

THE BROOKINGS INSTITUTION

WEBINAR

COLLABORATING ACROSS LOCAL AND GLOBAL CONTEXTS:
REALITIES, CHALLENGES, AND OPPORTUNITIES.

Thursday, January 23, 2025

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INTRODUCTION:

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OLATEJU: Well, welcome. Welcome to the third edition of Collaboration Conversations. My name is Mo Olateju and I am a scholar at the Brookings Institution. Collaboration Conversations is a webinar series hosted by the Knowing Doing Network at the Center for Universal Education, CUE, at Brookings. And today, we are honored to be joined by a distinguished set of speakers who are civil society experts in education and research, and deeply committed to seeing education systems transform so that children and young people can build the skills that they need in order to thrive in a changing world. These experts are drawn from Asia, Africa and Latin America and also represent membership of multiple networks at the Center for Universal Education, including the Network for Education Systems Transformation, NEST, the Learning and Action Alliance for Girls Agency, LAAGA, and FEEN, which is our network focusing on -- and FEEN, which is our early childhood network. Now, the world that we live in is changing from global, from the global pandemic to growing conflicts and crises to food insecurity, climate change and its devastating consequences, the rise of authoritarianism, the proliferation of misinformation and disinformation to the joys of artificial intelligence and the many questions that arise as digital technologies become even more advanced.

But what do all of these have to do with education? I say everything. Education at its best builds citizens that have voice and agency to shape their world so that all humanity can thrive. People, policies, processes and practices are at the core of education systems. And the more we're able to collaborate meaningfully across local and global contexts, the more we will see the transformative change that we saw urgently require in our societies. Today, we will spend time reflecting on what the terms local and global mean within the discourse pertaining to education systems transformation. We will explore power dynamics and how these influence inclusion and exclusion and who is invited to participate in shaping and changing education priorities. We will also explore how it is that relationships form the bedrock of our education systems work. Today's webinar is hosted by the Network for Education Systems Transformation at CUE, which many of us have known as the Knowing0Doing Network Leadership Coalition. It is a global network co-led by civil society organizations from the Global South that are united to understand and catalyze the transformation of education systems so that all learners develop a breadth of skills. We want to foster greater capacity, commitment and cohesion among ecosystem actors by co-creating the evidence and resources that are contextually rooted and designed to strengthen meaningful collaboration locally and globally.

We would love you to join the conversation on social media. Please use the hashtag *knowingdoing*. At the end of our discussion, we will invite live audience questions through the question and answer function on Zoom. And if you're joining us online live, you might want to go to X to ask the question. Please also use the hashtag *knowingdoing* during the question and answer portion. So I will now hand over to our moderator for the day. Ana Maria Raad lead the Fundación REimagina, which is a member of the Network for Education Systems Transformation Nest based in Chile for several years. Ana Maria has worked across local ecosystems in Chile and at the more regional level across Latin America. So I welcome Ana Maria to lead us in to the conversational portion of today's webinar, and I hope we all derive tremendous benefit by spending this hour with us. Thank you.

RAAD: Thank you so much, Mo, for this marvelous framework of our conversation. And as Mo was mentioning, we want to discuss especially about definitions of what and how do we see local and global context are. We want to highlight the power dynamics, reflect right now and why today and this is the right moment to do that. And for that, we have a great panel of different members of the networks that the CUE is catalyzing. And we want to get right into the conversation. These conversations usually are very dynamic and we want to keep it that way. And since time is also an important part of these conversations, we I'm going to ask each one of our panelists to introduce themselves. I'm going to start with Ganga. Please introduce yourself and tell us a little bit about your organization, the role where you are located, and which of the networks do you belong. But basically, we want to start with one question for each one of the panelists, describing a time, a moment or an experience when you had to navigate across these local and global contexts. And briefly describe, tell us what kind of challenges and opportunities you faced. So Ganga, please turn now, turn on your video.

OLATEJU: Sorry. Just before Ganga comes on. A little correction, FEEN is our network for family engagement just to make that correction. So that's our family and Global Family Engagement and Education Network. Thank you very much.

GAUTAM: Thank you. Ana Maria. Hello, everyone. Honored to be here. My name is Ganga Gautam from Nepal. And basically my background is university academics, teacher, educator. Now I am a freelance and my network engagement is with the Echidna Global Scholars Network. LAAGA, obviously. Also, I am a member of local, regional and global teacher associations network, so these are some of my network related engagement, a few of them. Regarding my navigation to local and global contexts, because I'm recently working on menstrual hygiene-related research. And in some communities in Nepal, when the girls and women go through this menstruation every month in certain communities, they are isolated in a in a separate hut, which is not a very hygienic and not a safe space. So based on global experience, some NGOs in Nepal, in collaboration with some INGOs, they went to the communities and they dismantled the isolation huts. When they came back, some communities rebuilt them. So we realized that copying global experience without considering the local issues doesn't actually work in the local context. So that's where we realized that we need to look at the local context in order to bring global experience where they fit in. So that's, that's when I realized this. Back to you, Ana Maria So that's my brief intro.

RAAD: Thank you so much. And now I'm going to ask Karen to answer this herself and tell us about a little bit of your or any specific situation or moment when you had to face this local and global context.

ROSS: Thanks. And Maria. And hello, everybody. And I'm Karen Ross from the Mikhulu Trust in, we're based in South Africa. We are working in the early childhood development space and our aim is to build an ecosystem of support for parents that enables them to develop positive and stimulating relationships with their young children. We do this by developing and testing, research and researching supportive interventions that serve parents. Early childhood development and other needs. Build capacity with government and other social services. And we produce quality resources that can be used by facilitators, parents, community health workers, etc. and that the networks that we belong to, we were involved with the conversation starter tools research, and we're part of that network while the research was going on. And more recently part of the theme network. And for an example of some work that we've been involved with, I'm going to draw on Mikulu Trust's work in book-sharing to support parents in fostering secure attachment and stimulating conversations with their young children. An example that stands out is our collaboration in Tanzania, where there were

some Czech academics who approached us to train local parents as facilitators for a book sharing program in deep rural communities where they were already involved in an agricultural co-op project. The aim was to study the program's effect on children's language acquisition, cognitive and social emotional development and the ability to concentrate and focus. To support this project, we introduced the Czech researchers to the British academics who had developed the grant program and extensively researched its efficacy. And in order to assist them with research and methodology, we then engaged them around the local context, as this would differ from the South African context where we'd been working, translating the program into Swahili and ensuring competence and facilitation with critical steps and time constraints and funding made this difficult. And there were problems with this. Other challenges that arose was that the rural setting posed just equal hurdles, such as power outages and limited familiarity with technology-intensive pre- and post-assessments. Additionally, timelines set by the Global North researchers often clashed with the community's rhythms, and the local facilitators faced skepticism about their competence from local authorities in Tanzania, which to us reflects a deeper bias about the role of rural parents in their children's development. And despite these challenges, the collaboration fostered local capacity building, highlighting the potential of empowering rural women as facilitators. It also demonstrated the value of interdisciplinary partnerships. However, this experience taught us that involving local communities earlier, especially in defining research questions, can ensure greater relevance and utility. We also learned the importance of adapting methodologies and timelines to local contexts to ensure a more equitable exchange of knowledge. Some questions that arose was, should the focus have been different, possibly looking at the effect of validating parents' roles in their children's early development. And as the children's first and base teachers, should it possibly have been incorporated? Should it possibly have incorporated local knowledge of early childhood stimulation and incorporate those aspects into the program? This example underscores the need to challenge traditional hierarchies of knowledge. Global collaborations have immense potential to transform education systems, but only when they prioritize the voices and agency of local communities. By co-developing research and fostering equitable partnerships, we can bridge the local global divide by more effectively.

RAAD: Thank you for caring for your experience. We are going to assume more a little bit later. And now I'm going to ask them to introduce herself and tell us about your specific experience.

OSSAI: Thank you very much, Ana. And a warm greeting. Good morning, good afternoon, good evening to everyone who's joined us. My name is Edem Ossai. I work and live in Nigeria, where several years ago I founded a local nonprofit organization that has been focused on issues of access and completion of education, as well as quality of learning in public sector schooling. On a flip side, I also work as the regional coordinator for a network, an academic network, an educational network, and I focus on the Anglophone speaking part of Africa. So to the question about my first experience or significant experience with the importance of the local to the global, I'd say that it first struck me a couple of years ago when I attended a state of education emergency meeting in my local education jurisdiction, which is a state in Nigeria called Oyo State. There was a stakeholders meeting declaring a state of emergency in the education sector. And in that room, in that dialogue, we had a cross-section of stakeholders who, you know, are affected by issues and priorities in education. In that room, we witnessed the presence and the contributions of parents, community leaders. We saw, you know, policy actors, education planners and a whole spectrum of people involved in the entire life cycle of learning. A couple of years later, when I began to attend education convenings at a more global and Africa regional level, I started to witness and observe disparities in the representations of voices and expertise in these convenings. When you know, as any map, the more you, you know, detail out of the small cellular levels, the less granular the issues, but also very dangerously is also the less wide and representative the voices. And so what I found was that increasingly in global settings, there's a disproportionate, you know, presence and contribution from what we deem as experts who tend to be individuals who conducted studies and put out evidence, less knowledge. And to that extent, there is not enough or inadequate representation of practitioners. And this is a result of a myriad of myriad of factors, including structural problems of even, you know, participating in these dialogues, economic issues and factors as well. And so the global consensus often doesn't reflect, you know, as much of the priorities in these shifting landscapes and contexts. While it is natural that, you know, at that level, issues would be less granular, it is very critical for us to keep our minds on bridge building and to also be sensitive to ensuring that the representation of voices and also our appreciation of the concept or notion of expertise allows for the contributions of all actors, important actors in the education landscape. I'd like to stop my contribution here.

RAAD: Thank you so much. And now is the time for Ángela, you can introduce yourself and give us your first impression or experience about local and global practice.

CHACÓN: Thank you, Ana Maria, thank you, everyone, for joining this conversation. We're very glad to be part of the panel. I am Ángela Bravo. I am the CEO of Enseña Peru. The network that we belong is that probably, you know them because we are in over 68 countries around the world. So Enseña Peru is an organization that has 54 years working in Latin American country of Peru. We work with regions with rural schools and also with urban schools that have challenges to the value of education quality and equity. We are quite focused on developing leadership in local actors and also introducing new leadership to the education system through the two-year program that allows professionals from different experience backgrounds to enter a classroom for two years and have the opportunity to impact students in reality, but also to learn from the context of education from the classroom perspective. 80% of the alumnae that we have in this program, that is the leadership program, are working in education after they finish their two-year confirmation school. And they keep working in policy and also in research and also in other perspectives of learning and teaching. So this allowed us to create a network of people who is involved in education, who have the perspective that is possible to the changes from the classroom and with the teachers and within the communities to impact to broader spaces.

So we were very focused on leadership but we have [inaudible] on how we can ground that leadership on the local challenges and also the local opportunities and how we can make that a conversation with the challenge that we have in leadership in terms of global agendas. And I think that's something that is very interesting for Enseña Peru, because since we would focus on agency and leadership, we are always talking about power, we are always talking about imbalance of power resources and we're talking about different perspectives on what education equality is. So that's always challenging because here in Peru we face a lot of agendas about how we can create a better education system. And the outcome of that better education system is usually learning math and reaving. That's what international evaluations are always focusing on. But also the outcome of that education system of quality is going to university. So for a lot of communities and the students, that's not the meaning of education and education has a deeper meaning for them. So they have a meaning

that is based on access equity, access to power, access to class and transformation, access to community transformation. And that's always a challenge and attention, because if we want to promote a leadership that is locally based, but also that can be part of this look of these global trends of change and education, it's how we can navigate having both locally grounded, but also this idea of aspire to have a global perspective on the topics that we've rolled into education and make our education system at very base of quality and equity, particularly for communities from rural areas and indigenous populations that have their own mindsets on education and how we can navigate and construct together an agreement. Meaning, what is [inaudible] and what is quality in education?

RAAD: Thank you, Angela, for all your for your experience and everyone for these. A great source of inspiration. As we have heard some of the ideas are related to the importance of understanding and acting about the specific areas in these local or global and local aspect. For example, how some experiences have failed because of top down approach without consulting local issues or elements. We understand that copying global experience doesn't always work at a local level. As for example, Angela was mentioning the importance of training and familiarization of different stakeholders about a specific and context realities, local youth, for example. As we were listening from all of the experience here, this is something that appears obvious but is not. So bringing the thoughts, the actions, the ideas into the local content demands a process of familiarization. An also the value of interdisciplinary partnerships and contribution, bringing those research or global knowledge and also global knowledge to assure that our programs and the and the practices are well-designed and embedded in into the local context. And also there is another idea that I think is important to mention. The importance of building on the strength of the system, recognizing local capacities that are already present and can catalyze that transformation, and not focusing only on the weakness of the system. So that is another idea that has been around the panelists. And finally, how this idea of ecosystem of relationships and connection has to be a result of fluid, inclusive, and for that, we have to map everyone, especially to assure who are being included and who are not. So thank you, all of you, for these first round of questions. And now I would like to ask a more specific question to each one of you. Let's go back to Ganga and especially within the context of localization or local agenda and tell us about how can the education system can achieve this balance or between the local and the global

factors and how these a local and global actors can mutually and reach a learning, but also preserving the in the indigenous nature of learning or the local nature of learning.

GAUTUM: Right. Thank you, Ana Maria, for this question. When we talk about the education ecosystem, I think we need to look at it in a more holistic manner. We cannot provide education. We cannot build education system without considering the local context. When we talk about the local context, there are indigenous ways of knowing and indigenous ways of learning and these indigenous ways of knowing and learning. They are lauded to the local culture and they are grounded to the traditions of the community. So if something comes from outside and it is imposed on them without giving the values, as you mentioned earlier, to these local cultures, and it was an ingenious ways of knowing and learning. People find it so difficult to embrace them and their foreign ideas for them. So the education ecosystem, in my observations, should be envisioned in building on the strength of the indigenous ways of knowing and learning and integrate the global experience to enrich these experiences. So for this, I think we require a deliberate and series of strategies and practices and we can bring technology in it. So for this, I think creating appropriate policy and that is the first step which recognizes the values of the local knowledge, but also at the same time recognizes the importance of global experience. So creating appropriate policy to integrate both local and global system. I think that's the first step. And once we do that, the ownership is also developed in the policy that we that we envision. So in the same way, we also need to have a system in which we adapt the global experience and embed them into the local heritage. I think that's the key aspect of bringing local and global experiences together. And at the same time, we should also be thinking of building the capacity of the local stakeholder and strengthening the resources at the local level that will contribute to sustained innovations in education. Thank you, Ana Maria. Back to you.

RAAD: Thank you. Now, Karen, maybe connecting or building on Ganga's ideas about this ecosystem and how can we reach local and experiences? What do you think are the main challenges faced by local actors as they seek to achieve global resonance in terms of actions and impact? Karen.

ROSS: Thanks Ana Marie, and some of the challenges local NGOs faces is often a struggle with isolation and not knowing what influence could or should look like or which international circles to

engage in. The often preferential relationships that exist between funders and established paydays. And this creates significant barriers to entry for a lesser known organization. Furthermore, for small order organizations, the administrative and reporting requirements attached to international funding are often too burdensome and with poor NGOs with limited capacity. However, there are opportunities for global resonance. What has helped us significantly access international funding and achieve resonance has been forming part of consortia and partnerships. And this approach amplifies our voice while also distributing the administrative and reporting burdens amongst partners. Advocacy word networks have also been critical. So, for instance, through the South African Parenting programs implemented Implementers network Sapan, we've been able to present to influential platforms such as the Year and G20, while also driving local change by engaging with government departments both provincially and nationally. And this all on early childhood development policy. So being and being part of the scene from gestation started to add to research and network and also subsequently feed has also proved beneficial. So breaking isolation requires deliberate efforts to build stronger networks and collaborative platforms so small organizations can leverage these partnerships to gain visibility and credibility, while also learning how to navigate global funding systems. Advocacy and advocacy groups and networks can amplify local voices and push for policy policies that prioritize equitable representation in global spaces. And lastly, the idea of possibly investing in consultants or advisors with expertise in international relations can also bridge knowledge gaps and open doors to individuals. Influential circles internationally. Thanks. Ana Maria handing back to you.

RAAD: Thank you, Karen. And as you were saying, a about how to build this knowledge and to bring it into our local from local level to a global and an, to a global dimension. Maybe it's a good it's a good time to hear Edem, about how has local to global dialog create opportunities for collaboration? A Karen was mentioned in advocacy as a as sometimes a barrier that we have to face and maybe your experience about these local and global dialog can be a very good one in terms of how these can create opportunities for collaborations and specifically in the area of your expertise, which is access to gender equity in Nigeria. So if you can build on that.

OSSAI: Thank you, Ana. And yes, I really appreciate the point that Karen has just highlighted. I think that one of the things that stands, rings clearly for me is how in recent times, with the emphasis on

local to global collaboration, there has been a shift away from the focus on, you know, declarations and conventions and, you know, the passing of global legal instruments as sort of some magic wand to suddenly, you know, improve education systems. What we witnessed in the past was, you know, state actors coming together in some location and passing a declaration and expecting that, you know, suddenly it will trickle down and nations would adopt and, you know, parliaments would adopt and automatically it would improve the systems. I think increasingly it became very glaring that that does not change education systems on the ground. And so with the shift towards a collaborative approach and a sort of local to global dialog, I think the emphasis or there was effort to really integrate communities in the focus or the priorities in education transformation. And I think that's been very critical because at the heart of education systems lies a parent lies, a community leader lies, a school leader lies, those actors on the ground. And so if efforts are not put in place to hear from them, to bust the myths that surround their thinkings and their mindsets in education, you find that whatever lofty goals you set at a global level, don't cascade or don't translate into the money, the picture, the realities or desirable outcomes that you seek. And so with efforts to engage communities, what has happened also is sort of, you know, a ballooning of networks and consortiums and basically different actors organizing themselves along their areas of common interest to form, you know, sharing of insights, knowledge, exchanges. These all present wonderful opportunities because then teacher groups can share challenges or insights with, you know, government actors and policy actors and moving away from local jurisdictions or regional to the global what that have. What also happens is that different contexts, subject matter, context, geographical context can also share their insights and exchange their good practices or their limitations with their counterparts in other countries. What we have is a beautiful system of knowledge exchange that is helping all of us to become more aware and more difficult. We need to deepen, to contextualize rather So instead of, you know, this focus on centralized consensus, it's now a very keen sensitivity that we're seeing as a response to see what is your context, what does it look like, a shift away from saying things like, this is a best practice to saying this is a good practice in location? It could it potentially work in location being. And so that's been one of the major benefits of this emphasis on local to global dialog. Another thing I'd like to really stress is what when we think about what, you know, what the situation looked like in the past and comparing it to what it is now. Again, I would like to say is how very strongly this, you know, we've begun to think or conceptualize the notion of the expert and the room is the expert, simply the

individual who's dedicated his or her life to, you know, conducting research studies and going into places, using methodologies and putting out papers. And simply therefore, that's the only person with the right to come in and influence global education discourse. Or is the expert a teacher who sat in a conflict-ridden classroom in or in a location with, you know, internally displaced individuals and therefore has insights or can contribute to case studies? And so we're increasingly beginning to look at things like case studies as something to learn from as opposed to just asking for, hey, this wonderful paper with this research methodology. And that allows more voices to contribute to the discourse. There's also been in recent times, a shift away from global north to south, you know, debate and the hierarchy is being questioned and such that instead of you telling me what to do in a, you know, wonderful room in Washington, D.C., I'd like to have a meeting in Africa focused on our priorities in sub-Saharan Africa, or experts and actors in Latin America would like to sit down in a group together and say, this is our own priority and let's cascade it up to you, but we need to be in power to deal with our own problems. The question you need to be asking is how you can support us. And so the issue is not to tell me this is what you need to be doing. The question that you or the way to enter the conversation is to say, what is your priority as you have identified it and how can we support you to attain the goals you've set for yourself? I think increasingly these three themes ring out for me in terms of some of the benefits that have come out of this wonderful theme of local to global dialog and collaboration setting. Let me pause now.

RAAD: Thank you so much. And let's have a Ángela, please, to reflect on how globally established, established priorities can either support or disrupt locally in policies and practices. Maybe you can build on one on the other ideas or maybe your own.

CHACÓN: Thank you, Ana Maria. I think something to advise is stressing out and is very interesting and important is how we can survive spaces for having the dialogs where local communities in different levels can have these negotiated implementation of some agendas that are important locally. And we have focus on education because they are not only trends, but they are important because we have, for example, a focus now on environmental education, because we are facing so many challenges globally with them with climate change, and that become an agenda in education that is very relevant and important for all communities across the world. But having the local communities

based on the power of negotiating that agenda to construct a knowledge that is locally grounded but is also delivered with this global context and global challenge that are shared by different countries is very important. But to have that kind of experience, something that we have the understanding here is that we have to go to very basic things on how we can do that negotiation in terms of a dialog and not in terms of an imposition or in terms of a different outcome that is quite common here and continue to have that these local communities thinking that they don't have a connection with anything outside the community is a more protectionist way than also a forward placement of protecting the community or protecting a local languages or protecting a local agenda. But we need those points of connection. We need to have a dialog between those local stance and also global agenda. So I think something that is very interesting to not have this fresh or top down experience or not have this outcome of very protection is the sense of an education that kind of closed down the community to other experience or to other dimensions of the dialog is very important to work with people in terms of developing share with agenda, understanding the community, what is the location for and why that agenda is coming from and how we can negotiate and dialog that agenda with our own priorities and their own views of the world on their own outcomes of education. Something very important that we normally assume that is already set and in place in communities and school. And when we ask different people in the school what is the location for, everyone has a different question on that and what that means, what is education for? And they have a deeper response as well. So it's very important to start working on developing those shared agendas for reflexive and also more intentional, because otherwise we can be assuming that we have a shared agenda as a local community or a local offender, even as a country, but not maybe the reality. I think the second stage for that is starting to work at agency to have a new perspective of how we can from or different roles in that community or in that system promote transformation that is locally grounded. But is dialog with these global trends or national trends. But if we don't focus that agency on transformational agency, it can become rejecting of any changes or they can become having the adults, not having the response that is allowing people to develop a dialog again. So you're closing down, you have a chair that the individual have identified in Seeds of Transfer. So when we work on terms of agencies, we try to always focus on leadership and also understanding how each role in the community, not only future, but as well parents, local authorities or even the students themselves cop an agency and the role in the system to transform it. And they're part of that sheriff agenda that we're trying to promote. So having that idea of shared

leadership, but also this transformative agency that you can actually take action to do changes is very important to connect and to understand. But I think it's something that is keep for mind for us all the time is how we can do that. Challenging power imbalances because we know that sometimes when an agenda it's very strong and comes with a lot of investment and needs some national priorities and a global priority, it's going to be a power imbalance between those community and those different agencies and some other agencies that may be more focused on the government and the national level or in an international organization that wants to promote something in that community. But it's very interesting to see how we can start working for those for our balance of focus and trying to have those negotiated dialogs that help us to ground experience in local and that negotiate. What is common for us and to share is to work together.

So thank you so much and Angela, thanks everyone for your great ideas. And we have heard about many, many a specific approach. Not only ideas but also actions and experiences that you are already taking or developing in your own countries and area of expertise. We have heard about the importance of considering local context, for example, the indigenous way of knowing and learning and again, building on the strength of the system. And then integrate those global experience to enrich the local knowledge and practices and not the other way around. We have also heard about barriers like isolation, physical isolation, but also in terms of think of the of the networks or the disconnection, for example, with international financiers. And the point, the importance of having these international consortiums or collaborate the international collaborative estuaries to connect the local organizations and voices into the global discussion. This is exactly what the CUE team is doing with this all with all the networks that we are part of. Bring those local experience and voices into a global and discussion. And I think it's also important to realize and to face this a shift that we are again facing from top down declarations and perspective into a more a bottom up or South-North and a vision of the of the not only the problem but also the solutions and integrating also the voice of the communities. All of you have mentioned the importance of parents, leaders and members of the communities into these into these conversations. And for that, it's a key element to have these collaborative action and collaborative vision of the system transformation throughout consortiums, throughout networks, ecosystems where we can share not only knowledge but also power, also resources and of course, voices. So the idea of how to embrace these systems to information, to be more inclusive and to have

this local and global imbalance apparently a need or become very, very clear the importance of consortiums and networks. And finally, the weirdness of the of these powers dimensions. All of you have mentioned these powers dimensions. And how can, as you were just saying, Angela, we can negotiate a priorities, agendas, visions and bring these local visions in and experience and shared leadership. So as you as you might see, we have a lot of experiences here. This is a this is a very important moment for each one of our organizations and the networks where we belong to, to address these local and global discussion. I want to thank again the panelist and ask Modupe to jump into the discussion.

OLATEJU: Absolutely brilliant. Thank you so much, Anna Maria. I think all of our panelists have done justice to the questions that they've been asked. And as I reflect on, you know, what we're hearing, I suppose one big question, is that all? So why it why are we networks? What is the distinctive power of networks when it comes to systems transformation? And I reflect on that, you know, from the lens of power, obviously from the lens of knowledge production and ownership of evidence, but also from the lens of how it is that we are able to build local capacity to make change happen in our societies and then how we're able to influence, I mean, in certain instances actually disrupt, you know, power dynamics. You know, so as I think about, you know, our work within the Network for Education Systems Transformation, as I think about the work of larger the network focusing on gender at an agency goals, as I think about the work of FEEN, which is focusing very heavily on family engagement, there are notions of knowledge creation that I think are extremely important when we come together to create evidence, to generate, you know, evidence that evidence becomes hours and hours in terms of the research, as the practitioners who have all participated in the creation of it. And that in itself is extremely empowering. I reflect on some of my experiences in Nigeria where we were able to do exactly the same thing. And at the end of the day, we found some of those actors beginning to refer to the evidence as their evidence and the policymakers beginning to refer to the evidence as their evidence as Nigeria's evidence. So I think that there's something really powerful about bringing our collective strengths and agencies into networks that enables us to create knowledge and generate evidence in a way that is not just relevant, but in a way that we can own and contextualize for our needs as local communities and also as a global community. But then there's also something about capacity as well. And we think about how it is that we learn from each other, we

learn approaches from each other, frameworks. We have peer learning sessions, we're learning approaches, we're learning about contexts. We're moving away from policy borrowing to policy learning. And we're really beginning to adopt in ways that are suitable for our respective context. And then obviously, the third dimension around the power dynamics. And I think that our panelists have spoken brilliantly about why it's important. You know, two new ones, a lot of the international agenda around education from the lens of the reality of what happens in our local contexts. So I think that networks continue to be powerful mechanisms, you know, for ensuring that we're able to truly think about transformation and work for transformation in a way that is contextually relevant but also globally applicable. So thank you again so much for your incredible comments. The questions have started to come in and I'm going to jump straight into them. Our first question is for Edem, and he sees we're working with several education networks around the world. And one issue that we continue to face is commitments and continuity over time. What are your thoughts on this, Edem?

OSSAI: Thank you, Bill, and thank you to the person asking the question. I think I'd say go off your last comment, Mo. When we think about networks as a response to a lot of the inequities we see in education systems, and so people organize themselves so that their voices are heard and they are more visible. It therefore means that a network must be very intentional to ensure that members are visible within their spaces and that there's pathways for members to contribute. The organizers of these networks must also recognize that people's priorities shift over time. So young Ph.D. student, a young entry level researcher 20 years down the line is not, you know, has different aspirations from how they came into the network must be cognizant of that and must be examining and checking its members to see if its offerings are relevant. At the end of the day, individuals join networks because they satisfy or fulfill their aspirations. And so these things must there must be a marriage between the network's offerings and the aspirations of its members. Another thing is, beyond the substance of what the network is offering is also the experience within the network. As I said earlier, networks have to be very intentional to leverage tools available to leverage convenings and collaborative methods to ensure that people as they feel thin and there are opportunities for them to be heard. If people exist in a network and other people drown out their voices, they feel that they don't have the chance to lend their insights and that whatever outcomes of the network do not reflect their own, you know, understandings or their own appreciation of education, then the network is less and less relevant to

the fulfillment of the. Aspirations. I think that that this is my time to condense, you know, network approaches and systems and all that coordination into these two responses. But I think networks must keep a lens on the substance of the offerings as well as the experiences they create for members to actually feel a sense of ownership and a pathway for voices to be, you know, to make contribution.

OLATEJU: That's absolutely brilliant. And the notion of facilitating that, particularly in the early days of networks, is so important. Thank you so much for sharing your reflections. There's a question that's also coming for Ganga, and I'm just going to jump into it and say, I'm curious about your favorite example of international collaboration in classrooms, whether certain technologies or curricular design have been particularly impactful or well received. Remember, you can keep your questions coming in via X or you can use the Q&A function. Ganga, over to you.

GAUTUM: Thank you. I think it's very difficult to find a common example that works in all the context. But as Adam mentioned earlier, that there are there is a tradition now that we are collecting the cases from around the world and we can learn the specifics from those cases. I can talk about two examples. One is the cases of Liger Network. We are trying to understand girls as in see with reference to their context. So the global definition of girl's agency, we have found that it doesn't work in the particular context in different parts of the world. So once we have those cases, we will learn so many things from each individual cases for the global community. And another example I can share is the classroom successful experience collected by the British Council initiated in South Asian region. So rather than, you know, sharing the global experience to the local communities, what British Council is doing is collecting the successful cases through eccentricities, engaging the teachers in the local school context, and then see what they can do. So empowering them to contribute to the pedagogical practices through their experience in their particular local contexts. So we can learn from these cases, from the classroom and collected by the teachers, compiled by the teachers, shared by the teachers, experimented by the teachers, rather than looking for a particular model from a particular context. So that's how I would like to respond to this question.

OLATEJU: Thank you for those excellent examples. I'm going to go to the next question. I'm going to invite Karen to answer this question. In your experience, what have somewhat have been some of the

consequences of mismatches between local contexts and global agendas, and what are some strategies to reconcile in the face of misalignments on the ground?

RAAD: Thanks, Modupe. It's an interesting question and I think it's something that can Ganga touched on as well. I think one of the consequences and is that the project is like rolling a boulder uphill. The possibility of getting it to work takes so much effort that it's almost not worth it. And the other is that the project fails entirely. And but there's a third aspect to it, which I think is really important to consider, and that is that potentially you're doing damage to local communities. And if you're doing that damage to the community, then as an organization, your reputation is being damaged as well and your standing in the community is compromised. So I think all of those things need to be taken into account. Some strategies for reconciliation. And I think we need to be big and brave and stand up and say when there is misalignment and be prepared to talk it through. Be prepared to listen. Be prepared to engage with funders and with agencies that are that have a certain agenda that definitely, you know, doesn't fit within your context. And I think in some cases, one needs to be brave enough to walk away from something where, you know, that potentially it's going to damage your organization and damage the community that you're working with. But I think with building relationships, it is possible to work through these issues. Thanks.

OLATEJU: The full courage. Courage, courage. And there is a follow up question for Angela, which is very similar to that. And so, Angela, you know, you can nuance this, you know, in a way that is most suitable for you. It is how do we address the tension between local priorities and global frameworks to ensure meaningful and context sensitive education system transformation? And I'm going to add without local rebellion.

CHACÓN: Thank you, and thank you for the question. I think something that is very interesting and how we can try to address the tensions is having the opportunity to have the spaces where we can reflect for what is the ground basis for those agendas or priorities that are being put in focus globally or nationally wide. When you talk to the local community or the again in the community, how you can actually have the space to negotiate. I think something that is very interesting in this period that I had priority working at the Ministry of Education and I see as well in the community something significant

is that when you have full closed design or how is the agenda going to look like, how it's going to be implemented, how is going to be made sure you have this like one recipe that is perfectly designed probably in terms of technical aspects is going to be like very, very well designed, but you don't have a space for the community to engage with that agenda decision. And also with that, with shifting that agenda, which actually allows changes for the implementation and the evaluation, you're always going to have some imposed dialog. If you can open the table, you can kind of think the discussion and that imposed dialog, it's the next reaction that probably is going to be, I don't want to be part of these or are going to be questioning that agenda even when it's an opportunity for that local community or for that region community to develop. I think in the case that was very interesting to me was when we were trying to move people's agenda in secondary education. We try to maintain that, keep it quite open. So it was not favored for industrialization of the country or develop what the capital or local capital of the enterprise. But it was pivot as an opportunity for teenagers to engage with a postsecondary experience that allows them to have a future that is more grounded on their necessity. So it was quite open and a lot of local communities connected with the agenda with their health and food security because they need people who are producing in better terms with technical approaches and also with environmental approaches that are caring for the environment. So they started doing with education, with the greening way of doing it. That was very ground on local experience and local knowledge, and that was kind of creating an agenda for a curriculum that recognized that kind of activity from the private, formal aspect. So it was actually having an open space to discuss and to talk about why the priority is a priority for the country or for the world, how we can actually negotiate that with the local interests and with the local experiences and perspective and context. And I think something that is very important there is having the third sector and also the research sector as a link that leverage to prove that that is possible to do that. But also that is very important that you don't have these kind of very well-developed designs that are sometimes good policy or and global trends that are actually done on fuel to the last needs for the implementation and evaluation. So you still have a space to negotiate them. So having more open agendas were brought to the discussion agenda is how we can actually negotiate and try to feed both perspectives and different perspectives in the table, something that is possible to do. But we need to put more focus that there is a condition and that it's not having full, the design has to be implemented well.

OLATEJU: What is absolutely brilliant and still on the Latin American context, I'd like you to just, you know, share some closing thoughts, you know, with us before we wrap this up completely. Ana Maria, can you reflect on the role of networks in navigating some of the challenges that have been identified today, these tensions, you know, across from local to global? Because you sit in the middle, you know, you have a regional network, you know, that encompasses quite a few countries, you know, across Latin America and is an award winning, you know, effort, you know, as well. And so what are your reflections on the role of networks within the context of region?

RAAD: Thank you, Mo. First, let me start with the with the importance of having a clear position of the network for us in the network that you are mentioning, A Friend in Casa, that is the driver to bring the best education to the Latin American students. And that's the only reason why we connect and build this great ecosystem and also to have this coherence and to give that the not only the network but the whole ecosystem alive. We have to share leadership. We understand that we can share knowledge. We can share expertise. We can share resources to local organizations. There are eight organizations in seven countries. So we have we have to bring all these ideas of shifting the power dimensions, the idea of who is having better or valuable information or knowledge. And we understand that each one of our members of the network are embedded in the in their context. They bring their local knowledge into a more regional level. So for us, it's very important to keep the North very clear and all the actions that we do and everything that we do is based on that.

OLATEJU: Wow. Thank you so much, Ana Maria. Thank you, Ganga. Thank you, Angela. Edem. Karen. I think it's been an absolutely brilliant session just exploring collaboration across the global, you know, the local and the global. And we've talked about why it is, you know, that we even define the local and the global in the ways that we do. And what makes a context local? What makes it global, and some of the nuance, you know, around that, including, you know, the power dynamics, who is included, who is excluded from the conversations, you know, how do we wrestle with local priorities, you know, within the face of global, you know, agenda and also why it is that relationships are critical and absolutely important for the kind of transformative work that we want to do. Now, for those of you who've joined the session today, I would like to say thank you for spending this hour with us. And we hope that this has been an enlightening session for you. Of course, you can always head

over to the Brookings website to get more information about the knowing doing network and to participate in our upcoming webinars. We hope you have engaged on social media. We will be checking the hashtags and we will be retweeting and we will be in all the other social media platforms. Just to get a sense of how the conversation has flooded with us all. Once again, the hashtag is #KnowingDoing. We have two more editions left in this particular collaboration conversation series, and we look forward to welcoming you to both. So once again, thank you so much to our wonderful panelists. We hope that you would help us celebrate them and to the networks that they represent. Nest, Lager and FEEN. Thank you very much and have a lovely rest of the day. Goodbye.