

PTF Education Issue Brief

1. Background

Transparency International's *Global Corruption Report: Education (2013)* reinforces the notion that corruption inhibits social and economic development and may even jeopardize stability of a nation's education system. Opportunity for corruption exists all along the education continuum. The "roots of corrupt practices lie in a lack of transparency and accountability." (p. xiii) The experience gained through implementation of PTF education projects corresponds with TI findings.

In the 12 years that PTF provided small grant assistance for good governance projects, about 10 percent (about 22) were directed to the education sector. The projects addressed problems of governance, poor transparency and corruption in four main areas: (i) use of school resources; (ii) school construction; (iii) procurement and delivery of textbooks and other school supplies; and (iv) professional misconduct related to student admissions, examinations and teacher hiring.

Approximately 70 percent were carried out in two regions, Africa and East Asia; 17 focused on the primary/secondary levels of education, and five on the tertiary level. A PTF intern, Cosi Schreiber, prepared an analysis of PTF's education projects in March 2012. Our report builds on Schreiber's analysis but is not intended to duplicate her work. Instead, this report seeks to zero in on what makes for a successful anti-corruption projects in the education sector and to present some suggestions for future activity by PTF.

2. Country Case Studies

Based on Schreiber's analysis the working group selected four countries where PTF financially assisted 14 education projects that met with varying degrees of success: Armenia (1 project), Ghana (2 projects), Cameroon (5 projects), and the Philippines (6 projects). Except for several Philippine projects, all were recent, dating from 2009-12. The group prepared short studies on the education projects in each of these four countries, which are attached as Annexes. Our assessments of project success are based mainly on analysis provided in the Project Completion Reports as well as in independent Project Completion Assessments, where available. The projects did not address directly gender issues. Follow-up with the CSOs would be required to determine any impact on girls or women.

3. Factors Contributing to the Success of PTF-Assisted Education Projects

In examining our four-country portfolio we identified three factors that were present in all the successful projects: (i) **an engaged citizenry**, where citizens help identify the areas of corruption and carry out measures that help mitigate the problem; (ii) **an**

effective civil society organization (CSO) through which PTF channels its grants and which in turn supports and nurtures the citizen engagement and also coordinates with the public sector; and (iii) **a supportive public sector**, where one or more public officials endorses the approaches taken by citizens and the CSO, and has the capacity to redress the corrupt practices that are identified. These factors are elaborated on in the box below.

THREE FACTORS IN SUCCESSFUL PROJECTS IN EDUCATION

(1) An Engaged Citizenry

In the set of education projects reviewed, civic engagement took several forms:

- The Cameroon projects in higher education required buy-in and support from administrators, staff and students.
- The construction, materials delivery and expenditure monitoring projects in Cameroon, Armenia and Ghana depended variously on school management committees, parent-teacher associations and local, regional and national administrators.
- The Philippines textbook monitoring projects involved mobilizing as many as 6,000 volunteers to monitor the centralized procurement and delivery of textbooks to the school level. The more recent efforts at monitoring decentralized construction and furniture procurement in the Philippines entailed delegation to local CSOs as well as citizens.

In all the projects, citizen involvement was a requisite input for achieving targeted outcomes. In most of the projects, PTF contributed to the build-up of civic engagement principally through advice and support to the CSO on citizen involvement and on related, training and monitoring.

(2) An Effective Civil Society Organization

In each successful case, PTF supported an effective Civil Society Organization that demonstrated these characteristics:

- The CSOs are well established within their countries and regions. They have qualified and talented staff and successful project experience that lend them credibility. Some have obtained funding from other international donors such as UNDP and USAID. They may have offices not only in the capital cities but in more remote areas of the country where project activities occur. In Cameroon and the Philippines, the university base may have contributed to this strength.
- The CSOs are connected to education networks, organizations and institutions ‘larger than themselves.’ They work at the national level, often with policy-makers and/or national implementing agencies, which can provide currency for improved governance and incentives to engage stakeholders. In the four sets of projects reviewed, CSO linkages at the national level strengthened implementation as project efforts became national policy.
- The CSOs came to PTF with existing portfolios in education which PTF either strengthened or helped the organization to expand in a new direction. In most cases, the PTF projects were not isolated events and may have contributed to mainstreaming technical approaches.

The overall level of CSO competence enabled success ‘on the ground’. Though systematic review has not been carried out, it is likely that PTF technical support provided value-added through strengthening CSO staff capacity in new areas.

(3) An Effective Supporter in the Public Sector

Complementing strong CSO performance and civic engagement as contributors to success of the projects was effective government support.

- Ministries of Education (MOE) were, or became, supporters of the improvements in governance and reduction in corrupt practices under the projects. Based on the G-Watch campaign in the Philippines the Department of Education gradually mandated countrywide implementation of the textbook procurement and delivery improvements during the years of PTF involvement. The Armenian MOE also aimed to spread the school-level model for improved transparency in extra-budgetary expenditures introduced under the project and adopted the model for national use.
- Legislative and legal support for good governance in education also contribute to successful impact, where approved and enforced. In Armenia the CSO lobbied to initiate the process of creating legislation to support transparency in budgeting and expenditure at the school level.
- A strong individual who champions the cause can also play a critical role in raising political, legislative and/or citizen demand for good governance. In the case of the Cameroon higher education projects, a forceful Minister of Education successfully took on this responsibility.

Our analysis indicates that these three elements are present in the education projects that have achieved success and one or more is missing or weak in projects that have failed to achieve their objectives. For example, with Cameroon the exception, projects aimed at reducing bribes and improving the transparency of exams and admissions at the secondary and tertiary level met with “mixed” success and were typically characterized by less active and/or committed citizen involvement and public sector support. Three university projects in Moldova and Kazakhstan failed to show real gains in transparency, reflecting continued strength of historical practices such as “fees” charged by professors/teachers for admission and passing grades on examinations. Slightly greater success was experienced at the secondary level in one project in Moldova in which parents and other community members were involved in exam and expenditure monitoring. However, attempts to sell the model beyond the one district involved failed, at least in part owing to CSO limitations and lack of government support.

4. Sustainability

In almost all the projects, questions about sustainability arise. However, short-term funding, which characterized the PTF support (one or maybe two years –Philippines an

exception), seldom yields the data required to determine what continues after PTF exits. Sustainability is often confused with ‘project continuation’, which is not a fair measure. Projects funded by an organization for a specific purpose will not continue without additional support for the same ‘project’ or an adaptation of that project. A broader view of sustainability, which considers any management strategies, technical approaches or other project contributions used in new activities, is more useful. Another piece of the sustainability lens is to know how national institutions (where applicable) have adopted policies based on PTF projects. Knowledge about ‘sustainability’ will require a more formal follow-up activity with the country. This is critical if we are to build upon the earlier efforts, going forward.

5. New Projects

Several options for further projects suggest themselves from this review and other ongoing PTF developments.

- **Moving to scale.** Each of the projects reviewed here presents a possibility to build on for expanded or more effective coverage within the relevant country. The Cameroon higher education projects could be extended to include all higher education in the public sector. The Ghana and Armenia projects that monitored use of decentralized or extra-budgetary funds might also be scaled up regionally or nationally. The more recent Philippines projects for local monitoring of procurement for schools also present a possibility, with a view to strengthening local CSOs as well as civic engagement. Based on experience, such projects would need to be larger than the typical PTF projects of the past, and with a longer duration, to allow for adequate monitoring and to promote sustainability.
- **The Broker Model.** A promising model for PTF is evolving in the Rule-of Law Initiative. The first project supported by the Metzger Fund is launching a regional network beginning with three Eastern European countries. It will require PTF to advise and support several national CSOs in making use of, and disseminating, available knowledge and experience, initially in the area of trial monitoring. The PTF Germany is hoping to attract EEC monies for subsequent phases of this project. This could be an example of the PTF as broker rather than full funder model and may hold promise for other sectors, including education. For example, assisting with a multi-country network for improved transparency in educational management might be pursued in selected Eastern European countries.
- **The Subcontractor or Partner Model.** The CARTA program uses PTF as a subcontractor. PTF is using volunteer advisers to support several World Bank-assisted projects in Nepal and Bangladesh. The Nepal subprojects promote civic engagement, including independent monitoring of project results, in the education and training sectors. In this case, the World Bank contracted PTF to manage the CARTA program. PTF projects following this model could be envisaged in many service delivery programs sponsored by governments with or without major donor support.

Each of these models could be pursued by PTF as volunteer efforts or consultancies. PTF expertise in education is fairly wide ranging. It includes experience in project design and management, monitoring and evaluation, both qualitative and quantitative, and decentralization of resources. Expertise and practice in newer techniques for social accountability are less prevalent and might need to be subcontracted to experts under new types of operations.

6. Suggested Next Steps

Suggested next steps are as follows:

- Explore interest in and possibilities for new PTF-supported projects/partnerships beginning with moving to scale or additional activities (including support for regional networks or independent monitoring projects) in education with our current CSO partners in Ghana, Cameroon, Armenia and the Philippines. Issues of sustainability would also be reviewed in these discussions.
- Explore potential funding with these same CSOs at the country level.
- Explore with PTF's Development Committee if any donors, foundations or high net worth individuals are interested in addressing corruption in education and should be approached for expression of interest to fund new projects.
- Work with PTF's Communications team to develop knowledge pieces for the website and blog-posts.

Based on outcomes, these steps would be followed by preparation of project concept notes.

Annex 1

Review of Armenia: Transparent and Accountable Schools Project

Overview. The project addressed a corruption risk in Armenia's secondary education system centering on collection and use of extra-budgetary resources. The funds, collected from parents and students, are intended to compensate for inadequate budgetary resources. School directors and teachers typically collect these. The corruption risk, in Armenia and elsewhere, lies in the potential for misuse of the funds due to the absence of transparent procedures for managing them.

The P&T (Partnership and Teaching/NGO) designed and implemented the project, building on earlier UNDP and other experience, to prepare and introduce a transparent system to monitor the collection and use of school fees. The project focused on six schools in two localities and aimed to incorporate the relevant beneficiary groups in the process.

The approach taken yielded positive and measurable results in the schools and communities involved and also had an impact at the policy level. The national Ministry of Education (MOE) adopted the new monitoring procedures and at the end of project implementation the P&T began to lobby for legislation requiring use of the procedures in all Armenian schools.

The CSO. P&T, a regional NGO, was established in 2000 and as recently as 2011 was the only Armenian NGO working in education that qualified as a USAID contractor. It is well regarded by local, public sector partners and during the project it strengthened its connections to the national political level. Examples of P&T's competence include: its effective adaptation of models for expenditure monitoring developed by others; its success in selling transparent procedures for budget monitoring at the school level; and its success in getting the MOE to adopt the procedures for use nationally.

Civic Engagement. Project design (and the PTF advisor) emphasized a central role for "community" input and support under the project. The P&T involved school boards, administrators, teachers, parents and students at each school, and at each stage of the project, from issue identification through introduction of the new accountability procedures. The P&T provided training and community awareness campaigns to sell its model for transparent budgeting to the relevant school, community and local government authorities. A pre/post-survey at the school level showed significant increase in participation in extra-budgetary finance collection and use, and a decrease in perceived misuse, across the full range of participants.

Public Agency Support. Based on its project and other experience, the P&T was able to lobby the MOE to approve for nationwide use its model for transparency in extra-budgetary funding. P&T gathered support in this effort from national assembly members,

educational authorities and other NGOs. After project implementation, P&G continued to push for the legislation needed to enact the procedures.

PTF Value-Added. The main value-added by PTF in this project was in the area of monitoring project implementation. PTF exchanges with P&T during implementation emphasized the importance of ensuring beneficiary input in developing procedures for improved accountability and CSO assistance in incorporating them in regular practice, thereafter. This required the presence of the CSO at the school level to ensure follow-through. The PTF input was based on an expertise in monitoring in projects with school level participation. The skills involved, while not unique to PTF, contributed significantly to the project's success. Because of the general level of competence of the P&T, less than typical PTF input was required for overall project design.

Recent Developments. The P&T, a local NGO when the project was carried out, has since opened a branch in Yerevan, the Armenian capital. The PTF adviser is attempting to communicate with the P&T principals to determine if activities were sustained/further developed post-project and if any interesting opportunity for further PTF presents itself.

Eleanor Schreiber
24 March 2014

Annex 2

Quick Review of Cameroon Experience 2009-12

“It is hard to imagine that Cameroon, a country that scores in the lowest 25th percentile on both the Transparency International corruption perception index and the Mo Ibrahim Index, would be home to some very exciting and promising anti-corruption activities, as retold by two PTF Advisers after their recent field visit to Cameroon.” CambriefFeb2013

Overview. PTF has supported five projects in Cameroon’s education sector. Three projects were aimed at curbing corruption in the universities, of which two were carried out at the public University of Buéa while the other was implemented at the privately-funded University of Siantou. Two projects aimed to mobilize civic engagement for improved educational resource management at the secondary school level. Cameroon is the only country in which tertiary education has been the main sub-sector for PTF support.

Year Approved	CSO Grantee	Project Title	Grant Amount (\$)
2009	IGI-FITCAM	Strengthening University of Buéa Internal Mechanisms for Tracking & Curbing Corruption	22,200
2010	IGI-FITCAM	Strengthening University of Siantou Internal Mechanisms for Tracking & Curbing Corruption	34,000
2010	ALDED	Monitoring the Quality of Classroom Construction in the Department of Mefou & Afamba	30,163
2011	AGDGG	City of Limbe Government Bilingual High School Resource Management Project	21,300
2011	IGI-FITCAM	Follow-up Project to Reinforce the Capacity of the University of Buéa to Undertake Concrete Actions Against Corruption	33,380

Curbing corruption in the universities. In 2008 the Cameroon government (CamGov) made eliminating corruption from its universities a top national priority. A local CSO associated with the UK-based NGO International Governance Institute (IGI) saw the opportunity and approached PTF for assistance. Initially, IGI-FITCAM’s requested financial and technical assistance to build up its own capacity as it was still small and new. While this request was not consistent with our funding priorities, PTF helped the CSO to design a project aimed at strengthening internal anti-corruption mechanisms at the University of Buéa (UB). Because the task looked challenging and the CSO implementation capacity unproven, PTF’s initial one-year commitment was kept fairly modest but, as implementation seemed quite impressive, it was extended for two more

projects, plus supplementary funding for additional items, such as installing large steel billboards for mounting anti-corruption posters at key points on the UB campus, amounting to a total of some \$90,000 over three years.

Evaluation. Despite strong initial opposition to launching corruption events on UB's campus, IGI/FITCAM succeeded in implementing the planned activities as scheduled (in fact, the public launch workshop was held off campus, so as to avoid the resistance from UB's Vice Chancellor). The results of a survey to identify corrupt practices at UB confirmed the relevance of the training provided by IGI/FITCAM, and the categorization of the widespread nature of corruption provided a clearer way for UB officials to attack the different malpractices (often delicate in nature), ultimately leading to an anti-corruption strategy being adopted at UB. The scientific manner in which the field research was carried out lends credibility to project results. The fact that the second Buéa project was implemented after the Siantou meeting, during which the Minister of Higher Education conveyed a forceful message against corruption in Cameroonian universities, paved the way to a more collaborative environment to introduce and track improved internal mechanisms at UB. Moreover, the methodology used to track progress (interviews, consultation of documents, and spot checks) set up a sound basis to monitor and assess future progress in corrupt practices at UB and other universities. The PCA rates the three projects highly for both design and implementation, with some reservation as to their long-term sustainability, giving an overall rating of 3.75. ¹ In a country like Cameroon the results obtained by the IGI/FITCAM initiative are remarkable. The theory of change underlying the approach was that significant changes in corrupt behavior could be made when coalitions are built with champions representing interested stakeholder groups, these champions are provided with factual information about the extent of corruption and ethical standards are reinforced by general adoption of a suitable Code of Conduct.²

Classroom construction monitoring. The objective of this project started in 2010 by ALDED (Approches Locales pour le Développement Durable) located in the Central Region of Cameroon (French-speaking) was to fight corrupt practices of public officials and builders in the construction of classrooms in two districts. The methodology of ALDED included monitoring the construction of 29 primary and secondary schools, checking their quality, ensuring that builders were held to their contracts, setting up a database and strengthening capacity of local beneficiaries and monitors to detect and report problems. ALDED had a solid project idea and obtained some reasonably good results. However, its communication plan was weak, resulting in lack of understanding of the potential benefits of the project by key stakeholders.³

Expenditure monitoring. In theory, Cameroon's students attend secondary school free of charge. In practice, the principals of secondary schools and the school management

¹ Extracted from the PCA by Adriana de Leva, February 2013, which also reflected an independent evaluation done for DFID/GTF by John Clark in 2012.

² From PTF report, Most Significant Result Analysis: IGI-FITCAM, Cameroon

³ From BTOR of PTF mission to Cameroon, October 2012.

committees (SMC) draw up an annual budget with a list of projected operating costs and subtract the likely government contribution. To close the financial gap, parents are asked to contribute dues directly to the parent teacher association (PTA). Exasperated by the generalized misuse of PTA funds, Mrs. Lois Ebenye, principal of the Government Bilingual High School (GBHS) in the city of Limbe, contacted Action Group for Democracy and Good Governance (AGDGG) to help build the SMC capacity to manage PTA funds properly. In addition, she obtained support for her initiative of departmental officials of the Ministry of Secondary Education. Under the project approved by PTF AGDGG implemented three activities: a workshop on budget tracking, adoption of a Code of Ethics by all participants, and tracking of the PTA budget by SMC members. Thus SMC members found that teachers' salaries included in the PTA budget were paid regularly, that the planned classroom construction was on schedule and good quality materials were used, and school benches included in the budget were delivered. Several factors contributed to the success of this project. First, the GBHS principal was an outspoken advocate who had full backing of the Department of Secondary Education. Second, many parents were very supportive. Third, the on-site tracking process made the flow of money transparent and decreased the chances of corrupt practices. The same approach is now being applied at other high schools in the Limbe area, with direct support from the schools themselves. Education authorities welcomed the code of ethics, which may become a model to be applied throughout the secondary school system.⁴

Possible future involvement. Although substantial effort was spent around this time on trying to define a PTF country program, PTF support for anti-corruption efforts in tertiary education was primarily a response to CamGov and CSO-identified priorities. Eventually, however, the basis of a future country program did emerge from these deliberations in 2012, with a sectoral emphasis on education and geographical concentration in the English-speaking part of the country where almost all PTF-supported projects in Cameroon have so far been implemented. It still seems to make sense to build on these *acquis* in thinking about a possible future PTF program, focusing on improving resource management and ethics in the education sector through promising local initiatives in the populous South West region in line with government priorities.

Government support. The IGI-FITCAM projects had been started in response to a 2008 policy initiative of the central government to try to stop the alarming growth of corruption within Cameroon's 13 public universities. The success of the projects at Buéa and Siantou universities seems to have so favorably impressed the Minister of Higher Education that in 2010 he called for the approach to be extended nation-wide. Prof. Jacques Ndong'o's support was considered by the CSO a key factor in overcoming the resistance of the VC of UB. Within a year the latter was replaced by a new VC who gave her full support for the follow-up project at UB.

Civic engagement. This was clearly important for all the Cameroon projects, allowing for differences in definition depending on the respective stakeholder groups concerned. For 'civic engagement' in anti-corruption activity does not necessarily have to involve a

⁴ From article in the PTF Liaison Newsletter, Feb 2013, by Pietronella Vandenoever.

large number of people, it can be sufficient (and maybe even more efficient) to mobilize just that segment that sees itself most seriously affected. Not all the stakeholders were *positively* affected by the projects: as noted, at UB the Vice-Chancellor and some of his Council fought vigorously against the project, and local contractors and suppliers of school materials may not have been too enthusiastic about the school budget monitoring projects. As one might expect, parents were more involved in the secondary school projects while students became positively involved in the university projects.

Table 2: Main Stakeholders in PTF education projects, Cameroon

Project	Public stakeholders	Civic stakeholders
U Buéa	MoHE; VC & Council; anticorruption & ethics committee (ACEC); university staff	students union; suppliers; media; general public
U Siantou	MoHE; national anti-corruption committee (CONAC)	VC & Council; ACEC; university staff; students union; general public
Mefou - Afamba	MoE; DoE; school authorities	SMC; PTA; suppliers; general public
GBHS Limbe	MoE; DoE; school authorities	SMC; PTA; suppliers; general public
U Buéa II	MoHE; VC & Council; anticorruption & ethics committee (ACEC); university staff	students union; suppliers; media; general public

CSO capacity. Besides relevance as an issue of public concern and the effectiveness of mobilization of civic stakeholders, a third main factor explaining the outcome of the Cameroon projects was the implementation capacity of the CSO concerned. The actual outcome of the two projects done by ALDED and AGDGG has not been independently evaluated, and evidence of these CSOs' implementation capacity remains sketchy. While the AGDGG project was started by an energetic and charismatic high school principal who enlisted the support of school PTAs, the drive to get results seems to have somewhat fizzled out, possibly reflecting a lack of focus and implementation capacity by the CSO concerned. And as noted ALDED did not perform well in keeping stakeholders well-informed about the project. This was not the case with the university projects where, even though the material stakes and entrenched opposition from the UB authorities were high, IGI-FITCAM succeeded in rising to the challenge. This was probably due more to the ability and drive of one relatively young person who took over as director, than to inherent institutional strength. Nevertheless IGI-FITCAM continues to fight corruption at a regional and national level in Cameroon, using targeted civic and media engagement as well as support from influential champions as its main weapons. And it has shown itself ready to share its skills and experience with other CSO with similar objectives.⁵

Chris Redfern

⁵ BTOR of PTF mission to Cameroon, October 2012.

3 April 2014

PTF Supported Ghana Education Projects

The projects selected from the Ghana portfolio:

Promoting Accountable Governance in Education (PAGE) implemented by Action for Rural Education (ARE) (WStruben/advisor) – Aug 2010-Aug 2012 (\$34,000) and

Promoting Accountability and Responsiveness for Improved Basic Education in Ghana implemented by Sustainable Aid through Voluntary Establishment (SAVE-Ghana) (BFriar/advisor) – Dec 2011 – Dec 2012 (\$30,583). (not to be confused with SAVE the children)

Purpose of this “little brief”: to summarize these two projects with information that will equip the Education Working Group to make decision about next steps regarding any (or no) aspects of these projects that will propel us closer to donor support. I am not providing a lot of descriptive detail about each projects. If required, will refer to the documents.

Focus of the projects: Both projects focused energies on reducing corruption at the grassroots level – in the schools. SAVE worked with 7 rural schools to target payment to ‘ghost teachers’; double dipping from parents to cover costs already paid by government; and teachers using students as unpaid hired help on their farms. ARE/PAGE focused on the use of ‘devolved’ funds from the central government through Ghana Education Service (GES) to GES municipal offices to schools where it was used to offset school fees for materials and activities. ARE/PAGE also examined distribution of exercise and textbooks. The national purpose was to provide incentives for parents to send children to school in order for Ghana to meet MDG goal of providing universal primary education. However, these supplemental costs did not meet real costs required to operate the schools. Ten schools in a rural municipality were monitored.

Civic engagement: Both projects used a participatory approach to engage stakeholders and local constituents in monitoring the movement of monies from one hand to another – School Management Committees; Parent-Teacher Associations and for SAVE, use of photography to provide evidence of students working on teachers’ farms. It also used radio to publicize the project and its activities, so as to reach a broader constituency. ARE/PAGE worked directly with the municipal office of the GES who had full buy-in to the project. Each project used the typical approaches of training workshops and lots of meetings to build capacity and encourage ownership of the monitoring activities. This ‘ownership’ issue seems to have resulted in less CSO monitoring of the implementation process and therefore there is scant tracking of activities and less quantitative data collected. I think both projects were successful in engaging a variety of stakeholders ‘for

the cause.’ But both projects report that communities want the support from a CSO that keeps them ‘going.’

Public sector cooperation. ARE/PAGE did more due diligence in including the public sector to introducing transparency to the process of distributing funds by working with the GES (implementing arm of Ministry of Education) and SMCs (formal school oversight under Education Act 504). SAVE also worked with SMCs and local chiefs who held authority, but not with GES although they were working with devolved funds from same government source as ARE/PAGE. However both projects recognized need for wide range of stakeholders in the process, and both report success in expanding participation and awakening community to potential corruption. ARE/PAGE also reported success in increasing successful distribution of textbooks to the schools.

CSOs: Both CSOs hold solid reputations in their communities. ARE is a registered NGO founded in 2001 by the present Executive Director. There is an office in rural Ghana and a recently established office in Accra. Funding comes from Dfid, World Bank, UNESCO and CAMFED. They have produced a great report (project monograph) which I assume is the PCR – beautifully presented and well written. SAVE also has a rural office and one in Accra and in January 2014 reports both a northern and southern portfolio although I don’t know who is funding these activities. They are revamping their website. This recent message also reports meeting set objectives and wanting to scale up.

NEXT STEPS:

1. As with other projects working ‘very local’ the participatory approaches are fully utilized and working, although probably not without continued input from CSOs. To me, this indicates that we should pay more attention to the models than to scaling up the projects.
2. If a scale-up were to be discussed for Ghana, we need to return particularly to ARE/PAGE and see if any of the procedures have moved through the GES.
3. My observation is that ARE is a ‘bigger player’ in Ghana than SAVE and if we work with a local, it may be ARE.
4. I know one of the education folk in USAID/Ghana and if we decide to pursue anything I could contact her.
5. There is no reference to ‘gender’ in either of these projects so if we wanted to deconstruct, we’d need to return to the CSO.
6. As with other regions, this focus on devolved funds has become a policy directive that results in challenges at the regional and local levels. I think we should ‘raise this up’ as a possible way forward in education. Bill’s email to me (5 feb) captures the ‘negative’ chain of corruption within education sector – how a child in school who is shortchanged ‘today’ multiples through community and system to impede national development. T.I./education report says the same.

Jane Schubert
24 March 2014

Review of Philippines G-Watch Projects

Overview. Government Watch (G-Watch) was established in 2000 by the Ateneo School of Government, in partnership with the Ateneo Center for Social Policy and Public Affairs, with some initial seed money from UNDP. In 2003, PTF provided the its first grant to G-Watch, and subsequently provided five more grants through 2011. Figure 1 provides an overview of the six G-Watch projects financed by PTF.

Project	Government Agency	Year of Approval	Amount (\$)
1. Tracking Public Expenditure	DepEd; DPWH	2003	24,000
2. Text Book Count 3	DepEd	2005	29,472
3. Text Book Count 4	DepEd	2006	22,555
4. Protect Procurement	DepEd	2008	27,500
5. Localizing Protect Procurement	DepEd	2010	30,475
6. School-based Monitoring of Education Services (Local Hubs)	DepEd	2011	35,045
Total			169,047

Source: PTF

The first G-Watch project worked with two agencies, the Department of Education (DepEd) on the monitoring of textbook distribution and the Department of Public Works and Highways on infrastructure projects. This began G-Watch's relationship with DepEd, which extended and grew through 5 more projects.

The first project (2003) developed G-Watch's relationship with DepEd in the area of textbook procurement, where extensive leakages were known to exist. In the first project, G-Watch piloted an approach known as "Textbook Count" in partnership with CSOs, including the Boy Scouts of the Philippines (BSP) and the Girl Scouts of the Philippines (GSP) to monitor DepEd's textbook procurement, which is handled centrally.

The second (2005) and third projects (2006) expanded coverage from procurement to the production, evaluation of the content and the delivery of textbooks to beneficiary high schools and district offices. The 2005 project piloted innovative approaches for delivering textbooks using Coca Cola delivery trucks, the BSP and GSP, and creating human chains as delivery mechanisms, to get the books delivered from district offices to local schools. The 2006 project went further in efforts to decentralize the process of textbook procurement monitoring and distribution. G-Watch brought together DepEd districts and elementary schools, local officials, the Scouts, church faithful and other local volunteers to help track textbook production and distribution. While the 2005 project had tracked 1.2 million textbooks, the 2006 project monitored distribution of 12 million textbooks to 4,844 districts. The projects also saw the decrease in the average cost of many textbooks.

The DepEd valued the interventions inspired by the G-Watch projects and in 2007 released Order No. 59 entitled “Institutionalizing NGO and Private Sector Participation in the Department Procurement Process” in effect taking responsibility for ensuring CSO participation in the DepEd’s procurement process.

The 4th G-Watch project (2008) supporting DepEd was called “Protect Procurement Project: Institutionalizing the Capacity Building of CSP Procurement Observers.” The project returned to an underlying theme in all the G-Watch projects, which was finding ways for CSOs to become more involved in the procurement process in the DepEd. This project resulted in many CSOs undergoing training in procurement processes and then monitoring procurement packages within DepEd. During the project 10 procurement processes were monitored for contracts amounting to P1.3 billion. The project’s culminating activity was a public forum on the ways and means of mobilizing and building capacity of CSO procurement observers.

The 5th G-Watch project (2010) continued emphasis on procurement in the education area, but with a more ambitious approach to address procurement issues at decentralized levels. The project, “Citizen Action for Accountability in Education Procurement: Localizing the Protect Procurement Project,” aimed at using citizen monitors to observe all stages of the procurement process at the regional/divisional level. Although textbooks are procured nationally, procurement for school buildings and school furniture take place at the regional/divisional level. The 5th project piloted work in three regions: Region 3, Region 8, and the Autonomous Region of Muslim Mindanao (ARMM). G-Watch trained civil society monitors who were invited by DepEd regional offices to participate in the procurement process. The weakest part of project implementation related to the low level of participation of the trained volunteers in observing DepEd’s procurement processes. There were differences by region. The amount of monitoring was high in ARMM, modest in region 8 and low in region 3. The Project Completion Assessment gave the project an overall satisfactory rating, but it did point that future efforts should include greater communication and coordination efforts to ensure greater coverage of procurement activities (many trained CSO representatives were not invited to participate by the DepEd regional procurement teams). Also, better monitoring was needed to track procurement results so that senior managers are aware of the numbers of procurements by type and value actually monitored by CSO observers.

The 6th G-Watch project (2011) followed closely on the 5th and worked with DepEd on education-related procurement at the local levels. Working in three regions (ARMMM and Region 8, as in the previous project, but in Region 4 instead of Region 3, which had not been that responsive in the last project), this project developed local hubs that were tasked with supporting school-based monitoring in their respective divisions. The idea was that the local hubs could use the methodologies previously developed by G-Watch projects for monitoring procurement of textbooks, school construction (Bayanihang Eskwela), and school furniture. G-Watch recruited local CSOs and trained the staff that would be assigned to the local hubs. The local hubs in turn worked with the school-based monitoring teams, which monitored projects in their schools, processed the monitoring results and sent reports to the National Coordinating Groups. According to the Project

Completion Report, the local hubs facilitated a total of P391 million out of a total of P894 million in education-related procurement. A Project Completion Assessment is under preparation.

The progression of G-Watch projects demonstrates the potential that exists for innovation and expansion when a program can be sustained for a period of time. The G-Watch program evolved from a very successful effort to reduce the costs of textbooks and ensure their delivery to the remotest of schools to an ambitious program of addressing school construction and furniture procurement at the local level. The most recent projects have been ambitious in piloting approaches in three regions that could be extended to the country. Although the pilots still have issues to be addressed, the approaches G-Watch have taken remain sound and have great potential for future scaling up.

The CSO. G-Watch is a program of the Ateneo School of Government (ASG), which is part of the Ateneo de Manila University. Having a strong institutional base at the ASG has enabled G-Watch to attract funds from other donors beside PTF (its initial funding came from UNDP) and to carry out programs other than those financed by PTF. G-Watch has significant credibility within government circles as can be seen in the support it has received from DepEd. Partly through G-Watch's programs to help reduce the level of corruption in textbook procurement and distribution, public perceptions of the DepEd dramatically improved and by 2009 it was considered the least corrupt Government department, compared with earlier ratings where it was considered one of the more corrupt. As previously noted G-Watch's successful collaboration with DepEd led the department to institutionalize CSO and private sector participation in the department's procurement processes.

Civic Engagement. The 6 G-Watch projects all featured significant participation by individuals and local CSOs. The Textbook Count and Textbook Walk projects at various times mobilized more than 6,000 volunteers. In the last three projects G-Watch trained a number of CSOs and individuals to enable them to have the proficiency and knowledge to participate in procurement proceedings. One issue that emerged, which could explain some of the lower than anticipated attendance during DepEd procurement proceedings, was the lack of funding provided to the CSOs and volunteers to cover their transport costs, food, etc. Since some procurement meetings can last 3 days, lack of funds to cover the minimum cost of attendance could have affected CSO participation. It was also noted that as G-Watch moved outside of working with DepEd centrally to localizing efforts within regions and divisions, G-Watch encountered problems in sustaining its involvement with the CSOs and individuals. The overall lack of monitoring of project activities in the last two projects made it difficult to assess what impact the CSO participation in regional/divisional education procurement may have had on reducing corrupt practices, although some reports noted that fewer complaints were raised in the regions/divisions where the pilot projects were implemented than in others.

Public Agency Support. G-Watch developed a strong working relationship with DepEd that continued from the first project through the 6th. Early on DepEd saw the benefits of working with G-Watch in terms of the public's improved perception of its transparency

and accountability. Given that textbook procurement is handled centrally, DepEd and G-Watch were able to jointly implement programs that substantially reduced textbook cost and dramatically improved textbook availability throughout the country. DepEd also supported G-Watch in its efforts to regionalize the public's participation in procurement issues related to school construction and school furniture, activities that are handled by the regions and divisions. DepEd's continued support for G-Watch's efforts to bring public participation to the procurement process augurs well for future projects that could be supported by PTF.

Final Observations. Overall the 6 G-Watch projects have had a measurable impact on procurement, especially regarding textbooks, in the education sector. Part of this can be attributed to the leadership of G-Watch and part to the DepEd senior staff who chose to work with G-Watch over a period of 10 years. The deep relationship and trust that ensued has paid off for DepEd, which is now seen as one of the least corrupt government departments. The success of the textbook projects gave G-Watch the capacity to tackle more complicated terrain in developing pilots at the regional and divisional level that looked at school construction and school furniture, in addition to ensuring textbooks were continuing to reach local schools.

The last two projects, both pilots, have yet to demonstrate that G-Watch can successfully decentralize and spread its operations to regions and divisions. Part of the difficulty is that PTF funds only a year's worth of activities and the pilots G-Watch embarked upon are multi-year in nature. Participation in the procurement cycle can easily last longer than a year starting from the procurement bids and following through to implementation. Future PTF support for regional/divisional pilot programs and support for local hubs needs to be multi-year in duration and sufficiently funded to support CSO participation in procurement meetings, which may require travel money and support for meals. G-Watch will also need to provide more hands-on support to the regions and hubs, besides the initial training programs. This could include quarterly visits to check on progress and provide technical support as needed. In addition, G-Watch will need to design a monitoring system so it can track the impact that citizen participation in local hubs and in regional/divisional procurement meetings is having on the costs associated with textbooks, school construction and school furniture.

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