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Coordination by Default or by Design Implementing Education Programs in Post- Conflict: the South Sudan Experience

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Coordination by Default or by Design
Implementing Education Programs in Post-Conflict: the South Sudan Experience

A Master's Project

by

Sarah Kahando

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ABSTRACT

Coordination by Default or by Design

Implementing Education Programs in Post-Conflict:- The South Sudan Experience

The process of rebuilding and reconstruction after war is a long, demanding and arduous process. Different actors are involved, drawn from the local community, neighboring countries and international arena. The actors come with various expectations, interests, resources and demands in programs implementation. Each actor has their own way and understanding of doing things based on where they have come from. To further complicate the process, coordination issues, whether planned or unplanned, become an imperative and have to be addressed or further strengthened so as to meet the objectives of the various actors involved. Implementing education in post conflict countries has seen its fair share of these complexities.

Driven by different interests, needs, expectations and demands, there is a lack of clarity among the different actors, which ultimately has a negative impact on the success of programs. Using a case study of the Community girl's school, a Non-Formal program implemented in south Sudan, I will explore and examine the missed opportunities that arise when there is lack of clarity at the onset and continuation of implementing education programs. The author will address coordination challenges that are faced by different actors working in Post-Conflict scenarios and how these affect program implementation. The author argues that coordination issues especially in post-conflict scenarios should be clearly included in program plans and not merely assumed. Data used is largely drawn from the authors experience in implementing the program, interviews of the respective people working in the different organizations, former and current officials from the government representatives and reports submitted on the program.

The study will also examine the envisioned roles of the concerned actors involved, their objectives, roles and coordination efforts within the program that was implemented and how that contributed towards the overall impact of the program.

Finally, the project will analyze the lessons that can be drawn from the analysis including ineffective oversight, clarifying terms and mandates and communication across and among all actors. The study recommends among other factors the need to not only involve community in designing programs but also clarifying goals, roles and responsibilities. Coordination should not be a design by default but rather well planned and budget for with clearly articulated goals.

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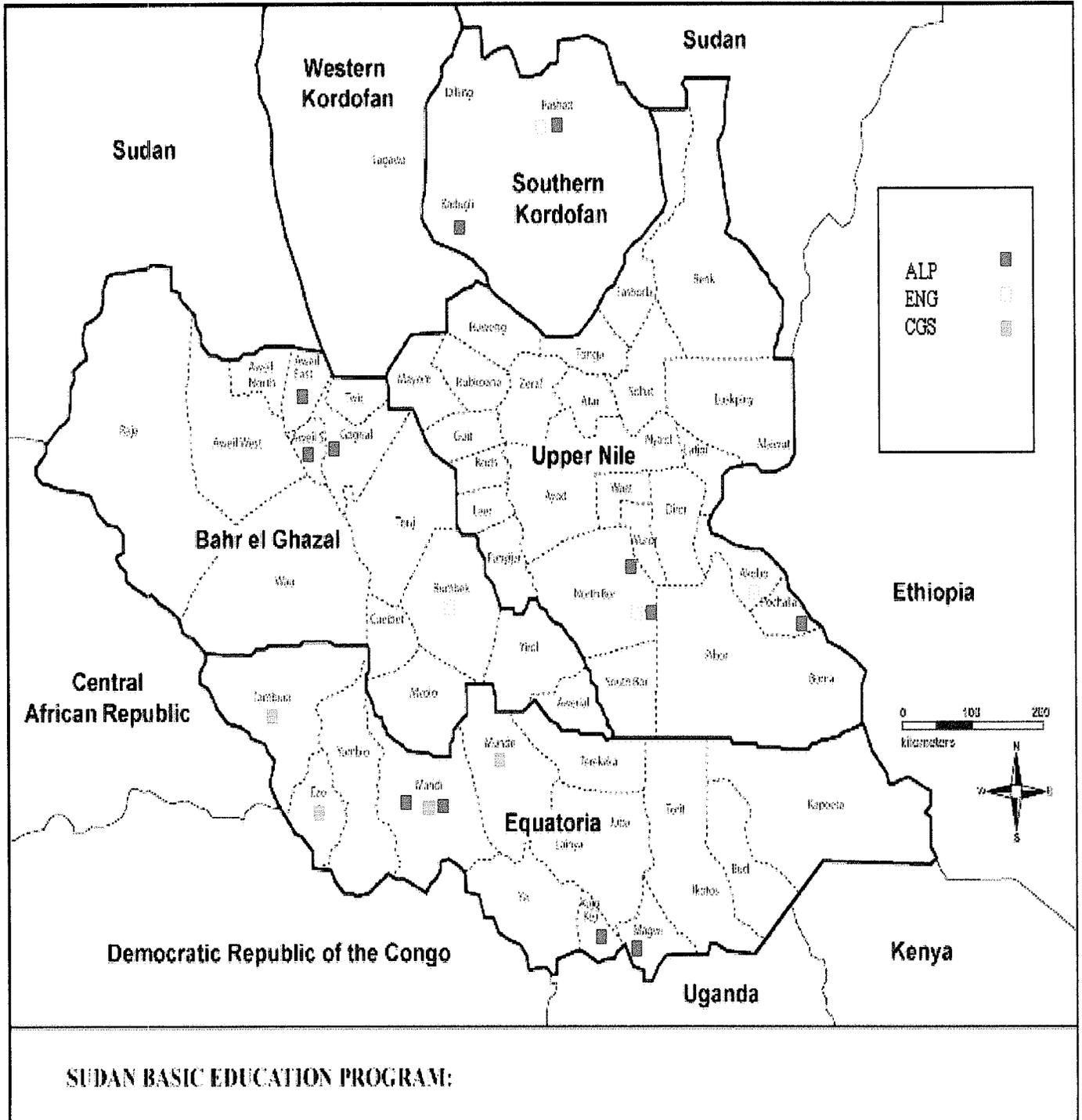
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GLOSSARY OF TERM

AES	Alternative Education Systems
AET	Africa Education Trust
AIR	American Institute of Research
BRAC	
CARE	Cooperative assistance Reaching everywhere
CEO	County Education Officer
CGS/CGSP	Community Girls School Program
CIE	Center for International Education
DFID	Department for International Development
EDC	Education Development Center
EFA	Education For All
EQUIP 2	Education Quality Improvement Program
ERDF	Education Reconstruction and Development Forum
FEO	Field education Officer
GOS	Government of Sudan
GOSS	Government of South Sudan
HIV/AIDS	Human Immune Deficiency Virus/Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome
INEE	Interagency Network for Education in Emergencies
MDG	Millennium Development Goals
MDTF	Multi-Donor Trust Fund
MOEST	Ministry of Education science and Technology
NEPAD	New Partnership for Africa's Development
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
OECD	Organization for Economic and Cooperation and Development
OLS	Operation Lifeline Sudan
Payam	Local government in south Sudan equivalent to a district
RALS	Rapid Assessment of Learning Spaces
SBEP	Sudan Basic education Project
SMC	Schools Management Committee
SOE	Secretariat of Education
SPLA	Sudan People's liberation Army
SPLM	Sudan People's liberation Movement
SRRA	Sudan relief and Rehabilitation Association
UMASS	University of Massachusetts Amherst
UN	United Nations
UNICEF	United Nations Children education Fund
UNOCHA	United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
USAID	United States Agency for International Development

Map of South Sudan with Alternative Education programs by SBEP



CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

“We need better coordination on the international side ... We have too many reconstruction and development assistance plans.”

Jan Egeland

Introduction

As is characteristics of post-conflict settings, the number of international organizations and other grassroots organizations increases for a myriad of reasons. Different organizations respond to arising needs using different mechanisms and often times at different times. Resources for example, human or financial, are sourced and come from different channels, such as governments, religious institutions or humanitarian organizations. These organizations bring with them different beliefs, mandates and eventually different reasons for responding to the needs among others. Thus the need to coordinate has over the years been reechoed over time as a necessity within these settings. Despite the increase of rhetoric, other program issues often times supersede the need for coordination, which in most times is expected to weave in with other program activities.

Having worked in a post-conflict setting, the memories of my first visits and organization meetings are still etched in my brain. The nature of the environment then demanded that we work together especially for security purposes. My first visit to south Sudan was in October 2002, where I went to work for an international organization as a literacy trainer. In this area, the organization I was representing was known to have presence (worked and were known within the region) though we still did not have a compound. I thus stayed with another host international organization that had been there for a while. There were three other

organizations working on different aspects of education and my presence there representing another big organization was seen as a blessing to the Sudanese and as a soft threat to other education partners who had been there for a while and were dealing with education. This meant that even when we were called for meetings, being tactful was essential and one only gave away the necessary information at the same time trying to learn best what others were doing or planning to do. The first coordination meeting, as they were then called, that I attended had been called by an important official representative from the South Sudan Relief and Rehabilitation Agency (SRRA) the relief agency that coordinated all relief services in south Sudan under the Sudan People's Liberation Army, (SPLA). The only contribution I remember making were my name and the agency I worked for. Looking back this was the first of the many coordination meetings that I was to attend that I would say was more of information sharing get together than coordination meetings. Information is carefully shared not to expose too much and respectful of not 'stepping on other toes. The fear of being 'ran out' of the field and hence competition was real in the NGO world.

Coordination issues in conflict and post-conflict settings are not a new vocabulary. In many cases, the "ability or skill to coordinate with others" (*taken from a job description*) comes as part of their job descriptions in many organizations. Interpretation of what this entails within and outside the organization is most often not elaborated. Different people have different understanding of what coordination means or what it entails and hence all the good intentions for coordination can later emerge as bones of contentions. General acceptance of the issue and its rhetoric thereof seems not to enlighten the practical challenges of following it through and coordination for many organizations has proved to be more of a dreaded task than an easy thing for various reasons. Indeed, one research report introduced the topic as an agreed upon

principle but a source of irritation and frustration in practice hence and “old sore” (Brabant, 1999.). Plans without coordination are a source of irritations and frustrations and this could ultimately negatively impede the progress of the good plans and efforts put in.

From my experience, I am aware of, and acknowledge the challenges involved in planning coordination meeting. As simple as it sounds; coordination requires not just the input of time for planning and getting people together but costs as well. The frequency number of times that coordination issues and meetings were planned increased over the years while I worked in the post conflict settings. This sometimes-meant reorganizing time and budget. I do believe in working around flexibility to a certain limit beyond which impedes a program’s progress. Such meetings and the mention of coordination as one of the challenges in a number of post conflict literatures may perhaps be pointing towards the direction for the need to reconsider what we mean by coordination and how coordination is to be planned. The challenges of post conflict education and the multiple players involved in implementing programs, the complexity of environment within which programs are to be carried out highlights the need for coordination by all actors for effective program implementation. The case study looks at how coordination issues are understood at the field level by the different players involved and how that plays out within a program being implemented.

In the course of this study, I came across several reports and articles that highlighted or stated different coordination issues be it of aid or programs, as one of the challenges that have to be addressed in implementing programs in post conflict settings. One research report by World Bank for example, talks of the “battles for AID” (Precise, p.g. 2) and the challenges involved in coordinating aid by different donors in different contexts. Indeed on of the twelve indicators of

progress in the Paris Declaration on Aid effectiveness is “4. To strengthen capacity by coordinated efforts” (OECD, 2005, p.g. 9.)

Few reports and articles have defined what they mean by coordination and even fewer how coordination efforts should be carried out. The confusion in even defining some of these terms and the language used to refer to the post conflict jargon and terminology such as peace building (Schirch, L. 2006) compounds the problem and impacts how coordination is carried out. There is not one agreed meaning of coordination (Sommers, 2004) and even where coordination is defined, at least in paper, the challenges and realities in the field shows that coordination is not as easy as it is assumed to be. Different challenges are faced by the different actors¹ at different levels in an already challenging environment, yet despite these challenges, there is the call in different reports, requirement and push to coordinate efforts for effective running of programs.

Coordination challenges is not a new problem and efforts to address the issues have been under way with other international bodies such as the, UNOCHA that oversees all humanitarian wing coordination, INEE that seeks to network with all international NGOs and others organizations. The different groups work towards addressing the problem for example through the cluster system, the UN new initiatives of planning together as humanitarian body and organizations coming together to form alliances such as the save the children alliance among others. Such initiatives among other agendas are to work together and coordinate their work.

¹ In this study I have used the word ‘actors’ to include everyone involved in implementing education, this includes donors, humanitarian organizations, International organizations, governments or Non-state actors and community leaders.

The study is made up of four chapters; Chapter one sets the background of the study and introduces the setting of the study, the problem statement and the methodology are discussed. Chapter two is the literature review that begins with a brief summary of the role education is seen to play in post-conflict settings, discusses various definitions and goes on to look at the political, economic and technical issues that causes tensions and concerns in implementing education programs in post conflict settings. The chapter ends by looking at five challenges involved in coordination of education in post conflict settings. Chapter three introduces the South Sudan case study and the actors involved in implementing the community girl's school and the roles each actor played. The final chapter looks at the key themes and gives some practical considerations and recommendations that can be used in coordinating programs.

Background to the study

South Sudan Context

The history of south Sudan is characterized by conflict mainly between the North and the south, and has been termed as one of the longest civil war in Africa since its independence in 1956 (Deng, 2000,). The war further deepened the already existing inequalities between the North and the South. (Deng, 2000) South Sudan vast region is rich in its unique diversity; one region enjoys an equatorial climate, while another region has to deal with the heat and climate conditions of the harsh semi arid-desert climate. Other than war, south Sudan has had to deal with two major famines, one in 1988 and another 10 years later that not only plunged the country further into poverty but also claimed more than 300,000 lives (Deng 2002). The 1988 famine drew media attention and International pressures on the Government of Sudan to allow humanitarian efforts be delivered to southern Sudan led to the formation of Operation Lifeline Sudan(OLS) in 1989, a consortium of organization between the UN and NGOs. An agreement

between the SPLM, the UN and GOS was signed to allow humanitarian assistance to be delivered to all parts as needed.(Deng, 2003). OLS operated from Northern Kenya and helped to coordinate the UN and 35 other organizations offering relief to South Sudan. Social services in south Sudan were largely provided under the OLS through the International organizations. While SPLM relief wing SRRA assisted in facilitating the coordination, dominance was largely under the International influence.

Education in South Sudan

Characteristic of post conflict countries, education services were severely affected. School going children were either in the army or looking for food. Under the SPLM, education governance was established as part of the SPLM resolution for self-reliance, articulated in one of the key documents-*Peace through Development*. (Deng, 2003) The education policy documents that clearly spelt out the goals, vision and mission of the SPLM education were launched in 2002. Other documents such as the EFA were used in forming the foundation as part of the process of adhering to the international standards. Goal 2.1 in this document states that, “Education shall be the right of every child regardless of ethnicity, culture, gender, religion and socio-economic status”. Goal 2.4 states “Emphasis should be placed on girl’s education in order to achieve equality of education”. (*SPLM 2002*)

While this was a good start, there continued to be gaps between the documents and real implementation amidst other challenges. Faced with the enormous responsibility of working towards uniting the education system in the south with limited resources and little or no capacity, the SOE also had the task of working to coordinate the NGOs already operating in the South using “their own style”. Schools in different regions ran under different curricula based

on their proximity to their neighbors. Hence the curriculum became dependent on the NGOs implementing the program preference and from availability of books from the bordering countries.

Before the peace deal was signed, pockets of war continued to plague the country. SPLM did not have the resources or the capacity needed to plan and implement its education strategy plan and relied on International donors and NGOS for resources and implementation. Very few people in south Sudan knew of the policy or had even seen it and most based on their geographical locations followed the curriculums of neighboring countries. Despite the fact the NGOs implementing education had been operating since the famine, a survey done in 2003 by UNICEF showed that only 25% of the children were enrolled in schools and 1% of the girls enrolled completed primary school. Students had to walk for hours to school and most schools were under trees or in makeshift classrooms. Despite these challenges SPLM education system operated under the Secretariat of Education, continued to insist on International organizations collaborating with them to ensure coordination of efforts and activities followed the written policy. As more NGOs became involved, more meetings were held and the Education Reconstruction and Development Forum (ERDF) officially established as one way of coordinating the NGOS and the SOE. The main objective of this forum was to coordinate the multitude of various NGOs claiming to be operating in education so as to ensure mainly equity in terms of regions of operation and quality. As a way of ensuring control and avoiding being usurped by the NGO world the SOE wanted to find out who was doing what, where and the resources available. The SOE raised a concern that “most of the partner activities were not known to them and the need for addressing coordination issues. (ERDF minutes, 2005 Sept at Rumbek).

Statement of the problem

Characteristic of conflict and post conflict settings, humanitarian crisis such as war and other natural or man-made catastrophes attract different interventions from a variety of places. South Sudan was no different. The civil war and human catastrophe has attracted International actors who are involved in implementing programs in all sectors. The intentions of these organizations vary in intention and hence the mode of operation. Overtime the planned programs evolve from talks and acts of relief and humanitarian assistance to reconstruction and rebuilding. Given that the Organizations operate under different mandates, responding to different needs often times to the same communities, the challenge and hence the need to coordinate at different levels has been seen as not only important but paramount in by many of these actors. One article states coordination challenges as one of the problems faced in implementing education in post-conflict education and continues to state that complexity involved between the boundary that exists within education of humanitarian action and development contributes to the “plethora of coordination mechanisms.” (Buckland, 2006)

Initial involvements in South Sudan by International actors were relief, based on humanitarian responses. The Bahrl-el Ghazal famine in 1988 that attracted media and international pressure led to the formation of OLS in 1989 as a tripartite agreement between the SPLM, the GOS and the UN that would help coordinate the flow of humanitarian assistance to the needy civilians. (Deng, 2000). Different International organizations based on their mandates and beliefs, operated in different regions and worked as long as there was peace and funding permitted. Different actors were involved in implementing education programs in the best way they knew how, hence in different ways and with minimal efforts to coordinate their work. Interventions then, can be characterized as scattered, uncoordinated and in most cases duplicated efforts were

seen. This poor coordination of programs increased the challenge of working within this environment, created a gap in clarity of goals and roles and hence duplication of efforts in some areas and a gap in others. Later on as semblance of peace were seen in pockets areas, the jargon changed to include development and reconstruction and the need by different International NGO to coordinate was paramount. In preparation for peace, the SPLM government's ministry of education started demanding from these organizations for accountability, who was where doing what. While it sounds like a simple undertaking, this was not easy.

Driven by different needs, expectations and demands, collision of interests of the different actors involved, causes lack of clarity and ultimately negatively impact the success of programs. Historical formation and practices of the different actors' further compounds the problems where changes need to occur and different way of operation has to be enacted.

Changes brings more challenges uncertainty and is non-linear, (Fullan, 1999) hence the need to reconsider how others work and work together. Implementing actors who were historically formed and operated to offer relief services had to reconsider and learn how to operate within the relief and development jargon so as to survive, hence compounding the need to and the challenge in coordination.

Using a case study of the Community girl's school, a Non Formal program implemented in south Sudan, the author will address practical coordination challenges that are faced by different actors working in Post- conflict scenarios and how these affect program implementation. Do all partners and actors within a program have the same understanding of the programs they are involved in and what it means to coordinate? Do all have the same or at least clear roles of what coordination efforts will be involved resources required and

responsibilities each is to carry? These are some of the questions that the author will try to explore and examine the **missed opportunities** that arise when there is lack of clarity at the onset and continuation of implementing education programs. This study will look at the challenges that arise from these demands and how these may have negative effects on the very programs that are being implemented. While coordination issues in South Sudan were complex and vast, the study will concentrate on coordination issues within one program as a microcosm of the complexity involved in coordination issues.

The study will examine the envisioned roles of the concerned actors involved, their objectives, the planned and actual roles they played and the coordination efforts within the program that was implemented and how that contributed towards the overall impact of the program. In doing so, I hope to contribute towards the dialogue on coordination in post-conflict settings.

Objectives of the study

In this study, I hope to look at practical coordination issues and how these affect implementation of programs. The study aims to:

- Analyze coordination efforts between agencies and the practical challenges that they encounter
- Analyze lessons that can be drawn in regards to coordination and partnership using the case study
- Propose strategies that need to be considered before and during the implementation of programs by multiple players.

Methodology

This research is based on an in-depth case study that analysis the author's field experience combined with content analysis from data from the field. The analysis was carried out using relevant primary data from the field that includes reports from the field to the donors and to the SOE officials, minutes of various relevant coordination meetings that are recorded. Email conversations and discussions concerning the CGS have also been used in some cases to show the flow of information as used in the field.

Interviews: Conversations and interviews with 6 field personnel involved with the programs at various levels were also be used to describe the meetings and complement the recorded minutes. The interviewees include one representative from the key organizations working with CGS in South Sudan between the periods of 2002-2006. This includes officials from UNICEF, SBEP, CIE-UMASS, and the County Education officers as the government representatives. Given the different level of involvement, different questions were used to provide relevant information that the participants were involved in. The interviews add to the general issues of coordination discussed by describing where necessary specific roles played by different actors. A desk analysis was involved in critically looking at the different reports that have been published on the Internet and any available sources by the organizations involved in the program that pertains to the organization history and mandates and their role in the program.

One challenge of writing this study is that there is not so much study that has been written that can be drawn upon on the challenges involved in coordination of actors in education in post conflict. Most of the information given states coordination as a challenge but very few sources

go to depth of defining the issues, coordination activities or even the challenges involved. Given this challenge, the choice of analytical method will largely draw on concepts and historical data available from different organization. Another challenge is the fact that the field of post conflict education is evolving and there is sometimes not sufficient data available. Tracking down personnel who worked on the program has been difficult due to communication problems and the facts that some of them no longer work for the organization, hence very few interviews were done. Using previous records and the author's experience compensated this for this gap. Analysis of data and the choice of analysis will be drawn from comparing the different actor's roles as envisioned and as practiced and description of their work

Author's role

The role of the author in this study is important to consider and cannot be ignored in that the author was key program personnel of the Community Girls schools for three years. I served initially as the Community Girls School's training coordinator and later as the program manager for the Alternative Education System of which the CGS was one of the programs I managed and was involved in from its early beginnings.

The program was fairly new when I joined and I was privileged to have been involved throughout the whole process of setting up the schools, negotiating with different community groups, and the County Education Officers and key education officials from the SPLM/SPLA. Over all I helped in the start-up of 26 schools, work with community to hire 52 teachers and supervised the 6 field education officers. I also worked with the curriculum team to develop the CGS curriculum and the textbooks, training of teachers and the supervisors (Field

Education Officers) and finally to handing the schools over to the communities three and a half years later. Part of the management issues involved coordinating with different actors at different levels, the donors, the NGO partners and the education officials for different reasons from day to day running of the schools or technical issues such as curriculum writings or in meetings and discussions held over the programs. I do have in depth knowledge on the program and issues involved that I find very useful and relevant intend to use to contribute towards this study.

I do acknowledge the challenge involved in trying to remain objective given my role in the program and as the author. However I cannot ignore the experience gained and learned from my involvement in the program through observation and reflection that has helped to shape much of the discussions and examples used in the study. As much as possible the author has tried to remain objective by sticking to the relevant documents and reports that were written and interviews where relevant. Efforts will be made to reduce personal bias from the findings. In some cases where the author has stated her position, reflections and opinions, the pronoun (I) will be used or italicized so as to distinguish between her voice and those of others in the study. It is hoped that my personal reflection and experience will be used to provide information in this area of study as it has been enriched and informed further through my understanding of the critical issues that come out from the study.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

We, the governments, organizations, agencies, groups and associations, represented at the World Education Forum pledge ourselves to:

5. meet the needs of education systems affected by conflict, natural calamities and instability and conduct educational programmes in ways that promote mutual understanding, peace tolerance, and that help to prevent violence and conflict.

(World Education Forum, 2000, p.8)

Education Role in Post-Conflict settings

Education plays a unique and complex role both during and after conflict. Previously, education was not seen and included in humanitarian efforts as a basic need even though it is one sector of the social services that survives in different forms and usually attracts different responses, attentions and has earned international recognition. In the recent years, Education is now seen as a core social service response in conflict and post-conflict endeavors. Even after vast devastation of infrastructure and system collapse, research demonstrates that schools in different forms are one of the first social institutions that can be seen to operate. (World Bank, 2005). This resilience may be reflected in continued schooling even within the challenges of equity, access and quality that continue to be seen during the post conflict scenarios. On the other hand, the relationship between education and conflict has also been described as ‘complex and multidirectional’ (World Bank 2007, p. 2). Recent finding in articles now show that education has the capacity to play both the role of exacerbating conflict or of contributing towards peace building and development, for example through instilling values, skills and attitudes that promote peace and reduce conflict (Smith & Vaux, 2003) Education is seen as a key instrument that can lead to development and conflict seen as “development in reverse” (

World bank, 2005 pg. 8). and a threat to achieving the EFA and MDG goals attest to this. In Post –conflict settings, it would seem that efforts are geared towards minimizing the risk of not achieving these goals and actors are forever in search of looking for ways to accelerate the growth and development that is needed towards achieving these goals. This has led not just to an increase in the number of programs working in Post-conflict but are also driven by a common genre of language as well that supports their presence.

The complex relationship of education in conflict and post conflict scenarios has elicited a lot of International response from different actors and justifies international involvement especially during crisis. A report to DFID (Smith and Vaux. 2003) examined and established three perspectives that consider the relationship between education and conflict. The rights-approach, the development approach and education as a problem and solution approach. These perspectives not only ground why international actors are involved but the demand and challenges within the core issues brings out the challenges involved in coordination issues.

The first core issues is that education is seen as a fundamental human right as written and ratified by many nations as commitments in various international instruments such as the UN convention on the right of the child (1989). This perspective is also emphasized in the EFA goals where “the rights for all people to benefit from an education that meets their basic needs” (goal 4)... and as “a fundamental human right, key to sustainable development and peace and stability ...and hence indispensable means for effective participation” (goal 6) Dakar 2000 pg 8) was reaffirmed. This means that, even in the most difficult times, countries and nations are committed to doing their best in providing education services on the basis of the rights approach. This rights approach perspective has been criticized within conflict and post conflict

settings as it is seen to pose a problem of sequencing or prioritizing among other human rights. The rights approach is seen to compete for priority (Smith and Vaux, 2003, p.14) and assumes that situations will be similar in all contexts. Should the right to eliminating poverty come first or education or the right of freedom? Given that each conflict and post conflict situation is different, and requires systemic analysis and response, sometimes education as a human right does not always come as a first priority. In his book *Development as freedom*, (1999) Amartya Sen (1999) introduces rather the term freedom in 'capability approach' where education creates the freedom that those being educated can exercise. The approach is currently used by UNDP but not popular in international circles. (Smith & Vaux 2003)

Education as an essential tool to human development and poverty reduction is the second perspective as proposed in the Millennium development goals, where the role of education in eliminating poverty is echoed especially in one goal that refers to "the achievement of universal primary education by 2015" (MDG...). The issue of conflict and the role in education to achieve the EFA goals was discussed at a World education strategic forum in a session on Education in situations of emergencies and crisis (Nov 2000). This forum helped to highlight the need to give support needed for rapid progress towards EFA goals to countries in conflict and post conflict.

Education according to these goals is seen to play an important role in not just reducing conflict but in helping in the reconstruction of post conflict countries. The declaration framework for action further states that, 'countries in conflict or undergoing reconstruction should be given special attention to building up their educational systems' (Dakar framework for action, p.9 paragraph 14.). While these are good policies and well articulated the practical aspects of

meeting these commitments and goals are not clear, for example, what qualifies special attention and what kind of special attention is needed? Who is to provide and monitor, on what mandate and the list of questions keeps going on. These goals also tend to be quantitative and focus a lot on numbers rather than the quality of learning that takes place. The increase in number of pupils in class may not necessary mean that learning is taking place, and even when learning is taking place the kind of learning that The MDG goals relates the positives of education to bring economic development and poverty reduction but does not realize the fact that education can also indeed be a cause of and increase conflict such as cultural repression of minorities, segregated education and others. (Saltarelli & Bush, 2000).

The third perspective mentioned is the impact education can have where education is seen as part of the problem as well as part of the solution. Education implementers can no longer look at education as all good but have to start looking critically at education as a source of conflict as well. In many cases, education is a political and social tool (Smith and Vaux, 2003) and can be used to manipulate, subordinate or discriminate hence causing violence or conflict. "If this is the case, care should be taken in analyzing resource contribution and issues of quality.

The role that education plays cannot be overstated and the reason why so many actors are involved is understandable. In conflict and post conflict situations, intervention from international arena is imperative especially based on fundamental goals ratified internationally and are used as the basis for policy making in many nations. While these interventions are meant to be helpful, the demands and pressures to implement programs can also be sources of challenges in coordination efforts. Well meaning programs and projects if uncoordinated and

can indeed proceed to “cause harm”. How then do different organizations define some of these terms?

Definition of terms

To be able to better understand the issues we are dealing with I will continue to look at a variety of definitions of the two main terms that flow throughout the study and define the working definition that I will be using in this study. The purpose is two-fold, first is to give a background of how different literatures define and understand the context hence the setting. Secondly look at the impact in terms of application if any of how these definitions goes to set stage and justify implementation of programs in regards to coordination. What and how has post-conflict and coordination been defined and how does that affect the way things are done?

Post conflict

While the term post conflict has been used extensively in a host of the many literatures that I came across, defining the term was not quite clear and proved to be problematic, obscure and has been evolving over time. Most of the definitions tended to describe the elements of characteristics that can be found within post-conflict situations and even the application of these tend to vary and differ from context and situations. Let’s take a look at a few of these definitions

“Post conflict is defined

1. “...as the period when hostilities have abated to the level where some reintegration and recovery can begin....acute humanitarian crisis has ended and a process of reintegration and political and economic recovery has begun...” (Forman & Salomons, 1999).

2. The UN charter that commits member's state to "*create conditions of stability and well being*" and "*promote higher standards of living*" sets the concept of post-conflict.(UN Charter article 47-56,1995)

3. '.... *generally commences with the signature of peace accords and lasts until a degree of political normalcy is restored typically from two to five years.* The description continues to acknowledge the unique contextual attributes and recovery and states that it involves a "*triple transition*" *from war to peace; from controlled market to a market economy; and from authoritarianism (or totalitarianism) to democracy.*" (Patrick, 1998)

4. "Post-conflict reconstruction starts when hostilities end, typically in the form of a cease-fire agreement or peace agreement....is designed to assist in stabilizing the peace process and prevent *relapse into conflict...but its ultimate aim is to address the root causes of a conflict and to lay the foundations for social justice and sustainable peace.*" (NEPAD, 2005. p.g. 6) the paper continues to give the three phases that post conflict systems proceeds through namely, the emergency phase, transition phase and the development phase."

5. Other articles characterize post conflict countries as "*countries emerging from conflict*" and delineate these as *countries in which there are a reasonable expectation of peace, or an actual peace agreement...a continuum from "ongoing conflict to peace settlement, reconstruction and post reconstruction.*"(Vaux & Visman, 2005, 8,13)

The above examples suggest that the definition of post conflict is time based and on a continuum after considerable hostilities have ended. The continuum tries to describe the relationship that exists from chaos to progress towards development and reconstruction. Most of the descriptions also state the need for some form of agreement between the rival groups or some agreement towards some semblance of peace. The descriptions also seem to carry the connotations of stability or working towards stability. These complications of trying to describe

or define the terms have been evolving with the current trend and term used today as “fragile states.” In this study, we shall stay with the term post-conflict.

The problem with the definitions is that they are too optimistic and assumes that reconstruction will move towards a certain orderly step. The realities, uncertainty and volatile nature have proved over time that conflicts can be unpredictable and take a longtime such as Somalia.

While they do accept contextual difference, the descriptions are too linear. Success is also tied in to political stability that ties in with market economy. The implication is that implementation of programs is based on these definitions and determines how operations are run. The challenge however comes in where different donors prioritize different things based on their definition.

NEPAD for example may prioritize addressing the root problems while the UN may be more concerned about standards. While this diversity has its positives, it can also cause challenges of implementation at field level. Implementing programs in post conflict settings involves careful considerations and certain key issues need to be taken into consideration.

In this paper, I recognize that post-conflict does not mean that there is total absence of conflict rather as a state or time within a process towards peace. (Patrick, 1998) I will define post-conflict as a country where there is relative security that allows reconstruction of any kind to take place beyond humanitarian relief, which allows political and economic reforms to take place and one that has a recognized leadership including that of non-state actors. This also includes the acceptance by the local community to invest their time and resources towards the process as a sign of stability.

Coordination

Coordination issues continue to remain a paradox. Most actors agree to not just the need and value of coordination on one hand but in many cases continue to carry out programs in isolated uncoordinated pockets, and continue to cite coordination as a challenge. People talk about it. Indeed, a peruse through most of the post-conflict reports, often times cites or alludes to lack of coordination at different levels as a challenge. Lack of coordination has been cited as one of the three critical challenges and failure of NGOs (Bennet, 1994). Donors despite their coordinates they impose with aid want to know how well their resources are being spent as there are accountable to their contributors. While accepting aid on one hand, governments or non-state actors in affected areas are concerned about the delivery modes of the aid, control issues, political agendas they may have, among others from the mammoth of Organization agencies during and after crisis. Then of course we have the recipient at community level, who have to deal with different agencies demands and requests for different things and have learnt to juggle along these demands. Of course we cannot forget the NGO's who are concerned of the donor demands as well as trying to do as much as they can in the best way they know how and try to stay at the top of the game. It is like a serious game of survival. Just because they agree to education's role in post-conflict or are tied to the global goals does not mean that they have the best-coordinated plans. (Sommers, 2000)

Several literatures have defined coordination from various perspectives. While there was a lot of literature that talks about or mentions coordination, there is not an agreed upon definition to draw from. It was hard to choose which definition to use for this study. A few definitions will be reviewed. The lack of a clear definition of what coordination means may present problems of

those involved in coordination to know what they are coordinating and how to go about it. Let's look at a few examples that stood out

1. One defines coordination based on how well resources are utilized "*Coordination is in sum the optimal use of resources and the optimal accountability for them.*"

(Donini, Antonio, 1996)

2. He goes further to look at definition based on several instruments and how well those instruments are monitored and defines coordination as

"the systematic utilization of policy instruments to deliver humanitarian assistance in a cohesive and effective manner. Such instruments include: (1) strategic planning; (2) gathering data and managing information; (3) mobilizing resources and assuring accountability; (4) orchestrating a functional division of labor in the field; (5) negotiating and maintaining a serviceable framework with host political authorities; and (6) providing leadership. Sensibly and sensitively employed, such instruments inject an element of discipline without unduly constraining action.

(Donini, 1996. p.g

The above two definitions looks at various operational concepts that needs to be looked from a policy level and assumes a rather top-down approach where one entity be it a person or organization, takes the responsibility to see how something somewhere else will be done through provision of good leadership...It assumes that if we have good policy that works and is used, then coordination will provide effective assistance and protection to vulnerable populations. This is all part of rhetoric as policy alone not accompanied by strategic action may take a long time to work if at all. The lack of involving others in the definition, where coordination is something done for another, usually the vulnerable tends to bring out hegemonic tendencies.

Other than definitions, coordination has also been classified and clustered in various ways. Some literature classifies it according to functions and is seen to be either strategic and or technical if. Strategic coordination is defined here as the coordination that looks at the leadership and clarification of roles of the humanitarian organizations and all other political leaders. Technical

coordination on the other hand looks at the actual running of programs. This binary classification serves to delineate rather than help in the coordination of the process where one is seen as separate from the other. It also assumes that if the strategic coordination is well laid out then technical/program coordination would also work out. The complex context in the field does not allow this.

The mammoth of literature on coordination is huge especially from a strategic coordination perspective. There have been strategies developed by the UN for the coordination purposes of the humanitarian wing. How well this has been done is still contested as the coordination challenge continues to be echoed in program reports. My argument however is not from a strategic coordination, but is more on the technical/program coordination on ground. Perhaps the problem is not that there is 'lack of coordination' as is often cited but that there is too much top heavy coordination and very little at program level

Coordination Issues involved in implementing education in Post-conflict scenarios

The challenges of working in post conflict countries are complex and vary from one country to another. Involved actors are concerned with the need for restoring peace, provision of basic amenities and needs and ensuring that human rights are respected so as to lead towards stability for the development of the country or nation. Aside these challenges and concerns characteristic in the rebuilding process or work towards recovering in post conflict settings, tensions between the different actors International actors and the host countries influences the relationships and operations in these context which further complicates implementation process. These tensions can be between the international agencies themselves or between International actors and host country actors at different level be it the community, governments

or the proxy governments/leaders which influences relationships and implementation of programs and ultimately complicating coordination efforts.

In this section I have tried to broadly look at three key tension issues that all actors contend with in post-conflict settings and how these issues impact their coordination efforts. The first issue is based on provision of resources or financing, the second revolves around the issues of politics at various levels, who controls what and has the power over whom, and finally the practical technical program issues that have to be considered. In an education program, these include issues to do with training, curriculum, design of programs and so on.

Financing tensions

You do not insult the hand that feeds you. (Swahili saying)

In post-conflict settings, financing the reconstruction processes is usually a priority to most actors. Different actors have to contend with the provision and utilization of resources for reconstruction and development. Tensions in resources are mainly three-fold, from the governments or non-state actors, from donors and different NGO's involved and from the communities. Careful considerations are undertaken when competing for resources so as not to insult the hand that feeds.

In post-conflict settings, the priority is in taking advantage of the peace so as the process of rebuilding and reconstruction of systems and education is often times seen due to its resilience as a major factor that hastens the process of reconstruction. (World Bank, 2005). That said, the lack of structures and systems including human personnel is a challenge for most donors as they require some sort of structure for accountability purposes. This means that in places such

as South-Sudan, funding is channeled through other organizations who take the responsibility to work with proxy-governments and provide the structure needed.

Governments or Non-state actors, emerging from conflict are concerned on how and where to get the resources they need for the reconstruction process without necessarily feeling that they are losing their autonomy. In many cases and for the above stated reasons, funding is usually channeled through other organizations and the governments or non-state actors are expected to work together. While this is often welcome the question of what the external sourcing of funds mean to a government's control in making policy versus the donor's pressure remains and hence the tension is unresolved. Even in cases where the donors expects the implementing partners to work with the governments or non-state actors, the hand that controls the purse is seen to rule and the bigger the purse, the tighter and bigger the control. The situation is further complicated in that each post-conflict context is different. Different actors in different settings have to come together and work out ways of prioritizing financial need and use for finances, address the question of availability of resources and the best use and management of those resources. What are the internal and external resources and how can those be made available and used? How can those resources be accessed and by who? Who takes the responsibility of accountability? Each step of the chain requires some accountability so as to report back, which also varies. A breakdown or delay in accountability chain may result to program delays and frustrations. Coordination of finances and or resources becomes very crucial and sensitive in such settings.

Even where funding is provided, the development prospect, requires communities to contribute towards the development project. The argument here is that if communities contribute towards

the development project, then they are more likely to own it and be obligated to be responsible for the project. Unlike in humanitarian provision, where in most cases resources are provided, this is sometimes a big shift for many communities who on one hand are poor and were used to receiving aid and are now expected to contribute. The binary definition between development and humanitarian is vague especially for communities. When exactly do we say that we have moved from relief to development, who defines that and how does that get communicated. In most cases, it is not the communities. So one day the community wakes up and shift has occurred and they are usually informed by well meaning NGO's and their local counterparts, usually in well-planned community mobilization that they are now in development stage and are expected to contribute. Sitting in one of these meetings in South Sudan, I will always remember an old man very annoyed telling us to go tell "them" that sent us that they were still hungry poor, and had nothing to contribute. The Old man didn't see the difference between relief and development or when the shift occurred.

While Education needs are in many contexts highly prioritized, it also has to compete with other social services and with other sectors such as security. (Ndaruhuste, 2004). Other than prioritizing, the sources of resources have to be considered. Reports indicate that even when funding is available, resources allocated towards Education sector remains weak, are slowly disbursed and tied within rigid bureaucracy that often frustrates and complicates education reconstruction. In South Sudan for example, by May 2007, of the USD 91.9 million funding for education pledged, only USD 7.7 million (8.4%) had been "allocated. One recent report noted that *"the funding of education fragmented, uncoordinated and at the mercy of fading interests"* (SCF report, 2007). On the other hand the donor community while willing to give is concerned with the cost-effectiveness use of the resources and accountability, especially in cases where

the capacity of the countries is not strong. In some cases especially in early reconstruction, funds is disbursed through International NGO's who are seen as having the capacity and capability to While the "demand" may prove weak and incapable, the "supply side" has its own challenges. Donors have been said to "repackage previously committed funds" (Patrick, 1998). Aid comes with 'strings attached' and is sometimes given based on their own political ideals and fiscal interests or those of the nations they represent. This coupled with poor coordination among the various donors, their ability to allocate funds to whichever projects they choose within a 'tight-grip', delay in disbursement of funds all contribute towards the challenges of financing in post-conflict settings. While the saying Swahili saying that one should not abuse the hand that feeds it, it is also true that when there are many hands competing to feed the same mouth in uncoordinated way, the results may be a more frustrated un-fed stomach unless the hands agree on how the feeding is to be done.

Political tensions

In discussing post-conflict politics, I will be looking at leadership issues based on who controls the various systems, be it the donor community the International NGOs and the community.

The proliferation of programs and projects by different actors in conflict and post-conflict settings brings with it the issues of leadership and competition of control. During one of my trips to South Sudan, as we started our descent to land, a colleague of mine described the NGO compounds as small "governments" enclosed in their compounds with guards at the gate.

While the statement may have been offered in jest, it got me thinking. The reality is that in their own small ways and unknowingly, the NGO's seemed to have created to themselves their own regions of operations within these spaces. Enclosed within the gates and walls were the NGOS politics and day-to-day protocols that governed them and others. To a large extent, the NGOs

control the resources and policies in conflict settings. The NGOs with the largest resources and programs, have a number of experience in terms of number of years, are seen as the organizations “in-charge” of the region. Even the small NGOs structure is in such ways that ultimately, work is done for a particular audience to please a particular entity alias the donor so as to ensure survival of the programs. Reports, decisions and resources are thus made and controlled “at a higher level” and usually in a different place. While I am not against this par se, I argue that, as the chain of transfer of power increases, the demand for better coordination should increase as well.

Technical/Program issues

By technical programming, I am looking at the day-to-day running the program issues, the content of the curriculum and the oversight of the whole program. Who makes the curriculum decisions, what is in the curriculum, how should the program look like, who is involved, who are the teachers and so on. Political issues, be it the politics among and between NGOs or the state providers usually affect the technical day to day program issues as well. For example, some programs may push towards the sector-wide approach, while another may decide that that is not relevant to their goals. This means that similar programs can have very different trainings based on the goals of the NGOs. One NGO may also look at the cost of implementation differently from another based on how much they have which may be different from another NGOs point of view and hence willingness to participate. Am I proposing for a uniform way of doing things? Not necessarily but that consideration of long term impact especially for sustainability purposes needs to take place. The over all goals and objectives of NGOs should at least be based on the national goals of the setting.

Summary of Coordination challenges faced by implementing actors in post conflict countries

Funding/AID in post conflict education:

- Funding initiatives in conflict and post conflict areas play major and defining roles in the way programs are implemented. While there is a lot of talk on sustainability of programs, implementation of programs to a large extent depends more on who the donors are and their mandates and expectations. One donor for example may only be willing to fund girls while another may be welcome to the flexibility of the context. NGOs are then left with the challenge of dealing with these constraints at the same time trying to compete for the resources.

Defining the type of response and

- Is it humanitarian/relief or development? The thin line that differentiates the two and the transition process may be clear to program developers' funders and policy maker but rarely is this well communicated with the people on ground. The terms hence remain a common jargon that NGO's use to a community members ears. On the other hand, this jargon of words has implication in terms of the length of funding and expectations to the communities and from donors. Most often these are not well communicated and understood and the community and the aid agencies are usually on two different footings, with the later, working hard to convince to former
- Even when the Aid agencies understand the terms, there is usually the confusion or transition from one to the other-how do we transition?

Overlapping mandate-Organizations histories and their mission

- Who are the organizations and what do they represent. Historically some of these organizations are either relief based, or religious and this plays a role in how they operate, where they get their funding and how that affects the work in the field. For example, some organizations work as relief organizations mainly rooted in religious beliefs and the shift from development from relief becomes a challenge.

Varying expectations and definition of roles

- Every actor comes with expectations of what they intend to do and how and the game of convincing the other the best-laid plans begins.
- NGOs see community as beneficiaries and not partners.

Ineffective oversight

- Lack of capacity and limited control by the governments. NGOs being the funders call the shots, everyone has a say in what is to be done and whoever controls the biggest pocket gets heard.
- Un-discussed varying degrees of expectations by all the different actors.

Global Initiatives in education (EFA, MDG,)

- Global initiatives have played a major push towards countries and NGO's policies and implementation of programs as these affect the funding mechanism for different organizations. Examples, girl's education, EFA, MDGs, and the current issues on Fragile states.

In the next chapter we shall begin addressing some of these challenges as experienced in the case study selected.

CHAPTER 3

THE CASE STUDY

Analysis of the CGS in South Sudan

In this chapter, we shall begin taking a closer look at the Community Girls School programs, here in referred to as CGS. I need to clarify that there were over 400 confirmed Community Girls' Schools operating between the years 2002-2006 (Ayite & Dabi 2006). However, some of the schools were not verified. During this period, the International NGO's with the help of the Secretariat of Education managed most of the schools. While the uniqueness of each region cannot be under pinned, the structure and management of the schools was generally the same. I have made several references to all the CGS schools operating during this period in south Sudan mainly due to its common unique qualities that operated in most of the schools. However, I need to clarify that while reference is made about all the schools, specific examples in some cases are mainly drawn from the cluster of schools that were managed under the Alternative/Non Formal Education within the USAID funded project the Sudan Basic Education Program (SBEP). This is based on the availability of data and familiarity of the specific schools. This chapter to a large extent, looks at the overall operation and management of the schools and actors involved and not the specific schools. Where special reference to specific schools will be used as examples to stress certain points, footnotes of the details will be provided.

Rationale for Selecting the Case Study

The decision to use the case study was derived from its unique characteristics of place, the timing, the actors involved and the already available data. To begin with the unique context and setting of the study is within a time period where the South Sudan was characterized as

Post-Conflict region, in preparation for transition. The schools were located in areas where there was relative safety under the proxy governance of the SPLM/SPLA.

The schools as we shall see later were initiated by International organizations as a respond to education needs in a post-conflict setting. Hence the case study is an example of the alternative models that are used in post conflict settings so as to address various needs in education. Alternative programs have continued to be encouraged as a way of addressing issues of access, equity and quality in basic education in such settings and have become popular within the International NGO and other education actors. Given their flexibility, education is looked at from different angles by different actors using different goals and objectives.

Other than its locations, there was a range of different actors involved from different donors, International organization, and the humanitarian wing under UNICEF and communities that varied from region to region. This also meant that the goals, objectives and methods of implementing differed.

Finally resources were also availed from different channels, demanded for different reasons and used to a large extent differently. While there were insinuations of working together, the case study provides a perfect mixture of challenges involved in implementing programs by several actors in complex situations. Over time, we have seen many organizations coming together to work either in a consortium or in clusters or under big umbrellas such as the INEE. While these are important steps towards working together for mutual understanding, the challenges involved cannot be ignored. The aim of this case study is to bring out some of

these challenges that are experienced in such circumstances and perhaps provide some recommendations towards the need to reconsider coordination issues in implementing programs.

Background and History of Establishing CGS in South Sudan

Community Girls schools were seen as a key component of the Education Policy of the Secretariat of Education, that among other things strongly advocates for Education as the right of every child regardless of ethnicity, culture, and gender, religious and socio-economic status. Different assessment reports show that girls have been most affected by the war. Of the 30% children enrolled in primary schools 26% were girls, a percentage that continues to decrease as one move to higher grades. (AET/UNICEF School baseline Assessment report 2003). This led to several initiatives to try and bridge this gender gap.

The first initiative was from UNICEF who proposed a visit to Bangladesh to see the BRAC School in 2000 by several officials from South Sudan. After the visit, the BRAC model was seen as an ideal model to borrow for the south Sudan setting as it was seen as a cheaper way to encourage the community to run schools and specifically address the girl's education problem. I need to point out here that while the idea of borrowing and learning from others may not be avoided for several reasons; the complexity of borrowing programs needs not to be ignored despite the "urgency" used in justifying rushed programs. For example, in borrowing BRAC for the south Sudan context, question such as: what makes the BRAC model thrive in Bangladesh? What support mechanisms are in place for support systems, management, finances and how would it differ in a place like south Sudan? What difference would it make to do without or have different support system, how would that look like and

most importantly who would take responsibility of not just initial financing but offering support system as well?

Rationale for establishing the CGS in south Sudan

With an approximate of 1.6 million south Sudanese children out of school due to the conflict setting, lack of infrastructure, girls are the most affected. Access to schools due to distance, lack of infrastructure, cultural practices such as early marriages and the need for girls especially to work at home were factors among many that the girls have to contend with. The latest report done by MOEST and UNICEF shows that despite efforts by many International NGOS, this situation has not really improved. The Rapid Assessment of Learning Spaces (RALS 2006) done by UNICEF and MOEST shows that out of the 758,207 students enrolled in 2922 learning spaces, 34% are girls and only 1% of these girls complete their primary education.(RALS report. 2006. pg 6-7). Students have to travel distances ranging from 2.7km to 6.9kms depending on the region (pg 41). With such dismal figures, all efforts for alternatives to education are welcome.

Policy dimensions The Secretariat of Education (SOE) official representatives who visited the BRAC School so liked the program that they decided to adapt it to the south Sudanese context. This led to the establishment of the first schools by UNICEF in the Bahr –el-Ghazal region in 2001. The officials believed the model was relevant, cheap and suitable for the south Sudanese context and created a department within its structure for the CGS establishment. The Secretariat believed in these schools and the program to address on of their Education goals which states that, “Education shall be right of all children and shall not be discriminated upon by gender, region or ethnicity.” (SOE unpublished doc). CGS came to be referred to as

“the SOE baby”. Given that the SOE did not have the resources available, the mandate to implement was left to the International organizations. By the year 2005, mainly UNICEF and Sudan Basic Education Program as the International NGO’s with the support of the SOE facilitated CGS programs. Later UNICEF subcontracted to other NGOs for implementation. By 2005, there were more than 252 community girls’ schools were established in Bahr-el-Ghazal, Western Equatorial and Upper Nile regions. A total of 8102 children were enrolled, (98% girls), 278 teachers trained and 53 Field education officers assisting in the support of the teachers. (Ayite & Dabi report). The organizations relied on the communities for the success of the schools and a lot of community mobilizations efforts had to be put in place to sell the idea to the communities and get them involved.

The establishment of the community girl’s schools has the full support and recognition of the ministry. Local authorities and the communities are involved in mapping out and selecting the villages and sites for the schools. The ministry officials oversee and approve the curriculum developed by a group of Sudanese led by a consultant hired by the secretariat but paid by SBEP and UNICEF. The NGOs provides a humble one-time grant of 200 US dollars for school to support the initial constructions and does all the capacity building and training. Coordination meetings are held at least thrice a year between the government and the NGOs. Reporting is mainly the NGOs responsibility. However, very little is done by the ministry to ensure quality of the schools. The NGOs are limited by financial constraint and their visions. Management of the schools is left to the communities who are poor and stretched.

Ideological dimension One may wonder why in a place like south Sudan, where reconstruction and development was in the process there needs to be a CGS. Why not just

build formal schools? Why girls alone and not boys? Are boys not part of the “all” in the Education for all goals? These were some contentious issues that created basis for discussions and debates with different groups. In some places the communities allowed a certain percentage of boys in the schools even though the schools were meant solely for girls. The unique opportunities and element of choice given to the communities is one of the unique characteristics of the formal schools. Previous history of an authoritarian regime where schools had to follow the set system, down to prescribing Arabic as a language, the opportunity to decide was seen as empowering.

The CGS model was designed to equip the girls with basic literacy skills and thus empower and prepare the girls for the future .The model more or less falls under the disadvantage paradigms as described by Rogers (2004). Though the NGOs are the implementers, not much was budgeted for the schools as they were labeled “cost effective” by the SOE officials and the NGOS at the beginning. SBEP for example, saw its major role in supporting the communities to establish the schools by building the capacity of the community and teachers. Communities were expected to be self-reliant, manage and run the schools using the locally available resources. This however did not work very well and contributed to the challenges faced as we shall see later. Too much expectation and support drained the communities that were used to educational services being provided fro free and while they were eager to do their part, keeping up this motivation amidst poverty and other demands proved to be a challenge. The MOEST on the other hand controls the schools by recognizing and creating room for alternative approaches to addressing diverse educational needs and is also in charge of overall monitoring through the County education centers. It also monitors NGOs that are implementing and structuring the curriculum. However, the ministry allows spaces for

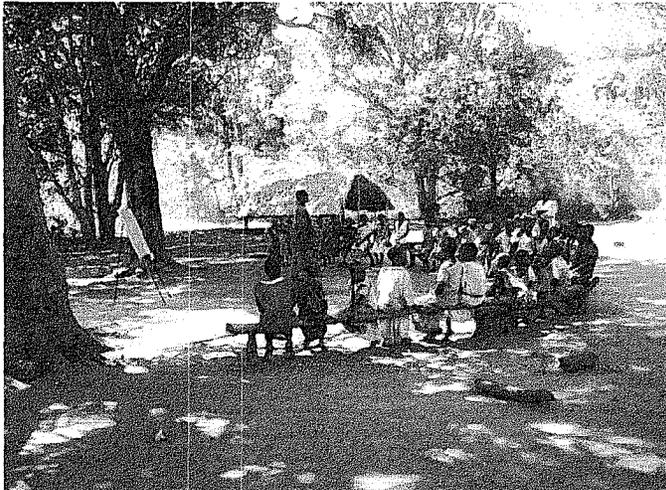
communities to make decisions, recruit teachers locally and adapt the use of mother tongue among others.

Analysis of the Learning Environment

In his book “teaching with the brain in mind” 2005, Jensen discusses the effect the physical environment has on students. Issues to do with space, seating arrangement, light among other things can and do affect the brain and learning. In designing the CGS, issues such as space, distance and seating arrangement were considered as described below. In this section, we shall take a closer look at some of these conditions necessary to learning, such as the environment, financing, and management.

Physical Structure: One of the roles of the community was to provide a learning space and construct a one-roomed class with locally available resources. This was one way that the implementing NGOs saw as a crucial strategy for the communities to own the schools.

Despite efforts to work with the community to provide a one-room structure, construction and



maintenance continued to be a challenge.

The communities either were stretched too thin by other activities to afford a one roomed structure, or given their previous experiences where schools were the responsibility of the government did not see it as part of their responsibility to

build schools, especially given that it was for girls. In some cases there were no schools available for several miles and the community argued for a better bigger school in the name of development even if it was to be for girls only rather than a one roomed structure. The idea of

a temporary structure or a semi-permanent structure did not sell. To the community members, the visibility of a brick constructed school meant true development. Hence in some cases, classes continued to be conducted under trees and classes postponed during the rainy seasons. This also meant that there were no places to display learning materials or store them and eventually the teachers gave up making them. The metal boxes provided by SBEP to store classroom materials ended up in many cases stored in teachers' homes and eventually disappeared.

Proximity to school and Flexibility of Time For parents to accept to send their girls to school, the environment had to offer a sense of safety in terms of distance and convenience. Parents were not comfortable to send their small girls to schools not only because of the insecurity on the way but most of them felt that it was a waste of precious time when the girls could have been at home doing other chores. The proximity of the school meant that the girls were near and would be home after three hours. The community discussed and decided on the timings. Some schools started early mornings while others chose the afternoon sessions. Timing in some schools would also change especially during the rainy seasons and harvest times. The flexibility to the time when the school would take place meant that the girls had a block and of time where they could learn uninterrupted.

Locally recruited Teachers and training: the community selects Teachers with at least a grade six education, preferably female and married, from the locality. In Western Equatorial region, SBEP and the communities agreed to have two teachers rather than one per school. Selection of the teachers by the community meant that the parents choose someone familiar whom they felt comfortable to entrust their girls to and who usually was someone more

learned than majority in the community and hence a role model for the girls. In most cases the teachers had not been trained. They went through a basic introductory training course for two weeks and met once a month with other teachers for refresher trainings. Teachers were also supported with basic allowance of 15usd per month paid by the NGO. Supervision of teachers was by the community and the Field education officers who were trained to assist the teachers with technical teaching issues such as day to day classroom management and lessons they had difficulty in. the FEO's were to visit each school at least twice a week. Distance between each school and weather made this impractical. Given that their communities locally selected the teachers most of them felt a sense of duty to their community and the girls and were hence usually very motivated despite the continuous everyday challenges they faced. The fact that they had to report to their own people made them feel responsible, dedicated and innovative. The fact that they were not certified trained teachers also meant that they valued the time they shared with their supervisors and with each other. This continuous flow of feedback between the teachers and the Field education supervisors and the community helped to structure the training needs held monthly to deal with major issues.

Students and assessment: Each community school was structured to have 30 girls aged 7-11 years old. This was discussed with the community and the criteria agreed upon. The U-shaped seating arrangement was recommended as seen in the BRAC model. In cases where they had too many children, the class was always spilt into two to create space. Teachers are encouraged to continually assess the learners in class and give feedback. The teachers developed most assessments. With automatic promotion to the next grade, the teachers learned to see assessment as a way of providing feedback to the girls and their parents and not a way of selecting out students. This helped to promote cooperative learning where learners

worked together and teachers helped individual students who had difficulties. This was not automatic but a result of a process from training with teachers and the Field Education Officer.

CGS Curriculum and provision of learning materials: Given that the Secretariat was in favor of the schools, curriculum issues were seriously considered and given priority. A consultant was hired from Kenya, to help in designing and developing a culturally appropriate curriculum. The curriculum was based on the New Sudan primary school curriculum and accelerated to cover four years of education in three. Life-skills issues identified by the SOE were to be incorporated. The rationale was to equip the girls with important life skills they would find useful if for some reasons they were not able to continue into primary schools. Issues such as peace education and conflict resolution, HIV/AIDS, health education and proper nutrition were incorporated. Instructional teaching and learning materials for the learners were also provided and teachers trained to use and make learning materials such as cloth calendars, pictures and others materials that they thought would help and also to make teaching and learning materials from the environment.

Preparatory Phase; When the schools began, there was a preparatory phase for two months. The girls and the teachers used this time to orient the girls to the idea of being in school. During this time basic writing skills through drawings on the ground with sticks, story telling, games songs and counting using sticks and seeds were part of the curriculum. The objective of the simulations, exploration games and the use of locally available materials as manipulative were to promote cooperative learning and create a safe space for the girls to learn. Books and writing materials were introduced after the two months even though many

people, including the parents and the teachers, would have wanted to have the materials earlier.

Training: Training of teachers was a crucial component of the CGS. Initially teachers were given two weeks intensive short orientation training and thereafter-monthly refresher trainings. These were meant to serve as meeting points, training and reflective times for all the teachers within a given region. However very little reflection was done and a lot of time was spent on management and problem solving issues. The idea of reflective practice being foreign was hardly ever practiced and over time was forgotten.

During the training active learning and learner centered practices were introduced and emphasized continuously to the teachers. In reality however, the gap between what happened in training sessions and in class continued to be seen. Teachers continuously struggled with what they had always known or were taught in and the “new ways’ of teaching was totally foreign to them and hard to envision. Previous behaviorist ways of teachings, that most teachers had been taught in and knew, where the teacher was the informer and the good student the silent recipient, was hard to do away with. Teachers, who had previous teaching experience, had an even harder time in trying to use learner centered practices. As one consultant observed,

“Despite the emphasis in the training on interactive teaching methods and child-centered activities, and the provision of materials such as a cloth ‘wall calendar’, the lessons observed were traditional blackboard work; the teacher wrote on the blackboard and had the students copy into their exercise books.” (Jackie Kirk consultants report 2004).

Classroom management and discipline The seating arrangement was mostly U-shaped or in small groups under trees. The presence of the small girls with their baby sisters or brothers on their backs or somewhere nearby in class made class management a tricky issue. This being a common practice, teachers had to learn to teach the girls despite the occasional interruption of babies crying. It was worth noting however how the children would cooperate to help keep the babies together and tend them together as learning continued. Discipline was hardly an issue as teachers and the pupils all knew each other. This was coupled with the cultural imbedded ideas of who the teacher is in the eyes of the child and the society, as the figure in front with a stick or some sort of authority. A teacher became more respected if they could make learners keep quiet with just a look or command some sort of respect and awe. While it is worth noting that corporal punishment was not common, punishment either verbally or embarrassing was not unusual. In most cases children feared being reported to their parents. Culturally the children having grown up with the idea of who a teacher is in the eyes of the society accorded that respect.

Despite these challenges the fact that the teachers were selected by the communities and well known by the children and the parents and vice versa worked well to reduce what I would call the student- teachers fear factor

The friendly environment was in many cases a boost especially where the teachers were women.

Analysis of the Support Environment

The importance of having a support system in alternative programs cannot be overemphasized. Indeed, it is one of the many reasons often attributed to the success of BRAC community schools. This has been accomplished by ensuring success through

providing a service delivery mechanism, community technical support, details to management issues and provision of finance. (EQUIP 2. pg. 2. 2006.)

For South Sudan, different support mechanism structures had to be put in place so as to ensure that the schools continued to operate. Here we shall take a closer look at the different support mechanisms provided for these schools.

Staffing, Supervision and Monitoring As the NGOS implementing and funding most of the activities of the CGS, UNICEF and SBEP supervised the school directly and reported to MOEST. The community recruited the teachers, who were paid by UNICEF or SBEP and the County Education Officer and the NGO involved interviewed and recruited the Field Education Officer. The role of the FEO's was to supervise at least 5- 8 schools. The main role of the FEO's was to mentor and train teachers. Other roles included working together with the SMC's in supervising and managing the schools. To enable FEO's performed their duties effectively, they had to undergo a management training organized by the NGO's. A total of 53 FEO's were trained. It is important to note here that the FEO's were a crucial link between the girls' schools, the communities through the SMC's, the education administration (the County education centers) and the NGOs. The FEO's often sat in the committee meetings and with time the teachers and the community members saw the FEO's as part of their school. This relationship created a free environment where issues were openly discussed and acted on or referred where need be.

The role of the community Given that these schools were structured to be managed by the communities, the role of communities in establishing the CGS was emphasized during community mobilizations done by the International Organizations responsible. The schools were marketed as Community owned schools with minimal support from implementing NGO.

To begin with, different members of communities were asked to volunteer learning spaces as one of their contributions towards the school. Different communities provided temporary learning spaces from churches to village meeting places and later more permanent places for the construction of the schools. At the beginning of the meetings, different members of the communities played the role of selecting teachers based on the set criteria by the NGOs and the SOE. A school management committee (SMC) was then formed. Two parents, the village elder, two women and the selected teachers formed this committee. The School Management Committees (SMC) are answerable to the education administrator at the SOE payam level who in turn works with the field education officer at the county level, and reports to the County Education Officer and in most cases the NGO helping to support the program.

The role of the committee was to provide orderly and coordinated administrative support to the community girls' schools and act as a link between the schools the communities and the county education office. Responsibilities included overseeing the construction with locally available resource of the learning centers, supervisory and evaluation roles of the teachers including the disciplinary role where necessary.

In many cases where the SMCs were active and involved, the schools not only functioned well but also performed better. Teachers felt supported and motivated and innovations and creativity of improving the schools was seen. This however was not the case where the SMCs were lax. In one school for example the community came together to grow sorghum for the school and help repair the school center, while another community took as long as two years just to construct a school.

Partnerships

The running of the community girls' schools involved different partners at different levels. The communities provided the space for learning, helped recruit teachers and manage the schools. The Education office at the county level assisted in selecting the FEO and the NGO's assisted the communities in building the schools by providing subsidized grant of USD 200 for each school; training teachers, SMC's and FEO's, and paying teachers and FEO's. A good point to note here is that, given that the NGOs provided financial support, the tendency to rely on the NGO was high. There was pressure on the NGOs from the donors to scale up and reduce cost and this was a challenge on the part of the NGOs. The communities felt that the international NGO's had money and could do more while on the other hand the donors argued that the costs of the schools were too high and should be reduced. This often times caused tensions with the different partners and made the running of the schools difficult.

Financing

As mentioned earlier funds came exclusively from SBEP as financed by USAID and UNICEF. Teachers were paid a lunch allowance of USD 15 per month during refresher trainings, which were conducted every month. The amount differed from one organization to another and became one issue of contention among teachers and NGOs. The pay is one example where the development terms of some NGOs did not mandate the paying of teachers which was termed as a "government responsibility". On the other hand, the government clearly did not have the resources or the means. Even where the amount was given the allowance was called "lunch money" to accommodate the restriction within the contractual obligation. The community saw this as rather hypocritical and accused the NGOs of being mean and their government removed from reality. *"Where do they (NGO) expect the*

government to get the money? They have too much right now. Even the soldiers have not been paid leave alone teachers. You the NGOs have money.” (CGS Community leader) Organizing and running costs for all trainings were also financed by the NGOs. Each community was given USD200 to help in building a semi-structure. This money was an attempt to hasten the building process and also practically help the SMC’s in simple financial management. This later on proved to be a challenge on two levels: firstly, the communities’ felt that the maintenance of the center was the role of the NGOs and not theirs and secondly, this did not in many cases hasten the building process as envisioned it would.

In a meeting held between the implementing NGOS (UNICEF and SBEP) and the MOEST, the initial cost of the school for the first year was calculated to be \$67, much higher than the \$42 per pupil at primary schools. (CGSP review meeting report 2004)

Analysis of the Case Study

The task of implementing CGS in south Sudan involved various partners and given the complexity of the context, initial efforts and challenges were addressed on isolated basis based on the implementing NGO’s priorities and set objectives for the schools. It was not until later as more NGOs became involved and continual pressure from SOE for organizations to work with the ministry that coordination meetings were organized. These even then were usually ad hoc and depended on the leading NGOs in Alternative Education to take lead. CGS was seen as part of the Alternative Education System. In the meetings however, issues to do with CGS were usually glossed over as other ‘important’ programs were discussed. In many of these meetings, the challenges faced by CGS were usually mentioned but discussions on how to go about this rarely happened. This discussion became a raw sore with SOE unmoving, and SBEP stress on quality and effectiveness of the programs. Caught between

contractual obligation and compromises of quality with low funds, SBEP for example decided to maintain the status quo without expansion of programs.

For the four years since the programs started running the first CGS meeting was held in June 2005. Given the location and timing, the attendance included participants not directly involved in CGS and knew nothing about the schools. This meant that time was first spent orienting the large group of people on what CGS was, the rationale and all, most of who were not interested. While the minutes show that crucial discussions took place, the decisions made were vague, unrealistic and unachievable. It is no wonder that the impact of the meeting was felt financially but not so much when it came to programs implementations.

On the issue regarding CGSP graduates completing G.3 future support

The discussants proposed

Construction of girls' upper primary schools in every payam (local district) by community with support from implementing agency before the end of 2005 or early 2006

Printing of CGSP pupils' text books (Upper Classes) by supporting agencies before the end of 2005

Recruitment of teachers for those schools the preference to be given to female teachers. Those model schools should be boarding. WFP and other agencies can support those schools with food and other boarding facilities.

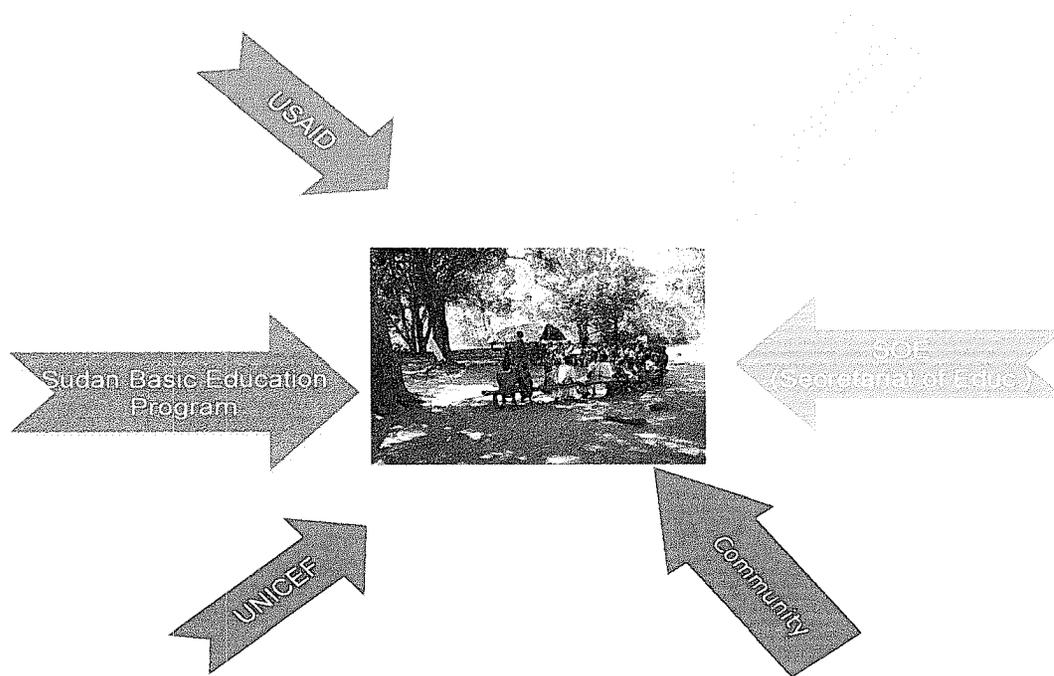
Supplies of schools uniforms for those girls in upper primary classes

Water and first aids facilities i.e. PHCU

(Sample taken from the minutes held in 2005 CGS coordination meeting.)

The schools on the other hand were a great attraction for girls and to the NGOS an easy access to reach girls. One consultant saw the schools as “a bait” to get funding and did not really believe in the schools strategy or see their future. “You want money you quote CGS and the numbers will get you money. That’s the language to use.” (Consultant for CGS curriculum). In the next section, we shall begin to take a brief closer look at the key actors involved in implementing CGS in south Sudan.

Actors involved



USAID

USAID is one of the major donors to education and one of the major donors to education in South Sudan. As a development agency, the agency was the first to commit funds over 20million US dollars towards education for development and reconstruction in South Sudan through a consortium of organizations led by CARE along with AIR and the Center for International Education at the University of Massachusetts, Amherst. USAID believes strategic investment in education has value not just in economic development but also in the development of democratic institutions, a healthy nation and ultimately contributes to the national security of the country (Fiske & Foster, 2005). The Agency works hard towards eliminating barriers to education especially of marginalized groups by working towards improving access, equity and quality of education. (Fiske & Foster, 2005).

In south Sudan, USAID Strategic Objective concerns were on access and equitable quality basic education. The performance towards these objectives was monitored under three Intermediate Results, IR. The community girl's schools were specifically under IR 3.1 "Improved Non-Formal Education for out of school youth and adults by developing community based literacy and vocational skills programs." The importance of the schools was also occasionally mentioned under IR2 that stated "Increased Capacity of primary schools to deliver quality education especially for girls. (PMP-SBEP, south Sudan. 2003.)

While the commitment to girls' education was unquestionable, CGS was not afforded the same commitment in terms of resources and support, even though results were expected. This compounded the implementation challenges as well as any coordination efforts needed. As one staff commented,

"Although programming in support of girls education gender was high on the agenda, the CGS program did not enjoy enthusiastic support from USAID over the long-term." SBEP staff interview.

SBEP

The Sudan Basic Education Program was consortium of three main organizations namely; CARE as the lead, AIR and CIE-UMass. SBEP main task was to work with the SOE to develop the basic education system for the south Sudan. As an implementing body, the three organizations worked together under incredible challenges to meet the USAID and SOE objectives at the same time trying to ensure that as the organizations entrusted with the program, quality issues were not compromised. Caught between the demands from the donors, contractual obligations, SOE and community expectations, decision-making were not

always an easy thing. The question of whether to increase the numbers of school over quality and contextual issues and demands such as the fact that both boys and girls needed schools became one of the issues to consider. While on one hand, SOE insisted on the need for the programs, USAID demanded the numbers promised in the contractual obligation, SBEP tried to reason over the issues of costs and quality both of which were hugely being compromised. With time, CGS was like a “sore” to be dealt with.

Aside the 20 million dollars from USAID, SBEP managed other programs like the AGSP (Ambassadors Girls Scholarship Program) whose main objective was to support girls' education. The program was initiated in 2005. It was expected that through this program, the CGS girls would also benefit from the scholarships and peer counseling. Books on HIV/AIDS were written and diaries that were supposed to benefit the girls published. The efforts were uncoordinated and for a program that was always competing for funds, some of the activities were not important. Distributing the diaries and books on HIV/AIDS became difficult as what teachers and communities needed were textbooks pays and not materials they could not understand. Field officers tired of being criticized refused to take the materials to schools. By the time SBEP contract was ending in 2006, funds were yet to be disbursed to school.

UNICEF

UNICEF as a way of addressing access to girls' education initiated CGS. The assumption was that given some similarities in context, such as low resource area, need to involve the community among others, BRAC model would work in south Sudan. UNICEF funded a trip with key SOE stakeholders to Bangladesh as an educational trip. The results were that the SOE adapted the BRAC model for the south Sudan context. UNICEF major role was that of an initiator after which they handed over to the community and offered minimal support.

Initial support was given to train supervisors by consultants from BRAC in Bangladesh, some one time initial stipend to help put up a structure and later supporting the teachers' stipend. UNICEF continued to be involved from a distance by subcontracting the projects to small NGOs and handed over some of the schools to the County education Officers who with no resources and low human capacity could do so much.

The Secretariat of Education and the Community

Despite the war, the SPLM movement has always been in support of education and had established the education unit ran by the SOE. Given that they had little technical expertise and no financial support, they mainly relied on the NGO's for support. (Deng, 2003). This however does not mean that they had no manpower, while they lacked financial support; they were beginning to put in place systems and policies in preparation for the peace. This sometimes meant that they were in loggerheads with the NGOs who had been operating independently. Delay brought about by bureaucracies between the Non-state actors and NGOS became a common challenge through out the program. In one of the interviews on of the official remarked that '... these NGO's sometimes they do what they want.'"

Coordinating for example curriculum writing took longer than was envisioned. The first cohort for example saw the books when they were in their third grade.

The communities were also an active part in implementing the CGS as they were to be the managers for these programs. A lot has been discussed earlier on their expected involvement. I need to point out here that there was a lot of expectation from the community on the NGO's and from the NGO's on the community. The community had heard that 20 million dollars had been given towards education and they didn't understand why they had to contribute to build

the schools given especially that they were poor. This added to the coordination challenges with the communities.

Analysis of Actors involved

This section will summarize the role played by the different actors based on the following
Their major roles in the CGS (funders, implementers, technical expertise) and their contributions and expertise (political, financial, technical) Their main mandate as an organization, what they proposed as their main objective and saw as their responsibility and hence their commitment in terms of what they were looking for and working towards and finally

What was at stake, if they did not accomplish their roles and what strategy did they use and finally

The challenges and concerns that each of these actors had.

Actors Role and Mandate	At stake	Strategy	Challenge/Concern
<p>USAID-Donor</p> <p>Equity, Access and Quality of girls education</p> <p>Accountability of Funds</p> <p>Deliverables: Quantity of schools and the Number of girls enrolled.</p>	<p>Cost effectiveness of resources committed</p> <p>Contractual Obligations-reports</p>	<p>Impose strict conditions</p> <p>Earmark resources</p> <p>Follow up of target results</p>	<p>Detached from field reality</p> <p>Not flexible</p> <p>Concerned more about target and numbers than quality</p>
<p>SOE- Government Policy and goals, implementers</p> <p>Equity, Access, quality of girls education</p> <p>Policy and goals of education</p> <p>Politics of South Sudanese Education</p>	<p>South Sudanese education</p> <p>Coherence amongst many actors</p> <p>Their authority is not usurped</p> <p>Their goals are implemented</p>	<p>Impose conditions and try to provide structure in terms of where to work and with who</p> <p>Rely on NGO's especially for funds & technical support</p> <p>Mandate and approve all materials such as curriculum</p>	<p>Lack of capacity and resources</p> <p>Geographical Challenge hence detached from day-to-day reality</p> <p>Mainly Recognized through NGO's</p> <p>Politics of scale –up due to needs, demands and political purposes yet without resources</p> <p>Slow bureaucratic NGO's</p>
<p>SBEP-NGO- implementer, technical expertise,</p>	<p>Contractual obligation with donors, SOE and</p>	<p>Work closely with the SOE and community to implement and discuss alternative</p>	<p>Rigid policies with no room for flexibility</p>

Actors Role and Mandate	At stake	Strategy	Challenge/Concern
Equity, Access, quality of girls education	<p>community</p> <p>The quality of girls education for both boys and girls</p>	<p>strategies</p> <p>Limit the scale up of schools and contain the number of schools to what was already started</p> <p>Support as few schools as possible and avoid further commitment of funds</p> <p>Concentrate on other alternatives such as the ALP</p> <p>Commit funds to finishing the books</p>	<p>Quality concern over a poor adaptation of BRAC model</p> <p>Hesitant commitment of funds for</p> <p>Community, SOE and donor demands without much financial support</p>
<p>UNICEF- Initiators, donors and technical support</p> <p>Equity, Access of girls education</p>	<p>As an initiator, the success of the BRAC model was at stake</p> <p>Number of girls attending schools</p> <p>Donor obligations</p>	<p>Work with the community to help in the initial start up then hand over management to community</p> <p>Fund consultants from BRAC to come and train south Sudanese supervisors</p>	<p>Concerned about the costs of the schools</p> <p>Concerned over the sustenance of the schools beyond the third grade.</p>

Summary Analysis of Coordination Issues

The major thrust of this case study was to look at coordinating around technical programming and the summary will mainly look at that. However, it is worth mentioning that poor coordination and agreement over resources among the NGOs cannot be overlooked. Simple issues such as the cost of schools, writing materials and who would do them were rarely agreed upon and the NGOs that seemed to have the largest pool of money was assumed to take lead. This back and forth led to delays in program implementation. Each NGO did what they wanted and claimed to know best in their own way, much to the chagrin of the SOE who with limited resources could not do much.

Political factors including tensions around who was the final decision maker, how programs were to be organized and managed differed largely based on who was calling the shots and where the NGOs got their funding from. When it came to decision making on the program, those that controlled the largest purse and influenced how decisions were made. That there were more than one, made the decision making fickle. On one hand we had UNICEF, the mother of the project, and SBEP, very involved and working closely with the SOE as mandated but frustrated by the daily oversight and technical issues that compromised tensions, yet bound by a contractual obligation. SOE on the other hand, was seen as the final buck stopper. However, with the challenge of money, other pressures, completely relying on NGOs to implement and unmoving from the ideal of a CGS

Actors Role and Mandate	At stake	Strategy	Challenge/Concern
<p>COMMUNITY-Implementers, managers,</p> <p>Concerned over the over all education of their children both boys and girls.</p>	<p>Given that these were girls schools, boys education was at stake</p> <p>Preserving their cultures Lagging behind in education and hence missing out of its privileges</p>	<p>Given that NGOs are temporary, get as much as you can from them, hence most demanded full brick schools and not temporary buildings Have both boys and girls in schools</p>	<p>Too much expected from them in terms of contribution of their time, and resources.</p> <p>Lack of financial and human resources as demanded by the NGOs such as female teachers</p> <p>Did not understand the roles of the government or NGOs</p>
<p>Others-EDC, AGSP-donors and implementers</p> <p>Access to girls education-AGSP</p> <p>Access and Quality of education through alternative media-EDC</p>	<p>Contractual obligations and the success of their programs</p> <p>Number of girls accessing education</p>	<p>Take advantage of the existing schools to encourage others to come and hence increase the number of girls attending classes</p> <p>Train teachers, supervisors and trainers to assist the girls</p>	<p>Language barrier. Most of the programs were written in English coupled with Para-teachers who had difficulty in following and translating the radio programs</p>

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different NGOs implemented according to their small resources. Decisions from the SOE wavered between the two and rarely were something agreed upon. The textbook case is a good example. The curriculum was developed twice and it took more than three years for the books to be printed. The decision of who was to take up the task was assumed and not clearly articulated. When this was resolved, one organization backed out as they printing of books were not part of the agenda. Seen as an easy scale up, and easy way to count gender numbers, the CGS continued to be maintained as solutions were sought rarely approaching the ground for alternatives approaches beyond individual NGOs environments.

Technical issues

Given that there were many organizations involved in implementing the program, we shall take a closer look at how coordination efforts were organized and carried out, who was involved and outcomes that came from these meetings. Based on experience and reports that came from the interviews, the coordination of NFE programs among the involved actors was accomplished chiefly through bi-annual AES meetings, where CGS was one of the agenda as an AES program. These meetings generally included representatives of SOE and implementing agencies. As one representative put it, *'but rarely (if ever), in my experience, did coordination meetings include representatives from beneficiary communities or donor agencies.'*

(Interviewee)

The meetings were dependent on availability and priorities of the principle implementer and financers of the AES meeting namely SBEP, SCFUK and occasionally UNICEF. It was not rare to have the meetings cancelled or postponed. Very little occurred in these meetings beyond a summary of activities from each partner, and what they intended to do. The purpose of these meetings was ostensibly to share information and take action to improve programs. Given that CGS was not a high priority, little outcome if any came from these meetings. The general tone of the meeting was not very positive as each implementing agency felt that donor support of the CGS was lukewarm and that continued support was in question.

The result was that the key implementer, UNICEF and SBEP continued to work independently and with occasional sharing of information where necessary. The schools lacked clear direction as to what was to happen next, quality was affected as the costs continued to be incurred. Technical issues such as transitions of the girls who had completed third grade to join the primary school were rarely discussed. Since none of the organizations were willing to commit further funding to the improvement of the schools, the SOE put its foot down and demand that the NGOs take the responsibility and commit to finishing the CGS curriculum and print the books. The task fell to SBEP who were doing the curriculum writing of all the AES books despite the fact there were no resources allocated for the curriculum design for CGS.

No one at some point knew exactly when and where the graduates of the school would continue and join the primary schools. Each region or state performed its own evaluation and continued to count the numbers. This defeated the purpose of the coordination meetings.

The community was not involved in these meetings or the FEO's. Sometimes given the location, the nearest official or representative would be sent for the meeting to report on the 'progress' of the schools.

Given this context, I look at coordination as a continuous process and not an end to itself. The process of coming together of all the actors involved in implementing a program so as to share, integrate information that will lead to actions that will positively effect resource allocation, planning, implementation and evaluation of programs, thus creating synergies of best practice. This means that, actors come together to strategically plan not just on who will do what when, but also resource allocation given the specific Post-Conflict context.

Based on the interviews and discussion from various interviewees from the case study, the following coordination issues were cited as contributing to coordination failure

- Coordination efforts often do not include all stakeholders. In most cases, coordination meetings are held between what is called "key stake holders"

which in most cases can be translated to mean ‘key donors’ the controllers of the purse. This often overlooks and undermines other actors especially the community who are supposed to be the real managers of these schools. While there appears to be strategies and frameworks developed to help in coordination, these are rarely translated at field level.

- Coordination efforts are not always done concurrently at all levels among donors, implementers, and beneficiaries, as they are dependent on the priorities of these agencies. Some of these agencies and donors see the role of coordination as not key to their overall program and a waste of time.
- Coordination rhetoric is often incorporated into programs, but not mechanism for achieving unity of action.
- Coordination efforts often commence after projects are well under way and stakeholders have already invested significant time, resources and effort in “their way of doing things” and are reluctant to change or consider flexibility

CHAPTER 4

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The reality and challenges of implementing programs in Post-Conflict areas cannot be underscored. All actors involved are faced with the challenge of working in not just new programs but the context. In many cases, coordination efforts have been translated to mean more meetings usually attended by the coordinators of the projects. While these efforts are important, they demand time and resources as well and if not well planned can be a source of frustration and a waste of resources. Coordination however should be more than just meetings for program updates but rather should be focused on sharing information that will lead to action on resource utilization, planning, implementation and evaluation.

As stated earlier, and in the context of development programs, coordination engages all stakeholders in the process of sharing and integrating information leading to actions that effect resource allocation, planning, implementation, and evaluation, thus creating synergies of best practice.

It is amazing the number of organizations that were involved in implementing the community girls' schools and yet committing directly to funding the schools themselves. Most of the schools became what one NGO worker termed as 'a bait to catch the fish' (Interviewee). The reality of the situation is that the need for girl's education became a niche to attract funding and CGS became easy numbers to report on the progress. This may be what Fullan (1999) refers to moral purpose,

which he continues to say that it should not merely be stated but has to be followed by some action, proper strategies so as to achieve the stated purpose. Why for example would we want to build schools for girls in a place where there were no schools for all the children nearby and expect that the communities will allow girls to go to school and leave boys behind and thus creating inequity and rivalry? What is the moral justification in this? Perhaps even with the rush for and competing for resources, NGOs need to be guided by the moral purpose and not start programs without willing to attach importance to the program and finances as well. In a Post-conflict setting, any program no matter how small has repercussions and should not be over looked.

From a technical point of view and in terms of strategic planning and implementation of the program, poor coordination led to

Ineffective oversight: the assumption that because BRAC had worked in Bangladesh it would work in South Sudan without considering all the small details that goes with transferring the program contributed to the very challenges in implementing programs. For example, BRAC in Bangladesh invests in a detailed network of supervision and support of materials to the schools, both of which were lacking in south Sudan. A 10-day training of the FEO's who sometimes ended up being poached by other organizations could not compete with the need and demands of the program. The lack of clarity to all stakeholders for example by SBEP at the

onset of the program of how to run and implement these schools to of program, lack of clarity in terms of setting the goals

Recommendation

Involve community in designing programs. By involving I mean not just going and telling them what to do but really planning and working with communities.

Clarify goals, responsibility, roles, accountability and leadership with all actors

Communicate, Listen – negotiate-trust. This cannot be over stated.

Flexibility in adapting to the context and needs of the programs. This includes the flexibility from all sides including the government and the donors.

Binding differing objectives/mandates: Different actors had different objectives and mandates in implementing the program and these were developed elsewhere and at different times. EDC and AGSP for example were involved three years after the programs were developed and while they were needed, the programs were developed in isolation. This further contributed to lax involvement and the feeling that the schools were used for experimental purposes. Further more the push and pull between the organizations, over quality versus quantity among other issues did not auger well and while these are valid issues, these were discussed in isolation and hence lacked proper follow up.

Recommendations

Donors, governments and other implementers should plan based on a need assessment and not on what they have had works in other areas. Sometimes best

practices in one context may not be the best in a different context and the reality of this should be considered.

Actors should be flexible to adapt the program to the context through continuous monitoring and evaluation that helps to give constructive feedback throughout the program on issues of quality and effectiveness of programs. This means being brave enough to accept the reality and change programs especially if they compromise the quality of education

Where a proper needs assessment has been done and all actors involved, a Bottom-up approach in planning should be used so that the communities' needs are included. This can be done through Participatory action research approaches and through continual monitoring and evaluations done through out the life of the programs.

Conclusion

As someone who participated in implementing the program, I kept wondering what I would do differently if I were to manage the program again? One thing that I would be hesitant to do is to commit to a project without fully understanding how much resources are needed and is committed towards the project. The need to understanding the program, the history and the politics within is important especially is one is to head any program. I do understand that some of the tacit knowledge has to be learned in the field, I would appreciate for example to know

who are the key players and why. The following are some of the recommendations that I would propose in terms of coordination in implementing programs.

Through out this case study, the importance of clarity in communication became an apparent need when it comes to implementing programs.

Coordination at the top level without involving the community is not enough as it is detached from the realities of the community and environment. Even governments and state-actors in post-conflict can be detached from the realities of the field. This includes planning with the community based on the needs and including the plans as in the proposals. It was always easier when we went t the communities and reminded them of what they had agreed to do versus when we told tried to convince them what to do. When this has not been done for example when proposal are written under time constraint and pressure, the NGOs should at least take time t learn the environment and allow for flexibility before committing to projects.

Making a purposeful planning for programs at the beginning and budget for it-current programs are still very institutionalized, IASC, cluster, challenges are in the field not in New York or Nairobi, the temptations to give solutions for people in the filed is most times interpreted as condescending, for example one of the reason why the community took so long to build the one roomed structures is that they were not involved in the first place in deciding if they wanted a one room or not,, semi-structured or not.

If indeed we accept the importance of coordinating programs especially where many actors are involved, then we need to allocate funds towards these plans in consideration of the context. In South Sudan for example, transportation was mainly by flight, which was very expensive, especially given that these meetings hardly went over three hours. Coordinating is expensive and hence should be well planned to maximize time and resources. Meeting for the sake of meeting is not enough, or meetings just to update one another are a waste of resource and information can be shared over emails. Where meetings are planned, an agenda clearly stating its objective and expected outcome should be shared tied in with the responsible person to follow up.

Transparency rather than avoidance. This includes the transparency of finances and the technical progress of the programs. At one point, it was clear that the CGS were not doing very well and while this was discussed, there was never a clear decision on how to move forward and a commitment towards the same.

Setting and agreeing on boundaries of what the organization can do with the communities. Many times, we are tempted to or pushed towards “scale up” sometimes without clarity of what this means or entails. I recognize the pressures especially where there is great need but perhaps we need to learn to prioritize and target must be done and what can wait including the use of resources. Recognizing that we cannot do everything and specializing rather than experimenting.

I continue to be amazed at the number of resources that are available at higher levels such as materials available amongst the UN humanitarian wing, the NGO decision makers and technical adviser's level, yet none of these until recently has been made known to the people working in the field. Given this knowledge, I would at least have the government officials and field workers aware of what is available in the numerous meetings that continue to be held and in trainings, hence try to clarify the objectives of the meetings.

APPENDICES

Appendix 1

Planned CGSP, Partners' Coordination Meeting

Tentative Time Table. (22-23) June, 2005-

Day one- 22, June, 2005.

TOPIC	TIME	FACILITATOR	REMARKS
Introductions	9: 00- 9: 30 am	Masale Aggrey	CGSP. Coord.
Opening Remarks	9: 30-10.00 am	Mr. Tedd Bathoub	Assit. D/director administration
Matters arising from previous minutes	10.00-10: 30	Massamino Allam	D/ Director national languages.
Tea break	10: 30-11.00 am	All	Task Force
Update of activities	11:00 am-12: 30 pm		
Reactions from plenary	12: 30 -1: 00 pm	Massamino Allam	D/Director national lang.
Lunch break	1; 00 – 2: 30 pm	All	Task Force
Emerging lessons	2: 30- 3: 30 pm	Ghor Dhal	Teacher trainer
Reactions from Plenary	3: 30 -4: 00 pm	Allam.	
Tea break	4:00- 4: 30 pm	All	Task Force
Group discussion on thematic areas	4:30-5 : 00 pm-	Team leader of each group	In groups

Day two-23 June, 2005.

Group discussions continue	9: 00- 9: 30 am	Team leader of each group	In groups
Group presentations	9: 30-10: 30 am	Representative of each group	Plenary
Tea Break	10: 30- 11: 30 am	All	Task Force
Reactions from plenary	11: 30 am – 12 :00 pm		To be identified
Recommendations	12: 00- 12; 30 pm	Masale Aggrey	
Wrap up and closer	12: 30- 1: 00 pm	Tedd Bauthou	Assist. D/Directoe Administration
Lunch	1: 00 -	All	Task Force

Appendix 2

Sample report from the 2005 CGS Coordination meeting.

Objectives : By the end of 2007, the program aims:

- To Construct 1000+ Community girls schools in remote villages.
- Enroll 30,000+ girls into schools from remote villages
- To train 1000+ teachers for the program.
- To train school management committees (SMCs) for each school.
- To establish regional offices for coordination of program.
- To partner with other agencies as a strategy for expansion of program.

Review/Follow up of Recommendations from Previous Minutes

Action	By Whom	Time-Frame
1. Teachers' guide to be completed quickly (Grades 1, 2 & 3). Pupils' books and guides to be produced and distributed.	Aggrey	Nov 2005
2. Review of existing CGSP trainers' materials by SOE/Partners for execution in schools	Aggrey	Aug 2005
3. Mother-tongue materials to be ordered from schools, vetted, validated and approved for use in schools by SOE Partners	Aggrey	Sept 2005
4. Done		
5. Review of the current in-service teacher education programmer	Aggrey	Aug 2005
6. CGSP structure below national coordinator to be implemented	Aggrey	July 2005
7. Brochure to be completed and distributed	Aggrey	July 2005
8. Training of School Management Committees (SMCs)	CGSP Trainers	Aug 2005
9. Technical support to CGSP staff to improve the quality of learning (provision of FEO kits, fuel for motor bikes, 4 laptop computers, dictionaries, office furniture and office space, training of staff on computer skills, and tents for starter offices)	UNICEF/SBEP	
10. Inclusion of CGSP tutors in CECs and RTTIs	SOE	
11. Done		
12. Expansion strategies (extension of programme to other counties, and extension of centers	Aggrey	

Recommendations Arising:

Action	By Whom	Time-Frame
1. Minutes to be circulated to all members concerned	Rose/Hakim	Two weeks
2. 9-day TOT course	UNICEF/SBEP	September 2005
3. Provision of sufficient FEO kits	UNICEF/SBEP	July 2005
4. Training of FEOs	CGSP Trainers	July 2005

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