



SASA REPORT

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INTRODUCTION

Partners & Countries



The South America and Southeast Asia (SASA) Project (July 2024-March 2025) was funded by the AHRC (ISPF fund) with a multidisciplinary, cross-sectors, international team across Brazil, Malaysia, and the UK – and with Prof. Palladino as Project Lead. SASA mobilised local, regional and indigenous knowledges and expertise to identify priority areas, challenge current structures, and shape future funding opportunities.

SASA was a collaboration between artists, researchers, activists, cultural producers and organisations thinking about egalitarian and reciprocal relations between the Global North and South, between the nation-state and the plurality of communities.

SASA interconnected people and communities that are preparing for present and future challenges through solutions rooted in alternative aesthetics, genuine ethics, equitable partnerships and creative research. SASA aimed to:

Seek out new research agendas across Brazil & Malaysia on key challenges;

Disrupt oppressive systems of knowledge production;

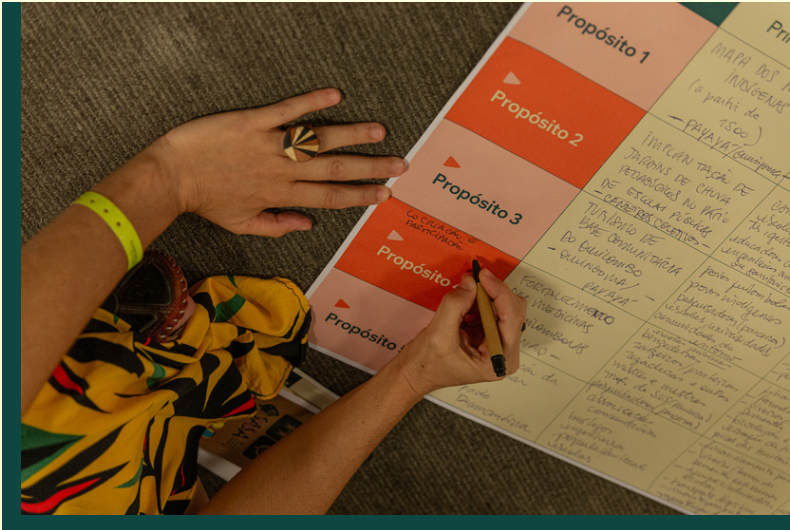
Develop critical understandings of equitable partnerships and North-South collaborations;

Identify transformative solutions for future global funding systems which honour ancestral, indigenous and marginalised knowledges and experiences.

SASA co-developed and facilitated 2 in-country workshops - focused on key challenge areas - to shape and support future AHRC funding for equitable partnerships in Brazil and Malaysia (ISPF priorities) and influence research agendas.

SASA engaged a wide range of stakeholders and facilitated comprehensive and equitable exchanges. SASA deployed an inclusive, collective, ethically sound, and horizontal approach to co-develop its ‘Stakeholder Engagement Strategy’ (in collaboration with the UK team and in consultation with the AHRC for review and support) drawing on extensive established networks.

Criteria and principles for identification and selection included: regional focus, geographical location, relevance to themes, expertise and sector (ensuring a balance among funders, civil servants, researchers, community leaders, CSOs, advocacy groups, creatives, local and regional governments). In each country, 50-80 participants engaged with and co-produced the workshops.



Themes

SASA focused on key challenges in Brazil and Malaysia; it was timely as in 2025 Malaysia chairs the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) and Brazil will host COP30 on Climate Change (UNFCCC). SASA workshops focused on three key themes:

1.Women and Girls

2.Environmental Humanities

**3.Conflict/post-conflict,
Humanitarian protection &
Modern Slavery**

The themes map onto the UK's ISPF priorities (Resilient Planet, Tomorrow's Talent) and relate to challenges (and target SDGs) for Brazil and Malaysia. Workshops in both countries devoted bespoke sessions to each theme.

Visual Identity

Aiming to conduct carbon-aware research, the SASA Project had a strong, meaningful digital visual identity.

Led and coordinated by Tainá Azevedo and Felipe Meireles – from the Brazil team - the SASA brand encompasses a bespoke colour palette and context-relevant visuals which relate to the themes.

#F1AEAC (Soft Pink) – dialogue and sensitivity, inclusion and diversity of voices.

#DE580F (Deep Orange) – energy, action, and social transformation, the strength of collaboration and resistance networks.

#B57929 (Golden-Earth) – ancestral and traditional territories.

#F1E8C4 (Clear Sand) – balance, softness and accessibility.

#114742 (Dark Green) – environmental preservation, sustainability, and the urgency of climate issues.



The theme “**Conflict, post-conflict and humanitarian protection**” was captured by the combination of two visuals: one element represents two interconnected human figures, in a style that echoes ancestral illustrations; "hair" can refer to roots or branches, symbolising both the connection with the past and the search for reconstruction and growth. The second illustrates two hands raised in a welcoming gesture, involving a central circle, symbolising a person or an ideal of dignity and rights.



The struggle of Girls and Women was captured by a symbol that refers to union, strength and resistance of women throughout history, recognising their fundamental participation in the construction of fairer societies.

For **Environmental Humanities**, the symbols not only refer to sustainability, but also to the struggles of communities - thus it seeks to encompass a balance of life and threat, renewal and urgency. The textures of leaves, roots and rivers superimposed on geometric elements, represent the coexistence between traditional knowledges and contemporary challenges imposed by the advance of environmental degradation.



Methods

SASA's methodologies are based on shared principles:

- 1. Inclusivity:** Adopting an ethics of care, we welcomed people, their stories, identities, ancestries in safe spaces.
- 2. Horizontality:** based on horizontal dynamics in which all peoples, communities and institutions involved had the same opportunities to dialogue;

this was a principle we strived to uphold in all our interactions, during, before and after the workshops;

- 3. Intersectionality:** we considered all forms of oppression, exclusion and difference and their intersections - with relevant pressing needs - as well as technical, ancestral, popular and artistic wisdom;

4. Creativity: The arts are in SASA not a mode of dissemination or entertainment, they are part of the research process from inception and a transformative and disruptive tool to legitimise culture as vital to the process of knowledge production;

5. Experientiality: sharing the knowledge accumulated in each community and by each participant, through their processes of historical affirmation, defence of their territories, and struggles for rights. These knowledges and lived experiences are in SASA fundamental to indicating priorities for action and funded partnerships.



SASA Outputs

SASA delivered a number of outputs, these include:

1. Two country Reports (links and references to these are in the Appendix);
2. A series of edited visual and audio outputs to complement the report/s (QR codes and links in appendix);
3. A Roadmap for sustainable partnerships and future activities in key thematic areas (also included in granular details in country reports with reference to proposed project and topics for thematic areas).
4. A set of principles and related actions for funders, institutions, and researchers to move forward towards equitable partnerships.

PART I: SASA BRAZIL

Context: “Cultivating connections and confluences”

The workshop’s subtitle - “Cultivating connections and confluences” - acknowledges the work of Quilombola anti-colonial thinker Antonio Bispo dos Santos, for whom **“when we confluence, we don’t stop being us, we become us and other people – we yield. Confluence is a force that yields, that increases, that expands.”** Thus, cultivating confluences, was a way of maintaining local experiences and knowledges, and enhancing them through new national and international encounters. The project team in Brazil – led by Douglas Pinheiro and Raiça Bomfim – from its inception, established that the event should take place in the State of Bahia, a historically marginalised site with a diverse population. The SASA Brazil workshop was held in the city of Salvador – considered the city with the largest Black population outside the African continent, with 83.2% of its population self-identifying as Black – on 18th December 2024.



Art as Language

Engaging with local and ancestral knowledges and with colonial legacies, involves more spectrality than written documents, it entails brushing closely with lost genealogies than with inheritances, more with erasure than with inscription, more with anachronism than with linearity.

This is why a narrative approach was developed to engage with the experiences of invisibilised populations, not only to reconstruct the methodology, but also to discuss how such insurgent knowledges can affect the processes of equality, fair, equitable and decolonial partnerships.

Thus, art as language, as knowledge, and as effective communication was deployed to reconnect immemorial native and popular knowledges with imagined futures. Since its conception, the SASA Workshop in Brazil set out to be a space for debate,

a territory of collective experiences for building more sensitive and transformative dialogues. In these dialogues, the arts have been an essential part. The arts, in their multiple expressions, provided a field of exchange where academic, community and ancestral knowledges could coexist in a broad and open dialogue. The poetic interventions placed the participants in an atmosphere of listening and connection, as well as reaffirming that the struggles for social justice, humanitarian protection and sustainability are not only made in speech, but also in the vibration of songs, the strength of the body in movement and the resistance inscribed in visual, sound and bodily narratives.



Methodology

The workshop was based on facilitation techniques that provided a structured dynamic to ensure a welcoming space, horizontality, participation, active listening, purposeful speech, with clear planning on 5 criteria: **(1)** initial provocation; **(2)** spatial organisation; **(3)** distribution of participation; **(4)** configuration of groups; **(5)** sequence of stages with prospected times. Such facilitation techniques are called liberating structures.

Prior to the workshop, data collection – through a survey built on the Google Forms tool - was conducted to assess participants' profiles intersectionally. Thus, it included the following sections: general personal information, information about their field, information about their organisation, movement, or community, information about applying for funds, and information about their experience/track record. The survey included a mix of open-ended questions, multiple choice, drop-down list and checkbox. Furthermore, another phase of data collection – through a survey built on the Google Forms tool - focused on participants' experiences at the SASA Workshop.



Participants' Profiles

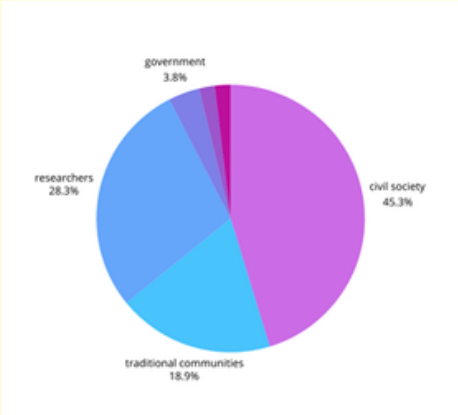
The Public Relations team, coordinated by Felipe Meireles and Felipe Rocha, had the role of selecting and inviting representatives from across sectors to participate in the SASA Workshop – Building Connections and Confluences.

The selection criteria were designed to ensure a balance of participants by thematic areas and sectors. In addition, although the SASA Workshop took place in the city of Salvador – Bahia and, thus, with a large presence of representatives from this city and state of the federation – there was also representation from the five regions of Brazil, in order to guarantee multiple voices and realities.

Our pre-workshop participants' survey data reveals a very diverse range of contributors (e.g. 38% self-identified as Black). Due consideration was given to acknowledging the presence and participation of local indigenous communities as well. Most participants resided in the state of Bahia (75%) and there were representatives from Quilombola, settlement,

and occupation communities; as well as from other states, historically under-represented in events of this type – e.g. 5.4% from Amazonas.

The set of participants was truly cross-sector – 45.3% of participants represented civil society organisations, 28.3% researchers and members of academia, and 18.9% from indigenous or ancestral communities (see figure below).



Thematic Areas

The workshop was organised around three SASA thematic areas; on the day, a working group (WG) and dedicated space were set up for each of the themes. Below is an outline of their findings and recommendations.

1. Women and Girls

The Working Group on the Protection of Women and Girls was formed by a diversity of participants, the vast majority of whom are women connected with community-based social movements, civil society organisations, universities, public institutions, traditional communities of African origin, churches, and indigenous and Quilombola territories. There was diversity also in terms of the age groups. The proposed methodology aimed: to favour the horizontality of dialogue; to decentralise information; to promote debate; and to allow the free right to debate. The WG's focus on guiding questions and writing exercises allowed personal interventions to be adequately received and listened to, thus avoiding the marginalisation of less vocal participants. The WG explored a set of **shared challenges for individuals, community organisations and activists in the thematic area of women and girls** that can be summarised as follows:

- Appropriation of modes or ideas: the co-opting knowledge and experience of those who were part of the project and/or intervention for purposes other than those that were initially established or agreed upon;
- Absence of and difficulties around frank dialogue, which ends up leading to veiled forms of institutional violence or silencing;
- Distrust and a sense of discredit regarding the work that will be carried out by the proponents;
- Mandatory legal statute for Civil Society Organisations to have access to resources from public authorities and the challenges inherent to this process;
- Calls for funding that have a pre-defined agenda (e.g. for target audience, methodology and deadlines);

- Non-recognition by funding bodies or public agencies of the work carried out, which leads to a feeling that the executors are only "labour" and not part of the process of knowledge production;
- Funders' lack of knowledge on lived realities in specific geographical, socio-political and cultural contexts;
- Absence of clear selection criteria and slowness in responses by funders, which leads to a lack of clarity and insecurity for potential applicants;
- Control of budgetary resources by partners in foreign countries;
- Imposition of the agenda without consultation with the proposing or implementing organisations;
- Inflexible hierarchies that limit the size of the contributions that actors can offer;
- Exclusion of indigenous people in calls and lack of knowledge of their territories: territorial extension, mobility, access and logistics;
- Hierarchy between researchers from the Global North and South, with the latter not being heard, paid unfairly/unpaid, and not in leadership positions;
- Women's double shift, or double 'burden';
- Competition over scarce resources among different CSOs;
- Limited interference in decision-making with the funds and funding agencies or in the context of the proposed projects;
- Challenges related to the prediction of impact based on quantitative measures.

The difficulties reported point to different degrees of power relations. These a/symmetries seem to lead to various discomforts, including that of feeling unheard, silenced, unpaid, or unfairly remunerated. The challenges above can be grouped in three key areas: Management of financial resources; Communication; Legal. Some of the highlights of the discussions also include: Ethnic-racial issues; Territory and Territoriality; Relationship with funding agencies; Impact evaluation. A participant from a Quilombola community who lived through a historical conflict around the demarcation and ownership of the land, shared a powerful testimony:

And [name of leader], this year, she was threatened twice for denouncing the project within the [name of community], a project that has already depleted four hectares of land and they are still active, destroying all our forest. And she left her house twice because of this threat and a group of women stayed, and one of them is me, who continued to report and we also received this threat. And then we went to get a group of people who wanted to get together, if they wanted to join us and get to know other realities of other communities, so that we could strengthen ourselves and make a moment of denunciation, of raising all these atrocities that we, from traditional communities, see and are going through every day. And, based on this, we try to negotiate so that our territory is demarcated. We are recognised, but we are not demarcated.

2. Environmental Humanities

All participants in the Environmental Humanities Working Group were experienced in climate crisis, socio-environmental struggles, and sustainability. The WG afforded participants the opportunity to build bridges between projects, expand dialogues on ecological practices, map their difficulties (most of which are shared), and extend oral practices of multiple knowledges that address the socio-climate crisis. The WG's work started with the question "What was my most difficult experience in a non-equal partnership?". Some of the key points raised, in the words of workshop participants, were:

- Difficulty in dialoguing and reconciling their aims and desires with the hegemonic interests of project funders;
- Funders who aim at profits and results that have no dialogue with the reality of the communities;
- Projects that come to oppress highly vulnerable communities;

- Mismatch between researchers and the communities: lack of feedback and results, such as taking the research done to transform it into public policies, fostering the community, researchers use the communities only for own benefit;
- Communities face the difficulty of understanding where their autonomy lies in the face of large investors.

Through a shared wisdom approach, participants shared challenges as well as knowledge to provide solutions based on their own experiences.

Challenges:

- Excessive bureaucracy;
- Companies that violate environmental laws, but are used as funders where they "provide work" to communities;
- Market logic within the community;
- Difficulty in accessing public agencies;
- Difficulty with the language and accessibility of the calls;
- Expansion of training and conscious actions for gender equality;
- Review of the methodology for access to investment and funding;
- How to make the needs of the territory viable;
- Many projects arrive ready and without dialogue with the communities;
- Requirement of proof of experience even when the organisation is old and voluntary;
- Volunteering is a movement that affects everyone in multiple ways;
- When resources are private, projects are a marketing game;
- How to bring together young people, adults and the elderly so that they can be part of the research, be active and authors of this research;
- Pulverisation of resources: resources are not expanded, but only fragmented;
- Calls of proposals with a fixed time, action time and quick results;
- Evaluation based only on curriculum; they should also be evaluated by the practices that take place in the communities;
- Funders demand to conform to their requirements and not the other way around;
- The resources are many, but they do not reach the communities;
- Abusive counterparts that are not consistent with the project;
- Difficulty in paying community leaders.

Solutions:

- Not to operate in the logic of calls for proposals, but in the logic of continuous programs;
- Flexible funding lines in continuous flow;
- Peer education and community strengthening;
- Focus on the knowledge of elders;
- Training workshops;
- Specific calls and budgets for Quilombola and indigenous people, improve affirmative actions in calls of proposals;
- International funding for the registration of and obtention of titles for indigenous and Quilombola territories;
- Encourage the search and systematisation of documents on the memory and resistance of communities, as well as their wide dissemination;
- Channels of guaranteed dialogue with the protagonism of the communities;
- Respect for prior, free and informed consultation based on art 169, ILO Convention;
- Strengthen the decision-making power of popular councils (advisory bodies composed by representatives of civil society);
- Make funding calls more user-friendly and adjust eligibility/requirements to expand access;
- Community involvement in the creation of public policies for environmental education through city councils and the creation of associations;
- Funding and monitoring of medium and long-term projects;
- Increase in funds for calls of proposals;
- Better listening in the communication of the needs of each project;
- Regularity of the promotion as well as continued actions of awareness and environmental education;
- Use of audiovisual evidence;
- Simplify the evaluation process and expand, train and better remunerate evaluators;
- Improve the dialogue between renewable energy projects and traditional communities as they are implemented;
- Implementation of community gardens.

Some conclusions so far demonstrate that the challenges of environmental projects include the difficulty in implementing sustainable practices due to the logic of calls for proposals being rooted in the capitalist/market system. Their language and the way in which funding for projects is thought of need to change.

Among the main difficulties identified are the lack of technical training and support for sustainable practices, the scarcity of adequate infrastructure in the communities, projects that cannot be thought of in the long term due to the lack of continuous funding, and technological and access barriers, especially for those who live in more remote communities and areas. One of the fundamental points that was raised is the lack of autonomy and empowerment of communities.

In the words of a participant representing a Quilombola community, *“it reinforces that we need to instrumentalise communities to promote their autonomy.”*

This evident disconnection between funding agendas and socio-environmental realities

means that the needs of affected local communities are not met. This is due to the lack of access and dialogue between funders, projects and communities. One of the WG's main points was to emphasise the need to listen to and respect communities, so that calls for proposals are created based on this understanding. According to an indigenous leader, “if you don't have many ears that listen to us, hardly anyone will understand what we need.”



Access to funding: many socio-environmental initiatives face difficulties in accessing funding due to extensive bureaucracy, lack of qualifications, or complexities of public calls. This is especially problematic for small-scale projects or in more isolated communities, where the necessary documentation and bureaucratic processes are an obstacle preventing access.

Challenges for more inclusive development: for socio-environmental projects to develop in a sustainable way, it is necessary to involve communities from the planning phase, taking into account their needs, traditions and ways of life. Community participation is essential to ensure that the solutions adopted are viable in the long term and that people feel responsible for the development of the projects.



Conclusions

From the discussions held in the Environmental Humanities Working Group, it is possible to identify structural challenges that limit the development and sustainability of socio-environmental projects. Areas to highlight include: the difficulty in accessing funds due to bureaucracy; the lack of continuous funding that is adequate to the realities of the communities; the need for greater autonomy in the management of resources. The strengthening of public policies that enable greater inclusion and direct participation of communities in decision-making processes emerges as an essential demand.

Expanding access to more inclusive and adaptable funding is a central point for communities to develop projects with greater impact and continuity. The reduction of bureaucracy in processes and the implementation of more accessible technologies for the submission of proposals are measures that can facilitate access. The financial empowerment of communities, combined with specific training can allow community members to become key actors in the practice and management of environmental and social projects.

Another relevant aspect is the need to **strengthen environmental education**, both formal and informal, aiming to raise awareness and mobilise society for a more sustainable relationship with the environment. The implementation of productive community gardens, for example, not only contributes to food security, but also promotes autonomy, income generation and preservation of traditional knowledge.

The creation of community and environmental networks emerges as an essential strategy to expand cooperation between different actors involved in the socio-environmental struggle. These networks can facilitate the sharing of experiences, strengthen political articulations, and enhance actions to mitigate and adapt to climate change. Investment in social technologies aimed at environmental sanitation and reverse logistics is also an urgent need, especially in traditional communities that face structural difficulties for proper waste management and access to basic services.

Finally, the **installation of community centres, the formation of waste pickers' cooperatives, and the promotion of employment and income generation** within the communities themselves are essential strategies to promote social inclusion, strengthen the local economy, and ensure greater autonomy in building a sustainable future.



3. Conflict, Post-Conflict, Humanitarian Protection and Slave Labour

Alex Simões kicked off the discussions of this WG performing a poem about social and institutional racism; this set the tone for the discussions on equitable partnerships, the challenges identified, and the possible ways forward. The group mapped the greatest difficulties experienced by the participants in trying to develop projects in equitable partnerships. The following challenges were identified:

- Difficulty in opening up to the interests of the local community;
- Bureaucracy;
- Difficulty in recognising social justice;
- Universities being removed from the realities experiences by communities;
- Exoticisation of people of Afrodiasporic origins and faiths;
- Technical ability to deal with call for proposals;
- Structural problems, such as few public servants;
- Inequalities in the structure of operation;
- Difficulty in accessing sources of funding;
- Non-inclusion of traditional communities in the management and research teams of the projects;
- Strict deadlines for call of proposals;
- Project teams always involving the same partners;
- Maintaining institutional relations in the long term;
- Uses of the knowledge produced;
- Narrative disputes;
- Methodological aspects of research being crossed by political interests;
- Temporality.

It is worth sharing the thoughts of one of the participants on the issue of **temporality**:

And temporality too, because sometimes the projects have times that do not coincide with the times of the communities, the Terreiro peoples, the traditional peoples. So, it's a synchrony of temporality too, it happens a lot.

Below is the mapping of the problems and the respective solutions proposed in the WG:

Challenge	Solutions based on shared knowledge
Technology: building a digital platform for donations	Involve young people into projects; Interdisciplinarity Willingness to learn
Project writing	Provide access to equipment and training to people not only in terms of form but also in terms of merit
Searching for resources	Inclusion of people linked to historically excluded groups in project evaluation boards in funding calls
Lack of knowledge of institutional forms in other countries	International partnerships Include people from the countries for which the funding is intended in the process of formulating calls for proposals and evaluating project proposals
Language: how to properly express the content of the project in another language (mentioned by three groups)	Include translators and other languages educators in projects

Crises of belonging in communities	Spaces of "reforestation" of memory Construction of tangible and intangible collections
Knowledge of legal apparatuses and their applications in the face of everyday needs	Training Alliance with groups that have already gone through this process Approximation of auxiliary justice bodies such as the Public Defender's Office and the Public Prosecutor's Office
Limitations caused by the scarcity of resources	Partnerships
Little time to develop actions with the help of few people	Enhance possible leadership Sequencing actions Delegate tasks Self-training Organising and coordinating a team with distinct profiles and characteristics
Time it takes to establish trust	Time and experience

Participants' Feedback

After the workshop held in Brazil, participants were asked to complete a survey to elicit their views and to better understand their experiences at the event. The open-ended questions in the survey offer a wide range of positive accounts about the workshop focus and organisation. For example, on testimonial states: it was "a very powerful construction", which enabled listening to voices which are usually excluded. The participatory nature of the event was similarly commended, as was the facilitation of knowledge exchanges. We received very positive feedback about the workshops as a safe space for listening and speaking:

There was certainly a lot of welcome and care, incredible people present.

It was incredible. Place of listening and speaking (Participant 1).

It was a hyper-productive day, with a lot of productive construction and contribution, as well as participatory and confluent involvement. (Participant 3).

Surreal, extraordinary, I will live other moments if possible. (Participant 7).

It was a day of a lot of learning, very powerful people gathered sharing knowledge of the best quality. Gratitude! (Participant 11).

The SASA workshop held in Brazil (Salvador, Bahia) has provided rich and nuanced insights into the key themes and the principles and practices of equitable partnerships. Its country-specific full report (here in the Appendix) includes further details on the granularity of the data and its analysis. The vastity of the Brazilian context – with its socio-economic, political, geographical and cultural heterogeneity – warrants for an in-depth approach. The SASA Brazil (country-specific) report has endeavoured to convey that heterogeneity and to acknowledge the multiplicity (ancestral, mainstream, dominant, indigenous, globalised, etc.) of its realities without making sweeping assumptions or claims of being inherently and essentially ‘Brazilian’, and less so ‘South American’.

PART II: SASA MALAYSIA

Context

The SASA Malaysia team, led by Mahi Ramakrishnan, hosted its workshop **“SASA Malaysia – Building Equitable Futures Together”** to tackle interconnected crises of conflict, climate change, and gender inequality, each exacerbating the vulnerabilities of marginalised communities. These challenges are not isolated; they intersect in ways that deepen systemic inequalities and disproportionately affect women, girls, refugees, migrant workers, and indigenous populations. For example, the displacement of Rohingya refugees in Southeast Asia is not only a consequence of conflict, but also a result of climate-induced resource scarcity and economic instability. Similarly, indigenous communities in Sarawak face displacement due to mega-dam projects, which destroy their livelihoods and ecosystems while exacerbating poverty and inequality.

In this context, the SASA Malaysia workshop was convened on 16th November 2024 in Kuala Lumpur to address these interconnected challenges through a focus on equitable partnerships, knowledge mobilisation, and transformative approaches to funding and research. The workshop brought together 58 participants from diverse backgrounds, including academics, civil society organisations (CSOs), activists, LGBTQ+ leaders, representatives from the Women’s Ministry in Malaysia, refugees, artists, and migrant workers. The participants also came from Peninsular Malaysia, Sabah and Sarawak on the Borneo Island, Thailand and Indonesia. This diverse participation ensured that the discussions reflected a wide range of perspectives and experiences, enriching the workshop’s outcomes and recommendations.



The integration of findings from the SASA Malaysia workshop highlights the importance of community-led initiatives and equitable partnerships in driving systemic change.



Approach

An intersectional approach guided the development of this workshop, the data analysis process and the integration of findings. The key themes addressed by this workshop were:

- **Women and Girls**
- **Conflict, Post Conflict, Humanitarian Protection & Modern-Day Slavery**
- **Environmental Humanities.**

The themes are discussed and developed in this report intersectionally by focusing on challenges and recommendations. As one participant, CEO of a Civil Society Organisation, put it:

Together with this, climate has been worsening and women and girls are definitely the most-affected population due to a lot of cultural norms within the region as well as the limitations that they face.

Challenges

In this section we highlight a set of challenges which cut across all themes, and which have emerged from the data gathered and throughout discussions in the workshop. These challenges can all be defined as systemic and structural, and articulated in the following headings:

Power asymmetries

Marginalised groups often struggle to have their voices heard in decision-making processes. This is particularly true for women, refugees, and indigenous communities, who are frequently excluded from policy discussions and resource allocation.

The government is a bit suspicious always about the stories it cannot control. Artists tell another story. Artists are concerned with people around them. They are concerned about what's going on, on the ground. Government tries to control the narrative that they want you to have. (Theatre director, discussing struggles due to lack of funding, censorship from the Malaysian government)

Lack of political will

Governments and regional bodies often fail to address root causes or enforce protective measures. This lack of political will is evident in the non-ratification of key international conventions, such as the 1951 UN Refugee Convention. A refugee community leader from Myanmar, during discussions, pointed out that Malaysia needs to do better as the incoming ASEAN Chair:

We have had many instances where Malaysia has pushed Rohingya boats back to sea. We live in fear that this government would also deport us following immigration raids. As you already know, even people with UNHCR are nabbed by immigration authorities. If sent back, we will end up dead, especially those who were members of the Civil Disobedience Movement.

Funding Constraints

Civil society organisations (CSOs) face difficulties securing sustainable funding for advocacy, research, and community support. This limits their ability to address systemic challenges and implement long-term solutions. Many CSOs working with refugees and migrant workers in Southeast Asia rely on short-term grants, which hinder their ability to plan and implement sustainable initiatives. A participant who works for an international network of non-governmental organisations fighting against arbitrary detention of migrants, summarises these issues and the structural problems underlying them:

If migration is not explored, then the intersection is also not explored. There is no interest in exploring, which is difficult. Lots of work on migration or any of these topics need to be long-term. Lots of the resources, lots of the funding is coming from white people to speak plainly. There is racism all across the migration and people do not want to fund them.

Another participant, who heads the youth section of a human rights organisation,

stated that this a challenging situation and called for there must be a “bottoms up approach” in assessing funding needs so that “donors know what’s happening on the ground and what the people need.”

Data Scarcity

Disaggregated data is often unavailable, hindering evidence-based policymaking and advocacy. Without accurate data, it is difficult to understand the specific needs of marginalised communities and design targeted interventions. For instance, the lack of data on the experiences of LGBTQ+ refugees in Malaysia makes it challenging to advocate for their rights and access to services:

If we have no funding to ensure healthcare access for the trans community, how would we find funds to conduct research that would enable us to gather data. Funding is crucial but as I pointed out, donor organisations are not forthcoming to fund trans-led civil society organisations (project director for CSO addressing the needs of the transgender community and other vulnerabilised populations in Malaysia).

Confluences and Connections Between the Three Themes

The SASA Malaysia Report includes a comprehensive set of reflections on the confluences and connections among themes which can be organised as follows:

1. Interdependence of Capacity Building and Equitable Partnerships: effective capacity building serves as a foundation for establishing equitable partnerships. Organisations that invest in skills development, particularly fundraising, advocacy, and documentation, position themselves to engage meaningfully with other stakeholders. Additionally, building capacities enhance trust and understanding among partners, leading to more collaborative and respectful relationships. The success of partnerships often hinges on the capacity of organisations to communicate and work together effectively.

2. Knowledge Mobilisation as a Catalyst: Mobilising knowledges from the Global South is pivotal for enhancing both capacity-building and partnering efforts. There is a need for local knowledges to inform training programs that address specific community needs, thereby making capacity-sharing initiatives more relevant and impactful. Such mobilisation not only allows organisations to learn from successful local practices but also empowers them to contribute their insights to the collective knowledge pool, promoting mutual learning among partners.

3. Advocacy for Inclusivity Across Themes: engaging marginalised voices, whether in capacity-sharing workshops, partnership dialogues, or knowledge-sharing sessions was highlighted. Ensuring inclusivity enriches discussions and leads to more comprehensive solutions that reflect the perspectives of all community members. There is a need to elevate and amplify the voices of women, young people, and other marginalised groups, ensuring their experiences and needs are recognised in every aspect of project implementation.

4. Collective Action and Solidarity: The themes collectively reinforce the necessity of collective action. The sharing of knowledge supports joint initiatives aimed at addressing systemic injustices. Through established networks and collaborative frameworks, organisations can mobilise resources and support more effectively, leading to broader impacts on the issues they are addressing collectively.

5. Addressing Structural Inequities: A critical intersection among the themes is the recognition of systemic barriers that impede progress. Acknowledging these interconnected barriers allows stakeholders to develop strategies that address the root causes of exclusion and inequity, paving the way for more equitable and sustainable outcomes.

6. Empowerment as a Central Theme: The focus on empowerment emphasises that all three themes work in synergy to create an environment where marginalised communities can assert their rights, influence policy, and drive meaningful social change.



One of the participants, an academic, said:

[there is] a real opportunity for the Global North right now to consider how funding a research in the Global South has a benefit to all of us. Most of the issues we are discussing in this workshop and in similar forums like this are interconnected. Despite people living thousands of miles away the world is becoming increasingly small. If we dot begin to address issues of migration, climate change in mitigation in one part of the world we will have consequences elsewhere. And actually, that learning is so important for the Global North as well. So, if we want to see great community development flourish in places like London, we need to be looking to Kuala Lumpur for what it has done really well around these issues.

Recommendations & Ways Forward

The workshop in Malaysia generated a wealth of data – accessible through the full report (linked here in the Appendix). Extensive analysis of the data has allowed the team to develop a set of recommendations and ways forward concerning the following key areas:

- 1)Equitable Partnerships**
- 2)Mobilising Knowledge from the Global South**
- 3)Transformative & Sustainable Approaches to Funding Structures**
- 4)Transformative & Sustainable Approaches to Research**



Equitable Partnerships

- **Diversity of Perspectives:** diversity of perspectives is crucial in ensuring that project objectives are relevant and resonate with the needs of all stakeholders. By effectively engaging with diverse voices, the project enhanced creativity and innovation, leading to more effective and inclusive solutions.
- **Capacity Building and Empowerment:** The thematic groups have underscored the role of equitable partnerships in enhancing capacity building. Addressing these gaps empowers group members to articulate their successes, secure funding, and sustain their initiatives.
- **Meaningful Participation:** There is a pressing need to foster meaningful participation and accountability among all stakeholders. Ensuring that every member feels a sense of ownership and commitment enhances engagement in collective actions.
- **Collective Action:** By engaging in collective action, teams can overcome individual barriers and address systemic challenges more effectively.
- **Challenges to Equity:** challenges such as power imbalances and resource distribution disparities persist. Regular assessment of these challenges is necessary to ensure that all voices are acknowledged and that no group feels marginalised or overshadowed.
- **Sustaining Partnerships:** For equitable partnerships to endure beyond the SASA Malaysia workshop, establishing mechanisms for ongoing communication, feedback, and recognition of contributions is crucial. Regular check-ins and transparent decision-making processes help maintain balance and foster a culture where all members feel valued.

Mobilising Knowledge from the Global South

- **Importance of Local Knowledges:** The thematic groups emphasised that local insights are critical for addressing specific community needs and enhancing the relevance and impact of interventions.
- **Diverse Knowledge Systems:** The Global South is rich in diverse knowledge systems, including traditional ecological knowledge, indigenous practices, and community narratives. These forms of knowledge contribute significantly to understanding complex social challenges and fostering innovative solutions that reflect cultural values and practices.
- **Capacity Building Needs:** many organisations in the Global South lack adequate skills in areas such as documentation, monitoring, and advocacy. Initiatives aimed at capacity building can empower these organisations to better articulate their successes and engage with broader networks.
- **Resource Accessibility:** Financial constraints present a significant barrier to knowledge mobilisation. Enhancing access to financial resources and creating sustainable funding mechanisms is crucial for overcoming these barriers.
- **Recognition of Local Expertise:** The thematic discussions highlighted the need to advocate for greater recognition and integration of local knowledge into policies and wider strategies, ensuring that Southern voices are included in global conversations.
- **Building Collaborative Networks:** Collaborative networks that connect organisations in the Global South with international allies and stakeholders can facilitate knowledge exchange. Such networks help amplify local voices and share innovative practices, leading to more comprehensive approaches to social challenges.
- **Addressing Systemic Barriers:** Advocacy efforts should focus on promoting inclusive decision-making processes that allow diverse groups to share their knowledge and experiences.

- **Engagement Strategies:** Ensuring all stakeholders can contribute to knowledge creation and mobilisation is essential for building trust and maintaining momentum in collaborative efforts.
- **Enhancing Visibility:** Increasing the visibility of knowledge generated by grassroots initiatives can help bridge the gap between local practices and global perspectives.

Transformative & Sustainable Approaches to Funding Structures

Future funding models should embrace flexibility, sustainability and inclusivity in order to enable real change. This would allow Global South partners and organisations to prioritise their immediate needs and adapt to changing local contexts. Some solutions could include the following features:

- **Implementation of Multi-Year Grant Opportunities;**
- **Micro-Grants and Community-Led Funding;**
- **Strengthening Accountability Mechanisms;**
- **Participatory Grant-Making.**

The report also includes a set of proposals for innovative and transformative funding models and structures which would enable addressing some of the challenges highlighted above. Proposals include the following:

Blended Finance Models: combines public and private funding sources to enhance investment in community initiatives. By leveraging resources from various sectors, organisations can overcome funding gaps while attracting private investment in social outcomes.

Social Impact Bonds (SIBs): Implement Social Impact Bonds that tie funding to measurable social outcomes. SIBs enable public entities to pay for services based on the achievement of specified outcomes, encouraging innovative solutions and accountability in addressing social challenges.

Innovative Crowdfunding Initiatives: Encourage community-based crowdfunding efforts that allow local populations to invest in their own initiatives. This method can build community solidarity and ensure that projects reflect the priorities of the people they aim to serve.

Hybrid Funding Models: Explore hybrid funding models that combine grants, social enterprises, and other revenue-generating activities. This diversified funding approach increases resilience while enabling organisations to fund their operations sustainably.

Sustainability is another key element which has characterised responses across the different themes in the workshop and across a range of participants. Some of the proposals below foreground important actionable points to take forward sustainability of funding. These include:

Long-Term Investment Strategies: Adopt long-term funding strategies that focus on sustained impact rather than short-term gains. This includes providing multi-year funding commitments that allow organisations to plan and implement their initiatives more effectively.

Capacity Building for Financial Sustainability: Invest in capacity-building initiatives that equip organisations with skills in financial management, fundraising, and resource diversification. This training can help organisations develop robust financial strategies to ensure their sustainability.

Integration of Environmental, Social, and Governance (ESG) Criteria: Funding structures can integrate ESG criteria to promote practices that are environmentally sustainable, socially responsible, and economically viable. Emphasising ESG considerations ensures that funded initiatives have a long-term positive impact on communities and the environment.

Partnerships with Private Sector and Philanthropy: Foster partnerships with the private sector and philanthropic organisations to create shared value and sustainable investment opportunities. Collaborations can leverage corporate resources and expertise while addressing community needs.

Monitoring and Evaluation for Continuous Improvement: Establish robust monitoring and evaluation frameworks that not only assess impact but also support continuous improvements in funded initiatives.

This feedback loop enables organisations to adapt and refine their approaches for greater effectiveness and sustainability.

Community Ownership and Engagement: Ensure that communities own and are actively engaged in their initiatives. Empowering local populations to take charge of projects can enhance sustainability, as community members are more likely to invest in and sustain initiatives they feel connected to.

Scalability and Replicability: Focus on funding models that promote scalability and replicability of successful initiatives. By identifying and supporting practices that can be adapted to different contexts, funders can extend the impact of their investments beyond initial projects.

Transformative & Sustainable Approaches to Research

The SASA Malaysia report brought forward some cross-cutting principles to transform research (and research partnerships) beyond issues of funding. Some of the highlighted principles include:

Community-Based Research (CBR): to prioritise local knowledges and expertise. By partnering with local organisations, researchers can co-create knowledge that is contextually relevant and actionable. This collaboration fosters trust and empowers communities to utilise research findings for advocacy and change.

Interdisciplinary Research Collaborations: Collaborating across disciplines allows for a more holistic understanding of complex social issues and can yield innovative solutions that address multiple facets of a problem.

Use of Technology and Digital Tools: Utilising technology can empower communities to participate in data collection and analysis, thereby increasing their engagement and ownership of the research process.

Actionable Knowledge and Policy Engagement: Researchers should engage with policymakers and practitioners throughout the research process to ensure that findings are relevant and can influence decision-making.

Empowerment through Research Training: Equip community members with research skills through training programs to conduct their research, communities can generate knowledge that reflects their realities and advocate for their rights more effectively.

The report also includes a robust analysis and discussion to embed sustainability elements in research; these included:

- Long-term impact assessment;
- Community involvement and ownership;
- Capacity building for local researchers;
- Integrating local knowledge;
- Interdisciplinary approaches;
- Adaptive research design;
- Collaboration and partnerships;
- Funding for long-term initiatives;
- Dissemination and knowledge sharing.

Conclusions

Addressing interconnected challenges requires a holistic, intersectional approach that recognises the overlapping systems of discrimination and vulnerability. An intersectional lens allows us to understand how factors such as gender, race, class, and migration status intersect to create unique experiences of oppression and marginalisation. By adopting this approach, stakeholders can design interventions that are inclusive, equitable, and effective.

Central to this approach is the prioritisation of marginalised voices. Women, girls, refugees, migrant workers, indigenous communities, and LGBTQ+ individuals are often excluded from decision-making processes, despite being disproportionately affected by conflict, climate change, and inequality. Ensuring that these communities have a seat at the table is essential for creating policies and programs that address their specific needs and realities.

Collaboration is key to addressing systemic challenges and driving sustainable change. By building partnerships between civil society organisations (CSOs), academics, policymakers, and the private sector, stakeholders can pool resources, share expertise, and amplify their impact.

Creative advocacy tools, such as art, storytelling, and community-led initiatives, are powerful means of raising awareness, challenging dominant narratives, and fostering solidarity. These tools can engage the public, shift perceptions, and drive systemic change.

The findings and recommendations from the Malaysia report, as well as the insights from the SASA Malaysia workshop, provide a roadmap for action. This roadmap calls on stakeholders to:

1.Strengthen Collaboration: Build partnerships that amplify impact and drive systemic change.

2.Advocate for Policy and Legal Reforms: Push for the ratification of international conventions and the development of inclusive policies.

3.Implement Flexible and Participatory Funding Models: Ensure that funding aligns with local priorities and adapts to changing contexts.

4.Prioritise Local Knowledges and Community-Led Initiatives: Empower marginalised communities to take leadership roles in advocacy and decision-making.

5.Promote Creative Advocacy: Use art, storytelling, and other creative tools to raise awareness and challenge dominant narratives.



PART III: CRITICAL REFLECTIONS, PRINCIPLES & RECOMMENDATIONS

Mobilising Knowledges from the ‘Global South’: Critical Reflections



The SASA team deployed **a decolonial approach and an ethics of care**. SASA fostered inclusive spaces for sharing, participating and listening, and brought around the table a variety of voices. This is significant, not only because participants - from diverse sectors, contexts, and degrees of power, privilege or vulnerabilities - came together, but because some of the voices we engaged are often excluded from these conversations (e.g. indigenous groups).

Mobilising Global South voices has afforded the SASA project – despite its brevity – to garner a wealth of data across Brazil and Malaysia with a focus on three themes and with the aim to map future research agendas, understand challenges and opportunities, explore ways forward. SASA has been successful in this endeavour, and it has done so thanks to its strengths in engaging local knowledges, learning from contextual experiences, leveraging its extended local and regional cross-sector networks.

SASA also fostered safe spaces and exchanges for participants to voice critical reflections and to table often uncomfortable conversations. We share here a few quotes from participants (elicited from post-workshop participants’ survey) to offer insights into the issues brought to bear and the challenges foregrounded.

Eliciting knowledges: Ethics, Risks, and Spatiotemporalities

I also consider it necessary to make the need for data collection clearer [...] The proposal put into practice sounded more like a kind of "consultancy" with project leaders, who could, for example, receive an amount to dedicate the day to transferring their knowledge and evaluating paths to funders. Perhaps think better about this two-way street, what organisations need, what organisations need from us, to make the process more balanced, because daily we, the organisations, think about strategies to be able to raise funds, and the chance of being seen in person by funders is very small. [...] In addition, there was certainly a lot of welcome and care, incredible people present. [...]. Why not a meeting in a green area of a community, on a weekend, that pays us to be there and allows us to dialogue and exchange on how to co-create a future in which all activisms are supported and valued as essential to reconfigure our way of being in the world? After all, don't we already give ourselves every day for our causes, which are collective causes? (Participant 6)

This participant raises important – and challenging – questions on the nature of the project, the funder's approach, and the time and spaces of encounters to better suit the communities involved. There are risks in the process of engaging and soliciting local knowledges: what they call 'two-way street' is precisely missing in this approach. This critical reflection addresses head on the power imbalances at play here. Thus, interpellating local voices – admitting them around the table – is not enough.

Lack of sustainable medium and long term plan from funders:

Is there really interest on the part of the richest countries in cooperating with our constructions and that they have an effective interest in repairing what colonial expansion has created? Is there an interest in supporting our needs without plundering our knowledge, resources, or exploiting our workforce? I hope so. The event ends with the desire for continuity. They were very rich exchanges, but we await the fruits of this construction (Participant 10).

In the same vein, this participant overtly addresses the ethics (and risks) of engaging local knowledges; as they put it ‘plundering our knowledge’ is a sentiment that is unequivocally voiced and is placed alongside hopeful reflections for next steps in which they call for continuity where these exchanges are not the end product (to obtain contextual information), but are the first steps towards veritable, equitable dialogues.

SASA Recommendations for Thematic Priorities

The country-specific reports chart very clear avenues for research agendas in the three thematic areas explored; these are to be understood as interconnected and interdependent. We summarise them here to shape and inform future funding calls.

Women and Girls

- Indigenous Feminism
- Knowledge of Indigenous women to address issues affecting them
- Transgender Women and LGBTQI+
- Gender Education for men and boys
- Increased Exposure to Violence

Peace and Conflict

- State and institutional violence as conflict creation
- Protection of human rights activist and democracy
- Arts as a platform and language for peace and resistance
- Conflicts on Ethnic and Racial issues
- Conflicts arising from environmental issues (intersection of the social and the environmental).

Environmental Humanities

- Social and environmental education
- Mitigation actions for vulnerable communities – environmental and social racism

- Decolonise knowledge to legitimise and include indigenous knowledge in decision-making
- Protection of indigenous and tribal peoples.
- Preservation of ecosystems – in particular integrative fire prevention and combating of forest fires, (consequence of which is ecosystem loss etc.) – Issues such as environmental activism, transboundary legal framework
- Influence of development model by the Global North on the Global South (from government and corporate, etc.)



Equitable partnerships: Principles & Practices

“Equitable Partnerships” as a concept is increasingly debated and there are many questions for the research community and for funders to grapple with. There are reports, position papers and short guides emerging about “Equitable partnerships”. A lot of these place a significant emphasis on Equitable Partnerships as the set of relations between the researchers and practitioners' teams across the Global North and South. Yet, there is a risk that such collaborations and partnerships are romanticised and idealised as decolonial labs. We at SASA foregrounded “Equitable partnerships” by taking further the current understandings of this concept; our approach can be summarised in the following key principles.

1. Equitability Beyond Partnerships

Equitable partnerships are not just about North-South relations and the flow of funding. They include the responsibility, accountability, and ethics of engaging with and soliciting a range of voices. Mobilising and soliciting local and indigenous knowledges entail first and foremost leaning on the shoulders of those very partners and collaborators in the South. In this equation, Global South partners become caught and bound up by the ethical implications and responsibilities to the communities being mobilised. Global South partners are those who often bear the burden of expectations from the very communities and participants who have been solicited and engaged for a project. The risks, commitment and ethical demands placed on Global South team members are thus significant.



Recommended Actions:

- When thinking of, developing and establishing equitable partnerships, we need to account for a more complex network of relations in which we all become imbricated once setting off on a project which involves the Global North and the Global South.

2. Acknowledge Power Asymmetries

Equitable partnerships need to acknowledge the complexities of power dynamics not only between countries but also within them, between funders and researchers, and within teams. To prevent perpetuating hidden hierarchies, it should be acknowledged that power can shift between institutions, communities, and in the interactions between funders and project partners at global, domestic, and intra-project levels. Co-creation, co-production, and shared decision-making throughout the research process are ways to highlight horizontality in partnerships. Partnerships should reject the temptation to homogenise or flatten lived realities in the Global South and instead recognise and address the vast diversity between and among communities.

Recommended Actions:

- Re-think funding models in ways that regional contexts and realities can be considered. This will enhance the empowerment and autonomy of affected communities;
- Define roles, responsibility, decision-making power and accountability models at the application stage;
- Develop templates for partnership agreements and terms of reference;
- Principal Investigators/Project Leads to be based in the contexts where research is being carried out.

3. Decolonise Listening

We must move away from the notion of giving a voice; the voices have always been there. **What we need is to do is decolonise the listening to heed and make space for those voices.** To this end, the arts can be mobilised not just as devices for integration, but as a principle of egalitarian dialogue, opening space for a plurality of expressions of knowledges.

Decolonising listening also entails transparency and openness to facilitate discussions about who interested parties are, their roles, agendas, and potential influence. Working collaboratively needs partners developing mutual trust and fostering an environment where flexibility and readiness to compromise are valued. Creating channels for candid discussions about future commitments ensures that all parties are aligned and invested in sustainable results. This includes opportunities at every stage for those in relatively disempowered positions to safely voice concerns.

Powerful actors in the research funding landscape must reconcile risk management with a heightened willingness to embrace strategic opportunities for innovative perspectives, and to do so with attention to and confidence in holders of local knowledges about challenges and conflicts. Intra-projects, accountability should work both ways – continuous, open dialogue and mutual understanding in partnerships strengthen collaboration and promote shared goals.

Recommended Actions:

- Ethical considerations must respect the governance of research in both the location of the study and the country providing funding, ensuring that the overriding principles align with the values and needs of the involved communities;
- Embed in project design and partnership ToR mechanisms to express concerns;
- Pathways to future sustainable partnerships should be openly and explicitly discussed from initial stages;
- Accountability mechanisms should not apply solely to Global South or marginalised communities (thus displaying distrust) but work in reciprocal and respectful ways.

4. Fairness in Finances

All those involved in the production of knowledge in the research to be remunerated proportionally, considering experiences beyond academic qualifications. We propose a model that considers factors such as experience — where community organisational experience, for instance, should be particularly valued — complexity of functions or shared knowledge, time dedicated, and the risks involved in the role and the collaborations it requires.

Recommended Actions:

- Transparent budgeting to ensure equitable financial commitments and fair compensation across all partners;
- Valuing and valorising diverse contributions, experiences, knowledges and practices;
- Budgeting practices and structures to allow for more flexibility for Global South researchers, practitioners, activists and artists as project leads, co-leads, or partners, and forms of direct remunerations (not via multiple parties) to be favoured;
- Direct allocation of funds to local partners.
- Shared financial decision-making with those on the ground in a leading role

5. Recognise & Legitimise Diverse Knowledges and Experiences

The recognition and legitimisation of knowledges, practices, experiences beyond Eurocentric epistemologies and beyond conventional academic outputs is an imperative for Global-North-South partnerships. Thus, valorising creative practises, indigenous, ancestral knowledges, and diverse systems of knowledge.

To ensure ownership for Global South partners (and involved participants/communities) within a project, a principle of sovereignty over data must be upheld. This includes moving beyond collaboration during project implementation, data collection, and being key agents in setting the agenda as well as having ownership of data generated throughout the project.

It is crucial also to review the standardised (often legitimate) practice of granting anonymity to informants in research and interviews. This can be problematic when working with ancestral, indigenous communities (who are also project participants) as it can erase their intellectual contributions and shared experiences. This ‘accidental erasure’ echoes colonial practices of anonymising or homogenising other voices. Funding calls, proposals and budgets should integrate principles of care and ensure the safety and well-being of researchers, participants, and their communities.

Recommended Actions:

- Intellectual agendas should be shaped by Global South partners;
- Ensure research teams have competency in the languages of the research settings;
- Arts are legitimised as essential to knowledge production and political transformation;
- Funding calls, proposals and budgets should contemplate the creation of safe spaces and implementation of safe practices, and gender-sensitive budgeting;
- Proposals and partnership ToRs should establish clear safeguarding protocols, including confidential reporting mechanisms and response strategies, to protect researchers and participants from harm or exploitation.

6. Ethics of Temporalities

Ethical engagement with communities demands sustained involvement rather than brief, superficial, time-limited interactions. Equitable partnerships and associated funding schemes should prioritise developmental pipelines that recognise the time, space, and resources necessary to cultivate meaningful relationships over short-lived, transactional approaches. The lived temporalities of communities and stakeholders should be considered and respected in all funding and project decisions.

Equitable partnerships should move away from one-off engagements and be institutionally shaped in ways that foster lasting relationships and enduring collaboration. Sustainability means discouraging isolated projects that tend to perpetuate extractivist practices. Funding should favour projects that build upon previous work, creating a progressive research trajectory that relies on local knowledges.

Recommended Actions:

- Longer application and project timelines and extended development phases to foster trust and impact;
- Accounts for ethics of partnerships by developing sustainable funding pathways to fund development of collaborations, research project, and future pathways;
- Embedding local, community and indigenous temporalities in project timelines;
- Funding schemes and budgeting practices that go beyond capacity-sharing to include continuous funding to ensure long-term impact.

7. Right to Research

The right to research entails enabling knowledge production to flow beyond the North-South, challenging the current structures whereby Global South communities and sites are the subjects and objects of research. Instead, research agendas and funding opportunities should be designed to facilitate the production of research which mobilises actors and communities from the Global South (and their knowledges and experiences) to lead on research which addresses social, political, and environmental issues faced by the Global North.

Recommended Actions:

- Funding calls to enable Global South researchers to lead on studies in partnerships with Global North;
- Funders' agendas to include and expand portfolio away from solely 'addressing challenges in the Global South'; designing instead research agendas where Global South researchers and actors study challenges in the Global North as well;
- Communities to be at the heart of the projects' conception, development, and planning. They must be included in discussions on issues such as research questions, challenges, methods, budget allocation, reporting models, and other relevant matters.

These are tangible ways to achieve effective participation and equitable partnerships, we need to re-think the funding models in a way that regional contexts and realities can be taken into account, ancestral knowledges can be recognised, and the need of communities acknowledged. Thus, the very conception and development of proposals need to be a collaborative and co-creative journey, where flexibility in the funding process and budget development makes room for diverse realities. This will enable the empowerment and autonomy of affected communities.

Closing Thoughts

SASA is based on the recognition of knowledges and methodologies that local and indigenous communities have already offered to us by putting themselves forward and by participating in our workshops. We now have a real responsibility for the future to those communities, those people, those voices we've sought out, invited, solicited, recorded, taken from. We have a duty to return to those communities and to honour commitments to the communities and the territories involved. **This report makes a contribution to shaping the future of international and global research by recommending future and sustainable research agendas; foregrounding novel ways to conceptualise funding models and structures; and by outlining transformative principles for Equitable Partnerships.**



APPENDIX

As outlined in the introduction, the present report is based on two country-specific reports, namely Brazil and Malaysia, which have been developed and authored by the respective in-country teams. These country-specific reports are detailed, include a rich and varied array of data, and are repository for numerous visual testimonials. Thus, we include below QR Codes and links to enable direct access to the original reports.

SASA Brazil Report & Resources

REPORT QR CODE:



WORKSHOP PHOTO ARCHIVE:



WORKSHOP VIDEO ARCHIVE:



SASA Malaysia Report & Resources

REPORT QR CODE:



PROJECT WEBSITE & PHOTOS VIDEO ARCHIVE:

<https://sasamalaysia.com/>