the target audience. At the same time that this would not feel very comfortable with it and they'll be like no, I'm gonna leave this app.

Sometimes it's just a balance with the hope that the ones who will stay on are more than the ones who will leave.

[Tiffany]: Yes, that's really good point, is constant iterations and you are always trying to make decisions that you think are for the best, or at least we hope.

[Cecilia]: We have a question here, what I found helpful both in US research and creating good feedback from development team is a clear public roadmap for development of CO and new features. It is so space, but I've seen some good examples Okay, it's a comment, but as I said, again, it is having a clear public or roadmap for development is very good, and also the tool has to keep moving forward, you know, we have... If I have maybe wire, giving us a new features, to some of us, it will be very exciting to some... Not very exciting, but at the same time, it's a personal choice, you look for what works best for you, you cannot have all of them working this for you, I am that you are the... Like, this is okay for me, and it is meeting my leads, but it is good.

[Ashley]: Also just to jump back to the the notes and about Signal and how they're maybe shifting audiences, I think an interesting example is Zom as a tool, as a tool that has used stickers and things that are more engaging and friendly for users as a way to entice people, to use a more secure tool, and so I think that's kind of flipping it on its head, to go on Cecilia's point here, you're using new features, you're using the catchy things that people like, the things that people like about what's up and other things, finding ways to integrate those into these privacy and security tools makes them

more appealing, so it makes it easier for us to ask an entire community or an entire organization to move over to this platform, so I would say if folks haven't seen Zom, it's a really cool tool that has a lot of really fun stickers targeted to a specific community, but I think is a good example of a tool that has really gone above and beyond to make the tool fun and to make it fun to use, so it's both secure and exciting to use.

[Carrie]: I was also going to share, just from working on the tool side of the product side in a lot of pieces. She brought a link previous, this is something we face also on the non-working on, there's always... We constantly go through this, the consideration of what people expect to have in a messaging app, it's a basic thing, like link previews are becoming a standard. So you find, Well, people expect to be able to have this and their messaging apps, and now we're finding this is the reason people are using it because they want that, because it provides a richer experience, and I would say just to get some... A insight into that process. For us, we do face these things all the time, and there's always a conversation around how important is it, is this to integrate into our work, and I see if we're doing a previous... What is the... What is the threat model around that now that we have, what risk are we intend for people? So there is always that consideration, and I would say the other thing I would add is, I typically... What we would do if we find that it is what people expect it is what will make the app more rich for the majority of our users, we always keep the option to turn that off and for example, to turn link previous off so that people can not have them as well. So I don't know what the signal has made in regards to link previews, but potentially there is a way to turn them off, but yeah, it is a constant balance between usability and security for sure.

[Participant]: So if I can just quickly follow up on the signal and link preview thing, 'cause I've been reading about it and from what I understand, they use the same mechanism than they used to... If it's a slash giphy, I refuse to give an opinion that they essentially... They have a server that makes an encrypted connection for us, so essentially your client requires some external server with a different IP to make a request for this, so theoretically, it's safe and cannot be tracked back to you, and is also the ability to turn it off, so, like signal, they've gone through a lot of really, really interesting steps to do it, but they haven't, for example, discussed how someone can create an attack for you by let's say, doing a customized link just for you, and therefore when the server requests this link, they notice you opening it because you are the only one whose ever received this version of the link, so they haven't documented it that well, but they've gone through a couple of steps.

[Carrie]: Yeah.

[Cecilia]: There is another question here. "Cecilia one more quick question for you, if I may...of course, you may. "One tool I always find fascinating, Telegram, which has worse security than Signal for example, but a vastly superior interface. Do you have any experience with getting user feedback for it?"

Well, the user feedback I have gotten for it is the one whereby you get it just from the community, not like being commissioned to do it by a developer. One thing I can tell you is WhatsApp takes up to 256 people and telegram takes a huge number. So let's say you want a group on Telegram, it is more easier than doing it through WhatsApp. That is the greatest feedback I have had, and what basically people are still not really invested in this part of the region that when you...especially when you want to form a big group, best way to do it is through Telegram.



So maybe I'd find out more and then I'll send you an email.

Yes?

[Participant]: No, I was just curious because I... Sometimes I've got maybe two people who I'm in touch with for whom I use Telegram, and the rest I most other messengers that are more secure, but every time I scroll, even the text on Telegram flows more smoothly. The scrolling is smotther, the cat videos, I send auto play and just incredible, like a telegram and I'm being serious now it's exponentially more fun to use, and I also really want to know what the other frameworks are that they use and why it's so difficult for us to copy the framework, like the signal best and the like. And one of the interesting things that I've also heard is, in the protest and Belarus now, when the internet was being switched off regularly, the telegram was supposedly really, really good at going around the circumvention technologies that were all of the other apps were failing like telegram was still working at these texts and people could communicate, so it's a really, really interesting time to observe, so of course. So that's why I've also been wondering and thinking a bit more about it.

[Cecelia]: Someone says it was the same in Hong Kong.

[Tiffany]: We have a couple of more people typing, these are really great questions, I'm enjoying the discussion. Also, feel free to unmute and ask questions if you would like, or bring up points, we love hearing voices.

[Carrie]: I know we have a lot of people typing still well, while we wait for those to come through, Cecilia, I wanted to ask, I'm thinking about user research in different contexts and even in Kenya. You mentioned that you do a lot of your work right now on Nairobi, and thinking about other places, thinking outside of the capital and more rural areas, how would you... Just from your observations and your knowledge- living there, what things do you know that you would need to do differently, if you are going to more rural communities to either collect feedback or do these observations or any kind of type of user research activity. The question is, What would you... What do you know that you would need to think about or do differently if you are doing user research in a smaller community in Kenya?

[Cecilia]: First of all, is just preparing yourself mentally. You see, like when you live in Nairobi, it's very easy to meet people and you have a very easy conversation, so you live with the mentality that is the same way everywhere else, and it's can be very frustrating for a researcher when you have this expectation but you are met with a different expectation. So first of all, is just preparing yourself mentally. In Nairobi life is very fast so when you go with an attitude like that, depending on which village you're going to, is also can be frustrating, especially for meetings and interviews, so preparing yourself mentally. And also language, as I said, English is not our first language.

We have 44 tribes in Kenya, so maybe you are trying to visit like four different places and tribes, so you can only manage to make one tribe, so it's always good to try and get an interpreter in advance. Most of the time, it's good to get an interpreter who is from that community. Somebody they can actually relate to, and someone they can be able to get back to when they ask... 'cause you want them to speak, you want them to pour their heart out. But when you go there with- maybe I live in

Nairobi, I look for someone who also lives in Nairobi, we go to a certain village, both of you are strangers. So it's always good to get an interpreter from that place. And also trying to involve the local community, as I said, maybe you are developing an app on maternal health, trying to get those local women leaders who can be able to hold your hand through the whole process, because you want to leave there feeling that you've actually exhausted everything that you want. And also trying to find a way to explain why you're actually doing this, not just collecting information, collecting feedback, exactly why, because there's always that question. So how do I come in? What is the need for me? It's always human or maybe it's very common here, which is in it for me, so just trying to be able also not to get initiated with such questions and also having a very concrete answer when it comes to that question.

And also looking at the remote network because you're going to a less - like Subu or Tucana, it's quite far, you know, so you also prepare yourself, maybe you can be on the road for two days or if you got enough funding, you can try and get a chartered flight to Tucana. Such things, also preparing yourself for environment, because if I live in Nairobi right now, my hometown is very hot. The difference in climate, as a person it also affects you. And also the way you talk to people, we have a culture where women don't approach men, so you have to look for a man to be able to talk to this other man. Even dressing...you can go there dressed like a Nairobiian and they take offense. Like, "Why you dressed that way? Don't you have respect for us as your elders?" So just finding out enough about the certain community that you're going to... Some are very liberal, some are very reserved.

Yeah, those are the main things that I will talk about.

And you also have to be very careful about cultural practices, you can't leave here and go to a place like- maybe, and you start going, you want to... You're talking about the LGBT-rights is an abomination. So you also have to know who you're actually talking to about that issue. You also have to have a lot of respect for religion, cause religion is the main issue in Kenya.

So respecting, being just careful with your watch, because you could say just one word and it could make someone feel like you're coming for them, and also, political views are very controversial in this country, so you have to know and ask what by tribe... it's not a secret. So you go there. You are Cecilia, you support this party. People just make an assumption, so even when they make that assumption, just try to water it down because you know why you are there in the first place because... And especially right now, we are preparing for the change to election, which comes with a lot of animosity, so you have to be very, very careful if you are going to a region where they see, they work for this political party and you work for this political party.

[Carrie]: I had a small question on dress. Coming from Nairobi, your dress may be different. If you were to dress more in line with how women do in a particular community or tribe, would they respond well to that? Or would they think that you were... Or would they think that, Oh, you're trying too hard, or you're trying to be like a singer all I guess?

[Cecilia]: Actually, I love giving an example. I come from, my home town is Muslim dominated. So we grew up wearing long dresses and the muslims wear what you call a hijab, so if you're going to my village in a long dress, sometimes is very exciting. Especially because maybe you are from

California, so you love this dress, so they feel like part of you. Like oh wow. So sometimes it's just a way of even trying to invite like "I'm one of you now," and even trying maybe speaking maybe two or three words to them, just a way of getting them to relax and be able to know that they can trust you with the information that they're giving you. Creating a conducive environment where they're able to talk to you.

[Carrie]: Thank you.

[Cecilia]: I hope I answered your question, Carrie.

[Carrie]: Absolutely, yes. Thank you.

I want to do the drum roll, like every time we see some more typing, like "here's another question coming!"

I know we did have some people starting to type, if you do have anything else you wanna discuss or talk about, please feel free to share also if there are any on the topic of cultural specific challenges or observations, if any of you have thoughts that you wanna share on that, please feel free to unmute and share.

[Cecilia]: I can also add, Carrie, maybe you're going to a place like Samburu and you want to do something like FGM. You also have to be prepared mentally. You could get a lot of opposition from it, FGM-as I said before is female genital mutilation- even the-The one we call a --- including the leader of that place supports it. Not all of them, but they do support it. So also you have to prepare yourself that you might meet opposition from people who don't want to believe that this culture can come to an end. Because it's part of them, so they feel like they've been robbed of something they've done for years and years, and especially if you're a foreigner, and you're not one of them, "What do you know about our culture?" So you have to be prepared for such things.

[Ashley]: Cecilia, you had mentioned this earlier in your presentation of your own lack of confidence in your own skills and even being hesitant to apply to things like the USABLE initiative. So I'm curious kind of now years later, and as someone who I think has such a long way and has really become a leader in this space, if I can say so myself, I would be interested to hear what would you say to yourself, looking back, if you could say something to Cecilia two or three years ago, what would you share to yourself and similarly, what would you share to others who are maybe feeling less confident in this space?

[Cecilia]: I would say, you never know until you try. Because even during this presentation, I kept asking Carrie and Tiffany, "do you think I should actually do it?" I think it's progress, you find yourself doubting yourself and wondering am I getting myself involved in things that are not in my community or that don't evolve my community, so it is just a matter of you trying. Also to try and bring change because when someone else hears that I'm doing user research, they might be interested, and pulling ten people who will also pull other people by the time we realized it, we are a pool and you know, we are experts from this region who talk about user research, so you would never know until you try it. It sounds like an overused cliché, but it's the truth, you never know, and just... Sometimes knowing that you get to a point, by where you ask yourself, "Am I getting out of

my comfort zone? Am I doing too much?" You might try to have imposter syndrome, but when the post-syndrome comes also give yourself a pat on the back and say, "You know what, if I don't do it, who will?" So that's, I think that's what I will say.

[Ashley]: Beautiful, love it.

[Cecilia]: And also, I would say taking maybe advantage is not the right word. Let me just use taking advantage, of the networks that you have, the way I feel sometimes I overwhelm Cary and Tiffany on so many things, and sometimes I feel so guilty. But at the same time, you need people who in this space to be able to guide you, and so just taking advantage of your network, it really helps, because sometimes you can't just support someone you don't know, so the people you know and I'm sure most of them are willing to do it for you, so just take advantage of them, learn something and also go out of your way to learn more than they've taught you.

[Tiffany]: I was gonna say Yes, absolutely. And we are so grateful that Cecilia, you have reached out to us throughout our relationship to learn, because we also learn and it helps us grow as well, and so, as Ashley said, it's a mutual benefit. And so thank you also for doing that, and actually I love that question about being reflective and what would you tell yourself if you were to speak to yourself in the past... I think that's a really interesting question, even for myself to consider.

[Carrie]: Yeah, I was going to share as well, these doing user research in different contexts, and they've even doing that work with local partners can sometimes be daunting or often- always-be daunting for us as well, and planning. What makes sense? What are all the things we need to consider? Can we do this safely? It's the list of considerations that we go through is very daunting, and there is always just asking can we do this safely, will we be putting anyone at risk? How will they respond? All of these things are-yeah, daunting is the word I'll use. I do appreciate your sentiment as well Cecilia, about you never know until you try and it takes courage and bravery to just do it and find the right people within your network that are willing to engage with the effort, and try and do.

[Cecilia]: I want to note that you'll always have the imposter syndrome. It just creeps on you before you know it, and you are like, Oh no, no, you want to do things within your comfort zone. So when it comes again, speak to it and like, "Oh no, I'm doing this..." As I said, this thing, I was like "Oh, even in the morning, I wake up and go, Oh God, What did I do to myself?" I feel like there's so many people who are so well advanced in this area in this meeting, so you're like what can I tell them that they don't know? But then I think "Oh, but no. I'm bringing in my voice."

[Tiffany]: Lots of nice sentiments, which is wonderful, and thank you all for joining and taking time. If there's any final thoughts people would like to share, we'd love to hear them. I also wanna leave space just for... Yeah, just for those final thoughts and then we'll wrap up, we have a couple of announcements just about AXIS in general, so I will pause and see.

[Cecilia]: This would have been impossible without Internews and the Okthanks team. So I am also very grateful and indebted.

[Cecilia]: Thank you so much, guys. This went better than I expected.

[Tiffany]: Okay, so yes, round of applause, woo wonderful job!

[Cecilia]: Thank you, thank you so much.

[Tiffany]: A few things on the front, AXIS front in general, is a well, at 9 P.M. Eastern, another community-led session, and it will be on identity, a role play game, so it's gonna be about identity management and surviving skills in today's online world, I don't know too much about it, but it sounds super interesting. So join for that is, I say this evening, but 9 PM Eastern, whatever, whatever time of the day that is for you, and then tomorrow, Thursday, 9 AM Eastern, and then 9 PM Eastern is our final day of live sessions for access, so you won't wanna miss them we have some fun lined up for all of the participants and we just wanna be acknowledged the fact that all of you have been so committed and present, and it's been a wonderful month of sharing, and so help can all join and actually will also speak to some of the funding that's available for through Internews, and so you won't wanna miss her share either.

Is there anything I am missing? Look at that commitment saying up until 2 AM to join. Amazing.

[Ashley]: Yes, I'll just say again, thank you Cecelia. This was really, really amazing, and it's always such a joy to hear from you and what you're working on, so thank you for sharing with us today.

Thank you. Last you A... Alright, and we'll see you all soon!