THE BROOKINGS INSTITUTION

WEBINAR

DECISIONMAKING IN COLLABORATIVE RESEARCH AND ACTION

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WELCOMING AND INTRODICTION:

EMILY GUSTAFSSON-WRIGHT
Senior Fellow, Global Economy and Development, Center for Universal Education, The Brookings Institution

PANEL DISCUSSION:

SREEHARI RAVINDRANATH
Associate Director, Research and Impact, Dream a Dream

ROSA MARIA MONCADA
KIX Honduras Project Coordinator, SUMMA

MARY OTIENO
Associate Professor of Educational Planning and Policy Studies Research, Kenyatta University, 2012 Echidna Global Scholar

MODERATOR: ATENEA ROSADO-VIURQUES
Research Associate, Global Economy and Development, Center for Universal Education, The Brookings Institution

MODERATOR: EMILY GUSTAFSSON-WRIGHT
Senior Fellow, Global Economy and Development, Center for Universal Education, The Brookings Institution

CLOSING REMARKS:

ATENEA ROSADO-VIURQUES
Research Associate, Global Economy and Development, Center for Universal Education, The Brookings Institution

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GUSTAFSSON-WRIGHT: Good morning, afternoon and evening to everyone joining us today for this conversation about decision making in collaborative research. My name is Emily Gustafsson-Wright. I'm a senior fellow at the Center for Universal Education at Brookings. And I lead our work on education and early childhood development costing and financing. It is my pleasure to introduce our event today. We have an excellent panel joining us from three different continents. Before doing that, though, let me share some background about this work. Over the past couple of years at Brookings, the Center for Individual Education at Brookings, together with its partners, has been building what we call the Knowing Doing Network, KDN.

KDN is a global network which unites educational actors, researchers, practitioners and stakeholders to foster research and mutual learning and facilitate across context, collaboration and action. It serves as a collaborative space by bringing together passionate actors and leveraging the strength of their relationships with the aim to uncover promising and impactful solutions. As part of this initiative, we have launched the Collaboration Conversation Series, a five-part series dedicated to exploring the complexities of collaborative research and action to transform systems and ensure relevant learning for all young people. Through candid discussions, diverse perspectives, and a shared commitment to equity and systemic change, this series explores nuances, unpacks tensions and shares contextual, contextual knowledge and reflections about what it means to work together in authentic partnerships.

Each part of the Collaborative Conversation series focuses on a specific theme examined through diverse perspectives and features education, actors, researchers, practitioners, youth, educators, policymakers, and private sector actors from around the globe who bring a wealth of knowledge, experience and contextual understanding to the table. As mentioned, our conversation today will focus on decision making in collaborative research. During this discussion, our panelists will share their thoughts on what decisions they have found important during the collaborative process, the relevance of consensus and dissent, and the tensions between flexibility and efficiency with collaborative decisions. They will also share some lessons learned about the links between collaborative decision-making equity and justice with work that gathers diverse actors from the global North and global South.

After the panel discussion, we'll be taking questions that audience has sent in advance. So with that, I will hand it over to my wonderful esteemed colleague, Atenea Rosado-Viurques, who is a research associate at Seri, who will lead the panel discussion. Over to you Atenea.

ROSADO-VIURQUES: Thank you so much, Emily. As you said, we have the honor to be in this panel with three different speakers based in Latin America, Africa and Asia. We are very happy and very proud to be learning with and from you, Mary, Rosa Maria and Sreehari. In this panel, we will first hear from our colleagues on issues related to challenges and opportunities of collaborative decision making on educational action and research. We hope that this is more like a casual conversation, so we will try to disrupt a little bit the dynamics of most panels. We really hope that this is a little bit more engaging. And then after our conversation, we will move to questions and answers from the audience, as Emily said. To conclude with some closing remarks.

We have the honor to introduce you to Dr. Mary Otieno with an associate professor of educational planning and Policy studies at the University of Nairobi. And she previously served as a coordinator of the Regional Center of Expertise of the Greater Nairobi. She is the founder of Cyprus Onyango Foundation, an NGO focusing on quality education and poverty. And she runs a lower cost ECD center in Kenya. She works closely with the Ministry of Education, representing Kenya at the UNESCO's Meetings on Education for Sustainable Development and the UNESCO's Meetings of Global Network of International Teacher Educational Institutions.

We also have Dr. Sreehari Ravindranath. He was a psychologist working on culturally informed psychological assessments. He holds a master's in counseling psychology and a PhD in life skills education, and he's currently a researcher on policy change and advocacy, focusing on evidence-based reform in education at Dream a Dream, a large organization in India. Before joining Dream of Dream, he was an assistant professor at various universities, and he also served as consultant for various transnational projects. He has rich experience working with universities and organizations in Japan, Malaysia, the US, Thailand and Dubai. And finally, we are very, very happy to have Rosa Maria Moncada, who is a support officer at Latin America and the Caribbean.

She has worked in education and across government, international development and civil society. Rosa Maria served as the technical coordinator of the National Council of Education in Honduras and has led and collaborated with multiple Central American projects on teacher training, minimum standards and standardized testing and the right to education and policymaking across America. She Holds a degree in business administration from Virginia Commonwealth University and also a master's from the Catholic University of Honduras. Rosa Maria has also served as a professor at the National Autonomous University of Honduras. And again, we are very, very grateful for your expertise Rosa Maria. Thank you so much to the three of you. And we hope that this is a lively conversation. I want to start first to a question. What a question to you, Rosa Maria. I'm wondering if you could please share an experience of collaborative research or action that you have been involved in and what type of decisions you have had to make in those collaborative collaborations.

MONCADA: For me. I'm thinking everyone. Thank you for having me. Yes, we do have a great experience in Summa, with Summa is the laboratory for research and Innovation in education in Latin America, Latin America and the Caribbean. We engage extensively in color of collaborative research. My primary work is on teacher professional development at a global level, and I also work closely with the Like Region Supporting Countries initiative. This is through the kids' path hub, which is Latin America and Eastern Caribbean states in TPD. We are currently working with ten countries located in three continents. The countries are leading research projects on scaling initiatives. Some TPD feature professional development. And this is the ETI Project. This is an empowering teacher's initiative.

We actually implementing with one from Philippines and two other universities, one in Hong Kong and one in the UK. The Open University in UK. And prior to this we also collaborated on typically project also under the umbrella, typically at scale. And that was an initiative with Gonzalez Vicky Stein in Honduras. This I think this two collaborations have been a very good experience to collaborate with some of the research with the last project on Ghana and Uzbekistan, we developed framework aiming to support those who wish to bring initiatives using technology and enhance teachers training. And in answering the second part of your question, the decisions that we had to make. I think the key involving decisions here was organizing and in sharing.

For nearly three years, we share resources. We co-create, co-create, TPD models. And it was training mediated by technology. It was this time. We also collaborate with Brookings at the Center of Universal Education on a pilot project on casting this. This actually provided a valuable insight for adaptable and an efficient, typically diverse context. And I think. Constant communication was especially with stakeholders, was a key factor on collaboration and deep understanding of local context for cultural contextual sensibilities. I think there was there was those key in in both projects still. And I think I think this experience can happen all over the world. So I would like to ask Mary, can you share some experience of that collaborative research that you have been involved, especially what principles facilitated this collaboration? Mary.

OTIENO: Thank you, Rosa Maria, for the question. And I will resonate a lot with what you have said, because when I watch it is it is it is biased teacher training. We trained teachers of primaries [unintelligible]... And even for teacher training, quality local partners, particular teacher training. So currently there is a program that we are collaborating as a university with the teacher organization on training teachers to be up to date in terms of their teaching practices, and therefore we are allowing teachers to enroll and do various modules to upgrade their, their training practices. So that is one area of collaboration. But in my work as an individual, I have been a coordinator to all the regional centers of expertise, which is UNESCO tool for mainstreaming education for sustainable development.

And I have been collaborating from the office, which I coordinate with the civil society, with government, with communities conducting research on education for sustainable development, different components on climate change and on conservation of the environment. And through that we collaborated also with our university in the UK, called the London School of Economics. And we published a book which is on politics and sustainability. So that is one area of collaboration. I have also been in a collaboration of a co-country research of Kidnapped Scholars Network. So four of us liberated and conducted research on gender-based violence. And what I can say in terms of the principles is shared interest. We collaborated because of shared interests, especially the Kidnaped Scholars Program.

We were all interested and because of our background and challenges in our own countries to find out how school going children in the primary school are managing gender-based violence or what forms of gender-based violence they are experiencing. And through this we have come up with the comparative publication on gender-based violence in the primary school. So that was because of our interests, shared interests, shared responsibilities and shared actions in times of. The principles. I think the principles of collaboration are varied. You get into a collaborative dimension because of what is in it for you. That is one. But also how the others are going to support you in achieving what you want to achieve. You may not be able to achieve it on your own. And that is what we thought in the various instances. Thank you. And maybe I would like to hear from Sreehari's view on his experience in this same area of conversation. Maybe you can share with us. Thank you.

RAVINDRANATH: Thank you. Thank you, Mary. And I guess, yeah, I'm also part of a collaborative, which is part of theory. And I think I start with one of our national collaborative, which is called the Lifespan Collaborative, a largest collaborative that we formed in India, where we have practitioners, organizations working in the area of statistics and social emotional learning donors, government officials, all being part of it, which is basically around the creating an urgency around why we have to talk about healthy lifestyles or why do we actually have to prioritize well-being of people? I would say you have to project that really a team is part of which is that KDN and I see the not less doing network leadership correlation.

And second one response which is strengthening pedagogical approach as well relevant knowledge and skills. I think if I talk about collaborative research or collaborative network itself, that remains are the principle in which we are actually working for these three projects. And the collaborative research is basically we have we created a research policy that is collaboration, and we co-created such agendas that we share the knowledge, we create assets, we reflect on how we can actually impact larger actors within the system. And most importantly, all these projects are trying to really create how reflecting on how educational system transformation happens and how young people can actually drive that. That's how we are working. And collaborative research is part of all these great collaborations that we are talking about.

And if I reflect be on maybe as opposed to an NDA, like when you are talking about principles. And I think one of the big challenges that we face probably in collaborative research, I think it's mostly around, I think the whole idea of this webinar, research around decision making. I guess the hard challenges like, you know, how do we actually in a collaborative research take decisions? And I think that's the most important challenge we always face we've been facing and be part of and how do we actually mitigate and negotiate for decision making processes while we are actually in the research collaboration? And I would say it could be something like, you know, establishing a collaborative governance or it could be around decisions around collaborating, co-creating research agendas, which is useful and beneficial for young people, or what is the priority of the go ahead or what is the priority of the actors?

How do we actually co-create? Because the decisions around it also moving from a shared understanding, how do we decide some of the immediate outcomes and how do we actually decide some of the impact that we want to have to create dialogs and debates around whether it's around policy change or like, you know, sit around creating assets, which is useful for teachers to use in the classroom, or is that something around deciding on creating assets which are actually useful for the school ecosystem, etc.? So it's always around decision making, I would say, in the whole collaborative process. I think that's the biggest challenge we always face in a collaborative research. And I think I would like to know more about like, you know, a couple of how do we actually make our neighbors reflect this? Like, can we make major, minor decisions?

We may make the single decisions we may make, might try and macro decisions would be in this collaborative decision, in this collaborative process. So my I would like to ask Maria Rosa like, you know, in this whole process of collaborative research, what are your thoughts on, you know, some of the decisions that you have made and in your experience, what would be what would not be some of the decisions that you shouldn't be taking or why is it actually like, you know, some of the decisions have to be collaborative and why not some sort of market in a collaborative way. So some thoughts around it, if there are some ideas you can actually share.

MONCADA: Thank you Sreehari. Okay. Decisions that have to be made and decisions that shouldn't. I think as a rule of thumb, all research should contribute to decision making, period. Collaborative research place in a specifically critical role because it tends to be more comprehensive. It often involves more sectors, more countries, multiple contexts, and usually address complex problems. And we all seeking doable solutions. And I think this diversity is useful for decision makers because it generates practical solutions and is informed by various perspectives, by expertise. And that and that is a good thing. Well, analyzing the cost of delivering teacher training in Honduras, this effort that we collaborate with Brookings, we decided to involve the academia, the universities, the different research units in in the Ministry of Education, all the TPD divisions, curriculum teams, etc.

It was it was a wide range of teams and in the inside gang were crucial for everybody. On planning the following years professional training and other initiatives. We actually found out that online courses cost only one fifth of what it would be to require to do it face to face. And this information was very useful for all parts. And I think one important decision on collaborative research is that the stakeholders should actively participate in the process. While it might be not always feasible ensuring some level of involvement at early stage. It's definitely vital. Other decisions that were taken related to collaborative research was the roles and responsibilities. What were we going to do with the resource repositories budget allocations along the way? Files, Management sharing policies. What the dissemination was going to look like.

And one key factor that I don't do not want to missed in this webinar is the concept of translation, not in terms of language, but in converting complexity into simplicity, how the teams can parse hard numbers and research findings into clear actionable formats that are easy to understand, not only for decision makers, but everybody involved in the process of research. Of course. I would say that, yes, there are practices that should be avoided. And one that I think of is this unilateral decisions when we're composed of very many minds and many different teams. And also ignoring the local context, not because it happens in your country, it will happen some someplace else. So just give the chance that we need to understand the local context.

And another key thing that should not be taken is inflexibility. Flexibility should be should be the key word to work with these very many people in collaboration. So I think I think those were very important during the process. And yeah. Sreehari, I'll go back to you. I wonder if you had some thoughts about the power dynamic that might influence the decision making in these different collaborations. Can you think of any?

RAVINDRANATH: I think that's the I think that's the most relevant that you see in like talk about collaboration or network that that's always coupled with like, you know, a lot of power. I would say I if I take the example of, I mean, we actually managed to create a research policy collaborative. It was ambitious that, you know, here like, you know, as researchers, we are actually entering into a space where we have practitioners, we have policy makers, we have teachers, we have young people actually coming together around the table to discuss around what is useful and what is the kind of research we can actually do. It was interesting to know, like, you know, and besides this whole process. But then we also realized when we actually bring these multiple actors to into our room, like, you know, the whole the power dynamics that play around be the, the how do we actually mitigate or navigate that, negotiate through this was quite surprising at the initial time for us.

And like, you know, the whole idea of facilitating this whole process really helped us at the beginning itself. But I would say like, you know, in the room and I have seen is like you will see actors with a lot of influence like policymakers or bureaucrats within, because our system becomes to the room with a lot of power and influence. We can also see people with our actors, with resources, and we can also see people with knowledge and expertise, like, you know, because we thought like, you know, researchers as researchers, we come with a lot of technicalities and knowledge that we can actually share with others. We can also see a lot of voices from marginalized communities are making different representations of the power in terms of voices, which is actually there. So there is a lot of power that actually play around when we actually create something like a collaborative research or be brings together a collaborative research of different actors in the collaborative research together.

And of late, what I realized or something that I reflect is that it's not the power of interpersonal relationship that actually plays, but the style of relationship that comes with the style of relation that

that builds around in the room between the people with the influence versus the people with knowledge or between the people with knowledge and resources, with the people, with the ground realities and people that that's that that's that I would actually qualitative side of relations that actually that's a dynamics which actually plays around a lot and that will actually impact or limit our influence, the whole collaborative process itself. And I would say the, the whole idea of how do we facilitate it, create a space for people to actually be behind an investment of time that we put across in order to create a research agenda, but to create a space where we actively listen, we validate some of our thoughts and emotions.

We give a space where people can be authentic. We create a group feel where people actually feel safe, that they can actually say anything that really influences the dynamics of power in the group. And yeah, that's what I have seen. Given that, you know, when I talk, I always look at Mary because the experience that you have with the collaborative and the experience that you have with the Academy and to maybe like, you know, what's your thoughts around. I may be wrong in the way I've actually expressed some of my thoughts, but how do we actually dismantle this power dynamics that's limiting collaborative research making processes if you have some sort of. To hear about it.

OTIENO: Thank you. Sreehari. I would like to begin from the point of view of the purpose of collaborative research. It is actually working together. So these different organizations coming together to collaborate on some action research. They must agree in terms of the product, in terms of their input, in terms of the product and what they are going to do with the product. And I think in most cases, this is where the problem begins. They have done the research. The results are that they want to disseminate, but they forgot to have some systematic approach on the collaboration dynamics. So what kind of collaboration is it? So I think to dismantle some of the powers and to avoid conflicts is to begin from some uniform and homogeneous standpoint. Why are we collaborating and what is it we want to do with the outputs?

Of the collaborative activities, especially in research. So different organizations will be at different stages and they can come in at different levels. And I compare these with a production function in economics where the that the production chain where at that at the percentage that is somebody

doing something. Maybe there is somebody producing the raw materials. The second stage is someone processing the raw materials. Another thing that is somebody marketing these raw materials. Then the target is the consumer. That is somebody consuming the final product. So when it is clear who is doing what and at what point. Then we may be able to dismantle their powers and their country and everyone will be happy. On the other hand, I also want to see the consent decree, such in a collaborative manner, for example, to review a curriculum of an education system where there are many players doing different things. There is that there are students with their own interests. There is the parents who may be looking at long term, the long-term impact of their discussion of the child. Then that is the government that is also looking at the investment in education and the return of this education to the society and also to the individual.

Then there is the teacher. Whether at the university or at high school. So all these are contributors to the final product. And so I think the objectives and the goals of every organization with this path. But they need to understand what has brought them together. What is the need that has brought them together? So that this is planned very well and the contribution of each what's announced in the collaborative research is well, well specified and. Maybe on that note, I would like to hear from Rosa Maria in terms of impact of collaborative research and action. What would be your view?

MONCADA: Thank You Mary. And I think you think collaborative research and action often lead to powerful stories. And I have one that is worth telling. It all began with a team composed of different units within the Ministry of Education in Honduras. Those units were curriculum were people working on teacher professional development, people working on technology liaison, which is which is a unit that really gain a lot of position while pandemic, information systems also were there and they were all collaborating to deliver TPD training through technology. And they just became a team working specifically on a model to do that, to do so. But once the research was concluded and the project was done, something remarkable happened. A few months later, they the whole team reunited. And this time they were working on something more ambitious.

There was an initiative that was aiming to have the virtual secondary school, which we didn't have in Honduras, and something that they think they were talking about this for a while, but never really

doing it until they had this collaborative experience on just a small training for teachers. This program, it's a high school that is delivery, delivered entirely to technology. And they launch finally the first cohort this last semester. I think I think that that is that is a great story because this really provides a second chance for Hondurans who for various reasons, had to drop out of school. And with this morality, they can they can draw from anywhere they can be in the country, they can be abroad working. And if they are 18 or older and if they already completed in grade nine and in the basic education, then they can draw online.

And this really offers an opportunity to pursue their high school diploma. And this this really can be a life changing option for many. And it's an opportunity for education in the country now. And it's a policy now More students can fulfill this dream of completing secondary school and advancing to higher education. And that to me it's collaborative research in action to finish having giving up opportunities to those who didn't have any. And I think I think we should give a second thought of how we do impact on policy. And I don't know. Sreehari just expanding on this theme, can you can you comment on impacts that you have experienced in the past on this research action? Can you can you share something with us.

RAVINDRANATH: Thank you Rosa Maria, I guess you beautifully articulated some of the some of the impact that I wish like, you know, that we could actually do with our collaborative research and thank you so much for sharing that. Like it's inspiring to know some of the work in action, how it actually looks at the ground and how its actually informed policy is to revise. And I honestly similar not like you know, for me to when I look at the impact of any collaborative research of course like you know I think the, we are all trained to look at any kind of research or any kind of collaboration. When we start this collaborations, we feel like, you know, what are some of the immediate outcomes that we can actually produce?

And we always hear like, you know, it should be something around that can actually instrumental in changing policy or some action points by policy changes, or it could be around creating some assets like, you know, that is useful for many or creating common goods like that's open source and useful resources that actually enable teachers and educators to take it into their classroom practice or

classroom itself. I would say that there are there are always limited by saying that they are all immediate outcomes and the impact of when we actually co-create or in a collaborative research is not around. Of course, like, you know, it has its own benefit, like it's very cost effective. The kind of innovations that we are able to bring in a collaborative basis like, you know, much beyond making as an organization or as an individual or as a team that we can actually bring. Or when we co-create this innovation, it's like, you know, the intensity in which we are actually creating the efficient, the effectiveness of the whole idea that we are actually creating is much more beyond the way that we were actually thinking, which impact the larger community. Our people are the ecosystem that we are working.

But I lot I always would like to like, you know, being all what I enjoy being part of this collaborative research and something that I find I see impactful is how do this all? Actors in that system are stakeholders, and the organizations come together for a collaborative research. It could be academicians who may have knowledge. So if I talk about Spock's projects, I've seen up and we bring together academicians, experts in needs of education. Boston Insider, researched-based teachers who have actually let you know who we are, who would like to share their stories and their voices matters to a larger community being that indeed collaboration. See, a lot of donors who are like, you know, passionately there to actually invest money all coming together. And then in part, I would say is like the sense of empowerment they get from this collaborative effort instead of like banal let's say like, you know, when I when I previously talked about the power that plays around, it's also like, you know, a space where people actually and there is there is a willingness that happens where we actually learn and then learn.

We take a pause to actually reflect on some of our practices that we were actually continuing and also listening to some of these expert's knowledge actually being shared, like, you know, this sense of empowerment that everyone actually gets a sense of validation that people get. Like it feels that, you know, my voice is also matters in the collaborative research on a collaborative network for policymakers or feels that, you know, I like, you know, this is a space that I can rely on a lot of information like, you know, it could be from different spectrum coming up. So I have a lot of information now which can actually inform the policy that I'm actually influencing or actually co-

creating or I'm also an academic and where we have a lot of disconnect between practice and what is actually happening in the academics, like listening to these practitioners' voice that. So I was listening to grounding insights to really make their thought process really different.

So I think one of the larger impacts of a collaborative research is like the whole idea of, you know, the sense of empowerment that everyone actually feels. Second, like, you know, we always have this concern around how do we actually sustain this collaborative research? We may we may have joined for one mission, our shared vision to co-create something. But once we see the merit, it's also around how do we actually sustain this process. So one of the other impact I have seen is like, if you are able to successfully create a space where like, you know, we co-create research, we have a shared agenda, shared purpose, alignment with the mission and moving beyond outcomes like, you know, looking at the real impact of, you know, creating it could be around influencing this system or it could be around ensuring every young person actually it's right for us. That's a mission.

So then like, you know, it's lots around an inclusive space that in a lot of voices from different people coming up, that's an impact. I would say, like most of our decisions are actually very inclusive in nature. There's a sense of belonging that actually brings together like, you know, it's not just a very temporary set up to actually do some research, but there is a lot of belongingness that actually happens. There's a lot of diversity that we bring into the reservoir of equity that we actually had around the decision that right for. So if someone asked me about the impact of collaborative research, I would always go back like, you know, Yeah. Like, you know, not very tangible outcomes as the impact but how it actually influence each one of the individual within that collaboration and how that sense of belonging actually brought together all of us.

And that's our mission and vision. Out How do that space really help people to share authentically what they wanted and what to take from this collaboration? So I would say I always want to go back to Mary to make sure I get validated from my thought. So maybe like, you know, what your thoughts are on, you know, when you talk when we all talk about collaborative research in action, how do you see the future of collaborative research and what are some of the actions in your work looking at that have you see as impactful in the collaborative space?

OTIENO: Thank you. I. I think it is it is big data contribution. The collaborative research is going to contribute. Actually contributes to big data puts outside the information. Covering a wide area because I assume that's. Those organizations collaborating together in action research will produce information, will disseminate this information in their different environments. And that in itself is important because researchers looking for information would be able to get information. And. There is actually inadequate data. Well, especially in education in different areas. So it will it will contribute. But my low-lying impact is the that that that leverage on technical, technical capacity and financial resources in terms of coming together.

That is my low-lying fruit and many organizations coming together in one bus, you still want to put a little bit in that purpose to conduct actual research in the different the different environments. I feel like the world is going collaborative. Because for a long time we, the researchers, have always left out the communities who are the beneficiaries of this research whose challenges the researchers are trying to handle. But they have never been part of part of this. So that will be, that is a spillover effect of what the collaborators are doing between spillover to their associates. And this, there will be a multiplying effects. If I collaborate with another organization in in the US, for example, and I include my students. In their That's collaborative research. When they become researchers, potential researchers then reluctantly follow the same that it is. It is a good thing because no one has a monopoly of skin.

And they know human capital is very important. So the skills that Rosa Maria may have in terms of, I may borrow from that to implement in our institution what they are doing if we collaborate in the teacher professional development. Yeah. And I think that is also a lot of duplication in terms of where different organizations work. So when they collaborate as much as the ethos on will be following their main goal, their main vision and mission. They could do more when they work collaboratively. So I see that impact is huge. But it must be well, it must follow some approach which is very systematic in terms of the engagement. And maybe Rosa Maria can come in and help us in this. Through our experience in our work and organization. Thank you.

ROSADO-VIURQUES: Thank you, Mary. And I hope that eventually, Rosemary, I can also answer this question.

MONCADA: You got better than that.

ROSADO-VIURQUES: Yes. But thank you so much, Mary, for asking about our experience and how it's how we see it. That's you. And specifically at the Learning and Action Alliance for Girls Agency Lager, which is a community of practice focused on trying to understand how girls between 10 and 19 years old understand their own agency. Something very important for us that I want to come back to is what the three of you have mentioned about listening and creating spaces where people can be authentic, when people can be themselves. I think that Laga now being hosted is self-reflective on how we can manage our different perspectives, given that we come from different spaces in the global South and the global North.

It's really a lot of self-reflection, a lot of trying to understand where we're coming from and then noticing how it's better for us to participate or to stand back, right? We say step in or stand back. Step in if you realize that your voice at the moment is important, step back if you realize that maybe we can keep silent. Right? Which is something that this time I tried to do in this panel. But in general, really thinking about when it's best for us, depending on where we're at and our positionality to either share our thoughts or listen. It's very important that we learn to listen, especially those of us who are based in the global North and carry some material privileges. And so that's one thing that I'm thinking about based on what you said. And the other thing that I wanted to share is what you all said about how collaboration takes time and it requires building trust and relationships, but it also implies iterative discussion and decision making.

Sometimes we make decisions that are not satisfactory for everyone, so we have to come back and that takes time. And that has a tension with some of our funding structures. And in global development and in education, it takes a lot of relationship building for our collaboration to really be strong. So at Laga, something that we try to do is make our work more transparent, be very explicit about how much time it's taken on much effort it's taking, our shortcomings, our challenges, our

potentials, etc. We try to be caring based on feminist principles of care. We really want to not only be collaborators or colleagues, but want to be friends. And we think that that's important for sustainability, to have transparent, honest, caring relationships. Anyhow, as you all say, there's so much to discuss. So I want to pass it to Emily because we have gotten a couple of questions from an audience. So, Emily, what thoughts have you heard from our audience?

GUSTAFSSON-WRIGHT: Yes, Thank you. This has been such an amazing conversation. And I know we could go on for much longer. We have about ten minutes left, so we have a number of questions from the audience. One was about dissent. So how does how can dissent and differing perspectives be effectively navigated in collaborative research and action to ensure they strengthen rather than hinder the process? And that anybody can answer that. Anybody. Or I'll call.

MONCADA: If I may, I think that that's an important issue to address because it can happen along the way. But I would like to go back to what Atenea's closing this this panel and is that yes, collaboration takes time. And it's especially because you're building trust. And I think it's the only way to make the journey sustainable and that the only way that you can actually impact on a higher level. So I think I think those are issues that can work along the way. You know, not easy all the time and not always takes, we often get caught up on a goal, deadlines, etc. But what really can make a difference? It's a group of people trusting each other and make things better for a public good. So I think it's something to, to yes. To speak out at the beginning of any collaboration. Yes.

GUSTAFSSON-WRIGHT: That's great. Yeah.

OTIENO: And we have to add, if I could add, I think it is when a collaborative activity begins on the platform of non-competitiveness, that it is not a competition. But it is a common goal for all the collaborators, something that they want to achieve. And therefore they come up with the insights of how to achieve it. If it is all participatory, then we that can be can be capped. Thank you.

GUSTAFSSON-WRIGHT: Thank you. Those are both such great and insightful answers. So I actually have a question of my own, and I am going to take advantage of my role as moderator of this portion

to ask this question. So, I mean, within CUE, we think a lot also about sort of how do we collaborate with each other within a center and obviously with all of the work that we're doing with KDN, and, you know, what does this look like? And something that I've noticed and I'm aware of is that. Unless sort of there's explicit it can be challenging if there's not explicit funding that's going towards the support of a network or a collaborative process. So I would love to hear maybe from Sreehari, if you have any thoughts on that. And then my final question is going to be and you can come to this afterwards. I would love to hear from each of you if you could say just one line on what do you think is the most important thing to facilitate decision making in the collaborative research process. But we'll start with the funding question. And if, Shari, if you're willing to take that one.

RAVINDRANATH: I think I think the moment we actually decided to have some shared vision, to collaborate like, you know, one of the biggest question that we pondered our biggest like around funding probably that's the question that we always have around how do we actually sustain it. So beyond like, you know, some of the outcomes that we are looking at, how do we actually sustain and do we even have the. I think the moment we invite a lot of actors within the system to be part of a collaborative research, that's also come with the same question, like, you know, do you have enough funding to sustain? Like if you don't want to commit to something, something for a short-term cost, but how do we actually make sure that's an impactful fund?

And I think what I've called over a period of time with the kind of collaboration that we have seen is like. Beyond defending, I guess like, you know, one way, like the belonging that I was talking about in terms of the impact. Right. It's not just our deliverables that we are actually coming together. It's a space where we collaborate to actually understand the challenges that we are facing together, creative solutions, which is actually something that we look forward to create collaboratively because we decided that collaborative efforts can really make some differences. So like, you know, how do we actually move beyond the legality? If I believe the core principle, I mean, he was talking about the principle of cloud to the surface that are being shared purpose and around creating that belongingness and trust. I would say like, you know, we'll see. We will be able to see a collaborative in action, much more sustainable in that way. But I'll pause in case, Rosa, or maybe if you have any other thoughts around it.

MONCADA: No, I totally agree with you. And I know from Emily we can go to the following question that, well, what will be the last thinking that it stays in my mind in collaborative research. And it's I think everybody has to do whatever is at your end, do it with responsibility. And most important, you get to see your coworkers, your fellow collaborators as friends. So this this actually can move was smooth and can be trustful along the way. That would me my thinking.

GUSTAFSSON-WRIGHT: Great. Mary?

OTIENO: I will say three things in terms of a collaborative activity is one is a shared responsibility. Shared action. And the shared solution. And in all that, then there will be a celebration. For all the parties within the collaborative organization. Yeah.

GUSTAFSSON-WRIGHT: Sreehari, do want to wrap it up?

RAVINDRANATH: I think what I said with what Maria said later that saved that bridge, that final remark on how do we actually like, you know, how do we see the success of collaborative research, our network? And if I summarize, I would also say it's also the ability that we build within the collaborative to like, you know, learn or to pause and reflect and then like, you know, it's that ability that we enable in the collaborative to unlearn and really learn and take both. If that's been the DNA of the collaboration, I would say like, you know, that can really help in terms of, you know what, maybe us talking about the shared purpose, the vision, the shared solutions can be co-created. And I would say that's my understanding of him. And I thank you.

GUSTAFSSON-WRIGHT: That's wonderful. So shared purpose. Trust. And friendship to work together in collaborative research. I'm going to hand it to Atenea to close off our session today.

ROSADO-VIURQUES: Thank you. Thank you so much, everyone. Thank you, Mary. Yeah. Emily St Harry. It's been a very insightful panel. I, I also think that it's that it's important to remind all of us about flexibility. How, all of this takes all of us to make, to make changes, to compromise, to be open to

listening and to transformation. And it's also important to I want to I want to say something that Mary mentioned, that no one has a monopoly of skills and that we share. We are here to share our knowledge of our experiences, our resources, our time. Thank you, everyone. We hope to continue expanding on the complexities of collaboration in our next session of this collaborative conversations and collaboration conversations. Our next session will be focused on the conversation between the local and the global and the dichotomy of that local knowledge experience with global research and experience too. So how do we navigate the global and the local? And we are we're happy to continue building on this collaborative research and action explorations with all of you. We appreciate your time and we hope to see you in the next in the next session in January. So thank you so much, everyone. Hope you have a good day. Afternoon, evening, wherever you are joining us from. Thank you so much.