

## Community Mobilization Methods for School Development in a Rural Area, Cambodia

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### Abstract

The study explores how primary schools in the remote area in Cambodia mobilized communities for school development, and the leadership roles of school administrators and School Support Committee leaders in mobilizing community participation. Qualitative research method was employed. The study found two approaches of community resource mobilization including community-led mobilization and delegated-resource mobilization. Leadership roles of school administrators and School Support Committee leaders were crucial in implementing community mobilization. The study suggested further research on community participation in children's learning and power dynamic of school administrators and school support committee leaders in community mobilization.

**Keywords:** *community, resource, mobilization, leadership*

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### 1. Background

Community and civil society are key partners of government for education development. Government alone cannot achieve the educational aims without the participation of stakeholders. A developing country like Cambodia needs the participation and resource contribution from community and civil society for school development. Educational institutions and schools have different potential sources of income and funding in addition to the government funding, called Planned Budget (PB), which is delivered to the school annually (MoEYS, 2015). The common sources of income that the schools have include community, government fund, Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs), school generating income, philanthropists and private donors outside the countries. The Royal Government of Cambodia calls for participation from different partners in education. Educational institutions welcome all kinds of support from the relevant stakeholders such as the public and private sectors, national and international organizations, non-governmental organizations, and communities (RGC, 2014). This encourages the involvement of these relevant stakeholders in the education process in such areas as planning, implementing, monitoring and evaluation.

As indicated in Article 44 of the Constitution of the Kingdom of Cambodia, education administrators at all levels are strongly encouraged to mobilize resources for education development (RGC, 2008). Relevant stakeholders such as individuals, faith groups, families, communities, national and international organizations, non-governmental organizations, and public and private institutes, all have the right to participate and to provide resources in any forms such as financial, materials, technical, advice, labor and so on. Educational administrators have the right to mobilize legal resources from all sources in order to develop educational institutions or schools. The school support committee (SSC) leaders can mobilize resources in their communities to complement the school resources and the budget received from the government. However, the contribution (financial and materials) from communities is voluntary (RGC, 2008). The school administrators mobilize resource to complement budget deficiency, the budget to use for the school development. As such, the school calls for supports whenever they are in financial needs. To pool resource contribution, the schools need capacity to pool local resources for developing their schools.

### 2. Literature Review

Prior to explore the process of community mobilization, it is important to unpack relevant key concepts include community, community participation and community mobilization. Community is broadly defined as a geographical area that consists of people who have social interaction and have one or more commonalities (DeRienzo, 2008). Not only is a place referred to by 'community', but also people and

institutions in the community (DeFilippis & Susan, 2008). In addition to the mentioned definition, (Diagne et al., 2006) UNESCO (2016) suggests certain criteria that bring people together as community including space, culture and history, property, race, religion, language, gender, political, age and interest. According to DeFilippis and Susan (2008), community is inclusive of people and places as people, places, and institutions that we encounter everyday life provide opportunities and support for our activities, as well as barriers and constraints. In this article 'community' refers to a fairly diverse groups of education related stakeholders both formal and informal groups who have a collective purpose in education. This includes parents, local authorities, civil societies, community based organizations, NGOs, business people, microfinance institution, youth, churches, Buddhist pagodas, and other private institutions. These people and institutions which are visible in the local community may or may not have a chance to be involved in education in school, at home or in the community.

The Cambodian community in the past had strong connections with Buddhist pagodas as the social, cultural and religious centre of the community (Pellini, 2005). This behaviour is still practiced in the Cambodia society of the present. The Cambodian community, according to Clayton (1995) and Pellini (2005), is socially hierarchical in which elderly are highly respected. Village leaders, laypeople, rich families and community members who are literate are reported as community leaders (Pellini, 2005). Take School Support Committee (SSC) as an example. The SSC's members compose of senior citizens, local authorities and former teachers as it is perceived to have strong voice and influence on development projects. The SSC is an organization to represent community members and parents in the schools (MoEYS, 2012). This organization support the education to ensure a smooth, transparent, accountable and effective education process. They are involved in formulating, implementing and monitoring the school plans; collecting and enrolling children in school; monitoring student's learning; generating revenue and mobilizing funds. The SSC is also involved in constructing, repairing and maintaining schools; sharing experience and life skills in the class; safeguarding properties inside and outside the schools; strengthening and expanding the capacity and awareness of school development. In addition, the formation of this group aims to help to protect and develop the schools, as well as increase cooperation and facilitation among communities. The members of the committee come from different stakeholder groups such as local authorities, monks, school directors, the elderly, pagoda committees, parents, laymen, education officials and private donors (MoEYS, 2012). These people are volunteers, without any incentive of being paid. The honorary chairperson should be a local authority or head monk and the advisor should be a school director or retired education official. The chairperson is usually a retired education official, a pagoda committee member, a layman, a private donor or a parent. The deputy chairperson and committee members could be any of the people mentioned above.

Community participation is the circumstances in which individuals in the community are involved in the development processes in all levels of society through active contribution and for the purpose of sharing the benefits from development (Desai, 1995). Community members participate in sharing responsibilities over development initiatives, decisions and resources which affect them (Nelson and Wright, 1995, p5). They (community members) also participate in development projects/programs through their representatives or directly participate in development activities (Arnstein, 1969; Crocker, 2007; Pretty et al., 1995). In other words, community participation in the development refers to the process of including local people, families, local authorities, community leaders, development workers, and development professionals in the process of identifying problems, the planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the development project in the community.

Community mobilization is a capacity building process through which community individuals, groups or organizations plan, carry out and evaluate activities on a participatory and sustained basis for their development, either on their own initiative or stimulated by others (Corps, 2009). Community mobilization has been broadly defined as the organization and activation of a community to address local problems (Shults et al., 2009). Community mobilization is very important for the success of any intervention/programme as it helps in creating demand for interventions; increasing the effectiveness and efficiency of interventions; contributing additional resources to the response; reaching the most valuable; addressing the underlying issues affecting education; and increasing community ownership and sustainability (Nwabueze, 2017). Community mobilization allows people in the community to identify needs and promote community interests; promote good leadership and democratic decision making; identify specific groups for undertaking specific

problems; identify all the available resources in the community; and plan the best use of the available resources (Diagne, et al., 2006). Key players, mobilizers are those who mobilize and get things moving. They are catalysts that create an atmosphere to achieve a common goal of importance to the community by bringing the people together; building trust; encouraging participation; facilitating discussion and decision making; helping things to run smoothly; and facilitating in the community mobilization process.

The community mobilization approach is used in a wide range of development projects. It helps to enhance the ownership and the sustainability of development (Mercy Corps, 2009). This is because the approach engages different stakeholders in project implementation. According to a Guide to Community Mobilization Programming of Mercy Corps (2009), community mobilization framework has several stages including pre-positioning, assessment and planning, structures and agreements, leadership and capacity building, co-monitoring and learning, re-positioning, and hand over. Each stage has different level of participation from various stakeholders.

1. *Assessment* – an initial stage to get to know communities, partners and the determination of the context before starting the project.
2. *Community Selection and Working Group Formation* – selecting community and representatives to participate in the project.
3. *Action Planning* – brainstorming options and drafting the implementation processes of potential community projects.
4. *Project Selection and Verification* – the options prepared through the action planning process are presented for selection.
5. *Project Formulation and agreement* – selected project is planned and agreed by communities, working groups and all partners.
6. *Project Implementation* – Communities mobilize their own resources and lead implementation, monitoring and evaluation.
7. *Project Completion and Celebration* – Project completion is celebrated by project implementers, community and partners.
8. *Repositioning or Preparation for the Next Phase* – the project has possibility to be redesign for further development.
9. *Handover* – Working group and other relevant actors implement the exit strategy and hand over to partners and ‘community.

Adopting community mobilization in project management enhance the success of sustainable development. Project management cycle consists of five main stages, in which community mobilization approach can be integrated, including project initiation, project planning, project execution, project monitoring and evaluation, and project closure (Kerzner, 2017). First, project initiation is an early stage of the project where potential actions are identified to respond to the development needs. Project initiation involves development need identification followed by the assessment of local resource, human resource and other factors to achieve development project. Partnership is also assessed for future collaboration in this stage. The second stage, project planning, involves key actions including budgeting, staffing, action planning, scheduling, and planning for project monitoring and evaluation. The third stage, project execution, is a project implementation stage for which resources are utilized within a defined timeframe to achieve project objectives. It also involves the effort of staff in project implementation for efficiency and effectiveness of the project implementation. Fourth, project monitoring and control, the project progress is tracked based on the defined indicators of expected outcomes. The progress is measured against the predicted outcomes. The monitoring information is analyzed to see the impacts of the project to inform management decision. Finally, project closure stage, the project achievement is verified and concluded. Exit strategies are also applied in which the project is handed over to community partners. The stage also involves financial and administrative closure.

However, community mobilizers require knowledge of community mobilization process and a thorough understanding of its principles; and understanding of the community, its ethics and sensitivities. He/she needs some sets of skills including good communication skill, facilitation skill, and ability to make

community participate in the decision making (Kim-Ju, Mark, Cohen, Garcia-Santiago, & Nguyen, 2008). He/she also should possess appropriate attitudes such as willingness to examine a situation, respect for all community members, non-judgemental, a belief in community capacity to take effective action.

The concept of community participation and mobilization is drawn from the theory developed by different developing context. The steps and process of community mobilization have been applied in those developing countries. Less has been done in the selected research area. This paper is academically developed to determine community mobilization method for education development in a rural area in Cambodia.

### 3. Objectives

- To explore the process of community mobilization for school development in the remote schools in Cambodia.
- To examine the leadership roles of the schools and community leaders in the community mobilization for school development.

### 4. Methodology

This study employed a case study method to explore how community mobilization was applied by the remote schools. As suggested by Yin (2011), case study method is suitable with the “how” question and for examining organizations, individuals, communities, past events or ongoing events. Multiple cases were selected for the study. Each case was selected based on the differences in location, infrastructure and the structure of school support committee. The study was started with the determination of case of school development project of each school in which community mobilization (CM) was applied. The study selected the current project each school was implementing for school development.

The schools are located in the remote area where development NGOs have been operated for the community development for decades since 1990s. The schools received constraint technical and financial supports from those NGOs. School staff received series of training on community development. Likewise, community leaders and members have experiences with development NGOs within different sectors. To a certain extent, they were familiar with community resource mobilization process. The schools were observed having community facilitation skills and resource mobilization experience with community members.

Document review was applied for data collection. Formal and informal documents which were relevant to and available for the case study were collected and analyzed. Those documents included school development plans, new academic year reports, mid-term academic reports, annual academic reports, school regulations, charts, tables, organizational structure and hand-written journals. These documents provided information about the structure of community representative at schools and the kinds of development project that the school had. The school planning manuals included community roles in school development.

Unstructured interviews were conducted with school directors to get information about the current development project and how community members and resources were mobilized. The leading questions with school principals focused on their practice in mobilizing community resource for school development. Four leaders of School Support Committee (SSC) were separately interviewed to explore how they assisted and took part in mobilizing community members for education development. The focusing question with SSC leaders were how community representatives supported the schools in mobilizing resources and how community members contributed in school development.

Physical observation was also applied to explore further the information beyond the information from the documents and the interview. For example, most school facilities displayed names of community people who had made financial contributions in the construction of amenities such as toilets, wells, playgrounds, buildings, fences and so forth. Not only were the names written on these tangible facilities, but also the amount of money contributed. These features provided the researcher with evidence of community resource mobilization in respective schools.

The information collected from the field were transcribe and analyzed in NVivo qualitative data analyses. The data was put into theme.

## 5. Results

### 5.1 Different models of community mobilization

Local resources from the communities were vital in school and education development and supplemented the government budget for the school operation. According to the interviews with the school directors, the budget from the government was not enough for the school development, sometimes the budget was late, or the schools had to follow strict budget guidelines from the MoEYS which made it difficult for the school to respond to the real needs. As such, the schools had to mobilize community resources such as materials, money and labour/services to address these restrictions. This research found no unified approach to community resource mobilization applied in the selected schools, but there were some similarities. Each school took an approach that had several steps and processes and these are illustrated through a specific project from each school. Four boxes below depict the different school development projects which were being carried out by the four selected schools during the research period.

#### Case 1: Kindergarten Renovation

Aphiwat is a primary school in a district town having elementary classes and kindergarten classes. Prior to the start of academic year, the school held a consultative meeting with school support committee and parents to discuss school development plan. One of the school development priorities was classroom (kindergarten) renovation because it had broken and cracked floor. The school administrators, SSC and parents decided to include this renovation project into the school development plan. However, the school had budget deficiency as the government budget. The school along with SSC decided to raise fund from parents and community members to complement the budget shortage.

#### Case 2: School construction

Dauntret is a primary school on an end line of a rural road connecting villages in a commune. Majority of village population live along the road. Children living the other end of the road have to ride their bicycle or walk for around 20 minutes on a very quiet, bumpy and muddy road to the school. The distance causes students' frequent absence and limits little children's access to education. SSC leader, parents and the school found solution to help children by building an annex school for those community children.

#### Case 3: School fence construction and water system installation

Sung 1 is a primary school on a main district road in rural area. The school faced problem in protecting school property and did not have water system. The government did not provide enough budget to build fence and installing water system. The two demands were included in the school development plan. As SSC leader was very prestigious in the community and he value education, he proposed the school to prioritize these two needs. The school director called for a meeting to discuss the issue and set fundraising activities to complement budget shortage.

#### Case 4: Building roof Maintenance and school playground construction

Sre Reach is a primary school in a far flunk area off the main road. One of its building had a leaking roof which affected classroom teaching and learning. School playground construction is a continuing project from previous year in its development plan. The school director conducted meeting with SSC leader discussed about budget deficiency. Then, SSC leader conducted meeting and fundraising activities with community members.

The interviews show that in general the schools and SSCs worked collaboratively to mobilize community resources for school development. Both schools and SSCs shared decision-making in planning, roles and responsibilities in carrying out the tasks in the mobilization process. According to primary data from the interviews, secondary data from the schools and my observation, two broad approaches of community resource mobilization can be identified. In the first approach, the school was more active in generating funds and in the second approach, SSCs were more active than the schools in mobilizing resources in the community.

At the beginning of the process of mobilization, for all the schools, the school director called for a meeting with SSC members and teachers to review the school development plan and start the implementation.

Then, the four schools identified target groups of communities to raise funds and a target amount of money to solicit. During the discussion, roles and responsibilities of teachers and SSC members were assigned. In addition, the time frame and target communities for fundraising were discussed. Local authorities were reported providing supports by approving the schools to mobilize resources in the community.

### **The first approach**

Initially, teachers wrote fundraising letters to parents through students after providing information about the fundraising project. Aphiwat School (Case 1) communicated this information by calling for a meeting with parents and by sending the information through students with the details of budget plans in the letter. The meeting aimed at building understanding of parents about the project in order that they contribute their resources to its implementation. The school director believed that communities and parents would participate more when the information was clearly understood.

The information about fundraising was spread in the community through the parents, teachers and students. In the first method, school-based fundraising, the school director sent printed letters to students' parents through students. Some parents put money in the envelope and sent it back to the school through their children. Some parents came to the school to contribute money directly.

After that, fundraising was carried out by the school director and teachers. They went through the communities to meet the wealthy people, authorities, microfinance institutions, banks and business families to raise funds. Teachers and the school director were asked for more information about the purpose of raising funds because the sponsors were sometimes in doubt about the use of the money. The financial contributors were worried that the money would not be used for the purpose of the school development and they only contributed money after clear explanation was given as to its purpose.

In order to build trust, each sponsor was given a 'thank you letter'. The letter stated the name of contributor, amount of money, name of receiver and the purpose of the project. This letter helped contributors to feel confident and trust teachers. In addition, teachers promised to write the names of the contributors on the board to indicate that their money was used for the construction. All schools were observed having a name list of sponsors written on the tablets at school. The practice of writing names of sponsors who contributed money served three purposes: to ensure transparency of the budget expenses, to motivate the community to participate in the school as well as to give the businesses a good reputation in the community. Once the money was collected (the money was put in the envelope by contributors), teachers, the school director and the SSC came together in the office to open the envelope and counted the money. The names of contributors and the amount of money that they contributed were recorded in a book.

### **The second approach**

The second approach of community mobilization was used by three primary schools, Dauntret (Case 2), Sung 1 (Case 3) and Sre Reach (Case 4) primary schools that had village leaders as SSC leaders. In the implementation stage, SSC leaders played roles as village leaders, facilitators and supporters in the communities and schools. As with the first approach, the process of community mobilization started with planning. As required by MoEYS, the schools developed school development plans with the involvement of SSC members, local authorities, parents, children and teachers. In this planning stage, school directors were the facilitators of the meetings. School directors raised the problems that the schools encountered before proposing for solutions from the meeting. For instance, Sung 1 primary school raised plans to build a school fence, but did not have enough in the budget. Thus, the concerns about budget shortages for the construction project were discussed. Once the plans were approved, teachers and SSCs shared their roles and responsibilities to implement the projects.

Following the planning, a series of meetings with parents and communities were conducted to communicate the projects' purposes and benefits for education. In these meetings, the schools built understanding with parents and communities about the benefits of the project. According to the interviews with school directors, there was more participation from communities and parents when information about the project was clearly communicated.

When the SSCs received information from the schools about the school development plan, they then conducted meetings to communicate the projects with communities and parents. At this stage, SSC leaders have a role as village leaders in the communities. According to the SSC leader from Dauntret primary school,

she conducted meetings with household group leaders after the meetings with teachers and school director to spread information about the project and fund-raising activities. Household group leaders take the information to the families in their own villages. The meeting also discussed the amount of money to collect from the parents. They decided to collect a limited amount of money from each family, 5,000 riels which is about US \$1.25. However, this amount was not the upper limit and families were welcome to contribute more. Village leaders and household cluster leaders started their financial contribution in the first meeting in the community, leading by example. Household cluster leaders were responsible for collecting money from their member families.

Another source of funding was from the Buddhist pagoda. Dauntret primary school is close to a pagoda. The two institutions have a connection and the school director from Dauntret primary school has always asked for financial and material contribution from the pagoda. The school director and SSC leader, who is a Buddhist supporter, initiated putting a fundraising box in the pagoda to raise funds for school development. SSC put a fundraising box in the pagoda to raise money for the school development. At some religious occasions [Bon], SSC could raise 100,000 riels [equal to USD 25]. Because of the good connection with the school, the Buddhist pagoda leaders usually contribute money and cement for school renovation (Dauntret SSC leader, personal communication, May 2017, 18). (Dauntret SSC, personal communication, May 2015,18).

Sung 1 also had Buddhist pagoda support. Even though far from the pagoda, Sung 1 has connections with pagoda because some SSC members are Buddhist clergy people. Sung 1 school director commented that clergy people who were SSC members coordinated fund raising in the pagoda in religious occasions for the schools (Sung 1 school director, personal communication, May 2015,19).

## 5.2 Leadership

The current study found that the schools and community leaders played leading roles in community participation. Leadership was very important in mobilizing community participation in education. The leadership of school directors and SSCs (especially SSC leaders) was crucial not only for ensuring the school was well operated, but also for facilitating community participation and mobilizing community resources for school development.

### *School Leadership*

The interviews with the school directors show that the four school directors had significant leadership roles in managing the schools. Leadership was shown through transparency, which was the first response by the four school directors when asked about the factors that made communities participate in education. The data from the interviews reveal that the schools gained trust from the communities because teachers and school administrators (school directors and admin staff) were transparent in conducting school operations.

School administrators were transparent not only with communities, but also with the teachers in the school in planning and using the budget. When the government budget was granted to the schools, teachers and SSCs conducted discussion meetings about budget allocation and involved SSCs and teachers in all aspects of financial decision making. A Buddhist monk leader said that one of the meetings that he had attended was about budget allocation receiving from MoEYS and NGOs (Buddhist monk leader, personal communication, May 2015,18). The interview data with school directors and SSCs show another leadership quality in that school directors and teachers were good at building relationships. School directors made good connections with communities, parents, local authorities and religious institutions. As a result, these groups of communities contributed to the school development. Additionally, the four school directors provided consistent responses that parents trusted the schools because of the teachers' performance and commitment to their teaching (with only a few days of absenteeism).

School directors were aware of the value of networking. The interviews show that school directors as well as their staff built connections with parents, communities, local authorities and NGOs to improve education. Communities are contributors for school and education improvement. They contributed money, labour and materials for school development and to protect the school properties (Aphiwat Samlot School director, personal communication, May 2015,11).

*SSC Leaders' leadership*

The interviews with school directors and SSC leaders reveal that SSC leaders were consistently willing to support their schools. The SSC leaders had an intrinsic motivation to help their school. Even though they were unpaid, they were enthusiastic about spending their time to help the schools because they perceived that helping the schools would have long term impacts in their communities. The children in the next generation would then also develop their communities. SSC leaders were influential in the schools and in the communities. Three out of four SSC leaders were also village leaders. SSCs were responsive and focused on the school development. One SSC leader was a former school director, so he also had influence in his community even though his level of power was not equal to that of the village leaders.

SSC leaders were observed using their positional power as village leaders to influence their community. According to the interview with school directors and SSC leaders, as local authorities, the village leaders, who are also SSC leaders, spread education information in their villages, and tell parents to send their children to schools and encourage families to support children learning at home. Village leaders were reported to be effective in resource mobilization.

[...] we selected and voted for the one who has authority roles such as village leader or deputy village leader to be an SSC leader [...] if we have local authorities as leader in SSC, he has power of mouth. (Sre Reach school director, personal communication, May 2015,25)

This section can be concluded that SSCs and school administrators were the driving force in bringing community people and parents together to participate in children's education.

**6. Discussion**

The study was conducted to find out the methods and procedure to mobilizing community for school development and to explore the leadership roles of the school management and the community representatives (present as School Support Committee) in mobilizing community to participate in the development process. The study found similar methods of community mobilization for school development practiced by the four selected schools, however, each school is found applied the methods in different procedure based on their development projects, their practices were influenced by the participation of the School Support Committee (SSC) who are community representatives in the schools. The study also found that the leadership of the school management and SSC were very crucial for the school and education development and their leadership shaped how they engage and bring people to engage in school and education development.

According to the finding, community resource contribution can be summarized having two models; the school-led resource mobilization (the first model) which was carried out by the schools with consultation and support from SSCs, and delegated-resource mobilization which were responsible by SSCs to solicit money in the community. The first method of mobilization had the teachers to take responsibilities to solicit money from the community and education stakeholders. SSCs only provided advisory support in this method. Meanwhile, there was the delegation to SSCs to conduct fund raising within the second method of community mobilization. SSCs that had village leaders as SSC leaders had influences on the people in the community. SSCs were in charge of collecting money and make payment for the construction. SSCs had power in the decision-making in school development.

Every school has to have SSC in planning, executing, monitoring and evaluation the education in the school. As SSC had to be consulted about school development, the four school, according to the finding, had meetings with SSC leaders who represented community to discuss about the occurring problems and identified solutions. This step was to ensure that the problems were well aware of. However, not all the four school had SSCs engaged in problem identification at the first stage. SSCs, in some cases, were just called for meeting to understand the problem that might affect the children's learning. SSCs were engaged in the discussion about how raise fund for development projects in which government funding was limited. Each school was observed doing budget estimation of each project. Then, they set target funding to raise to complement the existing government fund.

The finding shows that community representative engaged with the schools to identify the problems. They joined in school development plan process in which they could raise their concerns regarding education development. This approach could help the schools to have meaningful participation from the community. In

other words, community people had ownership in education development. The effort to engage people in the education development relies on the capacity and leadership of the schools and the community representatives. The study found that school directors are local people and very senior in the community. They received capacity development from NGOs within the areas on school administration. Thus, they seemed to have capacity in mobilizing community for their school development. In addition, SSC were the catalysts in mobilizing resources. They are very senior in the community, very influential as they are former school director and local authorities, and they live in the village. In Cambodian culture, old people who are literate and have position in the local government are very highly respected. This made them have high trust among community members whom they can mobilize resources for development. In short, the partnership between the schools and community representatives were the lubricant in mobilizing community in education development.

School and SSC are strong partners in promoting participation in education. However, SSC sometime were just a rubber stamping which were called for the meeting to meet the requirement of the MoEYS. SSC should have been given power in schooling process. Study on the work of SSC in operating school should be studied.

#### **School and SSC collaboration**

The study investigated the leading roles of the schools and community to mobilize community participation. The schools were found to possess leadership characteristics that entrusted the communities to get involved. The study found the schools were transparent in the school administration. The schools presented their plans to the community members, and the money that community members contributed was displayed on the school facilities. School staff were reported as having good relationships and being good network builders. They built connections with community members and encouraged community people to get involved in children's education.

SSCs were reported as having positive leadership roles in supporting education programs in the schools. More specifically, SSC leaders were the main supporters for school development. They were confident and powerful in the community. Because they were local authorities and former school directors, SSC leaders of the four schools gained high respect from the community and teachers. They were reported to have commitment in supporting the schools as well.

The findings of the current study were consistent with Sanders in terms of the factors that enhanced community participation in education. Sanders (2001) found that leadership roles of the school leaders were important for making partnerships between school, family and community. This contention indicates that to ensure that community participation take place, school leaders and staff could play roles in facilitation, coordination, designing, implementing, monitoring and evaluating the community participation in education.

Likewise, this research found that the leading roles of the schools and SSCs were crucial to enabling community participation in education. School directors and SSC leaders were found playing roles as communicators and community mobilizers in the schools and in the community. However, the school directors and SSC leaders needed strong management and leadership skills so that they could mobilize community participation (Pellini, 2007). Better leadership and management skills could enable the school and SSCs to more effectively mobilize community members and civil society to participate in education, such as providing training in parenting skills to parents and teachers.

Reflecting to the project management framework and community mobilization framework, the study shows that the schools and SSCs have capacity at a certain level in mobilizing community resources for school development. They started with need identification for school development which is an assessment stage in project management framework. The schools and SSCs continued to a planning stage in which school management teams and SSC leaders came together to set schedule, task and timeframe of the action (which is a planning stage). During this stage, both schools and SSCs clarified roles and responsibilities in performing tasks. For instance, the school raised fund among teachers while SSC leaders outreached the community to raise fund. Both Schools and SSCs were well aware of the context and they divided tasks accordingly. In the project implementation stage, both sides, the schools and SSCs used their facilitation and communication skills to raise fund to reach their target. The schools used verbal and non-verbal communication to clarify any doubts with those who contributed fund. SSC leaders had meetings before and after fundraising activities by

informing about the purpose and how the money would be managed. In monitoring stage, the study also indicated that schools and SSCs had discussions about how much money and resources they raised. SSCs gave resources and money to the schools with recording in the books (handover stage). Both sides also had reflection about their work.

## 7. Conclusion

The four selected schools had different ways of mobilizing community resources for school development. Both methods identified were suitable in the local context, and could be applicable in other areas throughout the country or in different countries. The first method was school-led resource mobilization which was carried out by the schools with consultation and advisory support from SSCs. This method was associated with teachers' roles to conduct fundraising in the community. SSCs only provided advice to the schools. Teachers were the facilitators, fundraisers, organizers and communicators. The second method, delegated-resource mobilization was the responsibility of SSCs to solicit money in the community. This method shows the power distribution among schools and SSCs. As SSC members were local authorities and elderly people who were socially respected, they could use their influence in mobilizing community resources. SSCs were the resource mobilizers and facilitators. The schools that had village leaders as SSC leaders used this method. The method tended to be effective for mobilizing resources, and reflects the genuine participation of community people in SSCs as partners with the schools.

The practice of community mobilization for school development in the study area even though could not be generalized for the whole country, it reflects the common practices by the remote primary schools to mobilize resources for school development when it had financial deficiency. The schools alone could not bring community people to engage in school development. The active participation of SSCs is crucial as SSC leaders and members are community representatives in the school who stay closely with community. They are also the connectors between schools and community. In addition, the active participation in schools relies on leadership of both school leaders and SSC leaders.

## 8. Limitations of the study

The method of community mobilization was limited to mobilizing community resources for school development, rather than mobilizing community people to get involved and invest in education. The study investigated how the schools and SSCs worked together to collect community resources to complement government budget for school development. This tended to be material-based and respond to the need to supply learning facilities for education. Further research should focus on methods of mobilizing local people to be more involved in children's learning processes.

The study was limited in determine the power of the school administrators and that of School Support Committee. The study determined the surface of the influence of school directors and SSC leaders in the community. However, it did not explore in detail the power exercise in the community in which further research should focus. Also, this research explored a phenomenon within its context but not using a variety of data sources so there is no triangulation evidence.

## 9. References

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