

Panel: Think Tanks and Crisis: How Can the Policy Research Community Help Cope with Major Crisis? (Grand Ballroom)

Date/Time: April 26, 2012 / 10:15 – 11:30

Organizing Institution: The Asan Institute for Policy Studies

Talking Points for: Ellen Laipson
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1. Think tanks are important players in most areas where public policy is being debated, developed, and reviewed. In mature democracies, think tanks can initiate a public conversation about a particular policy whether or not the government considers it useful.
2. Crises are opportunities for think tanks to make important contributions to public awareness and education, as well as to government deliberations. But the nature of the crisis may prove to be a significant constraint on a thin tank's role.
3. If a crisis is a political crisis or violent conflict of some duration, think tanks can provide historic context, can provide a platform for government officials seeking to explain their efforts at conflict resolution, and to be a channel for voices of the parties in dispute to be heard in a major capital city.
4. If a crisis is mostly humanitarian or a very sensitive security issue, think tanks can be somewhat marginalized, trying to play their role with less information than humanitarian actors on the ground, or than national security experts inside government, they can still add value, but in a more limited fashion.

** The views expressed herein do not necessarily reflect the views of the Asan Institute for Policy Studies.*
