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| Institution: University of Brighton |
| Unit of Assessment: C25 Education |
| Title of case study: Effecting educational policy change in different cultural and national contexts ICS [1] |
| 1. Summary of the impact |

University of Brighton (UoB) research into the promotion and evaluation of rights-based, participatory approaches to teaching and learning has changed policies in schools, teachers' colleges, and non-governmental organisations (NGOs) in three international and national contexts:

- in Africa, at 300 schools and allied teachers' colleges involving 120,000 learners, new policies towards teaching-learning have been implemented
- research for the International Planned Parenthood Federation (IPPF) has led to the adoption of a UoB research model enhancing youth policies into sexual-reproductive rights, which will be implemented internationally
- in the UK, evaluation research into the Rights-Respecting School Award (RRSA) programme has contributed to policy changes by the promoting agency, UNICEF.

2. Underpinning research

Since the 1990s, a core feature of education research at UoB has been undertaking rigorous research projects that also advance the development of rights-based approaches to teaching and learning strategies. Rights-based research aligns with our belief that the translation of pedagogic research is as important as its intellectual veracity.

The three research projects featured in this case study – two international and one UK based – also adopted a research or evaluation methodology that was participatory and empowering, and thereby ethically aligned with the intended policy outcomes of the research or evaluation.

Since his appointment in 2006, STEPHENS' research at UoB into culture, education and development [reference 3.1] built on his earlier research and was centred on four resource-poor sub-Saharan African countries. Culturally sensitive participatory action research (PAR) developed by STEPHENS [3.2] is used to analyse, promote and then evaluate strategies to improve the quality of teaching and learning in economically poor schools and teachers' colleges. As a result, research, evaluation and impact are closely connected. The research in four African countries analysed 300 schools that adopted more participatory ways of teaching and learning. The research examined and evaluated the outcomes by means of classroom observation, interviews with teachers and pupils, and a comparison of examination scores taken from project and non-project schools [3.3]. Indigenous research teams were established to carry out the research and subsequent evaluation to build research capacity. The research demonstrated that the project schools adopting the participatory approaches had experienced improved learning compared to the non-project schools [3.3]. Findings from both the research and evaluation formed the basis of an international conference convened by Save the Children in Cambodia in 2009.

JOHNSON, in her four-country research (Nepal, Kenya, Benin and Ethiopia) into the sexual and reproductive rights of young people, used a new socio-ecological theoretical model to conceptualise and design more effective strategies for implementing a rights-based approach in teaching and learning. This research employed a methodology of peer-focus groups, enabling young people to participate in the research process, and identified the nature of stakeholder views on controversial topics around youth sexuality and human rights that informed the development of the socio-ecological theoretical model [3.4].

In the UK, ROBINSON was funded by UNICEF (2008–2012) to evaluate its RRSA [3.5]. This research was focused upon the achievement and well-being of children within a range of UK schools. The longitudinal study with 22 schools over two years and 19 schools over one year, analysed the efficacy of the RRS approach and the value of the rights-respecting discourse. The research underpinned a set of recommendations presented to UNICEF. Methodologically, this

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research also used methods that paid attention to pupil perspectives and the articulation of stakeholder voice.

Key research grants:

STEPHENS, Save the Children, Norway, Evaluation of Quality Education Project (QEP) in four African countries: Ethiopia, Mozambique, Zambia and Zimbabwe, (2008–2009), total funding: £80k.

JOHNSON, IPPF/PANOS, Comprehensive Sexuality Education in Realising Youth Sexual and Reproductive Health Rights, (2012–2013), total funding: £10.5k.

ROBINSON, UNICEF and RRSA (two grants) (2008–2012), total funding: £35k.

Key researchers:

David Stephens: Professor of International Education (July 2006–to date).

Carol Robinson: Senior Research Fellow (Oct 2008–Aug 2011), Principal Research Fellow (Sept 2011–to date).

Vicky Johnson: Senior Research Fellow (Sept 2012–to date).

3. References to the research

- [3.1] STEPHENS, D. (2007) *Culture in education and development: principles, practice and policy*, Oxford symposium books. [Quality validation: peer reviewed sole-authored book.]
- [3.2] STEPHENS, D. (2012) The role of culture in interpreting and conducting research. In *Research methods in educational leadership & management*, A. Briggs et al.' eds, London: Sage. [Quality validation: output in leading peer-reviewed edited volume.]
- [3.3] STEPHENS, D. and HARBER, C. (2010) *From shouters to supporters: quality education project – final evaluation report*. Oslo, Norway: Save the Children. [Quality validation: output as a result of tendered external grant funded work that has been through a refereeing process.]
- [3.4] JOHNSON, V., LEACH, B., BEARDON, H., COVEY, M. and MISKELLY, C. (2013) *Love, sexual rights and young people: learning from our peer educators how to be a youth centred organisation*, London: IPPF. [Quality validation: output as a result of tendered external grant funded work that has been through a refereeing process.]
- [3.5] SEBBA, J. and ROBINSON, C. (2010) *Evaluation of UNICEF UK's Rights Respecting Schools Award. Final Report. September 2010*. London: UNICEF UK [Quality validation: output as a result of tendered external grant funded work that has been through a refereeing process.]

4. Details of the impact

Education research at UoB into rights-based learning has changed education policy in developed and developing countries.

Changing policies for learning and teaching in Africa: STEPHENS' four-country African research on the quality of primary education (QEP) was part of a wider Save the Children policy to promote more participatory ways of teaching and learning. This led to the adoption of these participatory approaches in the 300 project primary schools involving 1,000 teachers and some 120,000 children (source 5.1). The evidence of improved learning provided by the research led to changes in the policies of Save the Children to promote participatory learning internationally (5.2). As a result of the research, the special adviser to Save the Children, Norway confirmed that *QEP* is being spread to all teacher-training colleges in the Amhara region of Ethiopia (serving 20 million inhabitants) and reports that in 2012, '80 teacher training lecturers have been trained in the new methods in all 15 teacher training colleges' (5.2). PAR as a method to evaluate learning and teaching approaches has been included since 2010 in the curriculum in all 14 of Zimbabwe's teacher-training colleges, influencing 1,400 teacher trainees.

The research impacted upon Save the Children's international policy development. At the 2009 Cambodia meeting of Save the Children policymakers in Cambodia, it was reported in the national media that, 'the conference was used as a vehicle to present recommendations from

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Save the Children Norway's Quality Education Project to educators and government officials in Cambodia and around the world' (5.3).

Influencing NGO policies for sexual-reproductive rights: JOHNSON's research for NGOs working in four developing countries has influenced strategies promoting children's sexual and reproductive health rights in over 1,600 schools, resulting in evidence-based policy change within IPPF, which works in 172 countries (5.4). IPPF's Senior Advisor on Adolescents says this of the UoB research: *'Although the programme is over, the journey is not. The legacy of this assessment will help us continue better equipped and with a stronger focus to put young people at the centre of our work'* (5.5). The advisor paid particular attention to the application of JOHNSON's theoretical socio-ecological model for youth programming and its impact on IPPF's 2015 revised global policy strategic review: *'It will have an enormous impact on our strategic thinking in IPPF... influencing our work with adolescents and young people by putting them at the centre of our work which will have implications for IPPF's approach to communication and management'* (5.5). In terms of policy contribution in Nepal specifically, the Programme Officer for Adolescents and Young People at the South Asia Regional Office of IPPF has said: *'The life changing impact the project has made in the lives of the young people in FPAN (Family Planning Association Nepal) in particular, the imprints are visible across the region in all our Member Associations (MAs). The assessment research has brought out excellent examples of MAs work in promoting and advocating for provision of Comprehensive Sexuality Education in the national curriculum of Nepal.'* (5.6). The research has also influenced IPPF-funding decisions that led to the continuation of services for vulnerable young people in challenging geographical circumstances. The Programme Officer provides testimony that the research results *'helped in taking informed decisions on granting a no-cost extension for six months to the project with FPAN'* (5.6).

Policy changes in the UK around RRS: Research by ROBINSON for UNICEF evaluating their RRS programme has had a policy impact at national and regional level in the UK, with UNICEF UK adopting the evaluation findings, particularly around changes to the rights-respecting discourse. In his review of the Office of the Children's Commissioner presented to the Department of Education (2010), John Dunford said of the UoB RRS research: *'in conducting my review I visited some Rights Respecting Schools and saw at first hand that when children are taught about their rights they learn a greater appreciation of the rights of others. The evidence is that this research has a positive impact on behaviour and teacher-pupil relationships. Rights respect and responsibility are the 3 Rs of learning to be a good citizen.'* (5.7).

5. Sources to corroborate the impact

- 5.1 Harber, C. and STEPHENS, D. (2010). *From shouters to supporters: Quality Education Project, final evaluation report*. Oslo: Save the Children. Available at: http://tn.reddbarna.no/default.asp?V_ITEM_ID=10134 [Accessed 8 November 2013].
- 5.2 Testimonial from Special Advisor, Save the Children, Norway, confirming how QEP is being implemented in training colleges in a number of countries and regions.
- 5.3 International Conference on Quality Education. Available at: http://tn.reddbarna.no/default.asp?V_ITEM_ID=25073 [Accessed 8 November 2013]. A Cambodian news item is included that evidences the contribution of the work.
- 5.4 JOHNSON, V., Leach, B., Beardon, H., Covey, M., and Miskelly, C. (2013) *Love, sexual rights and young people: learning from our peer educators in how to be a youth centred organisation*, London, IPPF (Foreword).
- 5.5 Testimonial from a Senior Advisor on Adolescents, IPPF, confirming that the research has affected their work and their approach to communication and management.
- 5.6 Testimonial available from the Programme Officer for Adolescents and Young People, South Asia Regional Office, IPPF, confirming that the research has helped advocate for provision of comprehensive sexuality education in Nepal.
- 5.7 Review of Office of the Children's Commissioner (England) June 2010. Available at: https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/176457/Cm-7981.pdf [Accessed 8 November 2013]. This includes evidence about the review of the Rights Respecting Schools Award with a positive impact on behaviour and relationships.