Weak State, Strong Community?
Promoting Community Participation in Post-Conflict Countries

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Introduction

Promoting "community participation" in managing social services is a new orthodoxy among governments and international organizations. It has circumnavigated the globe, appearing in countries as varied as the United States and Malawi, Nicaragua and Bosnia-Herzegovina. It is a buzzword in international development work, edging out the "poverty alleviation" and "human capital" themes that came before it (Botchway, 2000; Cornwall, 2003; Ackerman; 2003). And it has emerged recently in programs that promote international humanitarian assistance for countries or regions at war or in conflict, thus establishing itself in the new relief paradigm. In relief work, the increased role of participation is evident from the mushrooming of parent-teacher associations, parent-school councils, and other varieties of community-based school management organizations. The belief that small civic associations are key ingredients for strengthening civil society and enhancing democracy provides persuasive theoretical support for these interventions. Thus, community participation in educational governance has become part of the formula to achieve both traditional development goals and social reconstruction after a conflict.

Yet in international development and humanitarian assistance, the beauty of participation is often in the eye of the donor or facilitator, and less frequently in the eye of those who participate. This is not to say that participation should not be promoted, but rather, to note that it is a complex tool that can be manipulated in multiple ways to varying effect. Supporting community associations to deliver social services when a state remains weak can significantly revise the relationship of the state to its citizens. To the extent that it works to increase the efficiency and quality of social services, participation may provide a patchwork solution to systemic problems, veiling more profound and contentious issues of structural change and political representation.

The purpose of this article is to explore the effects of community participation in school governance, as an element of development and humanitarian assistance programs, on social capital and civil society building. First, although participation in school governance is meant to produce multiple benefits for school and society, it may, in the long term, change perceptions of the role of the state, subsequently undermining the social contract between citizen and state. Second, so much reliance on community participation in the absence of strong democratic state structures may aggravate rather than assuage the social divisions that are particularly dangerous and pronounced after a conflict. Finally, newly acquired "social capital" (networks, norms, trust) and political skills among marginalized members of small communities do not necessarily strengthen civil society (see also Belloni, 2001)[1]. Rather than the vibrant civil society it is meant to produce, community participation, promoted with uncritical enthusiasm in the field of educational development and education in emergencies, runs the risk of leaving disillusioned and unempowered communities in its wake.

The following pages will examine community participation in the field of educational development and as it has moved into the field of international humanitarian aid and, hence, into the sub-field of education in emergencies. The first section describes different types of participation in education, its institutional forms, and the paradigms that support it. The second section reviews briefly education in emergencies and the principles it shares with educational development programs. The last section presents the relevant findings from a study of community participation in an emergency education program in Bosnia-Herzegovina (Bosnia), and explores some of the implications for civil society and democracy building.

The Power of Participation: Types of Participation and the Paradigms that Support Them

Participation as a mechanism to promote development has achieved such prominence because it holds strong appeal for multiple actors. The act of including the voices and concerns of "beneficiaries" in the projects that are meant to help them offers a counter weight to traditional top-down (multilateral, neoliberal) development approaches. The effort gained enormous popularity among practitioners after Chambers (1994) championed the data collection techniques of Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA). PRA was meant to garner opinions and decisions directly from local people about their own development. It provided clear and concrete guidelines to development workers to move toward goals of poverty reduction in a way that reflected and represented the needs and interests of the communities with whom they worked. In part because PRA carried so much intuitive appeal, and in part because of the practical possibility it offered for finding "what works" (Kapoor, 2002), even its critics were lulled into believing that they had found the solution to serious social problems if only the mechanism for participation were used correctly. In addition, PRA provided language and tools that grassroots development workers were able to employ in policy and program discussions with multinational organizations.

Similar to PRA, the philosophy of encouraging community and parental participation in education has much to recommend among international development workers, aid workers, and educators alike. Proponents as varied as the World Bank and Save the Children US vaunt participation as a virtual "cause celebre" for increasing success in decentralization, cutting costs and excessive state bureaucracy, and improving educational outcomes simultaneously. From the neoliberal (World Bank) perspective, community participation can channel badly needed resources into the under-funded education sector and provide schooling where none existed previously. For activists and NGO workers, it has the potential to empower communities by including many marginalized groups in decision-making processes (Freire, 1970), increasing the responsiveness both of local government institutions to their constituencies, and of local schools to the conditions around them. Because participation is used frequently to convey legitimacy of top-down prescriptions, however, its radical political message of empowering the excluded, poor, and marginalized has been diluted (Cornwall, 2003). In addition, the neoliberal neglect of the state undermines participation's ability to cultivate civic action because the state remains weak. It is this interaction between participation, civil society, and the state that will be addressed below.

To achieve these important outcomes, community participation in education development programs is most often manifested in changes in school governance and usually refers to increased involvement in management and decision-making on the part of parents, teachers, and sometimes other community members. At the most inclusive end of the spectrum, participants choose their roles, and activities may incorporate policy-making and curriculum development; at the other extreme, activities may be limited to school construction and resource mobilization (Bray, 2000). The institutional forms that facilitate community participation can range from community school management councils, to parent-teacher associations, to parent advisory councils. In a school system these associations may be designed to reinforce public education, providing extra assistance in the public school classroom and bringing food supplements for children, or they may be formed to design, build, and run private non-profit community schools. Depending on the school and the organization, parents, teachers, and community leaders comprise varied levels of representation. During violent conflict, when there is no state-run school system, or when services are truncated, relief organizations support communities to organize and provide education for themselves, thus maintaining small, private non-profit schools.

Community participation holds weight when it is invoked to support social reconstruction because civil society and democracy building activities are considered vital interventions with which to stabilize post-conflict societies. It carries the crucial promise of reconstructing social fabric that has been otherwise destroyed after a conflict. Parent-teacher associations and other forms of community participation in school governance are considered ideal civic organizations because they can "double-task"-they may improve educational outcomes and at the same time provide a vehicle for broader social change. In this study they are examined for their effect on the delivery of education services, and for their ability to enhance participants' civic skills and social capital. Putnam (1993) defines social capital as the "features of social organization, such as trust, norms and networks, that can improve the efficiency of society by facilitating coordinated actions" and cites parent-teacher associations as creating a particularly productive form of social capital (p. 167).

Parent, teacher, and community roles in management and school governance in a conflict or post-conflict environment are emerging as a critical principle of education in emergencies. Creating local parent-teacher associations, or parent support groups, is meant to increase the social glue that bonds neighbors ("bonding" social capital) and thus build community. Subsequent municipal level associations (intermediary or grassroots support organizations) will provide the links to government officials, colleagues and other organizations ("bridging" social capital) necessary to strengthen civil society (Putnam, 2002; Edwards, 2000). This type of social capital is critical to diversifying support for a common goal and increasing ability to take social action. It also provides links to policy makers and government institutions. Bonding capital can be exclusive-insulating a group against perceived intrusions from the outside, or from "others." In excess, it can "accentuate inequalities since additions of social capital will be used to promote the interests only of the group concerned" (Edwards, 2000, p. 6).

Uniting individuals across ethnicities in pursuit of common goals relies on the "strength of weak ties" (Granovetter, 1973), which has been cited as one possible mechanism for

increasing bridging capital. The strength of weak ties is present in loose allegiances formed among groups who have an external, objective reason for affiliation, such as professional development. Professional interests allow for relationships to be cultivated in situations based on shared interest. If strong ties are present, such as old friendships in a village, individuals may be more reluctant to violate a social norm (such as speaking with a member of another ethnicity), and thus, strong ties may in fact inhibit developing associations, or bridging capital. The community described in this article was homogenous, like most of the communities in Bosnia after the war.

Looking beyond community building to broader questions of democratic performance, Putnam (1993, 2000) argues that increasing levels of social capital is critical to successful governance. In turn, practicing civic engagement will increase social capital and political participation. Scholzman, Verba, and Brady (1999) describe political participation as providing "the mechanism by which citizens can communicate information about their interests, preferences and needs-and generate pressure to respond" (p. 430). These scholars argue that the training for political participation begins in civic organizations. Activities in organizations that are commonly considered "apolitical" can help develop communication and organization skills that facilitate political activity later (Coleman, 1988, 1990; Putnam, 1993; 2000; Scholzman, Verba & Brady, 1999; Stolle & Rochon, 1998). In promoting education for social reconstruction, community participation in school governance offers both the promise of citizens generating responses to their interests, and the possibilities of mending social networks.

To illustrate these points, according to the international development organization, Catholic Relief Services (CRS), strengthening civil society through education can be done "indirectly through mobilizing parent groups and other stakeholders to participate in their children's education at local and even national levels" (Carneal & Pozniak, 2004, p.23). In Kosovo before and after the conflict, CRS strengthened the "ability of school and regional-based Parent Teacher Councils and Parent-Teacher Associations to be more active participants in the education system and beyond" (p. 24). The theory functions in the same way in a conflict region as it does in any peaceful area, but the benefits from constructive civic action that accrue to an unstable society are higher if it can have a positive impact on civil society.

Although there is limited research conducted on the impact of community participation in school governance under any circumstances, available data indicate that the effect of participation on civic skills and empowerment even under peaceful conditions is grander than the reality it leaves behind (Rose, 2003; Levacic, 1995; Levin, 1998). The increase in civic skills is thought to come from practice in organizational management and decision-making. Parents prefer to be involved in educational content rather than management, few parents participate in administrative decision-making, involvement typically decreases after the first years, and school administrators often dominate councils (Levin, 1998, p. 136). The data to support these claims were collected in Canada, the US, and Britain, but extensive studies of community school management in development projects echo these findings[2].

In Malawi for example, international agencies helped foster community schools that rely on local management committees to construct and maintain the schools, and make

governance and policy decisions about them. The schools were developed mainly in rural, under-served areas (i.e., places without access to government schools) to address the severe shortages of access to primary education and to empower communities in the process. The program design encouraged community members to participate in genuine decision-making, including "community identification of locally-recruited instructors" and "promotion of locally-relevant curriculum" (Rose, 2003, p. 51). The management committees were meant to be representative of community members, with one-third of the positions reserved for women.

In reality, however, participation was "pseudo," based on "a consultative process whereby citizens are…kept informed of decisions at a school level, and are expected to accept decisions that have already been made" (Rose, 2003, p. 47). Furthermore, the management committees often mirror existing social divisions; women often do not attend meetings, or they remain silent when they do appear (Rose, 2003, p. 61). This point is consistent with the feminist criticism of PRA techniques and the problematic definition of "community"-community participatory approaches often privilege men.
These findings do not seem to provide much hope for the potential of community participation in small civic groups formed to support schools and education systems. Yet it is not clear if, as some point out, the mechanisms for participation were better developed and used correctly, it might produce more effective results. Emphasizing genuine participation along with appropriate training, carefully constructed mandates, and equitable composition of groups may increase effective involvement (Levin, 1998). Part of the problem with this proscription, however, as Kapoor (2002) notes, is that concentrating on "'what is done' is not conducive to questioning and critique. From a methodological point of view, the resulting tendency is to get bogged down in methods and techniques without stopping adequately to consider initial assumptions or broader issues" (p. 102). Another part of the problem is that the notion of genuine participation, by its nature precludes external "animators," or facilitators, who assist communities in organizing themselves.

Examining the purpose of participation in school governance raises questions regarding of the role of the state. Community participation should complement and check the state, not replace it. Most important, the purpose of participation (to provide a space for community voices and "claim making") (Botchway, 2000) should be clearly linked to the type of participation that is implemented, in order to avoid over-emphasis on techniques. During and just after a complex humanitarian emergency, however, communities that want education services may have to organize to provide it themselves for their children. The next section will describe education in emergencies, some of the questions that arise in defining it, and the relevance of community participation in this context.

Community Participation in Education in Emergencies
Although encouraging community participation has been a key principle for many years in the field of international development, it has only recently emerged as a guiding force in humanitarian aid work. It is now nearly universally deployed in emergency education programs and will likely be listed as a standard in the Interagency Network for Emergency Education (INEE) Minimum Standards (INEE, 2004)[3]. Before continuing, it is important to see emergency education in its proper light. Committed humanitarian

aid workers have fought hard to include education among the key services (water and food, shelter, medical attention) that are delivered during a humanitarian response; education has only recently been added to these efforts, and only slowly after many struggles. A poor understanding of complex emergencies and the inaccuracy of the "relief to development continuum"[4] were among the main obstacles to including education in humanitarian assistance programs. Entrenched institutional arrangements in the aid industry continue to hamper the delivery of education services, but because conflicts have the tendency to linger on for years, and because of the disproportionate effect they have on women and children, most humanitarian donors and practitioners now accept the need for some form of education to add to the other traditional "pillars" of humanitarian response: water/food, shelter, medical attention.

That said, what is education in emergencies? To summarize briefly here, at its most instrumental, emergency education "increasingly serves as shorthand for schooling and other organized studies, together with 'normalizing' structured activities, arranged for and with children, young people and adults whose lives have been disrupted by conflict and major natural disasters" (Sinclair, 2001, p. 4)[5]. Although it is beyond the scope of this article to provide an extensive review of emergency education programs and theories, it is worth noting some of the multiple and shifting factors that determine the type of education provided by international agencies during or immediately following an emergency. Among others, these may include: 1) the status of the population to whom the service is provided (refugee, internally displaced, or "stayee"-civilian caught in a conflict); 2) the status of the state in the region before the conflict began (functioning, weak, failed) and its ability to provide public services; and 3) the status of the crisis (high/low intensity conflict, and duration).

There is significant debate about the distinction between education in emergencies and educational development programs in peaceful countries. In a country like Malawi, where the state is hard pressed to deliver public services outside of urban centers, communities are also enlisted to manage and provide education for themselves, as described above, with assistance from international nongovernmental organizations (INGOs). Regardless of its level of development or industrialization, a country or region in conflict usually suffers from a near total decline of the state, in addition to massive forced migrations, an increased shortage of teachers, land mines, child soldiers, porous borders that encourage organized crime, and a breakdown of communications, health care and other state run services. These crises create new obstacles, or exacerbate existing ones, that cripple education systems and inhibit or prevent delivery of education services. Despite the differences between what has been traditionally called development work versus humanitarian assistance (as INGOs promote education as a basic right of all children), there are many aspects of program content that remain the same between peaceful and conflict contexts. It is certain aspects of program implementation (e.g., rapid training of paraprofessional teachers, physical protection for program staff, packaged material resources) and the emphasis on new subjects related to protection and security (e.g., land mine awareness) that change during an emergency.

In development as well as crisis, international organizations promote the usual sets of reforms that are considered progressive and effective education policies, including, of course, parent-teacher participation in school governance. Yet either in the absence of a

state, or in the presence of one that is weak, community participation in delivering social services such as education can only achieve limited results. The hoped-for positive impact on social capital and civil society in a country at war is fraught with many of the same difficulties encountered in a country at peace. Providing education in a conflict area confronts the added complication of violent social cleavages. Administering services unevenly, or (inadvertently) providing support for hate-based education, will exacerbate tensions. Given that equitable representation can be problematic under any circumstances, relying extensively on community participation during or after a conflict may perpetuate existing social divisions rather than heal them.

The argument in favor of community participation that, in practice, trumps all others and forges a compromise among conflicting views is that some groups would be without education if communities did not assume the task. This may be true, but the danger in this approach is that international agencies may over-emphasize the silver lining in the cloud of distress, promoting education in emergencies as an opportunity to introduce innovative reforms (in both administration and pedagogy). When there is no state, however, this translates into parents and community members often building the space for the school, hiring teachers, paying their salaries, effectively promoting small private schools, replete with fees, for the poor. The emphasis placed on civil society may delay the re-emergence of the state. When a fledgling state does re-emerge after a conflict, the responsibility for delivering social services such as education may remain with under-resourced communities.

The following section shows some of the key findings from a study I conducted of an emergency education program in Bosnia fostered by an INGO during, and for a brief time after, the war. The program relied on community participation to provide education and safe spaces for children, and it cultivated social capital among some parents and teachers, but it also introduced reforms that did not necessarily decrease economic or social division. The temporary provision of education and protection during and just after the conflict was the first priority of the program, and on these points, it was enormously successful. But the benefits hoped for from the community participation elements of the program were considered nearly equally important. In addition, these hoped for achievements of community participation are now ubiquitous among emergency education programs. The intervention was not enough to create the social change that the INGO envisioned. In this representative vignette, the program ultimately created a sense of despair and abandonment among the teachers. The data were collected in Bosnia roughly from 1999-2001, three-five years after the war ended.

Parent-Teacher Associations Bosnia
Summary of the Study and Major Findings
This is a qualitative case study of preschool parent-teacher associations that had been fostered by an international development organization during and after the war in Bosnia. The program provided funding for each preschool's first nine months of operations, after which communities were meant to take over financial responsibility. There were over 100 parent-teacher associations created to support approximately 1000 private, nonprofit preschools at the height of the program. Over 90 parents, teachers, government officials and international aid workers were interviewed for this study in eight communities (urban and rural) throughout Bosnia. The primary objectives of the

research were twofold. The first was to analyze how and why parents and teachers participate in local parent-teacher associations; the second was to analyze the impact their participation had on particular social capital indicators, thereby assessing its contribution to civil society building. Social capital was assessed by gathering data regarding 1) different types of networks among associations and program participants (bridging or bonding), 2) confidence in elected officials and public institutions among parents and teachers, 3) participants' levels of engagement, and 4) glimpses of trust, or the lack of it (adapted from Putnam, 1993).

As noted above, education is inextricably linked to both civil society and the state. Although the education goals of this program were important, it was also a civil society building project. Accordingly, the INGO designed a management and training system to establish three levels of associations (parent, municipal, cantonal[6]) to support the preschools. "Parent-support groups" were the most local and had the same functional and operational definition as a local chapter of a US PTA. These nascent groups were given training in organizing, fund-raising, and management, with the aim of increasing parents' participation, helping them to advocate and fund-raise for themselves and, ultimately, to sustain the preschools independently of the sponsoring agency. The international organization reasoned that bringing concerned parents and teachers together to care for and educate children would create the proper conditions for community development, and by extension, for civil society building. The sustainability of the preschools hinged on the sustainability of these organizations.

As mentioned, the program began as an emergency education program in the absence of a functioning state, but continued through the reemergence of the state to promote crucial aspects of civil society building. A network of local staff were hired and trained to work with teachers, parents and community members at every level of the program. This network was very effective as long as it was employed by the INGO; in fact, its functioning depended on the INGO. When the grant ended, however, and INGO stopped funding the program, the network disappeared. The disillusionment that accompanies abandonment meant that many program participants lost faith in the INGO, in their government, and in their own ability to create social change. This will be illustrated below.

The research findings were threefold. First, with the reliance on parent-teacher associations to manage and maintain the private preschools, the INGO introduced the notion of communities assuming responsibility for their own educational services, thus encouraging community members to revise their expectations of the state. Promoting these concepts can "provide the state with a legitimate opportunity for shirking its responsibilities" by shifting those responsibilities to communities, even though these communities may lack the necessary resources to assume this role (Botchway, 2000, p. 136; Stroschein, 2002).

Teachers and parents differed in their views on this point. Among the teachers, privatization was generally referenced in relation to the major for-profit privatization reforms that were overhauling the country's economy, including old socialist property laws; this affected them directly in their attempts to remain in their preschool space. Otherwise, regarding the private nonprofit status of the preschool, they were satisfied

with the income and lifestyle their business brought them[7]. But there was significant consternation among parents regarding the benefits of a private, community-managed preschool. Many urban areas in the former-Yugoslavia had had access to preschool education prior to the war. When the war ended, government-run preschools reasserted themselves, but with fees that were prohibitively expensive for many community members (this also perpetuated confusion regarding public and private divisions). According to the majority of parents interviewed, given the choice and the means, they would have preferred to send their children to the government "proper" preschools, with the schedules and structures that were familiar to them, with monitored conditions, and with professional teachers certified by the Pedagogical Institute, rather than to the private community-run preschools.

Second, the bridges that the program created across ethnic/religious[8] groups were limited to professional ties among teachers that I will discuss below. Parents generally did not have contact with, or express interest in, meeting with other parents of a different ethnicity/religion. Community schools are, exactly as the name implies, local institutions. In places where "ethnic cleansing" has eliminated diversity, there is little likelihood that these new institutions will provide venues for contact among previously warring groups.

Finally, as mentioned, the teachers appreciated the training they had received, and the opportunity to work and manage their own small business[9]. Yet even in the best-case example (described below) in which some forms of social capital increased (trust, networks), community participation without significant external help, enduring networks, or links to power, is unlikely to succeed. The goals of providing education on a more permanent basis, empowering communities or building civil society were not reached. The vignette presented below illustrates this point.

The following description is of a model preschool with a highly functioning parent-teacher association. In other words, the group held regular meetings and approximately one fourth of the parents attended. The parents financed the preschool and paid teachers salaries. These paraprofessional teachers had received training (in the form of an intensive eight-day workshop and monthly in-service training) from the INGO that sponsored the education program during and after the war. As was typical of most of the preschools created in Bosnia, this one was located in a community in a small town (population approximately 11,000) that had become ethnically homogenous during the conflict. Although few minorities had returned to the area, there were significant tensions regarding housing and privatization of property.

Teachers' Attempts at Civic Action
This preschool was shown to me as a model in March 1999-one of the most highly functioning, sustainable preschools. Although the preschool was ethnically homogenous, it was said to have a strong parents' association that was networked to regional education associations of other ethnicities. Just after the war in 1997, the space for the classrooms had been renovated by the British government aid agency. There were four teachers and three classrooms-two rooms with single groups of children and one with a double class. The teachers were energetic, enjoyed their work and had established close friendships with each other (trust and bonding capital). They

complained that they lacked materials, but they managed to continue their work after the INGO stopped its support by using parents' fees to cover their salaries. Little had changed when I visited them several months later in the summer of 1999.

In spring 2000 after the last material support and site visits form the INGO had ended, I returned to conduct interviews again. The spring term was drawing to a close and the teachers were beside themselves with worry about their space. They were caught in the midst of property privatization reforms. Few people apart from the upper echelons in government, business, or the media in Bosnia understand the process of privatization. Because of contract difficulties, and because of the huge changes involved in making a transition from a socialist to a market economy, privatization created enormous problems for the average citizen in Bosnia. The teachers in this town were no exception. They did not understand the process, have information about it, or know how to address it. They were told their space was being privatized and that they would have to move the preschool. They reported to me, "Now it is difficult because all properties are being privatized. We would buy this playroom, but we don't have enough money."

The teachers tried to take action in several ways. First, in April, they contacted the local government. The four of them met with the mayor (a member of an ethnic minority in the area elected in April 2000) who could propose support from the municipal budget. One reported,

> Four of us went to the Mayor's office once. We wanted to speak with him about the location, and possible credit we would pay off. If we knew for sure that we would get that credit I would never take another job….If this [the preschool] were mine I would work here all day and night. We were also thinking to keep children over night for those parents that have to travel. But, the money is the problem. He told us that they have collected some money that has to be wired to [the local] Bank. He said that maybe he will try to give us some of that money. But that wasn't for sure.

He expressed support for the preschool, but had no solutions to offer.

In June 2000, the teachers reached out to me-a foreign researcher with established links to international individuals and organizations and with an interest in their plight. It was clear when we discussed the dilemma further that they lacked the skills or contacts necessary to access accurate information (the price of the premises) or to negotiate. They presented ideas that ranged from contacting international donors to seeking aid from the new mayor (again). Because of the destruction of buildings during the war and the pressure on housing stock from returning and continuing refugees, finding a new space seemed out of the question. On behalf of the teachers, I contacted some representatives among internationals living in Bosnia who were influential and committed to preschool education, but assistance was not forthcoming. The teachers made another attempt to approach the new mayor together. They received words of encouragement but no financial support[10]. The space they used shrank to two rooms.

Finally, by October 2000, the teachers stopped trying to find new strategies for action. When I returned for my last visit, they had given up. There were only two teachers

working in one room-the double classroom. They told me the company that was privatizing the building had allowed them to continue using one room for the time being. It was just before the Bosnia presidential elections in November 2000. I asked them about the elections. One said,

> It doesn't matter who is elected-[the local nationalist party] or [the more integrated party]. Nothing changes around here. I have voted in every election until now but I won't vote anymore because it doesn't matter. Look at this preschool. Who has money? All the money has been given to political parties and they spend it on their campaigns and we have none. Things here are only getting worse. What has changed? I changed the color of my hair, that's what changed. I changed the color and [my colleague] cut hers.

According to the findings from this study, during the war, the emergency education program was immensely popular among parents and teachers; it increased their local networks and, among some teachers, their civic participation. Teachers appreciated running small businesses; the parent-teacher meetings usually covered topics such as special education issues, scheduling, or finances. This is consistent with the findings of other studies of parental participation in school councils mentioned above, parents are less interested in management than in education content questions, and school administrators (in this case the teachers) generally preside at meetings. Likewise, in this case, teachers were generally more active in management than parents and worked harder at creating networks to address obstacles before them. They were motivated to participate in activities related to the preschool, committed to teaching and interested in the time they shared together as colleagues. They tried to take civic action to advocate for the preschools. Yet in the long term, they did not have the bridging ties or expertise they required to respond to external threats to the preschools.

On a positive note, however, there may be "strength in weak ties" (Granovetter, 1973). Many parents interviewed in Bosnia were reluctant to meet and work with parents of other religious/ethnic groups, but the same was not the case for teachers. Based on their view of themselves as belonging to the same professional group, teachers were interested in and willing to attend workshops with colleagues from other backgrounds and were willing to cross boundaries to do so.

Conclusion

The notion of community participation in education management and governance continues to travel the globe as a key policy in development and emergency education programs. Aid workers and educators alike pin high hopes on efforts in this reform process to include marginalized or excluded voices. Despite the different contexts, early evidence indicates that community participation in education in emergencies is fraught with some of the same difficulties that plague education development projects: lack of empowerment among participants, unchanged or increased social divisions, and a restructuring of the role of the state. In addition, in an emergency, INGOs and bilateral donors often conceive (understandably) of an education program begun during a conflict as a stop-gap measure. Lack of long-term vision, and confusion over the role that an emergency education program plays in long term social planning, contribute to the

breakdown in services and blurred responsibilities between states and communities after the program ends.

Putnam argues that "social capital, as embodied in horizontal networks of civic engagement, bolsters the performance of the polity and the economy, rather than the reverse: Strong society, strong economy; strong society, strong state" (Putnam, cited in Foley & Edwards, 1996, p. 40). But in the data described here, and in many places where external actors intervene to support social services and a fledgling civil society, the state is weak and the international organizations are strong. In fact, the communities that participated in the Bosnia program seemed to gain strength only temporarily. A layer of competent local advocates ("national staff"), hired, trained and paid by INGOs, facilitated and maintained community participation. When the INGO stopped funding the program, the hired advocates took their skills, social and political capital and sought jobs elsewhere. The PTAs' links to political power were lost.

Finally, community participation is crucial in administering aid and services during and after a conflict. Cultivating ties among professionals across ethnicities may be a particularly productive part of the process. But strong communities and strong states need one another. The groups described here were left with neither. International organizations that replace the state (albeit partially) during a complex emergency by providing social services, or by assisting communities to do so, should not abandon government ministries during social reconstruction. Otherwise, states become accustomed to relying on NGOs (international or local) to provide social services, and abdicate responsibility for providing these services themselves. Thus the emphasis placed on community participation may become a Trojan horse for restructuring the state, fundamentally altering the provision of public education.

Notes

1. For a compelling and comprehensive look at civil society building in Bosnia, see Roberto Belloni's analysis of the efforts of the international community to build civil society by supporting advocacy groups and citizen participation.

2. For a very interesting look at community participation in an education decentralization program, see Gershberg's (1999) study of autonomous school in Nicaragua. It is important to point out that the government organized community participation in this case, and schools remain part of the public school system. Preliminary results indicate that administrators (principals) dominate school-site councils, and that equity questions have emerged as poorer communities struggle to pay fees.

3. For a sample of some of the education in emergencies programs that incorporate community participation, see the websites of Save the Children US, Catholic Relief Services, Creative Associates, International Rescue Committee, and the United Nations Children's Fund. In general, education interventions during and after violent conflict have made significant achievements over the past decade (notably in the area of increased access to education in refugee/IDP camps or during conflicts).

4. The "relief to development continuum" commonly refers to the stages of aid in a crisis in which "the external response to an emergency moves from relief through reconstruction to development" (Smillie, 2000, p. 17).

5. For the purposes of this article, I will focus on emergencies caused by war and conflict, rather than those caused by natural disasters.

6. "Cantons" in Bosnia are the smallest administrative unit of government in the Bosnian Federation (the Bosniak/Croat half of BiH territory). There are ten cantons in the Federation.

7. It is important to point out briefly the distinction between two types of privatization: for-profit versus non-profit privatization. In the former socialist republics, multinational financial institutions introduced reforms to privatize formerly state-owned businesses, industries, and services throughout various sectors of the economy. This, of course, extended into the health and education sectors (providing legal provisions for new private services, for example). Simultaneously, as discussed at the outset of this article, INGOs encouraged another kind of privatization-the emergence of the fledgling private-nonprofit (NGO) sector. The overlaps between these types of privatization cause tremendous confusion among both government and civil society actors: the definitions are conflated, and laws regulating non-profit institutions have yet to be properly enforced.

8. The precise nature of the ethnic/religious divisions in Bosnia is disputed; the word in Bosnian/Croatian/Serbian that is used to describe the difference among groups is literally translated as "nation" in English. The meaning in context is more precisely captured by the English word "ethnicity."

9. Teachers' own perceptions of their work added to the confusion between these definitions. When unemployment and poverty are high, any income is considered profitable. In fact, as is now commonly observed, INGOs often offer salaries in emergency and development work that are significantly more than what state employees earn, and that are often considered quite lucrative. These differences further confuse and distort the idea of non-profit work.

10. Interestingly, the teachers did not indicate to me that there was any animosity based on ethnicity between them and the mayor. In this particular example, disappointment in the performance of public officials seemed to be meted out equally regardless of ethnicity.

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