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Beyond PRONADE: NGOs and the Formal Education Sector in Guatemala

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Abstract

In Guatemala, the Ministry of Education (MoE) is overburdened with challenges; these include the most basic provision of services and support for public schools across the country. In the absence of a capable state presence, countless nongovernmental organizations (NGO) have sprung up to provide, sustain and/or take over basic education services. These NGOs come in all shapes and sizes, with different motivations, from different countries and receiving funding from a variety of national and international sources. The combination of rapidly increasing numbers of NGOs along with minimal state coordination means that the Ministry is unaware of the number of NGOs operating in the education sector, much less what they are doing, where they are and the capabilities that they bring to the sector. Recent estimates place the number of NGOs in Guatemala upwards of 10,000 with no definitive number to be determined in the near future.

The National Program for Self-Managed Schools for Educational Development (PRONADE) from 1994 – 2007 was the first large-scale initiative to include NGOs in the provision of public education. The participating NGOs delivered technical services such as pedagogical training and financial reporting. However, more recently, there have been an increase in smaller foreign and national NGOs that are interacting with the education sector in new ways. This study interviews six of these smaller NGOs along with four different policymakers working at the national level to inquire about their views on NGOs working in the education sector.

This study finds that the participant NGOs are involved in a complex set of interactions with the formal education sector primarily at the local level. This includes active and dependent partnerships at the local and ministerial levels and the supplementation and replacement of public services. Despite all of this NGO activity, there is a dearth of information on NGOs working in the formal education sector in Guatemala. And finally, both policymakers and NGOs expressed their interest in future NGO-MoE partnerships although each envisions such partnerships differently.

Acronyms

ASC　　　　　　　Assembly of Civil Society
ASINDES　　　　　Association of Guatemalan Service and Development NGOs
BEST　　　　　　 Basic Education Strengthening
CARE　　　　　　 Cooperative for Assistance and Relief Everywhere
CEH　　　　　　　Commission for Historical Clarification
CELAM　　　　　　Conference of Latin American Bishops
COBISAGUA　　　　Council of Social Well-Being
COEDUCA　　　　　Education Committee
CONALFA　　　　　National Committee for Literacy
CONAVIGUA　　　　National Council of Guatemalan Widows
CONGCOOP　　　　 Association for the Coordination of NGOs and Cooperatives in Guatemala
COPMAGUA　　　　 Coalition of Mayan People's Organizations
CPR　　　　　　　Communities of Population in Resistance
CRN　　　　　　　National Reconstruction Committee
CUC　　　　　　　Committee of Campesino Unity
DICONIME　　　　　Office of National and International Cooperation
DIGEACE　　　　　 Directorate of Accreditation and Certification
EFA　　　　　　　Education For All
EUBI　　　　　　　Unitary Bilingual School
GEP　　　　　　　Girls Education Program
IHERC　　　　　　 Inter-Hemispheric Education Resource Center
ISE　　　　　　　 Educational Service Institution
MoE　　　　　　　Ministry of Education
MSPE　　　　　　　Multi-stakeholder Partnerships for Education
NEU　　　　　　　New Unitary School
NGO　　　　　　　Nongovernmental Organization
OXFAM　　　　　　Oxford Committee for Famine Relief
PAIN　　　　　　　Project of Integrated Attention for the Child
PPP　　　　　　　Public-Private Partnerships
PRONADE　　　　　National Program for Self-Managed Schools for Educational Development
SIF　　　　　　　 Social Investment Funds
USAID　　　　　　United States Agency for International Development

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Introduction

This research project provides an analysis of the perceived roles and interactions of NGOs and the Ministry of Education in the formal education sector in Guatemala.

Statement of the Issue

In Guatemala, the Ministry of Education (MoE) is overburdened with challenges; these include the most basic provision of services and support for public schools across the country. In the absence of a capable state presence, countless nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) have sprung up to provide, sustain and/or take over basic education services. These NGOs come in all shapes and sizes, with different motivations, from different countries and receiving funding from a variety of national and international sources. The combination of rapidly increasing numbers along with minimal state coordination means that the Ministry is unaware of the number of NGOs operating in the education sector, much less what they are doing, where they are and the kinds of capabilities that they bring to the sector. Recent estimates place the number of NGOs upwards of 10,000 with no definitive number to be determined in the near future (Sridhar, 2007 p. 204; Beck as cited in Rohloff et. al, 2011, p. 428). The sheer number of actors working in the education sector in Guatemala indicates the potential for coordinated interactions with the goal of enhancing public sector provision of education.

> **PRONADE: An Experiment in NGO-Government Partnerships for Increasing Access to Education**
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> PRONADE, or the National Program for Self-Managed Schools for Educational Development, (1994 - 2007) made headlines by dramatically increasing educational access in rural areas utilizing an innovative combination of NGOs, businesses and public sector actors. Education Service Institutions (ISEs), which included NGOs and private companies, played an important role by providing technical administrative and pedagogical support to rural schools that were being run by parent committees. PRONADE was the largest partnership between NGOs and the Ministry of Education; this collaborative effort stood in stark contrast to the mutual distrust emblematic of their relationships during the 36-year civil war. PRONADE increased access for over 450,000 students and opened over 4600 schools. However, it was opposed by influential groups such as teachers unions and human rights organizations citing the poor quality of education and unfair working conditions for both teachers and parents and was closed in 2007.

The National Program for Self-Managed Schools for Educational Development (PRONADE) began as a small pilot program in 1994 with the goal of increasing access in rural, primarily indigenous areas. A joint initiative by the World Bank, the German Development Bank KfW and the Ministry of Education, PRONADE was the first large-scale initiative to include NGOs in the provision of public education. While successful in providing access to over 450,000 students, the program ended in 2007 after years of opposition from teachers unions and human rights groups criticizing the parallel structure that had been created to implement the program.

During a literature review of PRONADE in 2011, I realized that the NGOs involved in that program were very different from the NGOs that I had encountered and worked with in Guatemala. This discrepancy prompted the research questions driving this study, which are:

- How do NGOs perceive their role/s within the formal education sector in Guatemala?
- How are NGOs in Guatemala interacting with the Ministry of Education and/or the formal education sector?
- How do stakeholders envision the roles of NGOs in the education sector in the future?

Those working in education and development, specifically NGOs and those interacting with NGOs in Guatemala, could benefit from hearing the perspectives of both NGOs and key stakeholders about how they perceive each other and their place within the education sector. Furthermore, educational stakeholders across Central America may also be interested in learning about these interactions given the interest in this topic area.

Purpose of this paper

The goal of this study is to provide information that will illuminate the ways in which small NGOs are interacting with the formal education sector, how policymakers understand the roles of NGOs, and how stakeholders envision the future of NGOs in the sector. This paper will present the perceptions of different education development actors including six NGO representatives, a former top official from the Ministry of Education, an education consultant and two individuals from a bilateral aid agency. Each interviewee was questioned about their views on the current roles of NGOs in the education sector, the interactions that NGOs have with the formal sector and how NGOs might be involved in the education sector in the future. The findings are intended to foster dialogue about current NGO roles in the formal education sector; highlight potential avenues for mutually beneficial interaction; and provide information to stakeholders about the involvement of small NGOs in the education sector in Guatemala.

Context

Guatemala stretches along the southernmost border of Mexico and also borders Belize to the East, Honduras to the South and El Salvador to the Southwest. In a country of roughly 14 million people and where over 50% of the population lives in poverty, individuals under the age of thirty make up 70% of the population and roughly 40% of the population are indigenous Maya (ENCOVI, 2006). During 36 years of civil war that ended with a Peace Accords in 1996, over 200,000 people were killed or disappeared and over a million were displaced from their homes (ODHAG, 1999). The UN-sponsored Commission for Historical Clarification (CEH) confirmed that genocide was perpetrated

by the Guatemalan military against the Maya between 1981-1983. The 3,500-page report determined that 93% of the violations were carried out by the military with 3% attributed to the rebel groups (ODHAG, 1999). Since the peace accords, much has been done to try and bring the country together but the challenges are deeply embedded and progress in health, education and poverty reduction is very slow.

Literature Review

Current Day Discussions on NGOs

Civil society groups have a history of playing an active role in political and economic affairs, frequently requiring the government to listen to their demands (Simmons, 1998; Werker & Ahmed, 2008). The Anti-Slavery movements in the early 1800s in Great Britain and the USA, led by such organizations as the British and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society, are early examples of nongovernmental entities putting pressure on the government to modify their stance towards a particular issue (Simmons, 1998; Collier in Eade, 2000; Werker & Ahmed, 2008). The events of World War I and World War II gave rise to humanitarian aid organizations like the Save the Children Fund in 1917, the Oxford Committee for Famine Relief (OXFAM) in 1942 and the Cooperative for American Remittances to Europe, later changed to Cooperative for Assistance and Relief Everywhere and currently known as CARE (Werker & Ahmed, 2008). Nongovernmental Organizations, more commonly referred to as NGOs, received a leveraged status when they were written into Article 71 of the UN Charter in 1945 and declared a potential partner for development (UN, 1945).

Since the 1940s, NGOs have been increasingly involved in international development efforts with a dramatic spike beginning in the early 1980s (Werker & Akmed, 2008; McGann & Johnstone, 2006; World Bank, 2010). David Korten's (1990) framework for understanding the history of NGOs will be useful to place Guatemala into global trends of development (Korten as cited in Cardelle, 2003, p. 13). In his book "Health Care Reform in Central America: NGO-Government Collaboration in Guatemala and El Salvador", Professor Alberto Cardelle interprets Korten's "generations of NGOs" into three evolutionary periods: Relief and Welfare, Technocratic and Developmentalist, and Liberatory (Cardelle, 2003, p. 13). These three generations could characterize the evolution of one NGO or of the characteristics of successive NGOs; both scenarios can be applied.

The first generation of NGOs were focused on relief and welfare that traditionally took the form of short-term humanitarian assistance to provide for the most basic needs. The time period associated with the first generation will encompass roughly the first half of the 20th century through 1960. The second generation responded to the limitations of humanitarian aid and welfare and to the development theories of the 60s and 70s to address issues of underdevelopment. These NGOs tended to be more technocratic than their altruistic predecessors (or their previous approaches) and held assumptions that economic and technological inputs would stimulate development. The third generation was liberatory in nature in that they tended to seek structural changes during the 80s and 90s within the economic, political and social spheres of their locale, region or country.

Many of these NGOs wanted to enact institutional changes and influence policy at the highest level with the intention of having the most impact possible. Cardelle (2003) adds that one of the most important features that determined the kind of NGO that emerged within a country during a given time period was the relationship with the state and, specifically, whether or not the state deemed them favorable or unfavorable.

In the last decade, the literature contains debates regarding the privatization of public education, using the terminology of Public-Private Partnerships (PPP) and Multi-stakeholder Partnerships for Education (MSPE). Alexandra Draxler (2008) reviews the "partnership" terminology as it relates to the EFA initiative and distinguishes between PPPs and MSPEs by stating that, while PPPs tend to indicate the joint partnership of the government and a private, for-profit entity, MSPEs are meant to include a variety of "public, private and civil society stakeholders" (p. 23). However, an extensive report from Education International (EI) (2009) posed an alternative interpretation of the same terminology: that PPPs occur when a for-profit, private entity contracts with the state to build, operate or service the public sector, and that MSPEs are non-contractual and specifically related to corporate social responsibility initiatives and, especially internationally, the work of NGOs (Education International, 2009). Within this dialogue, it is evident that the current number of actors intervening in public education makes the sector increasingly complex; NGOs are occupying a central role in a debate about whether or not education is a public good or simply another vehicle for private interest (Comparative Education Review, 2012; Kamat, 2004).

NGO Roles: Two Frameworks

The definitions, classifications, characteristics, roles, accountability, interactions with the private and/or public sectors, interactions with bilateral and/or multilateral organizations, sources of funding, effectiveness, legitimacy, participation, democracy and neoliberalism of NGOs have been vigorously debated within academic circles for decades (Carroll, 1992; Paul & Israel, 1991; Hulme &Edwards, 1997; Fisher, 1993; MacDonald, 1997; Kamat, 2004). For the purposes of this paper, this author will use two analytical frameworks to be articulated in the analysis section in order to interpret the roles that NGOs play and their interactions with the government. These are Adil Najam's (2000) *strategic interest framework* and David Lewis' (2007) *roles of NGOs framework*.

Professor Adil Najam of Boston University describes a framework for analyzing the relationships between the third sector and the government in the year 2000 entitled *The Four-C's of Third Sector-Government Relations: Cooperation, Confrontation, Complementarity, and Co-optation* (Najam, 2000). Najam describes the interactions between governments and NGO as described by: cooperation, complementary, confrontation and co-optation. Respectively, the Four C's are:

1. Seeking similar ends with similar means;
2. Seeking dissimilar ends with dissimilar means;
3. Seeking similar ends but preferring dissimilar means, or

4. Preferring similar means but for dissimilar ends (Najam, 2000, p. 383).

In his book "The Management of Non-Governmental Development Organizations", David Lewis posits 3 primary roles that NGOs play in developing countries: *Implementers, catalysts* and *partners* (Lewis, 2007). Lewis describes the implementer role as one in which an NGO would secure funds to directly provide specific goods and services. The NGO role as a catalyst attempts to stimulate change at the individual and/or organizational level. In the role of partner, the NGO has different types of collaborative initiatives with governments, the private sector and donors.

The Role of NGOs in Guatemala

After a significant search for literature on NGOs involved in the education sector in Guatemala, I have found a limited selection of material. The literature was available in two genres: (1) historical information about NGOs in Guatemala, and (2) information from bilateral and multilateral aid groups that have engaged NGOs in their educational programming. The historical information covers NGOs in their many forms and especially during the Civil War and through PRONADE after the peace accords. Much of the first genre tends to be focused around either the Catholic Church or politically engaged NGOs. The information on bilateral and multilateral aid groups discusses their educational interventions and some reports indicate their inclusion of NGOs in implementation. Much of the information is related to health care NGOs; there is a dearth of information on small NGOs that are engaged in education, especially ones that were started after the Peace Accords. Because of this limited material, this literature review relies heavily on a few written works:

1. Alberto Jose Frick Cardelle's 2003 book *Health Care Reform in Central America: NGO-Government Collaboration in Guatemala and El Salvador* has several pages on the history of NGOs in Guatemala, occasionally mentioning education.

2. Felix Alvarado Browning's 1998 book *Perfil de las Organizaciónes no Gubernamentales en Guatemala* (Profile of Nongovernmental Organizations in Guatemala) is a World Bank-funded technical review of NGOs in Guatemala, conceptualizing, categorizing and characterizing the NGO sector.

3. The Inter-Hemispheric Education Resource Center's 1988 publication entitled *Private Organizations with U.S. Connections in Guatemala: Directory and Analysis* briefly reviews the history of the Catholic Church and USAID as they relate to NGOs and development.

4. Carols Gonzalez Orellana's sixth edition of the textbook *Historia de la Educación en Guatemala* (History of the Education in Guatemala) contains a 10-page section at the end of the book dedicated to the changes in the education sector from the 1980s to the year 2000. This mentions NGOs as implementing partners in a number of initiatives with few details.

5. Peter Roholoff, Anne Kramer Diaz and Shom Dasgupta have published an article in 2011 called *Beyond Development": A Critical Appraisal of the Emergence of Small Health Care Non-Governmental Organizations in Rural Guatemala* which briefly reviews the history and context of NGOs in Guatemala.

In order to place the history of NGOs in Guatemala within the context of important national events and at the risk of being reductionist, this section will break up the historical trajectory into five segments of time: 1944 - 1954, 1955 - 1975, 1976 - 1995, 1996 – 2008, 2009 - 2012. Due to the polyvalent nature of history and events, the time periods are somewhat arbitrary but in this circumstance will be useful to indicate significant changes in the NGO sector as they relate to important domestic events. It should also be noted that because of the heterogeneity of the NGO sector at any given time, that there will be significant variation in the ways in which each kind of NGO acts within a given context.

1944 – 1954: The October Revolution and Ten Years of Spring

The precipitous growth of civil society organizations and NGOs to the present day can be traced back to the October Revolution in 1944 followed by the "Ten Years of Spring", from 1944 – 1954, during which time Guatemala enjoyed two democratically elected leaders, Juan José Arévalo Bermejo and Jacobo Árbenz Guzmán. Pushing for social reforms including education, health care and land reform, both Arévalo and Árbenz set out to improve the quality of life for the everyday Guatemalan. During the less than four years of Árbenz's term, from 1951 – 1954, no less than 550 NGOs were registered with the government, including trade unions, cooperatives and community organizations (Alvarado Browning, 1999, p. 18). But a US backed coup d'état would overthrow the Árbenz government in 1954 and catapult the country into a military dictatorship for the next thirty plus years. The proliferation of NGOs occurred at three more specific points in history: the Alliance for Progress in 1961, the 1976 earthquake and the Peace Accords in 1996.

The October Revolution of 1944 came in response to the repressive, thirteen-year military dictatorship of Jorge Ubico. During his tenure, Ubico had violently suppressed citizen organization and opposition political parties, using his power to enrich himself and the select elite landholders in the country. A popular uprising led to his resignation on July 1st 1944 and the appointment of a military triumvirate that would take over the country. One of those men, Juan Federico Ponce Vaides became acting president and promised elections in November, but his violent repression of emerging political activists and critical media led to his overthrow by a group of young military generals and seventy students (Handy, 1994; Woodward, 1999). An estimated 100,000 citizens including groups from labor unions and political organizations as well as students and business professionals took to the streets of the capital on October 26th celebrating the overthrow of the dictatorship: in the true nature of this popular revolution, one of the many posters read "Military, students and workers: brothers in the fight" (CIRMA Archive, 1945). It is within this context of popular revolution that hundreds of nongovernmental organizations

were conceived during the following ten years of democratically elected presidents Juan Jose Arévalo and Jacobo Árbenz.

Both Arévalo and Árbenz took on major reforms in labor, health care and education. While this author was unable to find statistics for NGOs during Arévalo's presidency, 550 NGOs were created during the presidency of Jacobo Árbenz. This increase was directly related to his initiatives on community development, rural credit extension, land reform, trade unions and cooperatives (Alvarado Browning et. al, 1998). However, civil society organization was curtailed after the US orchestrated coup d'état installed Colonel Carlos Castillo Armas in the summer of 1954. In an attempt to reign in control over the population, the new government suppressed labor groups and the communist party and took back the management of the social programs. The Council on Social Well-Being (COBISAGUA) was formed in 1956 to deliver services to the rural areas using government and select nongovernment organizations (Alvarado Browning et. al, 1998). This change in policy was reflective of the government's growing mistrust of nongovernmental organizations and the rural population.

1955 – 1975: Catholic Action and the Alliance for Progress

The Catholic Church had been actively critical of the Árbenz presidency and had joined with anti-communist groups to criticize his rule; this went as far as the Archbishop colluding with the CIA to topple his government in 1954 (IHERC, 1988). The Catholic Church had been a prominent actor in the development of nongovernmental community organizations during the 20th century in Latin America and, in Guatemala specifically, was actively providing welfare and relief to the marginalized populations in both rural and urban areas (Cardelle, 2003; Korten, 1991). A shortage of priests had led to groups of lay people, or *catequistas*, taking it upon themselves to actively endorse the teachings of the church in their communities despite the absence of an officially sanctioned leader (Ferm, 1986). When the Central American Bishops convened in 1956 at the First Episcopal Conference of Central America, they "devised a plan of defense of the faith against communism" by officially recognizing the unorganized lay groups, specifically calling the reform initiative Acción Católica or Catholic Action (Cardelle, 2006).

While the Catholic Church had felt threatened during the previous ten years, they flourished in the following decades, bringing in hundreds of new priests and nuns as missionaries (IHERC, 1988). The Catholic Action movement played a significant role in the increase of nongovernmental organizations by involving missionaries and the catequistas, now numbering in the hundreds of thousands, and instructing them to take on development assistant projects that organized cooperatives, training centers, literacy campaigns and community organizations in an attempt to convert the indigenous population and assuage social unrest (Streeter, 2006; IHERC, 1988; Sollis, 1995; MacDonald, 1997). The church also created an NGO, called Caritas, which would serve as an intermediary for international assistance in the region and as a member of Caritas Internationalis, an international Catholic social action organization (Cardelle, 2006; Caritas, 2012).

The 1960s hosted Vatican II in the early part of the decade and the Conference of Latin American Bishops (CELAM) in 1968 which led to the church directly engaging in radical social action in an attempt to generate political changes that would address the structural roots of poverty; a preferential option for the poor (Cardelle, 2003; Ferm, 1986; MacDonald, 1997). Much was happening in Catholic Church during the decade including the blossoming of Freirean concientizacion, liberation theology and the forming of Christian base communities (Streeter, 2006; Ferm, 1986). Catholic missionaries were beginning to confront local and regional power blocks that were repressing the community organizations and cooperatives that they had formed in their communities (IHERC, 1988). As a result, many clergy members and their lay groups became radicalized as they saw increasingly violent suppression and some joined the guerilla groups that were actively resisting the government (IHERC, 1988).

President Kennedy initiated the US foreign policy initiative called the Alliance for Progress in 1961. This was partially in response to the Cuban Revolution and sought to boost economic relations between the United States and Latin America and to quell social unrest feared to be the fodder for communism; this initiative is cited as a major source for monies that contributed to the increasing number of NGOs in Guatemala (Streeter, 2006; De Lean Cabrera, 2005; IHERC, 1988; Chávez, 1993; MacDonald, 1997; González, 1991). This 20 billion dollar aid package sought to pressure Latin American countries into opening their economic markets and adopting democratic political reforms. Prevalent understandings of modernization guided the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) to try and induce development through the transfer of high level technology and macro level economic adjustments (Streeter, 2006; Cardelle, 2003). The initiative directly increased funding to service-providing national and international NGOs occasionally including the assistance programs taken on by the catequistas (Cardelle, 2003; IHERC, 1988).

During the 1960s, both USAID and the UN programs were involved in educational support. Rural education programs, adult literacy initiatives and primary education programs were implemented by USAID, and both UNICEF and UNESCO began working on bilingual programming for indigenous children (USAID, 1968; Wright, Rich, & Allen, 1967; UNICEF, 2008). In 1967, UNICEF and UNESCO began a small, bilingual education pilot program in the rural areas of three departments called Escuela Unitaria Bilingue or Unitary Bilingual School (EUBI) (UNICEF, 2008). During this time period, access to primary school in rural areas and particularly for indigenous children was almost nonexistent and was not available in the mother tongue. The EUBI program was based on the Escuela Nueva model from Colombia, which amongst other characteristics, focused on community participation in one-teacher schools with mother tongue instruction (UNICEF, 2008). Both the USAID and UN programs were executed with the support of the Guatemalan government. According to the Inter-Hemispheric Education Resource Center (IHERC), "Both U.S. and Guatemalan nongovernmental organizations were encouraged to participate in AID development projects" (1988, p. 9).

The EUBI program also likely interacted with small, nongovernmental community organizations to support their schools[1].

1976 – 1995: Natural Disasters and Man-Made Terror

The 1976 earthquake marks a pivotal point in the growth of the NGO sector in Guatemala (Alvarado Browning et. al, 1998; Cardelle, 2003; Sollis, 1995; IHERC, 1988). To support Guatemala in their relief efforts, 175 NGOs were created in that year and by the end of the decade over 350 new NGOs had been formed, many by individuals who stayed beyond the relief efforts of the earthquake to deliver development aid (Alvarado Browning et. al, 1998). Fe y Alegria, a nongovernmental Jesuit social service organization, came to Guatemala to support the relief efforts and began building schools and partnering with the government to provide education for vulnerable populations (Fe y Alegria, 2012). Their interaction with the government in Guatemala was unique in that they provided the school building and materials and then received government funding to pay for the teachers (Montoya, 2004).

Recognizing the need to coordinate the relief efforts and wary of opposition groups that were eager to take advantage of the influx of relief monies, the government formed the military controlled National Reconstruction Committee (CRN) (IHERC, 1988; Sanford, 2003). During the same time period, strong community based movements in the rural areas formed together such as the Committee of Campesino Unity (CUC) and organized peasant laborers; they supported the continued growth of cooperative movement in order to increase self-sufficiency and decrease their reliance on the government (Cardelle, 2003). By the late 70s, there existed a "thriving dense web of organizations" (Cardelle, 2003, p. 20).

Violent repression intensified under the dictator Lucas García (1978 – 1982) in response to a strengthened and more unified popular movement that was mobilizing against the military regime (IHERC, 1988). This continued into the early 1980s when Guatemala suffered the most brutal years of political repression, genocide against the Maya indigenous population and intense militarization led by the central government (Cardelle, 2003; ODHAG, 1999). A heinous reign of terror was unleashed between 1981 – 1983 during which time a military junta installed dictator José Efraín Ríos Montt. Over half of the 626 massacres documented during the war occurred during this time with tens of thousands of Mayan peasants arbitrarily executed, disappeared and tortured and an estimated 500,000 – 1,500,000 people displaced (ODHAG, 1999).

This was also a time of ideological crisis in the Western Hemisphere with the Cold War and several civil wars raging in Central America. The intense repression by the

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[1] This author was unable to find literature that specifically states that nongovernmental community organizations were involved in the EUBI program but all of the literature reviewed on Escuela Nueva and EUBI says that the local community was involved in the schools (UNICEF, 2008; Kline, 2002; McEwan & Benveniste, 2001). Because of the proliferation of community organizations during this time period, and because of the fact that USAID was involving nongovernmental organizations, the author is suggesting that nongovernmental community organizations may have been involved somehow in the process.

government and the exposure of grave human rights violations eventually resulted in the loss of much of the international aid for the government but a significant amount of money was channeled to NGOs "because external support was intended to impart a political as well as a humanitarian message" (Cardelle, 2003; Sollis, 1995, p. 527). The CRN tightened its grip on any international aid flowing to the rural areas and required that all NGOs be registered through them in order to control resources (IHERC, 1988). NGOs that were previously apolitical were forced to take sides in a dangerous political environment and those that were against the government, rejected any collaboration efforts with the CRN.

The increase in violence had a significant impact on the education system and schools; students and teachers were attacked and killed if they were suspected to be collaborating with the opposition (Marques & Bannon, 2003). The national public university as well as many high schools and also opposed the regime and "student and teacher leaders were persecuted, killed or disappeared" (Marques & Bannon, 2003, p. 9). Because teachers were afraid to be posted in the rural areas, communities often took educational programming into their own hands. This meant non-traditional settings, especially in the Communities of Population in Resistance (CPR) where the community was actively fleeing the military, and makeshift spaces were used to educate both children and adults (Marques & Bannon, 2003; Moller & Falla, 2004). While these community organizations weren't NGOs, it was clear that civil society had taken over new roles during that time period (Cardelle, 2003).

There was a developmentalist faction within the military that implemented their programs through the CRN (IHERC, 1988). This group saw both armed repression and the provision of social services as necessary to fight the enemy and proactively dissuade potential dissidents (IHERC, 1988). The international community condemned the ongoing human rights violations and because of this, much of the development aid, particularly from USAID, was channeled directly through NGOs, deliberately circumventing government agencies except for the provision of food (Cardelle, 2003; Sanford, 2003). This trend of directly funding NGOs combined with the military violence cultivated a culture of distrust between NGOs and the government of Guatemala (Cardelle, 2003; Sollis, 1995; Brautingham & Segarra, 2007). The government became highly suspicious of NGOs operating in the country and they were seen as a "direct threat to national security" (Sollis, 1995, p. 529). Despite this disintegration, there were nearly 350 NGOs registered between 1986 and 1989 (Alvarado Browning et al., 1998, p. 104).

Sensing the need to increase collaboration amongst the growing number of NGOs and the government, USAID formed an NGO umbrella group called the Association of Guatemalan Service and Development NGOs (ASINDES). This association was comprised of NGOs that were already supported by USAID as well as others that received international financing (Cardelle, 2003; Brautingham & Segarra, 2007). Given the strict accounting requirements of international donors, these NGOs were highly professionalized and technocratic; smaller, "social change NGOs" were not included in ASINDES (Cardelle, 2003, p. 22). This division became more pronounced when many

members left the association because of their desire to pursue a more political approach and out of fear that the government was taking over the agenda (Cardelle, 2003).

In the realm of education, USAID continued to run and support educational programming in the 80s and early 90s and, partly because of their fractured relations with the government, was working with multilateral groups, large international NGOs and nonprofit foundations[2] (Stromquist, 1999; Orellana, 2011). Their projects included bilingual programming with the *New* Unitary School (NEU), the Girls Education Program (GEP) and the Basic Education Strengthening (BEST) project (Stromquist, 1999; Orellana, 2011; Warfield, 1994). Through complex contractual arrangements, USAID hired education consultants and foundations to run programs that were often executed by different national and international NGOs.

UNICEF was also involved in running various educational programs including their continued support of the EUBI program and a partnership with the government to implement a program for children ages 0 – 6, new parents and pregnant and lactating mothers called the Project of Integrated Attention for the Child (PAIN) (Orellana, 2011; UNICEF, 2010). In 1986, the Ministry of Education launched the National Committee for Literacy (CONALFA) to offer nonformal literacy training for those above the age of 15 by partnering with NGOs to implement the programs (Orellana, 2011; CONALFA, 2012). Another boost to NGO involvement in education was articulated in 1992 in the Education For All (EFA) initiative mentioning the inclusion of NGOs in nearly every aspect of the plan (UNESCO, 2000).

In the late 80s, the government of Guatemala approached the World Bank for Social Investment Funds (SIF), an intermediary financial institution that was specifically designed for funding development projects and would allow for local implementation by nongovernmental organizations and community groups (Abbott & Covey, 1996). The World Bank saw this as an opportunity to push for increased collaboration between the government and NGOs by specifying that NGOs would be responsible for administering some of the funds from the SIF (Brautingham & Segarra, 2007). After roughly 8 years of rocky negotiations and many failed attempts to bring the government and the NGOs together, an agreement was reached in 1995 but with a significantly limited role to be played by NGOs (Brautingham & Segarra, 2007). However, the SIF was used to fund NGOs and NGO activities in the years following the agreement.

During the late 80s and early 90s, both large and small social and political change oriented NGOs[3] continued to play a major role in the national dialogue. Being involved in these NGOs was dangerous because many were critical of the government and had

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[2] Nonprofit foundations are the nonprofit, nongovernmental units of private corporations.

[3] These social and political change oriented NGOs is what Cardelle refers to as the *liberationist* generation, where NGOs became more involved in the policy making and institutional change (Cardelle, 2003, p. 15). These NGOs were influenced to a certain extent by international discourse which included Paolo Freire's notion of praxis, Marxist understandings of state and society, and dependency theories that cited a deliberate underdevelopment of the global south (MacDonald, 1997, p. 12).

links to opposition groups; this tension was underscored in 1990 when a government agent murdered Myrna Mack, a researcher and NGO founder who was speaking out against the military activities in the highlands (Sollis, 1995; CIA, 1995). In the years leading up to the Peace Accords, international and national NGOs played an integral role in the formulation of the details that would make up the agreements (Cardelle, 2003; Poppema, 2009). Many national NGOs also participated, representing groupings within civil society such as the Coalition of Mayan People's Organizations (COPMAGUA) and the National Council of Guatemalan Widows (CONAVIGUA); these organizations played an important advocacy role in the formation of the Peace Accords. This process was designed to include participation of civil society organizations through the Assembly of Civil Society (ASC) (Sridhar, 2007; ODHAG, 1999; Poppema, 2009).

1996 – 2008: The Peace Accords and PRONADE

The Agreement on a Firm and Lasting Peace (hereafter referred to as the Peace Accords) was signed on December 29th, 1996 and promised to herald in a new era of peace and prosperity in Guatemala and particularly as it related to the interactions between the Maya people and the government (UN General Assembly Security Council, 1997; Poppema, 2009). Explicit support for education was written into the document and included provisions for increased educational coverage and a multicultural curriculum that included Maya language and culture (Poppema, 2009). One particularly noteworthy component of the agreement was its statement that community involvement would serve as the primary catalyst for the creation and administration for many of the new schools.

The renewed support from the international community, the advancement of democracy and the tentative but increasing inclusion of various segments of civil society all contributed to the growth of the NGO sector surrounding the Peace Accords (Cardelle, 2003; Alvarado Browning, et. al, 1999). Despite the continuation of relatively high levels of mistrust, the NGO sector was growing and increasing their interaction with the government on a variety of levels (Brautingham & Segarra, 2007). Those NGOs with advanced technical and accounting capabilities were able to collaborate directly with the government and the bilateral and multilateral organizations. There was also a blossoming of smaller, development-oriented NGOs seeking funding from both national and international sources (Brautingham & Segarra, 2007). These NGOs made a point of differentiating themselves from the larger NGOs, the state and the private sector; they distanced themselves from a sector "characterized by force and coercion and a sole focus of profit maximizing" (Cardelle, 2003, p. 16).

Unbeknownst to many, a small-scale educational pilot program had started in 1993 called *Saq'be,* which is a Kaqchikel word that translates to "Path of Light" (Valerio & Rojas, 2001). This pilot would become Guatemala's National Program of Self-Managed Schools for Educational Development (PRONADE*),* dramatically increasing access to primary schools in the most rural and remote areas of the country. The PRONADE schools were unique in that each school had an elected Education Committee (COEDUCA) made up of local parents and village leaders that took direct responsibility for the hiring, firing and issuance of payment to teachers with government funding.

NGOs and private companies served as Educational Service Institutions (ISE) and provided the COEDUCAs with the necessary training in order to appropriately manage their school. Traditionally, these roles had been exclusively reserved for the state and so the reliance upon community members, private companies and NGOs was significant.

An official framework was laid out to create a functioning accountability system between the community and the Ministry. There were three key entities in this system: COEDUCAs, ISEs and the SIF or the Department of Directorates and Social Investments, which was housed within the Ministry of Education. Since the great majority of the individuals serving on the COEDUCAs had no experience in education or financial administration, ISEs served as their consultants. Their responsibilities included:

  (i) identify educational needs in the communities they serve;
  (ii) organize and assist COEDUCAs in obtaining legal status;
  (iii) provide financial/administrative training for the COEDUCAs;
  (iv) provide teacher development courses on "active learning" pedagogical methodologies as well as multigrade and multilingual classroom practices; and
  (v) maintain updated information on the schools and students under their tutelage. (Valerio & Rojas, 2001, p. 9)

Up until 2001, the ISEs also delivered in-service teacher training on bilingual and multi-grade education (World Bank, 2009; Schuh Moore, 2007; Di Gropello, 2006).

The majority of the ISEs were nonprofit, nongovernment organizations including foundations, those with religious affiliation, indigenous organizations, associations and international organizations and 80% of the ISEs were already working in social and community development before being a part of the PRONADE program (MINEDUC, 1998; Valerio & Rojas, 2001). Their requirements included having at least three years of experience in development, being a legal entity, having an office in the area where they would be working, having staff that was bilingual and be able and willing to work with at least five communities (Valerio & Rojas, 2001). In order to be considered, ISEs had to respond to a request for proposal articulating their technical ability and the cost for their services. According to Valerio & Rojas (2001) the proposals were evaluated by "weighing technical strength slightly above economic aspects" (p. 10). This application process placed emphasis on technical educational and administrative skills and so this was a limiting factor for some NGOs. Despite the residual tension between the NGOs and government during the civil war, this explicitly technical assignment for NGOs appeared to be one that was less threatening for the government.

By 2007, the PRONADE program had successfully enrolled over 450,000 students in over 4600 schools but was terminated by the incoming administration because of increasing hostility from teachers unions and human rights groups (Cameros, 2006; Poppema, 2009). The program was both heralded as a way to "enhance state capacity" through the involvement of NGOs but also as the work of "powerful elites in society in accordance with the World Bank, to reformulate the idea of participation in the PAs

(Peace Accords) to suit their own neoliberal policies and programmes" (Bräutigam & Segarra, 2007; Poppema 2009). PRONADE teachers were paid less, given fewer benefits and received annual contracts, as opposed to the possibility of tenure, and so it was a target for the teachers unions. It was also criticized for providing sub-standard education for the poorest communities, many of which were the same communities and populations that had been persecuted during the civil war (Poppema, 2009). On the other side, the World Bank and other development agencies boasted community participation, increased enrollment and increasing opportunities for the indigenous population to have access to education (World Bank, 2008; KfW, 2004). While each side has legitimate arguments, the fact that NGOs were an integral part of the program gave them a new status and potential role within the public education sector.

2009 – 2012: NGOtenango

The end of the 20th century highlighted a split between different types of NGOs: those that were engaged with the government and those that were aligned with social movements. Depending on where the money was coming from, this international aid typically went to one or the other (Cardelle, 2003). The former received most of its international aid from USAID. The latter group received most of its financing from private and bi-lateral aid from the EU, special agencies within the UN and from progressive US-based NGOs and foundations (Cardelle, 2003). However, after the Peace Accords in 1996, these groups became more integrated but also varied in their size, capacity, orientation and budget (Cardelle, 2003).

Whereas the time period that occurred after the 1976 earthquake was characterized with increasing state control of and antagonism towards many NGOs, the time period after the Peace Accords has been significantly different. Within the context of globalization, neoliberalism and the decentralization of state functions, Guatemala has become what I am calling NGOtenango[4]; the sector has grown at a fast pace and with minimal supervision from the state resulting in a "patchwork of small local and foreign NGOs" (Chase-Dunn, 2000; Marques and Bannon, 2003; Rohloff, Diaz & Dasgupta, 2011, p. 428; Sridhar, 2007). Furthermore, NGOs are less easily identifiable as pro- or anti-government and instead have a variety of strategies and agendas that they pursue. Recent estimates place the current number of NGOs working in Guatemala as exceeding 10,000 (Beck as cited in Rohloff, Diaz & Dasgupta, 2011; Sridhar, 2007). There is an ongoing controversy about NGOs in the national media and a level of cynicism commensurate with the quantity of corrupt officials who have used NGOs to siphon money away from the state (Sridhar, 2007). However, NGOs are not going anywhere and if the current trend is an indication of the future, then it will continue to be a growing sector.

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[4] In Guatemala, the suffix –*tenango* means "the place of" and appears in many of the names of the towns to signify a particular attribute of the area. An example is Quetzaltenango, meaning the place of the Quetzal, which is the national bird.

In 2010, the Ministry of Education began an initiative within the Office of Accreditation and Certification (DIGEACE) to invite NGOs to register with the Ministry of Education. This initiative asked for voluntary registration by NGOs so that they could become affiliated and accredited by the Ministry. The process would start with a self-audit conducted by the NGO followed by an audit by DIGEACE to determine whether or not the NGO met their standards. Depending on the results, the NGO could be certified for between one and three years or would be given requirements for improvement and could attempt to become accredited at a later date. This new policy mechanism was described to me by a Ministry official as a way for the Ministry to take responsibility for the organizations working in the education sector and for NGOs to benefit from becoming accredited with the formal education sector. This type of interaction is distinct from the PRONADE program and indicates a new way of thinking about the actors in the education sector. It could also indicate that the Ministry sees a benefit in knowing who is involved in the education sector and what they are doing.

During this study, many different groups were identified that collect information and/or serve as organizing groups for NGOs in Guatemala. These included groups that are officially part of the Ministry of Education: the Office of Accreditation and Certification and the Office of National and International Cooperation (DICONIME) both collect information on NGOs. One of the most visibly active umbrella groups is the Grand Campaign for Education with at least 77 different organizations and agencies as affiliates. For the last 8 years, they have initiated "social audits" of the education system in an attempt to draw attention to areas of success and areas that need improvement (Méndez, 2012).

The Association for the Coordination of NGOs and Cooperatives in Guatemala (CONGCOOP), the Consortium for Development NGOs in Guatemala and the Council of International Development Organizations all serve as umbrella groups that are organizing NGOs. Two other groups referenced in literature include the Council of Social Well-Being in Guatemala the Association for Civil Society (Sridhar, 2007; Poppema, 2009). Lastly, three online groups collect information about NGOs through a self-registration process.

The online sites serve as a platform to promote ones NGO and to make connections with others through the internet. They are: WEGuatemala.org, Idealist.org and The Guatemala NGO Network. WEGuatemala currently has 72 NGOs listed under *children and education* but because of several repetitions and several apparent miscategorizations (WEGuatemala, 2012). When the search is limited to *children and education* and *NGO*, 65 appear but with the same issues as above. Idealist.org currently has 55 NGOs listed in their search using *Guatemala, Organizations* and *Education* (Idealist, 2012). The Guatemala NGO Network currently has 44 NGOs that have self-registered under the topic of "education" (Guatemala NGO Network, 2012). In addition to their website, The Guatemala NGO Network also hosts events for NGOs in the Antigua area. Because these are self-registering websites, they are undoubtedly missing many NGOs. Furthermore, as evidenced by a few searches, it would appear that NGOs that are not education-specific still flag themselves as *education*. What is clear is that

NGOs are using technology to connect with each other and the world beyond Guatemala and that the information on education-focused NGOs is disorganized at best. I did not do an in-depth search of these sites but they provide an opportunity for future study.

Methodology

This section will review the research questions and the process of inquiry. It will also include the researcher's positionality within this project and discuss limitations of the study.

Research Questions

This study is an exploration of the ways NGOs are interacting with the formal education sector. The research questions driving this study are:

- How do NGOs perceive their role/s within the formal education sector in Guatemala?
- How are NGOs in Guatemala interacting with the Ministry of Education and/or the formal education sector?
- How do stakeholders envision the roles of NGOs in the education sector in the future?

This study took place in two phases, the first of which served as a pilot to test questions and hear how stakeholders were speaking about NGOs in the education sector. Based on the pilot, I was able to refine my approach and I decided that qualitative interviews would be the best way to gather information during the second phase.

Phase One: Conversations and Explorations

Phase one began in June 2011 when I spent seven weeks in a small town outside of Antigua, a small Spanish colonial city about 15 miles southwest of Guatemala City. I had been asked by an NGO to find out about the ways in which NGOs could become part of the formal education sector; specifically, how and in what formats could an NGO become a school? Despite searching several databases for articles and books about NGOs in the education sector in Guatemala, I was unable to find any literature before or during my seven-week stay. Therefore, I decided that in-person conversations with individuals representing NGOs, the Ministry of Education, bilateral and multilateral aid groups and private schools would be the best, and perhaps only, way to learn about this topic.

These conversations took place in a variety of settings including meeting one-on-one in offices, for dinner and over coffee. I had lived and worked in Guatemala for two years and have visited at least twice a year since leaving in 2006 and so part of my sampling was purposeful in that several participants were friends or acquaintances and easy to access. Knowing that it was essential to meet with people beyond my immediate circle, I used snowball sampling to connect with relevant stakeholders and contacted them via phone and email to set up meetings.

In total, I was able to speak[5] with 18 people (See Table 1.1, 1.2). Ten of these individuals were representatives of five different NGOs. Two of these NGOs had started their own schools while the other three provided educational programming through homework support, scholarships and/or teacher training. From those that had started their own schools, I hoped to learn about their decisions to become a school, the process by which they had become a school and their current experiences as a school and all of these specifically as they related to their interactions with the Ministry of Education and the formal sector. From the others, I hoped to learn about their thoughts about NGOs being, or not being, a school and about their interactions with the Ministry and the formal sector. Representing private schools, both nonprofit and for-profit, I met with two individuals and one group of three people to learn about their organizational structure and the legal implications of becoming a school regarding human resources and reporting requirements for the Ministry. I met with one individual from a multilateral agency and one person from a bilateral agency to learn about their positions and perspectives about the roles of NGOs in the education sector. From the Ministry, I was able to meet once with one representative of DIGEACE to learn more about a new accreditation process for NGOs and teacher trainers.

Table 1.1 (Origin and Gender)

Place of Origin	Male	Female	*Total*
Guatemalan	2	8	10
United States and Canada	4	2	6
European	1	1	2
			18

Table 1.2 (People by Affiliation)

Affiliation	Number of People
NGO	10
Ministry	1
Bilateral Aid	1
Multilateral Aid	1
Private Schools	5

In addition to these informational conversations and meetings, I reviewed legal documents from the Ministry website, NGO websites and print materials from participating organizations, literature about the general history of Guatemala and the rise of civil society and NGO groups in the last half of the 20th century. I also attempted to

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[5] I informed all individuals about my research and that I intended to share the information with the NGO that I was working with upon completion of this first part of my investigation. I did not request informed consent forms because I did not intend to use direct quotes or identifying information in this thesis.

collect information from the Ministry of Governance about NGOs registered in Guatemala but a language misunderstanding on my part resulted in my request being returned. In July, I was able to give a mini-presentation at a conference about the study and about my interests, which led to several fruitful contacts and connections with individuals who have helped with information gathering. For purposes of accuracy and understanding the importance of "reflexivity" in qualitative research, I kept a journal of notes about the experience (Rossman & Rallis, 2012). This process helped me to interpret my interactions with people understanding that who I was could be affecting the interactions that I was having with participants in the study. This pilot process provided me with information that I used to refine the questions for the second phase of formal interviews.

Phase Two: Formal Interviews and Continued Information Gathering

The dearth of literature on education-focused NGOs and the rich descriptions that I heard during phase one convinced me of the need to conduct formal qualitative interviews with stakeholders who could tell me more about NGOs in the formal education sector. I was able to identify ten[6] interviewees, which included four individuals who had participated in phase one of the study and six new individuals. Of the ten, six represented NGOs[7], one was a former top Ministry official, one was a consultant and two were from a bilateral aid agency (See Tables 2.1, 2.2).

Table 2.1 (Origin and Gender)

Place of Origin	Male	Female	Totals
Guatemalan	4	1	5
United States and Canada	2	2	4
European	1		1
			10

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[6] I had hoped to interview my contact at the Ministry of Education during phase two but when I contacted this individual after the new president took office in January 2012, their boss requested that I go through the office of Free Access to Information. Despite repeated attempts to communicate with this office, I did not hear from them in time to interview this individual for the purposes of this study.

[7] It is important to describe the characteristics of the NGOs that participated in this study. They are part of a growing subsector of NGOs that Rohloff, Diaz and Dasgupta (2011) refer to as a "patchwork of small local and foreign NGOs" (p. 428). All of these NGOs were founded after the Peace Accords, are small (80 – 650 participants), receive the majority of their funding from international sources, five were started by non-Guatemalans and one was founded by a Guatemalan. These characteristics are important for interpreting and analyzing the data.

Table 2.2 (People by Affiliation)

Affiliation	Number of People
NGO	6
Ministry (Former)	1
Bilateral Aid	2
Consultant	1

Phase two began in early January of 2012 after finalizing my questions, resubmitting them to the HSR committee and lining up several interviews. Several important changes included modifying word choices to ensure that my questions were "nondirectional" in nature (Rossman & Rallis, 2012, p. 132). Specifically, my original questions asked about how NGOs *collaborate* with the formal sector and I changed this to *interact* (See Appendix 1). This subtle change ensured that the interviewee, not the interviewer, would be the first to determine the characteristics of their interactions.

The interviews were semi-structured and took place in English and in Spanish. Out of consideration for language and cultural differences, I gave first language Spanish speakers the choice of having the interview in Spanish or English. All but one chose to do the interviews in English. I conducted nine of the ten interviews via Skype, with me calling from the U.S. and the interviewees speaking from either Guatemala, the US or Western Europe. This included one video Skype call, one partial video call and seven audio-only calls. One of the interviews was conducted in person. All were recorded and fully transcribed for analysis. I have used both inductive and deductive methods for analysis by identifying themes that emerged from the interviews as well as pre-established frameworks.

During this time period (January through March 2012), I continued to reach out to different NGOs, think tanks, consortiums, the Ministry and others to learn more about NGOs in the education sector. In total, I contacted five institutions that work on education policy in Guatemala but none of them had information on education-focused NGOs in Guatemala or NGO registries, although one did share a report on foundations in Guatemala. I also communicated with two researchers and one consultant that had conducted research on education reform in Guatemala, also with limited success.

Profile of Interviewees

This section will give a brief description of each of the interviewees.

Joseph – Is a North American who is a former teacher and school principal. He and his wife started their own NGO 4 years ago that works in rural areas providing teacher training, materials, homework support and scholarships.

Steven – Is a North American and a former teacher and school principal. He co-founded an NGO to train teachers in rural schools and then became the director for an NGO in an

urban area. This NGO has a pre-primary school, runs adult education classes, provides teacher trainings and afterschool activities and homework support for students.

Sheila – Is North American and is a former teacher and school principal. She started her own NGO 3 years ago working in very rural areas and specifically providing scholarships for secondary school students.

Sebastian – Is from Western Europe and has no background in education. He started an NGO primary school in a small town 6 years ago.

Eliza - Is a North American and has no background in education. She was compelled to support the start up of a secondary school in the rural highlands of Guatemala. Her NGO raises money for scholarships for the students.

Javier – Is Guatemalan and is a former teacher. He started his own NGO 7 years ago and offers an alternative education program for children and youth in his town.

Eduardo – Is Guatemalan, is currently an education consultant and has worked in the education and health sector in Guatemala for several decades. Most recently, he worked with a large international NGO consulting on education projects in Guatemala.

Andres – Is Guatemalan and has worked in the education sector for his adult life at the policy and national levels. He is a former top official at the Ministry of Education.

Maria – Is Guatemalan and works in the education for a bilateral aid agency and has done so for many years.

Carlos – Is Guatemalan and has worked in development, primarily in education for many years. He works as a lead person on education at a bilateral agency with Maria.

In addition to these key interviewees, I will use information from conversations with 18 other sources in phase one when appropriate to support or provide another viewpoint to the opinions of the key interviewees.

Groupings and Terminology

In the following descriptions, this author will identify groups of people that had similar characteristics. These are intended to be useful in differentiating who is saying what and also, in the analysis section, for interpreting what these groupings might mean.

1. **NGO Representatives**—will refer to all of those six individuals working in NGOs. (In the text and in order to highlight a specific theme, I will refer to these interviewees as either the Guatemalan NGO representative or the non-Guatemalan NGO representatives.)

2. **The Policymakers**—two bilateral agency staff, one consultant and one former Ministry official—will refer to all of those individuals working at the national level.

The terms "formal sector" and "Ministry" will be used to identify the following segments of the public education sector. The "formal sector" refers to all levels of the public education sector starting with the local, then municipal, departmental and Ministerial. The "Ministry" refers to the actual central office of the Ministry of Education (MoE).

Researcher's Stance

My history, role and experiences in Guatemala have had a significant impact on this research project. My personal history in Guatemala dates back to the fall of 2004 when I began working with a small, education NGO in Guatemala City. I stayed there for almost two years and returned to the US in the summer of 2006. In 2008, I became a Board Member for the same NGO and am currently still working with this NGO. Although I have not lived in Guatemala since 2006, I have travelled back at least twice a year for meetings and remain in contact with many people during the course of the year.

Culture also plays a role in how I understand Guatemala and how people in Guatemala understand me and my motives for being there. As a White, North American male in Guatemala, it would be easy for people to stereotype me along with others who come to study Spanish, backpack, proselytize, work at an NGO, start a business or visit as a tourist. Being from the United States presents conflicts because of the tumultuous historical relationship that the US has had in Guatemala and continues to have until this day. I represent different ideas and values to different people and I cannot understand how this will impact our interactions and communication. Acknowledging this, I have attempted to mitigate these challenges by maintaining a professional and respectful demeanor with all participants, sharing my own history in Guatemala and answering questions and providing information about my investigation.

Limitations

This study has limitations because it is a short-term, small-scale study. Not being in Guatemala for more time during the study, particularly during phase two, was a significant impediment in collecting information about the NGO sector. Limited financial resources also dictated my potential for mobility within Guatemala in terms of visiting the Ministry and other offices in the capital. The number of participants was limited partly due to the short time frame of this study. The composition of the participants was also limited to NGO representatives and those that work at a national level and did not include any formal sector staff that are working with these NGOs at the local level. Because I was in the United States for most of phase two, all but one of the interviews was conducted via Skype. Lastly, because of the time constraint, I was unable to do a member check before completing this paper and so my findings have not been reviewed with the interviewees.

My Spanish language ability is advanced and while I am able to comfortably navigate and communicate in this second language, I am less familiar with legal and technical terminology, which was challenging when conversing with high-level individuals in the education sector. While I am quite familiar with the current education topics in Guatemala, I am continuing to learn about how the entire system works at a national level especially because I worked at the local level during my two years in residence.

This is my first qualitative research endeavor and, as such, has been a learning experience in the process of interviewing as well as collecting, analyzing and presenting my own data. With support from several of my professors, I have read about best practices in order to follow the standards upheld by the field.

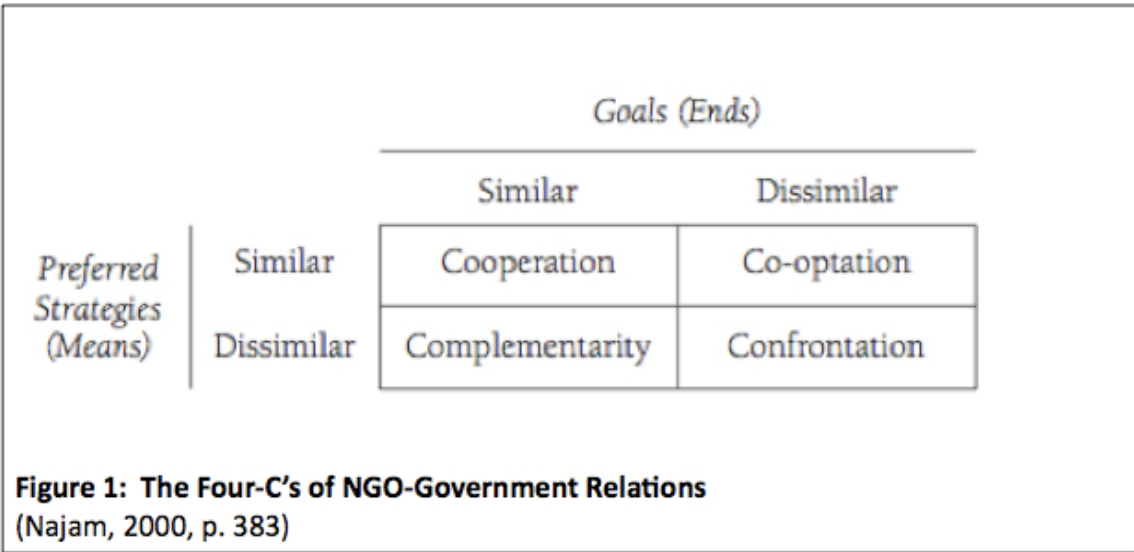# Theoretical Framework for Analysis: Strategic Interests and the Roles of NGOs

This paper will use two theoretical frameworks to interpret the data collected during the research process and its relation to the historical context of NGOs and education in Guatemala. One framework—using a strategic interest lens—will guide the analysis of interactions between governments and NGOs, and the second framework will guide the analysis of three specific but not mutually exclusive roles of development NGOs.

A Strategic Interest Lens

Najam (2000) describes a framework for analyzing the relationships between the third sector and the government using the Four-C's: cooperation, complementarity, confrontation and co-optation. According to Najam, these interactions occur within a framework of *strategic institutional interests* meaning that they are not limited to single issues but instead a totality of all of the issues occurring between the government and NGOs. Each constituent, NGOs and the government, has ends (goals) and strategies (means) for reaching those ends. He proposes four interactions (See Figure 1):

- *seeking similar ends with similar means,* (cooperation)
- *seeking dissimilar ends with dissimilar means,* (confrontation)
- *seeking similar ends but preferring dissimilar means,* (complementarity) *or*
- *preferring similar means but for dissimilar ends* (co-optation) (Najam, 2000, p. 383).

Najam also suggests a fifth possibility, which is nonengagement: this occurs when the two, either by chance or on purpose, do not interact with each other.

Goals (Ends)

		Similar	Dissimilar
Preferred Strategies (Means)	Similar	Cooperation	Co-optation
	Dissimilar	Complementarity	Confrontation

Figure 1: The Four-C's of NGO-Government Relations
(Najam, 2000, p. 383)

Cooperative relationships are likely, posits Najam, when the government and NGOs have goals and strategies that are aligned in a situation where both groups work together to promote or provide a specific service or stance. Characteristics of cooperation include shared decision-making and/or cost sharing and contracting. The confluence of preferred ends and means can happen on both a national and international scale through individual NGOs and governments as well as through coalitions of NGOs and governments. National boundaries do not restrain the ideas of an NGO so an NGO can have a cooperative relationship with other governments while concurrently not having one with its own. This interaction demonstrates the possibility of true partnership between a government and an NGO in a complex inter-sector relationship.

There is a high probability of *confrontational* relationships when government agencies and NGOs have disparate views on both the goals and strategies by which to achieve those goals. In addition to the fact that some NGOs are conceived as a reaction to a disagreement on government policy, the simple fact that each group is in near total opposition to the stance of the other contributes to the likelihood of confrontational behavior. Najam points out that the gradients of hostility vary from discursive disagreements and defiance of policy to violent confrontations. He also notes that certain

agencies within the government may have a confrontational relationship with the same NGO that has a collaborative relationship with another agency. By demonstrating multiple, simultaneous relationships between the two groups, Najam underscores the complexity of government and NGO interactions.

Complementary relationships are characterized by having similar end goals but different strategies for implementation. Najam articulates the difference between his usage of this term and that of Young (1999). Young characterizes this interaction as a contractual, financial agreement of fee for service where the NGO would be paid directly by the government. Najam distinguishes his definition by stating that, where governments and NGOs have comparable goals but differentiating media of realization, there exists the opportunity for complementarity. Najam states that NGOs and governments can work towards the same goals without the pretext of a government contract or direct funding. This frame further addresses the blurred line between government and NGO interactions by indicating that a variety of interests are at play when governments and NGOs maintain a complementary relationship.

Co-optive interactions occur when NGOs and governments employ the same strategies to achieve different results. Najam (2000) describes this relationship through "power asymmetry" where one party has more power and uses that to pressure a given outcome (p. 388). Similar to the complementary frame, co-optive relationships tend to be transitional stages with the potential to shift into the complementary or confrontational quadrants, depending on how the power dynamic unfolds. Najam refers to the inherent instability of this stage given that each has different objectives and suggests that this dynamic is more likely to steer towards a confrontational relationship.

Najam's (2000) last category, mentioned briefly when setting up his framework, is *nonengagement* (p. 384). This is a scenario whereby, either as a strategic objective or by happenstance, an NGO and a government do not engage with each other whatsoever. He states that this area lies beyond the Four C's model given that no relationship exists.

The Roles of NGOs

Lewis (2007) posits three primary roles that NGOs play in developing countries: *Implementers, catalysts* and *partners*. As Najam has done, Lewis asserts that these three roles have the potential to occur simultaneously and that they should not be understood as mutually exclusive. Lewis describes the implementer role as one in which an NGO would secure funds to directly provide specific goods and services. The NGO role as a catalyst attempts to stimulate change at the individual and/or organizational level. In the role of partner, the NGO embarks on collaborative initiatives with governments, the private sector and donors. Indeed, the roles of NGOs have continually become more complex and cannot be defined by one role or another.

As *implementers*, NGOs typically engage in a variety of development related activities. Lewis posits that, as direct service providers, NGOs deliver services through their own programs on behalf of governments and/or on behalf of donors. More recently,

NGOs have provided their services not only to poor communities and individuals but also to other NGOs, government agencies and the private sector. Lewis reviews common critiques of NGOs that take on this role as government or private sector contractors, which may compromise their value-driven motivations and simply replicate the for-profit private sector. On the reverse side, the NGOs may be more able to reach populations that lack government support and can potentially provide a gateway to strengthen government service provision in these areas.

Within the implementer role, Lewis states that *what* an NGO is implementing, specifically as it relates to existing government services, has the potential to shape how its services and presence are viewed. This can depend on three factors: whether or not the NGO is "supplementing, undermining or replacing public services" (Lewis, 2007, p. 89). Lewis relates these to the topics of accountability and sustainability, stressing that NGOs have significantly different accountability mechanisms depending on their revenue streams, which can also determine their ability to be sustained if their organization is not present. Using a similar framework as Najam, Lewis closes by saying that this role can be defined by whether or not the provision of service is " a 'means' or and 'end' for development NGOs" (p. 90).

To understand the roles of NGOs as *catalysts*, Lewis discusses the importance of understanding the usage of the word empowerment. He presents the notion of empowerment within a spectrum that places Freire's more radical understanding of the term with what Lewis describes as a United States specific understanding as "self-improvement" (p. 90). This is to make a point that understandings of the imbalance of power relationships are central to this role and that there is a widespread disparity in how NGOs may interpret these themes. Lewis talks about two specific ways that NGOs serve as catalysts: *empowerment* and *advocacy*. Within empowerment, Lewis divides this into two categories. The first he calls "market based" empowerment, where empowerment comes through economic activity and sometimes political engagement. The second, he would refer to as the "Ghandian" and/or "Freirean" style of empowerment which involves a process of active reflection on one's own and one's societies challenges as they relate to structures of power and poverty and result in some form of collective social action (p. 90-92). Lewis suggests that for NGOs accustomed to implementing service delivery, a shift to the role of a catalyst may be challenging and require a new organizational configuration. This may be related to the fact that more energy turns towards addressing the "structural roots of poverty rather than the symptoms" (p. 92).

Lewis' third role of development NGOs positions them as *partners*. While this description and activity lacks homogeneity, Lewis suggests that the blossoming of references to partnership seen in development literature in the 90s was in direct response to a deficiency. This role is generally seen as positive and one that has the potential to make better use of resources as well as to improve sustainability and participation. It can also be considered as strengthening civil society and breaking through a commonly "top-down institutional culture" (p. 93).

Partnership can be understood as directly related to the NGO role of implementer, specifically when NGOs are servicing a contract. A strictly contractual, financial partnership can be seen as a privatization of public goods provision and can draw hostility from those who feel that it relinquishes responsibility and distances the accountability between the government and the citizens. Lewis describes his definition of a partnership role as one with multiple strands of connectivity, not simply financial or contractual. Two different types of partnerships are presented: *active* and *dependent*. Active partnerships characteristically include ongoing dialogue and debate about roles and responsibilities. While this type of partnership may include hostility at times, it is one in which the NGO ultimately has a higher level of influence in the decision-making process. Dependent partnerships, as described by Lewis, are typically those that are reliant upon a specific funding source and have less latitude for modification such as a time bound development project. These may be less specific about role designations but will have specific outcome expectations. These two types of partnerships are not static and both are susceptible to change during the course of a partnership depending on contextual factors.

Lewis closes his thoughts on partnerships by stating that motivations for pursuing such a relationship can be complex. Different actors may have fundamentally different reasons for entering into a partnership and so it is important for development NGOs to carefully consider the implications of any partnership. He asserts that successful partnerships include ways in which the collaboration can be monitored and adjusted when needed. The defining characteristic should be that a specific objective could not be otherwise achieved without entering into the partnership.

Findings and Analysis

Emergent Themes

Four themes emerged during the interviews that do not fit neatly within the analytical framework but are critical to understanding the context of the conversations:

1. Stakeholders perceive dysfunction within the Ministry operations (political, financial, bureaucratic, and technical ability)
2. Policymakers highlight the historical context of PRONADE and the heterogeneity of the NGO sector;
3. Non-Guatemalan NGOs are less familiar with the education sector than the rest of the interviewees;
4. There are varied ideas about the roles of NGOs in the future of the education sector in Guatemala.

Theme 1: Ministry Operations

Politics play an important role in the functioning of the education sector. Nearly all of the interviewees mentioned the political challenges when describing the Ministry of Education and the formal education sector. One reoccurring issue from both NGOs and policymakers was the mercurial nature of the policy towards NGOs partly due to changes in the Ministry or in the administration.

> *...if for a given government it is important to involve an NGO in a teacher training program but three years later the process is interrupted and is taken back by the Ministry of Education as something that a given unit within the Ministry of Education has to carry out, and the NGO is taken aside and then in the next government the pendulum shifts back and now the participation is again well received.* ***What happens is that there is a lack of trust and a lack of continuity in all of the efforts that are conducted in the country.***
>
> <div align="right">-Andres, Policymaker</div>

Interviewees also talked about the hostility that exists between the teachers' unions and the Ministry, which poses a real political challenge and an ongoing source of frustration for those working in the education sector.

Financial impediments are frequently cited as an area of dysfunction.

And the other thought to this is the underfunding and so we have people in the Ministry that haven't been paid for 6-8 months…and also underfunding at the school level.

-Steven, NGO Representative

The Ministry does not have sufficient resources to keep tabs on what's going on at the local level.

-Eduardo, Policymaker

…their budgets are so truncated. They'll get an official budget but actually the money is maybe half of that that they actually spend. The schools are saying to us this year that they don't know if they'll get money for refaccion (snacks) in areas where there is malnutrition…

-Joseph, NGO Representative

Bureaucratic issues are described by the NGOs as an impediment to interacting with the Ministry.

They (the Ministry) say, ok, if you want to do that then you have to do this, this, this, this, this, this. All bureaucratic requirements. Nothing cooperative about the relationships. Just demanding things. We eventually filed an application that was over 300 pages…in the end it was approved and we got the status. So it was more of a barrier in terms of bureaucratic requirements than assistance.

-Sebastian, NGO Representative

I think that for the most part our experience with the Ministry of Education is really trying to manage bureaucracy…a bureaucracy that is an activity unto itself, and there are so many stamps to be received and so many signatures to be had and then all the compliance has to come into place regarding the building and the building plans and how…I mean in a lot of ways these are… It's just that it seems to be a paper activity…

-Steven, NGO Representative

I just see it as a big monstrosity, the Ministry… not very mobile because it's such a big bureaucracy…

-Eliza, NGO Representative

Lastly, several interviewees cite the lack of **technical ability** within the Ministry as leading to dysfunction.

It is absolutely impossible for the Ministry of Education to address all of the needs of the educational system by itself.

-Andres, Policymaker

The Ministry does not have sufficient resources to keep tabs on what's going on at the local level. They would like to make us think they do, but the fact of the matter is that it has to spread itself very thin beyond the direct service provision through teachers and principals and even that, as we well know, is very insufficient.

-Eduardo, Policymaker

Other examples are given by NGO representatives about the inability of the Ministry to deliver books or contracts on time, or generally to communicate policies critical to the functioning of schools.

Theme 2: Historical Context of PRONADE and the Heterogeneity of the NGOs Sector

The second theme that emerged from the interviews was that there is a historical context that can help explain the current roles of NGOs and that the NGO sector is heterogeneous. These two topics were specifically brought up by the policymakers but were not mentioned by any of the NGOs. One example is that all of the policymakers mentioned PRONADE when speaking about the NGO sector since this was a well-known and widespread initiative that included NGOs in the provision of public education.

Policymakers described NGOs in a wide variety of roles: as implementers, financial intermediaries, supervisors, social auditors, dialogue coordinators, partners, contractors, sub-grantees, watchdogs and vehicles for embezzlement.

You talk about non-government and it is everything that is not government. But there is an enormous degree of difference when you are talking between, say Empresarios por la Educación which is a business sector, policy and promotion initiative compared with the work that Gran Campaña De La Educación Nacional which is more about policy dialogue and bridging across the whole sector or say as opposed to Vida de Los Jovenes, one of these community based organizations which is a volunteer, youth volunteering organization which is very interested in education and do just that. And you could go on with the private foundations like Fundazúcar and Funcafé which are more focused on the service provision, working with schools, in some cases just the infrastructure in other cases the development of the educational systems and training teachers and principals etcetera or involving communities. It's a very varied sector of organizations which obviously to say at least means that you have a complex set of relationships, negotiations, interfaces between these various sets of stakeholders.

-Eduardo, Policymaker

Both policymakers Eduardo and Andres stressed the heterogeneity of the sector and, in general, the policymakers use a great variety of names for different kinds of NGOs (as seen above in the list) whereas the NGOs rarely mentioned different classifications of NGOs within the sector.

Theme 3: Non-Guatemalan NGOs are less familiar with the education sector than the rest of the interviewees

The third theme was a discrepancy in the relative knowledge between the non-Guatemalan NGOs and the other interviewees. Two directors of non-Guatemalan NGOs expressed uncertainty about processes and exactly what function the Ministry and its counterparts play at the department and municipal level.

> *...the municipality also participates in education **and I'm not exactly sure how that works** but I think that the Ministry of Education gives the municipalities a certain portion of that money to invest in education.*
> -Non-Guatemalan NGO Representative

In contrast, the Guatemalan NGO Director describes his interactions with the formal sector very differently.

> *Our interactions with the formal, official sector have been natural.*
> -Guatemalan NGO Representative

While policymakers talked about different ways to engage with the Ministry, nearly all of the NGOs were unfamiliar with avenues that exist for formally interacting with the formal education sector, which may be understandable.

> *...there are some formal mechanisms that are already in place for that (NGO-Ministry) cooperation...for the institution (NGO) it is easy to have access to the school to establish the single cooperation with the Ministry. ...it is difficult (for the Ministry) to establish a clear order for the involvement and participation of all of the entities in the process.*
> -Andres, Policymaker

Theme 4: NGOs in Education in the Future

The last theme has to do with how interviewees envision the roles that NGOs will play in the future. All of the policymakers see NGOs continuing to play a role in the future with some expressing a growing role. There are variations within this group about the specific types of roles but all seem to agree that NGOs are a fixture within the sector. The NGOs also express that they see themselves as a fixture within the sector but, as with the policymakers, there are a variety of thoughts about what types of roles they might play and their potential contributions:

> *...**there's going to be a growing role...there is a much greater role**...I don't think that they should or would go away in the near future...*
> -Eduardo, Policymaker

I think that they could (NGOs) play a very large role, however I think that that role would absolutely have to have a formal structure that is formulated by maybe two or three of the biggest current players and the Ministry of Education…

-Sheila, NGO Representative

*NGOs are…**the best metaphor that I can think of, is a band aid on a really gaping wound**…and until the body of Guatemala and until it's political systems and its tax systems change, that wound is not really gonna heal…we make a difference on a very personal level but not on a system wide level.*

-Joseph, NGO Representative

NGOs shouldn't exist…

-Javier & Joseph, NGO Representatives

NGOs and Policymakers have different views about how and if NGOs might engage with the formal sector.

I would say that they need to be much more effective about their agenda and their empowerment.

-Eduardo, Policymaker

They have to be aligned with the Ministry of Education's priorities. *But once again, it's up to the Ministry of Education to lead those coordination efforts…The overall goal should be to increase, given that the situation of the official sector in Guatemala is requesting more quality rather than in coverage, the objective should be working in education quality…*

-Carlos, Policymaker

It's such a dysfunctional system from a teacher's perspective and from our perspective that, why would we want to work with them?

-Joseph, NGO Representative

Several NGOs and policymakers also had suggestions for the Ministry about their future interactions with NGOs. Regarding their work in education, NGO founder Sebastian said "they should encourage that" and NGO representative Eliza added "they should take advantage of it." Three interviewees all saw the Ministry looking to NGOs as a "model."

I think what we would like to have is recognition for the work that we're doing, scholarship help for when our kids go to Guatemala City to study. I would also like more of a feeling that we're doing a good job and that we can do we want to do, some autonomy…

-Eliza, NGO Representative

...if we could have more coordination and have better leadership it would be phenomenal.

<div align="right">-Sheila, NGO Representative</div>

I will discuss the meaning and implications of these four themes in the analysis section below, but first I will present findings according to the analytical framework of strategic interests and NGO roles.

Findings: By Framework

In this section I will discuss the findings by each of the two frameworks as presented in the Methodology section. The first framework is Najam's *strategic interests* and will highlight findings in each of the four Cs: cooperative, confrontational, complementarity and co-optive. The second framework is Lewis' roles of NGOs: implementer, catalyst and partner.

Strategic Interests

Cooperative interactions occur when an NGO and the government have the same means for reaching the same goal and can be evidenced by dialogue between the formal sector and the NGO regarding a specific initiative, shared decision-making and/or cost sharing. While Najam's examples tend to be of national level engagement, the participant NGOs are engaged in this kind of interaction at the local and municipal level. Two NGOs have cooperative relationships through the Ministry's Adult Literacy Program, CONALFA. With CONALFA, the Ministry pays the teacher and the NGO provides the space and materials. These same two NGOs also conduct teacher-training activities for public school teachers thereby engaging in cooperative interactions with local schools. One of the NGOs supports local schools in purchasing materials for the year and the decisions about what to purchase are made solely by the teachers and school directors.

Policymakers tended to reference examples of this kind of relationship as cost sharing and contracting.

...NGOs were also hired by the Ministry of Education to carry out some of the activities for example in what used to be PRONADE, the supervision of all of the rural schools...

<div align="right">-Andres, Policymaker</div>

…the ones that are large enough are fantastic…they are good partners for managing our funds.

<div align="right">-Maria, Policymaker</div>

They talk about this kind of cooperation as being in the league of the larger NGOs and provide examples of cooperation with the Ministry specifically with teacher training.

Policymaker Eduardo is the only one who articulates that this could easily happen at the departmental level as well. Two policymakers, Maria and Carlos, also mention that when they enter into a cooperative contract with the Ministry and are working with an NGO as a subcontractor or sub-grantee, their agency works with the Ministry while the NGO would interact with the formal sector at a lower level. In this way, the bilateral agency takes on the primary cooperative role with the Ministry. Policymakers Andres and Eduardo talked about cooperative relationships where the Ministry would provide funding for a foundation to implement a project and the foundation would subcontract that project to an NGO.

Confrontational interactions occur when an NGO and the government have different strategies and opposing goals. The most relevant variation of this interaction within the context of this study would be policy defiance on behalf of the NGO. Two informants—one an interviewee and one from Phase One—both with schools, mentioned that that they are using an "official schedule" and an "actual schedule" because they disagree with the highly structured requirements about the lengths of classes and number of courses that must be taken in a given day and academic year.

Complementarity occurs when an NGO and the government have the same goals but different ways of reaching those goals. Particularly relevant to this study is that this often occurs when the "government is unable or unwilling to perform the task" (Najam, 2000, p. 387-388). The participant NGOs share the understanding that the current offerings by the public education system are insufficient. Three of the participant NGOs have started their own schools, one because there was no access to secondary school, one because there were not enough primary schools in their village and one because they felt that children were not prepared to enter primary school. All of the NGOs provide different types of support to help students achieve in their academic work including homework support and extracurricular activities. All of the non-Guatemalan NGOs provide scholarships for secondary school and some for college. One of the organizations from phase one has staff members in different public schools to support first grade teachers.

Co-Optive relationships tend to be temporary in nature and occur when an NGO and the government are using the same strategy but for conflicting ends. Within this study, I did not find evidence of existing co-optive relationships. The only example was one that was given by NGO Representative Eliza when their organization handed over their middle school to the Ministry and the quality "dropped overnight". This could be an example of the Ministry using the same school and teachers but in a new context where the teachers were not paid, did not work the extra hours as they had before and generally entered into a conflictual relationship with the Ministry.

Nonengagement occurs when there is literally no engagement between an NGO and the government for whatever reason. In this study, there is one example of this at the central government level. NGO Representative Sheila is the only one that is not registered as an organization. All other NGOs are registered with the government of Guatemala as nonprofit organizations. At this stage in their growth, Sheila's organization

is affiliated with a nonprofit in the U.S. and is considering formalizing the program in the near future. Two policymakers specifically emphasized the need to register with the state:

> ***You can't just walk in and decide to be an education NGO without being registered.***
>
> -Maria, Policymaker

Another policymaker from phase one said that is would be a very grave error to not register one's NGO.

Roles of NGOs

In this section we will use Lewis' framework for NGO roles to identify findings within each role. The roles of NGOs in the education sector are complex and, again, this framework is not intended to provide mutually exclusive categories but instead to offer one lens for viewing these roles.

NGOs as Implementers. NGOs that take on the role of what David Lewis would call *implementers* are NGOs that are involved in some kind of service provision on behalf of governments and/or on behalf of donors. In this study, all of the participating NGOs are implementers in various forms. NGOs that operate private schools and those that are providing teacher-training will be considered as *replacing public services*.

Four NGOs are simultaneously providing *supplemental* programs and *replacing public services*. Three of these NGOs have private schools (replacing) and are also providing extra-curricular activities and services (supplementing) to their participants and other community members. The fourth NGO is providing scholarships (supplementing) and also organizes teacher-training sessions[8] (replacing) in public schools. Policymakers all cite examples of NGOs providing supplemental programming and/or replacing public provision of public services. None of the interviewees spoke explicitly about NGOs undermining public services.

NGOs as Catalysts. Everyone interviewed indicated that NGOs serve as what David Lewis calls *catalysts*. There are, however, differences in approaches and different interpretations of how to engage in both *empowerment* and *advocacy*. Although none of the NGOs specifically say so in the interviews[9], we can infer from their literature that the NGOs believe that education is the key to empowerment and are therefore focusing on this medium to catalyze individuals to become empowered through educational attainment. All of the non-Guatemalan NGOs would appear to include components of both "market based" and "Ghandian" and/or "Freirean" approaches to empowerment (p. 90-92). Javier explicitly speaks about promoting a lifestyle that rejects "materialism", "competition" and the idea that "material wealth equals…good quality of life and

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[8] The NGOs might argue that some of the services they are "replacing", such as teacher-training, only exist on paper and do not materialize at the ground level.

[9] The specific ideology and rationale for focusing on education was not explored in these interviews.

happiness". He specifically states that his version of education is cultivating a "revolution of ideas…dreams and ideas" and rejects an economic motive for education.

Three policymakers spoke about NGOs as catalysts for advocacy by engaging in the larger education dialogue within the country.

> *I think that it's an important role for them (NGOs) in terms of building the self confidence and the technical confidence and policy awareness at that (local) level…*
>
> > -Eduardo, Policymaker

Policymaker Carlos suggests a catalytic role whereby NGOs might "try to foster a national debate on… Guatemala's textbook policy" or one where they educate "civil society" and serve as "a watchdog for education quality." Eduardo also suggests that NGOs can serve "as experts" to help communities understand education policy.

NGOs as Partners: Partnerships are generally diverse arrangements and each actor will have different motivations for entering into a partnership and receive different benefits from said exchange. In the NGO interviews, the partnerships can be identified primarily at the local level. Partnerships can be either (1) active, or (2) dependent, or (3) both. None of the participant NGOs have *active partnerships* with the Ministry, but it would appear that these exist with the formal sector, in different ways, at the local level. All of these active partnerships have been initiated by the NGOs at the local level; the NGOs have initiated, designed and directed these partnerships and have high decision-making power regarding their involvement.

For example, one NGO conducts teacher-training sessions for local public school teachers and has full control over this partnership because they have initiated, designed and funded the initiative. Another NGO has selected schools and school directors to partner with. A third NGO has an active partnership with a local governing body that makes decisions about their scholarship recipients. As is characteristic in an active partnership, the NGOs interviewed had significant leverage in determining the nature of the partnership.

Whereas the NGOs have proactively sought partnerships with local schools and communities, the policymakers speak about the government taking the lead in determining the texture of the partnerships.

> *…if you (the Ministry) can properly organize the roles and responsibilities of all of the institutions and add them up in a coordinated effort related to coverage, quality, instruction and some of the main topics in the system, that participation should be promoted and carried out.*
>
> > -Andres, Policymaker

> *…its up to the Ministry of Education to lead those coordination efforts.*
> > -Carlos, Policymaker

Dependent partnerships appear less frequently in the interviews with the NGOs. Three of the NGOs are in dependent partnerships because they run private schools. Two of these also have a dependent partnership by hosting adult literacy teachers through the CONALFA program. The policymakers frequently mention dependent partnerships with NGOs in the context of contracting work for different initiatives.

> *They (NGOs) are good partners in managing our funds and managing our partner's funds.*
>
> -Maria, Policymaker

> *...they (NGOs) were hired by the Ministry to carry out all of the supervision, the organization of the communities and the supervision of the communities in the PRONADE model...*
>
> -Andres, Policymaker

Analysis

Emergent Themes

All of the participants discussed **dysfunction within the formal sector** and specifically with the Ministry of Education. I found that all of the NGOs were having the majority of their interactions with the formal education sector at the local level. These interactions were occasionally described as negative but were more frequently cited as neutral or positive in nature. This was in stark contrast to interactions with the Ministry of Education, which were mostly viewed by NGOs as frustrating. While all interviewees acknowledged the challenges that the Ministry faces regarding financing and technical skills, the non-Guatemalan NGOs' characterization of the Ministry was particularly harsh. The Guatemalan NGO Representative characterized their interactions with the formal sector as "natural" whereas the others seem to have a palpable, averse reaction to the Ministry.

One hypothesis about these differing opinions about working with the Ministry could be related to the interviewees themselves. Where the Guatemalan NGO and policymakers have a common long-term experience working at the national level and/or as a citizen, all of the others are foreigners in the country and likely have a different interpretation of the Guatemalan context. For the Guatemalan NGO and the Policymakers, these interactions may be disappointing but are less than surprising. The non-Guatemalan NGOs are coming from different cultures and national contexts, perhaps with stronger expectations for positive interactions with the government. All non-Guatemalan NGOs mentioned the lack of "help", "recognition" and "cooperation" on the part of the Ministry. It appeared possible that non-Guatemalan NGOs have higher and different expectations about interactions with the Ministry, which could be based on their experience living and working in other countries.

Another hypothesis may be related to the nature of the interactions themselves; while the NGOs interactions with the local education officials were described as ongoing, the interactions with the Ministry tended to be around specific procedures, such as registering a school. These incidents were notably devoid of empathetic human interaction. While people at the local level were "happy to see us", those at the Ministry level were fulfilling a function that was often interpreted as a "hurdle" to the ambitions of the NGOs.

Some of the non-Guatemalan NGOs demonstrated an adversarial tone towards the Ministry, almost as if they were taking the bureaucracy's lack of response personally, doubting the validity and motives of the required procedures. For example, one suggested that legal requirements might just be a "paper activity". Another NGO representative stated that "They have only made it as difficult as it can be with the bureaucracy" which could be interpreted as the Ministry purposefully making the process difficult, or that the Ministry must be aware of this and intentionally not doing anything to change their strategy. Also, statements such as "we're doing their job" and "we should be out of a job" or "we shouldn't exist" could also suggest personal antagonism towards the Ministry. At the same time, many of the NGOs empathize with the Ministry and their lack of power within the government to procure the necessary financial resources and effectively negotiate with the teachers unions.

These contrasting sentiments reveal that the NGOs understand the Ministry as acting within a complex governmental and political ecosystem. Given that all of the NGOs are responding to what they see as deficiencies within the education sector, it seems less than surprising that they would be critical towards the Ministry of Education.

The second emergent theme was the **historical context of PRONADE and the heterogeneity of the NGO sector** as described by the policymakers. Remarkably, none of the NGOs mentioned PRONADE or the heterogeneity of the NGO sector. This could indicate that the NGOs are less aware of the larger context of NGOs in Guatemala and that the policymakers, because of their extensive knowledge of the sector, understand that there are many different types of NGOs and that this discussion takes place within a much larger historical context of NGO-MoE engagement[10].

This relates to the third emergent theme: **non-Guatemalan NGOs appear to know less about the education sector than the other interviewees**. Non-Guatemalan NGO representatives expressed some confusion about how the formal sector operates. Also, none of the non-Guatemalan NGOs were able to articulate ways in which they might be able to formally interact with the Ministry or formal sector. This was especially interesting because two of the NGOs have staff members that are paid by the Ministry but did not mention this as a "formal interaction".

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[10] It should be noted that the policymakers comments were unprompted and that, if prompted to discuss the NGO sector and PRONADE, that the NGOs may have been familiar with and had opinions about both topics.

On the other hand, two policymakers—Andres and Eduardo—gave several suggestions of ways in which NGOs could formally interact with the Ministry officials, and also appeared to suggest that simply by engaging with people in the formal sector, that one was "formally interacting" with the system. And from the policymakers' side, because they appear to think that a formal interaction is any engagement with the system, they appear to view NGO and formal sector interaction as happening in multiple ways, by multiple different types of NGOs and at different levels of the system. In other words, "formal interaction" between the NGOs involved in education service delivery and the Ministry of Education may have different meanings, depending on one's stance and background.

The last emergent theme has to do with the **roles of NGOs** in the education sector in the future. Interview respondents had different ideas of how NGOs should be involved and their potential as actors within the education sector. Some NGOs said that they shouldn't exist whereas others were optimistic about the potential for future partnerships with the Ministry. One NGO felt that their work was insignificant at a national level but effective at a local level whereas other NGO representatives described NGOs becoming involved in national level discussions on education policy. Policymakers saw NGOs as fixtures within the sector but tended to describe the NGOs as serving national educational objectives. NGOs described potential interaction with the Ministry where the Ministry would help them with their programs. The variance in the responses indicates the complexity of this topic and uncertainty about the roles the NGOs could and should play in the education sector in Guatemala.

Strategic Interest Framework

Cooperation: The cooperative interactions between the formal sector and NGOs were limited and, when present, took place at both the local and Ministry level. NGOs that operate schools and/or host an adult literacy teacher through the CONALFA program are involved in cooperative relationships with the Ministry. One NGO has a cooperative interaction at the local level where they have a relationship with teachers and school directors that is characterized by shared decision-making about the use of resources. Interestingly, several NGOs say that they would appreciate a cooperative relationship where they would receive money from the Ministry to conduct their programming.

Confrontation: There was one instance of a confrontational interaction carried out through policy defiance in this study. While these are relatively small acts of defiance, they do pose a threat to the NGOs if they are discovered. The fact that I encountered two schools in this small study that are engaged in policy defiance could be an indicator that other NGOs and schools are in similar situations. Najam (2000) says that these interactions are common in part because opposition is "a defining feature of the nongovernmental status" (p. 386). However, since one of these is a private school and not an NGO, it could be an indicator that this behavior is happening on a regular basis in private schools around the country without the knowledge of the Ministry.

Historically, as seen in the literature review, NGO-Government interactions were confrontational leading up to and during the Civil War. Each NGO that participated in this study was formed after the Peace Accords in 1996 and therefore when volatile NGO-Government interactions were declining. These NGOs began their work in a system that, while described as overly bureaucratic, did not threaten their existence or well-being. However, there are still confrontational interactions with NGOs in other sectors and specifically as they relate to financial accountability for public funds.

Complementarity: This was the most common interaction that the NGOs have with the formal education sector. Of interest is that each NGO seems to have identified a unique educational issue and then built their programming around that issue, all in different ways and through different interactions at the local and Ministerial levels. While all of the NGOs are interacting with local officials, none of them mentioned interactions with the department level officials. If the complementary relationships do not go beyond the local, municipal level, then it is possible that the departmental office is unaware of their activities.

All of the complementary activities would appear to be directed at strengthening the academic skills of the student participants. However, if the NGO is not a school, then the formal education sector is not able to correlate NGO participation with academic achievement. This means that by not capturing this information, particularly when a significant amount of money is being spent by the NGO to improve the education system, that the education statistics for that area cannot be interpreted accurately. Therefore, while complementary interactions may be positive for individual students and families, it is uncertain how much impact NGOs are having in a larger context if their activities are unknown beyond their immediate environment.

Co-optive: The only example of a co-optive relationship was when an NGO gave control of a school that they started to the formal education sector. From my limited conversations and interviews, it would appear that this does happen but not frequently.

Nonengagement: Only one NGO falls within this category. This interaction relates only with the central government, not the local government where the program takes place. In fact, although not legally registered as an NGO, Sheila's NGO is actively engaged with a local governing body that is administering the program. This is a seemingly contradictory case for Najam's framework where the NGO is both engaging and not engaging with formal government bodies. This NGO happens to be the most recently formed and indicated in the interview their intention to become more official. This could mean that nonengagement can be a transitional phase or a step towards one of the other relationships. It could also mean that other NGOs go through this same stage. The director of this NGO is aware of and comments on the dysfunction within the Ministry but also feels that it is a responsibility of NGOs to be registered and to interact with the Ministry.

Their current interactions at the local level have been positive and it is possible that, because her organization is providing a much needed service, that the local

governing body has not been concerned with the legal status of the organization. It could also mean that one's legal status as an organization is not given a high priority in decision-making when it comes to providing a service that is supporting local youth. The interaction with the Ministry during this nascent organizational stage could be influential in how an NGO interacts with the formal sector and the Ministry in the future. Of note is that this NGO is currently unclear of what their options are as an NGO and the different ways that they might be able to engage with the formal education sector.

NGO Roles Framework

NGOs as Implementers: One shared characteristic of all of the NGOs is that they are implementers and service providers on behalf of individual donors and small foundations, most of which are located outside of the country. This gives the NGOs in this study a distinct disposition as opposed to NGOs that are receiving their funding from the government or bilateral and multilateral agencies. Specifically, they have different lines of accountability given that they are not using public money and are not fulfilling their work as a contract. Furthermore, the NGOs that have opened schools have all opened private schools and therefore maintain a certain amount of control over the implementation of programming within their school.

Five of the six NGOs participating in this study were started and are currently run by non-Guatemalans. How an NGO was started and by whom likely affects how the NGO implements their programs and interacts with the formal sector. This was evident when the Guatemalan NGO described his interaction with the formal sector as "natural" whereas the non-Guatemalan NGOs all expressed significant frustration with the system. As a group, all of the NGOs are involved in replacing and/or supplementing public services and four are engaged in both. I did not see any evidence that NGOs are *undermining* public services although Lewis' description of this category is limited. There are dissenting perspectives about this issue because some would see NGOs that are opening private schools as directly undermining public services. This study, however, did not explore this issue beyond Lewis' framework. This complex implementing relationship with the public education system indicates that NGOs can be involved both formally and informally with the public education system.

NGOs as Catalysts: The topics of empowerment and advocacy were not a part of the interview. However, all NGOs allude to using education as a means for empowerment. The non-Guatemalan NGO was the only NGO that disconnected market based gains from their version of empowerment. Because there was a split between Guatemalan and the non-Guatemalan NGOs on this issue, it is possible that this could be consistent with other NGOs founded and directed by Guatemalans. However, given the small sample size, this is likely an outlying example and might simply mean that this individual has a unique outlook and that his nationality has little to do with his approach.

NGOs as Partners: From the interviews, it is apparent that the NGOs are acting as partners with the formal sector in a variety of ways. NGOs appear to be involved primarily in active partnerships at the local level. As is characteristic of active

partnerships, the NGOs have more leverage and power within the partnership. The non-Guatemalan NGO representative says that the simple fact that you are an NGO makes "everyone want to talk with you" and "opens doors." Because of the dysfunction within the education system, it is not surprising that a local teacher or school director in a low-resourced school would be open to receiving support from and/or partnering with an organization that has money, resources and a motivation to become involved. The NGOs in this study are directing the active partnerships, deciding how and with whom they will participate. Currently, the NGOs make the decisions about engagement whereas both their target population and government have minimal say in how that NGO will interact with the formal education system.

There are three NGOs that operate schools and two of these also host an adult literacy teacher through the CONALFA program. These three NGOs are engaged in dependent partnerships with the Ministry. When speaking about the roles of NGOs, current, past and future, policymakers tended to describe characteristics of dependent partnerships. This could have to do with the fact that, historically, the Ministry has had a lot of experience being engaged in dependent partnerships with NGOs and specifically through PRONADE. In this role, the PRONADE NGOs served specific administrative and technical functions as defined by the Ministry.

The NGOs that participated in this study are different from the NGOs that were involved in PRONADE and these dependent partnerships are also different. Even though there are strict reporting and administrative requirements for schools, the NGO has control over the implementation. Furthermore, the Ministry pays CONALFA teachers but the NGO is determining the population that the teacher works with. Thus, although these are dependent partnerships, the NGO still have latitude regarding decisions made about implementation.

The NGOs, when discussing their interest in interacting with the formal sector, portray themselves as remaining in control through active partnerships. They suggest interactions whereby they would accept money from the Ministry or that the Ministry would pay their teachers. The NGOs suggest that, within a partnership with the Ministry, that they would continue their operations, mentioning financial and technical support as ways in which they would engage the Ministry. This could indicate that the NGOs envision maintaining autonomy and leverage within an active partnership. On the other side, the policymakers spoke about partnerships where it is the government that should be involved in the decision-making process about the distribution of resources at this level. They too are describing partnerships that involve financial investment from the Ministry but where NGOs are the implementers of their ideas. From this discussion, it appears that there could be avenues for dialogue about cost sharing between the Ministry and the NGOs. However, decision-making authority in any partnership would need to be carefully examined if the two groups were to begin discussing any kind of active partnership that involved direct financing from the Ministry.

The accreditation and certification program is a new avenue for NGOs to engage with the Ministry of Education in a dependent partnership. This process has been reliant

upon NGOs self-registering and one participating NGO that contacted them to be registered did not receive a response. The self-registering component could reflect that the Ministry is valuing voluntary engagement specifically with NGOs that are not schools. At the same time, the process itself appeared to be somewhat rigid and characteristically "cumbersome" as NGO Representative Sebastian might say. As described to me, it could take several years to become completely certified depending on the capabilities of the NGO. It would appear that such a process could require the NGO to dedicate a significant amount of energy to become accredited. This begs the question, would it be worthwhile for a small NGO to commit to this level and duration of scrutiny? One policymaker commented that the Ministry current relies on the "good will" of the NGO to register or interact with the formal sector. Besides being certified and in a formal relationship with the Ministry, the accreditation process does not give NGOs specific resources. It is unknown what the ultimate goal would be and, given the history of an unpredictable government stance towards NGOs, NGOs may be wary of signing up if they are concerned about how the information or link with the Ministry might be used in the future. While the initial interaction is voluntary, the intensity of the process seems to be a limiting factor and one that is less appealing to NGOs. That said, four of the NGOs indicated that they would be interested in registering[11] with the Ministry and so it remains to be seen how this avenue for formal interaction will be used by NGOs and by the Ministry.

Summary

The majority of NGO interactions with the formal sector are happening at the local level. These tend to be *active partnerships* that are *complementary* in nature with ongoing interactions with local schools directors and teachers. The interactions that NGOs are having with the Ministry are related to specific tasks such as opening a school. NGOs that (1) operate schools and that (2) host adult literacy teachers through the CONAFLA program, have dependent partnerships with the Ministry that are complementary in nature. NGOs that did not operate schools did not describe any partnerships with the Ministry. Both the NGOs and the policymakers spoke positively about partnerships between NGOs and the Ministry of education although they appeared to speak about them in different ways (See Figure 2).

When describing both current and future interactions with the formal sector, NGOs talk about active partnerships that are complementary in nature. Referring to ways

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[11] Because I had spoken openly about my visit with the Ministry and the new accreditation process during Phase One, several of the NGOs interviewed mentioned this process. All of them thought that it was a good idea although we didn't explore the specifics of what the requirements would entail. Steven in his interview said he was open only "on the grounds that it (our NGO's programming) isn't compromised." This mechanism for formal engagement is unique because it is minimally contractual and is voluntary. Strikingly distinct from a financial contract, this characterizes a less coercive nature on behalf of the Ministry and demonstrates a sense of responsibility on their part to interact with the NGO sector that is currently working in education. This accreditation is specifically relevant to those NGOs whose programs are complementing the public system. This particular process is not relevant to NGOs that are running their own schools because they are already certified through the Ministry of Education.

in which they envision their NGO interacting with the formal sector, NGOs commonly suggest that the Ministry could help them by providing financial support for their programming. In general they speak about ways in which the Ministry could help *them* with *their* initiative. Such an agreement would allow the NGOs to maintain the active partnerships that they have set up with the local staff. NGOs are also engaged in cooperative, dependent partnerships with the Ministry by either running a school or hosting a CONALFA teacher. While the NGOs are cautiously interested in engaging with the Ministry of Education and the formal sector, they tend to describe future interactions as maintaining the characteristics of their current active partnerships with local level officials.
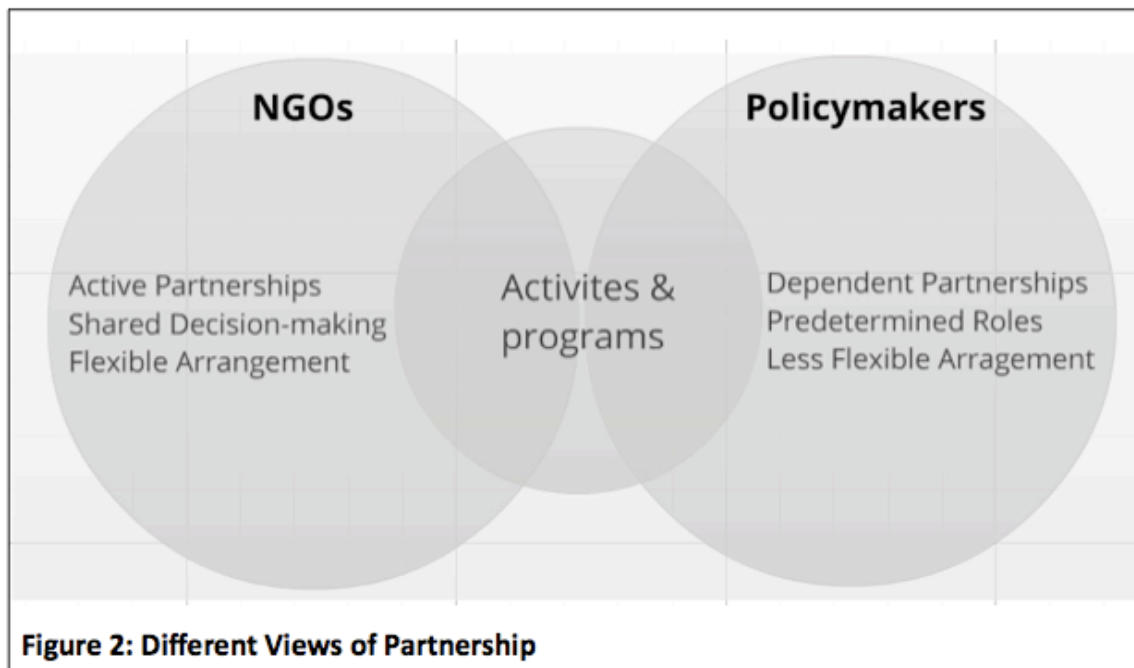
When describing the formal sector's current and future interactions with NGOs, the policymakers tended to speak about dependent partnerships that were complementary in nature. All of the Policymakers mentioned the PRONADE model of contracting NGOs to fulfill a larger, Ministry-driven initiative. They also referred to NGOs working within the national education initiatives. Several also spoke about the importance of NGOs aligning their strategies and programs with the objectives of the Ministry. These comments are not surprising since they are likely connected to the historical context of NGO-Government relationships within the country.

Only one NGO is being identified as having an active partnership that is cooperative in nature. This NGO raises funding for school supplies and then gives the local staff the authority to decide exactly how they would like to spend that money in order to equip their classroom for the year. This seemed like an exceptional interaction because both the staff and the NGO are using the same strategies (school supplies and shared decision-making authority) to reach the same end goal (quality education and well equipped classrooms and teachers). Because there was a high level of shared decision-making authority about how the money would be used and to what end, this example stood out amongst the others.

The new accreditation and certification initiative is an example of a new kind of interaction between the Ministry and NGOs. Unlike the PRONADE model, the Ministry is not contracting NGOs to help them fulfill a larger agenda but instead, they are acknowledging the large number of NGOs working in the education sector and communicating that it would be advantageous for them to know about and certify these entities. This initiative suggests a new version of a dependent partnership specifically because it is not contractual in nature. It is currently a voluntary process and, in this nascent stage, its survival may likely depend on how NGOs react to the process and how the Ministry is able to facilitate the auditing component without making the administrative process a burden.

The participant NGOs are not like the NGOs in PRONADE. They are engaging with the formal sector in a non-contractual relationship and, even though several of them have advanced accounting capabilities, they have less technical expertise than the NGOs that were contracted in the PRONADE program. It is possible that these NGOs are open to exploring new kinds of partnerships with the Ministry in part because they did not

experienced the strong distrust that characterized the NGO-Government relationship during the civil war. This openness is remarkable given the fact that all of the NGOs spoke with frustration about the Ministry and indicates that there may be room for dialogue. Furthermore, those NGOs that participated in both phase one and phase two all mentioned that they thought the accreditation and certification initiative was a good idea[12].

NGOs

Active Partnerships
Shared Decision-making
Flexible Arrangement

Activites & programs

Policymakers

Dependent Partnerships
Predetermined Roles
Less Flexible Arragement

Figure 2: Different Views of Partnership

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[12] To my knowledge, none of these NGOs have gone or are currently going through the process although one NGO did contact the Ministry about the program but did not receive a reply.

Conclusions

This section reviews implications for practice, policy and future research, based on the conclusions of the study. There are four salient points that result from this study:

1. NGOs are interacting with the formal education sector primarily at the local level;
2. Non-Guatemalan NGOs could benefit from learning more about the formal education sector;
3. NGOs are involved in a variety of complex interactions with the formal sector but there is a dearth of information about NGOs operating within the sector; and
4. There exist opportunities for new types of mutually beneficial interactions between NGOs and the formal education sector.

Implications for Practice

The NGOs in this study have the greatest amount of interaction with the formal education sector at the local level. NGOs have a need for interaction at this level, so they have initiated and often designed these interactions, contingent upon their specific relationship with the formal sector. Thus, there is a possibility that these interactions can become strengthened. However, NGOs could benefit from learning more about the functioning of the formal education sector and how other NGOs have been, can and are interacting with the government. The NGOs in this study did not articulate how the Ministry of Education functions at the different levels of government, how NGOs can formally interact with schools at the local level, or the historical context of NGOs in the education sector in Guatemala. This situation is an opportunity to support NGOs, particularly non-Guatemalan NGOs, that are interested in learning more about the education sector. This could be in the form of a dialogue with experts and policymakers about both the formal education sector and about the roles that NGOs have traditionally played and currently play. Such information could be used to make more informed decisions about their interactions at the various levels of government. It could also prepare them to serve as local experts on education policy, sharing this information with their participants to catalyze citizen understanding of government services as they relate to education in their community.

Despite the fact that the participating NGOs are involved in a complex variety of interactions at the different levels of the formal education sector, those working in this sector lack up-to-date research. The most recent, comprehensive information found on the NGO sector in Guatemala is over thirteen years old, which means that there is an opportunity to update, revise and revisit previous studies to present the current state of the sector. Knowing what resources are available, what consortiums exist and who is doing what would give NGOs the opportunity to learn about and engage with the formal

education sector. For the Ministry and at the department and municipal levels, such a guide would help identify resources available to support their efforts.

Because NGOs are already interacting with the formal education sector at the local level and because NGOs will continue to be actively involved in the education sector, in the interest of improving education quality and government provision of public education, the formal sector and NGOs could explore new opportunities for interaction at the local and municipal levels. NGOs are already interacting with the formal sector at the local level and so they could learn about the ways in which they would be able to support the goals of the local education officials and possibly have an impact on a larger population. If an agreeable relationship can be fostered at the municipal level, NGOs in some departments might be able to interact with the department representatives and learn about ways in which they could support the departmental efforts and increase their impact.

Several interviewees say that collaborative initiatives need to have support and coordination from the national level either by the Ministry, a university, the UN or a combination of the three. Based on the number of NGO consortiums, it could be helpful to survey their level of interest in such an endeavor. There would also need to be a desire from the Ministry, at some level, to endorse such an effort and create or modify a legal structure for engagement through one or more of the Directorates within the Ministry. There is an opportunity for one or several established and respected entities to partner with the Ministry of Education and support the inclusion of these many smaller NGOs working in the education sector.

Because there are opportunities for new interactions, the Ministry could acknowledge what NGOs are doing in the country that is positive. The current rhetoric surrounding NGOs is negative because of ongoing corruption charges related to publicly funded NGOs. It could be useful to generate an alternative category for the kinds of NGOs that were included in this study, similar to the way that the Ministry refers to international partners as "cooperative agencies". None of the NGOs in this interview have chosen the legal tax designation as an "NGO"; they all chose their legal entity to be an "association". This is just one more complexity that would need to be addressed when devising language for new policies. Any change in language should purposefully delineate these nonprofit education-focused NGOs from those that are accused of embezzlement.

There are opportunities for fruitful, coordinated efforts at the local, regional and national level. Having more information about NGOs currently working in the field would be very helpful when initiating dialogue. Including smaller education-focused NGOs in the national dialogue could occur in many ways at the local, municipal, departmental or national level. Partnerships and interactions are already happening informally all over the country but it would take interest and effort on the parts of NGOs and government officials to begin a dialogue.

Implications for Policy

This research is limited in its findings and, because of time constraints, did not include a thorough review of existing policies regarding NGOs and their interactions with the formal education sector. Therefore, it would be irresponsible to suggest policy adjustments based on this small research study. The one area that could be an exception has to do with information sharing between ministries. All but one of the participating NGOs have been registered with the Ministry of Governance, the government agency where all NGOs must register to become recognized as a legal organization. As I have been told, during the registration process, information about the NGO, including their function/s, is collected but does not get shared with relevant ministries. Therefore, the Ministry of Education does not receive information about education-focused NGOs as they become registered. This information is being collected and NGOs are going through this process but it is not being shared with those who could use it to make informed decisions about issues in the education sector.

The above description is my understanding of the current situation as explained to me during phase one conversations by my contact at the Ministry of Education. Before moving forward with such a suggestion, an investigation would need to be undertaken to verify the veracity of this information. Presently, individuals can make a request to the Ministry of Governance to receive information about registered NGOs but from my personal experience and from my conversation with my contact at the Ministry, this does not always happen and/or does not happen in a timely fashion. There could be a system at each Ministry for sending, receiving and disseminating relevant information from the national level to the departmental level to the municipal level and ideally vice versa. However, information for information's sake does not solve the problem. Stakeholders must have a desire to use the information, resources to do so and the prioritization by their Ministry to address this issue. Lastly, the general population must expect this kind of information sharing.

Implications for Future Research

In order to gain a more complete understanding of the impact that NGOs have in the education sector, future research should gauge the attitudes and perceptions of all stakeholders, such as community members, and participants in the NGOs, teachers, union members and school directors. This can continue through the municipal, departmental and Ministerial level. It would also be valuable to hear from the private donors and foundations that are funding the NGOs to learn how their perceptions about the roles of NGOs in the education sector in Guatemala may be affecting the ways in which that NGO engages in their work.

Future studies should review existing policies about formal engagement with NGOs. This is something that should involve individuals who are familiar with and have experience in the education sector and the history of education as it relates to legal affairs. In order to research the fourth conclusion, it is necessary to know about initiatives past

and present in order to discover what policies and mechanisms already exist that might be relevant to NGOs and their interactions with the formal education sector. By using this as a starting point, the sector can identify existing pathways and avenues for formal interaction and begin a discussion about modifications or the creation of new policies.

At the departmental level, a survey could be conducted with the different departments to find out what they know about education-focused NGOs operating in their department and the characteristics of their interactions. We need more information about existing, successful models for government interaction with NGOs and about the attitudes and perceptions of these departments regarding the presence of NGOs working in the education sector. Such findings would spark conversation and generate interest in the potential for new interactions between the two groups.

Since NGOs can benefit from learning about the formal education sector and the roles of NGOs, we need to map out the actors and gain a better understanding of what is currently happening, what resources are available, the geographical distribution, and the appetite and capabilities for partnership with other NGOs and local and national government bodies. With estimates of over 10,000 NGOs operating in Guatemala, there exists an opportunity to research, compile and share information about the sector in its current format. NGOs have a desire to connect with others who are in the same line of work or are interested in collaborating, judging by websites that display such information. Many of the NGOs are using these sites to solicit donations and post openings for volunteer positions but these networks could also serve as platforms for engaging these NGOs in a larger dialogue. There is one new consortium called the Guatemala NGO Network that has been established to provide resources and space for discussion about NGOs in Guatemala. This, or another group connected with such NGOs, could partner with a researcher to conduct interviews of focus groups with additional NGOs working in the education sector. This could serve as a starting point for interfacing with local officials working in the education sector.

Lastly, this report serves little purpose if the information learned is not readily accessible in Spanish and English for those involved in strengthening the education sector. Several previous studies have focused on the categorization of the NGOs at a national level with the information tailored to policymakers and technical advisors. These studies disaggregated NGOs by characteristics but still only illuminated only the big picture as opposed to studying particular segments of the NGO sector. As demonstrated in this small study, the specific relationships between NGOs and the education sector are limitlessly complex and minimally studied. None of the roles or interactions from the analytical framework turned out to be mutually exclusive and so NGOs are interacting in a variety of different ways and at different levels of the sector.

The quantitative categorization of all of the different interactions and roles should only be done to the extent that it is helpful for improving the sectors understanding of itself and as a way to facilitate dialogue. For future research, questions that could complement or be more useful than categorization have to do with the effects that education-focused NGOs are having on the provision of public education in Guatemala.

How are NGOs strengthening the capacity of the public sector? How are they undermining the public sector? Who is benefitting from their presence? What effects are they having on the education system in different parts of the country? What goals do NGOs and the Ministry have in common? Where are they in disagreement? What can be done to facilitate an increased level of coordination and active partnership at the local, regional and national levels? These questions, in addition to the compilation of information about the sector, should be the next line of research to better understand how NGOs are engaged in and having an impact in the education sector in Guatemala.

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Appendices

Appendix 1 – Interview Questions

Principal Investigator: Dr. Cristine Smith
Student Researcher: Jacob Aaron Carter
Study Title: An analysis of the perceived roles of NGOs in the formal education sector in Guatemala (Draft Title)

Interview Questions for this Research Project

Questions for NGOs

1. What is your personal background in education?
    a. What was your motivation for starting this NGO?
2. Can you tell me about the work that your NGO is doing?
3. What have been your interactions with other community organizations, NGOs, businesses, the ministry of education or any other actors in the education sector?
    a. How have/has this/these interaction/s evolved?
4. What has been your experience interacting specifically with the Ministry of Education and/or any departments in the formal education sector?
    a. How has this evolved?
5. Have you come across any (other) pathways or opportunities that exist for NGOs to formally interact with the Ministry of Education and/or the formal education sector?
6. Are there incentives and/or barriers that you see in interacting with the Ministry of Education and/or the formal education sector?
7. What are your beliefs about the roles of NGOs in education? In Guatemala?
8. What responsibilities do NGOs have, if any, to interact with the formal education sector?
9. What responsibilities does the formal education sector have, if any, to interact with NGOs working in the education sector?
10. What role do you envision NGOs playing in education in Guatemala in the future?

Questions for Ministry & Formal Education Sector

1. What is your personal background in education?

a. What is your motivation for working in education?
2. Can you tell me about the work that your department/office is doing?
3. What types of interactions does your dept/office have with other community organizations, NGOs, businesses or any other actors?
    a. How have/has this/these interactions/s evolved?
4. What has been your experience interacting specifically with NGOs?
    a. How has this evolved?
5. What pathways or opportunities exist for NGOs to formally interact with the Ministry of Education and/or the formal education sector?
6. Are there incentives and/or barriers that you see to interacting with NGOs?
7. What are your beliefs about the roles of NGOs in education? In Guatemala?
8. What responsibilities do NGOs have, if any, to interact with the formal education sector?
9. What responsibilities does the formal education sector have, if any, to interact with NGOs working in the education sector?
10. What role do you envision NGOs playing in education in Guatemala in the future?

Questions for Multi-Laterals, International NGOs, Development Agencies, Consultants

1. What is your personal background in education?
    a. What is your motivation for working in education?
2. Can you tell me about the work that your organization is doing?
3. From your experience, what types of interactions does your organization have with other community organizations, NGOs, businesses, the ministry or any other actors?
    a. How have/has this/these interaction/s evolved?
4. What has been your experience interacting specifically with NGOs?
    a. How has this evolved?
5. What pathways or opportunities exist for NGOs to formally interact with the Ministry of Education and/or the formal education sector?
6. Are there incentives and/or barriers that you see to interacting with NGOs?
7. What are your beliefs about the roles of NGOs in education? In Guatemala?
8. What responsibilities do NGOs have, if any, to interact with the formal education sector?
9. What responsibilities does the formal education sector have, if any, to interact with NGOs working in the education sector?
10. What role do you envision NGOs playing in education in Guatemala in the future?