

PW-ACK-304

**Teachers' Perceptions of their Participation in Policy Choices:
The Bottom-up Approach of the *Nueva Escuela Unitaria* (NEU) in Guatemala**

Martha E. Mantilla

**(Manuscript for the "Policy as Practice: Ethnographies of
Educational Policy Formation")**

November, 1999

Introduction

In this paper, I intend to show the relationship between participation on the one hand and policy formation and appropriation on the other. More specifically, I will address the issue of teachers' participation in the formation and appropriation of educational policies within the context of *Nueva Escuela Unitaria*¹ (NEU) in Guatemala. NEU is an educational reform initiative that seeks innovative ways of engaging different actors such as teachers, parents, students, government officials, and program administrators in the decisions concerning the educational choices that affect their lives.²

I am going to begin with a brief summary of the views of donor agencies and international organizations on people's participation in local affairs during the last five decades. I will introduce the NEU educational reform initiative and provide background information on Guatemala's social and political conditions. I concentrate on the teachers' perceptions of their participation in the formation and appropriation of educational policies and conclude the article with a discussion of NEU's bottom-up philosophy in policy formation and appropriation.

Participation, according to the Oxford Dictionary, means "taking part, with others, in some action or matter." Two aspects of this broad definition will be highlighted in this article: One of them is the notion of taking part with others, which gives us the idea of participation as a joint endeavour. The other one, is the notion of participation in some action or matter, which gives us the idea of participation for an specific purpose. In this article, the teachers are the primary actors who participate with others, namely, parents, students, government officials, and program administrators. The action or matter in which the teachers took part of is the formation and appropriation of educational policies. Educational policies, in the NEU context, should be

¹New Unitary School.

²This manuscript is part of my ongoing research on teachers' perceptions of their participation in educational policies within the context of NEU. My interest in the topic started while I was working for the Institute for International Studies in Education (IISE) of the University of Pittsburgh as part of the IEQ documentation team. IEQ is a USAID project that evaluated the NEU educational reform in Guatemala. The IISE was a subcontractor to IEQ.

understood as a course of action or solution to a problem.³ The concepts of formation and appropriation will unfold as we examine the NEU educational reform.

I am in agreement with Coombs' (1980) view that participation should be examined more carefully, recognizing that participation acquires concrete meaning only when it is considered in a specific context (p. 25). Pigozzi (1982) contends that participation means different things to different people and it can be manifested in a variety of forms (p. 7). I further argue that participation should be studied primarily from the perspective of the participant. The participant or non-participant's perception of their involvement or lack of involvement in educational activities becomes the starting point from which participation acquires meaning. Therefore, in my research, I investigate the issue of participation from the perspective of the participant. I use an interpretive approach to examine how teachers perceive their role and other actors they interact with for the formation and appropriation of new educational policies. For this article I have drawn on data collected over a seven-year period including documents,⁴ open-ended in-depth interviews⁵ and observations.⁶

People's Participation in Local Affairs

Current community participation approaches are based on a rich legacy of ideas and practical agendas that have been formulated over the last five decades. The community development movement of the 1950s and 1960s, focused on small communities and sought to

³I use a generic definition found in Heslep, R. (1987). Conceptual Sources of Controversy about Educational Policies *Educational Theory* 37, 423-432.

⁴Documents such as audiovisual material depicting NEU schools; newsletters; trip reports, research reports, semi-annual and annual reports prepared by the U.S. consultant on the evaluation of NEU.

⁵In the Fall of 1997 I spent a month in Guatemala collecting data for my research. I visited and observed NEU schools, deepened my knowledge about the program, interviewed NEU administrators and researchers. I conducted open-ended and semi-structured interviews with different actors including 33 teachers, ten government officials, four representatives of the Academy for Educational Development (AED) which provided technical assistance to NEU, three researchers, and four parents. In 1999 I traveled to Nicaragua and interviewed the NEU Director from 1992-1996 in Guatemala.

⁶Observations include the ones done by the evaluators of NEU and my own observations done during my field trip to the regions in Guatemala.

establish democratic decision-making institutions at the local level. This movement also tried to mobilize people to get involved in development projects directed to improve their social and economic conditions. In the 1970s, there was disillusionment with community development projects, in part because many governments failed to provide adequate financial support. In the same decade, the emphasis on popular participation was formalized by the United Nations with the publication of two major documents "Popular Participation in Development" published in 1971, and "Popular Participation in Decision Making for Development" published in 1975 and the creation of major research programs by the United Nations Research Institute for Social Development (UNRISD). In the 1980s, through the influence of international agencies, the governments of many developing countries strengthened participatory elements in their social and development programs (Midgley, 1986).

During the 1990s, international agencies re-examined their approaches to development in order to respond to several concerns of the world community. The most pressing one was the lack of progress in improving the lives of the very poor. Such lack of success of development efforts was attributed, in part, to the failure of international agencies and national governments to adapt development programs to the context of the local culture. A study of 2,000 World Bank projects, for example, showed that a major factor in poor project performance was inadequate understanding of the local culture. This was attributed, among other things, to the lack of local participation in the planning, implementation, and evaluation of development programs, which in many cases showed an "a la carte" approach whereby a program is taken from one environment and placed in another where different conditions prevailed (Wolf, 1997).

As with other areas of development, educational reform efforts in the 1990s have emphasized the need for increasing level of people's participation as a prerequisite for achieving educational quality. As a consequence, the focus of many regional-international conferences and research projects has been on the conditions that facilitate the participation of the people who are

affected by policy choices. As such, throughout the 1990s, community involvement in education has been one of the central issues of concern. For example, on March 5-9, 1990, UNESCO, UNICEF, UNDP, and the World Bank co-sponsored the World Conference on Education for All. At this Conference which was held in Jomtiem, Thailand, a major emphasis was on the promotion of more effectively participatory and decentralized education systems. It was also determined at the Jomtiem Conference that the most significant partners in educational projects are those who are directly affected by the educational practices and policies, namely teachers, students, parents, and other members of the community. In addition, it was also noted that governmental and private organizations are equally critical in the process of articulation and implementation of educational choices. Therefore, in the "Framework for Action to Meet Basic Learning Needs" endorsed at the World Conference on Education for All, Jomtiem, March 5-9, 1990, we read:

Because basic learning needs are complex and diverse, meeting them requires multisectorial strategies and action which are integral to overall development efforts. Many partners must join with the educational authorities, teachers, and other educational personnel in developing basic education if it is to be seen, once again, as the responsibility of the entire society. This implies the active involvement of a wide range of partners -families, teachers, communities, private enterprises (including those involved in information and communication), government and non-governmental organizations, institutions, etc.- in planning, managing and evaluating many forms of basic education. (p. 54)

Following the Jomtiem Conference, there were several Summits and initiatives related to the implementation of the Jomtiem resolutions. For example, in the Education for All Summit in New Delhi, December 12-16, 1993, panelist from United Nations agencies, as well as representatives from nine highly-populated developing nations including Bangladesh, Brazil, China, Egypt, India, Indonesia, Mexico, Nigeria, and Pakistan reaffirmed their commitment to make education universal and at the same time the heart of sustainable development. According to the delegates, one of the pressing issues affecting basic education worldwide was the need for

community participation in educational practices and policies, along with mobilization of the masses and grassroots units to participate in literacy programs.

When it comes to policy issues and decision-making, the views of the actors who have traditionally been involved, namely donors, national governments, development agencies, technical experts, and researchers have usually been recognized. However, in today's world, the people whose voices have traditionally been missing teachers, parents, students, and other members of the community are claiming their space and are increasingly seen as legitimate partners and participants in the activities and decisions that concern their lives. The challenge of community involvement has become evident in recent years and decision makers, at the national and international level, have started to rethink their roles in the development efforts and have turned their attention to the participation and perspective of local people, whose views are as essential as any other "expert" contribution.

Taking the aforementioned issues into account, international agencies such as the United Nations Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), the United Nations International Children's Education Fund (UNICEF), the Asian Development Bank (ADB), the World Bank, and the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), have redefined their approaches to participation and have strengthened their support for it. *Nueva Escuela Unitaria* (NEU) is an example of a USAID funded project based on the assumption that the best or the most effective way to introduce both quality and quantitative change in education is from the bottom-up. Unlike the traditional philosophy of education where reform is believed to pass from the top to the bottom, in the NEU reform, experts and government officials are still in the picture, but not as pivotal actors. The priority and primacy have shifted to new actors, particularly teachers, parents, students, and other members of the local community .

Nueva Escuela Unitaria (NEU)

NEU is an educational initiative that began in Guatemala in 1992 as part of the Basic Education Strengthening (BEST). BEST was a seven-year, 1989-1996, project undertaken by the Ministry of Education and funded through a \$30,000,000 grant by USAID with technical assistance from the Academy for Educational Development (AED). NEU's fundamental principles are based on the democratic pedagogical principles formulated by one of the preeminent philosophers John Dewey and an equally prominent social psychologist, George H. Mead.⁷ NEU traces its history back to the UNESCO Geneva Conference recommendations of 1961, which served as the impetus for many countries in the world to concentrate on the pedagogical challenges posed by multigrade teaching, that is, a single teacher in a classroom, working with children of different ages and skills representing all six primary grades. As a result of the meeting in Geneva, Colombia started a Unitary School Program under the guidance of UNESCO experts. With the name of *Escuela Nueva*,⁸ the program started in the early 1960s in isolated rural areas with low population density and by the mid-sixties it had expanded to 150 pilot schools in one province. With financing from the World Bank, the program expanded at the national level to several thousands rural schools, and by 1989 there were 17,948 schools serving 800,000 students (Psacharopoulos, 1993).

The emphasis of NEU in Guatemala is on the improvement of the quality of education by an active teaching-learning process, a flexible system of promotion, closer ties between the school and the community and appropriate curriculum to meet the rural needs. NEU is an integrated package of activities to assist teachers of multigrade classes to manage their classroom effectively. NEU schools are unitary schools in which one or two teachers attend to all six primary grades, working with 50-60 students. The NEU program is composed of two major

⁷Guatemala. Ministerio de Educación. (1996) *La Escuela Rural Guatemalteca en los Albores del Tercer Milenio*. AID-BEST, p. 9

⁸For a description of this educational model and its history see Schiefelbein, E (1991) *In Search of the XXI Century School: Is the Colombian Escuela Nueva the Right Pathfinder?* Santiago, UNESCO/UNICEF.

interrelated dimensions: school-community relations, and teacher-student relations. The first one emphasizes the integration and interaction among different actors teachers, parents, students, administrators, and other members of the community with expectations of collective collaboration among them. NEU schools are intended to be the focal point for community integration and development and NEU teachers are expected to be the school-community links. Teachers are encouraged to reflect on their practice and to participate individually and collectively on decisions about how instruction can be enriched by gathering information relevant to their work and using community resources. Parents participate in different ways, particularly in activities related to their children's learning. Parents are consulted, by the teachers, about what they wanted their children to learn in the school. In Guatemala, the parents said they wanted their children to learn how to write letters to their siblings in the military, how to write stories and legends of the community, how to speak Spanish. Equally important was to teach them to love the community and not to loose respect for the elderly.

The second dimension emphasizes a number of educational practices conducive to fostering student achievement and cultivating participatory democratic behavior.⁹ The school practices include active learning, peer teaching, use of self-instructional guides, and participatory student government. The objectives of NEU include providing students with the opportunity to complete sixth grade; creating flexible, life-long learners; and encouraging the formation of participatory, democratic practices.

The Ministry of Education in Guatemala provided physical space and offices for the NEU administrators. It also provided logistic support including secretaries, motorcycles for government officials, means to send notices about meetings and workshops to the teachers. Communicating with the teachers was not an easy task, considering the lack of phones and

⁹Participatory democratic behaviors and attitudes are promoted by creating situations that allow children to demonstrate or expressa rational, empirical, and egalitarian beliefs about how to function in social situaions; to interact appropriately with peers and adults; and to become involved in the social and political life of their school and eventually of their community and the nation.

almost non-existing roads to access most of the schools. Equally important, was the effort made by the teachers to attend these activities. The remote location of many of the NEU schools¹⁰ and the difficulty in accessing them is particularly important in order to understand the teachers' efforts to participate in the activities developed as a result of their commitment to the new educational reform, as we will see later.

The technical and administrative aspects of the project were coordinated by the NEU Director, a specialist in unitary schools who implemented the Colombian *Escuela Nueva*. He moved to Guatemala and lived in Cobán, a town located in Alta Verapaz, in region II. This was a conditions asserted by the Academy of Educational Development (AED) and Ministry officials, that the NEU Director and administrative offices were to be located in one of the two regions where the program was implemented.¹¹ The reason for this condition was because "only if you live in the community you can identify the problems, not only of the community but also of the children and the teachers. These are complex and intertwined problems."¹² The positive reactions of the teachers about the NEU Director living among them is reflected in a statement made by a teacher: "I learned to value people. One of the things that motivated us is that they [the NEU Director and his family] were part of us. He was like a brother to us or a relative. He was someone very close to us. Because many times the authorities do not come to partake with the people. To value people is what I learned from them [the NEU Director and his family] besides many other things that they taught us, and I am very grateful to them as are many of my fellow teachers."

¹⁰During my field trip I used a four-wheel truck in region II and motorcycle in region IV, to access the schools. Walkign was also an option if one would be willing to walk, in most cases, for three or four hours which some of the teachers do daily.

¹¹NEU was initially implemented in 100 schools in two rural regions of Guatemala: region II and region IV. Region II, consisting of the departments of Alta Verapaz and Baja Verapaz. Alta Verapaz is populated almost exclusively by Q'eqchi speaking Mayans. Baja Verapaz, has a population comprised mostly of Mayans who speak either Q'eqchi or Poqomchí. Region IV is made up of the departments of Jalapa, Jutiapa and Santa Rosa and primarily populated by Spanish speakers.

¹²Interview on September 16, 1997 in Guatemala with Myriam Castañeda, NEU Coordinator and liaison to the Ministry of Education.

Guatemala's Social and Political Conditions

Before we proceed to examine the teachers participation in the new educational reform effort and in order to better understand the significance of the teachers' role in the formation and appropriation of the educational policies implemented in the NEU program, we need to have a general understanding of the country's social and political conditions.

Guatemala is considered one of the most culturally diverse countries in Latin America. Its population is composed of diverse ethnic groups most of which are the indigenous groups of Mayan ancestry. Fifty to sixty percent of the population are Mayan Indians and the rest are *ladinos*, that is Spanish-speaking descendants of white and Indian racial intermixing. There are twenty-two linguistic subgroups of Mayan origin. Out of these, there are five major mother tongues that are spoken by 80% of the indigenous population which are Q'eqchi, K'echi, K'aqchiquel, Mam, and Pocomchi. (UNICEF, 1994)

Ruled by Colonial Spain until the nineteenth century, Guatemala has struggled with economic, social and political problems which have been attributed to distorted capitalist-dependent development, external political intervention and internal conflicts in which the economic and political elites and members of the military have dominated and ruled the country. (Del Cid, 1996 p. 89)

With one of the oldest guerrilla movements in Latin America, Guatemala is an ethnically-divided society, split among Indians and *ladinos*, affecting virtually all aspects of its social, economic and political life. Efforts to democratize and modernize the country in the 1950s were resisted and portrayed by some of the national elites as a way to advance communism. After a coup d'état and an invasion backed by the United States in 1954, the country was led into almost four decades of unparalleled political instability and violence. It is estimated that during this

time 150,000 have been murdered, 454,000 disappeared, one million internally displaced and 200,000 fled abroad as external refugees. (Del Cid, 1996)

At the political level, the dominant groups are constituted by *ladinos*. In the 1980s there have been some steps toward the participation of the Indian population in the political life of the country. In 1985 Indians started to be elected to high positions in the government and to participate in top governmental units. In 1987 the constitution of the country was translated into the four principal mother languages and in 1993 the first Minister of Indian ancestry was appointed to the Ministry of Education. Being the first indigenous Minister in Guatemalan history became a political issue used by some of the politicians of different parties. (Mantilla et. al. 1996) During the last two elections and governments in turn, there has been an increasing number of Indians holding different positions. For example there are now 84 Indian mayors in Guatemala out of a total of 330 mayors. (Del Cid, 1996 p. 91)

Guatemala is largely an agricultural country with the principal crops of coffee, bananas, cotton and sugar supplying 62% of its export earnings. The country's total population is estimated at 10,998.602 (July, 1995), of which 60% are rural dwellers engaged in agriculture as farmers and migratory workers. Official statistics indicate a rate of unemployment of 4.9% and underemployment is estimated to be between 30% and 40% (Del Cid, 1996, p.78).

Of particular significance in Guatemala's current social and political life is the signing, in December 29, 1996, of the Peace Accords between the government and the Guatemalan rebels which ended the country's 36-year civil war. The agreements were supposed to be followed by structural reforms to bring peace and changes that would benefit sectors previously excluded from social, economic, and political advances. I also that the agreements would facilitate the less privileged groups, among them, the rural teachers, to claim their space in the country's political

and social arena, which would presumably take Guatemala into a new chapter in the country's history. (Jonas, 1997).

Guatemala's Educational Conditions

Guatemala's illiteracy rate, has been cited as the highest in Central America and second highest in Latin America. According to the National Census, in 1993 the illiteracy rate in Guatemala was 58%.¹³ Only a small portion of the indigenous population speak Spanish and illiteracy is concentrated in the rural areas. Seventy percent of the rural population is illiterate and this indicator is more severe among the indigenous population, particularly women. In largely indigenous areas, few girls attend schools. This is in part what explains the low overall percentage (35%) of children enrolled compared to 82% of all children in non-indigenous areas. Even for those children who are enrolled in the school, attendance is irregular and dropout and repetition are high, resulting in an average of 10 years of schooling to produce a sixth grade graduate and approximately 87% of the population without a complete primary school education. (UNICEF, 1994)

The high illiteracy rate, particularly among the Indian population, and the disparities in educational attainment by ethnicity, region and gender can be attributed to the convergence of different factors, one of them being pervasive poverty. According to CEPAL and USAID, 72% of the population in 1990 lived in extreme poverty, that is to be unable to afford the minimum diet. Guatemala has the highest number of infants with low birth weight in Latin America and malnutrition is common especially in rural areas (Jonas, 1991, p.178).

Based historically on the Spanish colonial structure, the educational system in Guatemala has more recently drawn from Latin American and European innovative models. Like most Latin

¹³Illiterate, according to the Guatemalan National Committee for Literacy (CONALFA), is the person 15 years of age or older who is not able to write or read Spanish.

American countries, Guatemala has a rigid and highly centralized educational structure in which decisions are made from the top by government officials and international consultants. These decisions are to be carried out by other actors at the regional, local and communal levels. The technical and administrative centralization reflects the concentration of power and resources at the top leaving very little space for participation from the actors directly affected by the choices made. According to UNESCO (1986), the highly centralized vertical structure of the educational system is one of the problems affecting the Latin American region. In general, the educational systems is affected by excessive centralization and bureaucratization in the administration and planning of the educational process; curricular rigidity with identical plans and programs for the whole country; and prevalent urban orientation in terms of educational coverage and educational content to the detriment of the rural areas. In the case of Guatemala, these problems are compounded by lack of information which contributes to decisions based not on reliable data but on political considerations, an absence of concrete and realistic plans for educational development, an absence of institutional evaluation, concentration of services and resources in the most privileged areas and groups of the population and excessive bureaucratization. Indeed, the latter, especially imposes unnecessary formalism, deflects responsibilities from the periphery to the center and encourages passive obedience from local actors (ASIES/PREAL, 1997).

Like most countries in Latin America Guatemala has taken steps towards decentralization.¹⁴ The Process of decentralization was started by the Ministry of Education in 1986. It was based on the *Plan Nacional de Regionalizacion Educativa*.¹⁵ The country was divided into eight regions each of them with a Regional Director. One of the purposes of the Regionalization was to seek the participation of local actors such as parents, teachers, and members of the communities. To that end, the Ministry of Education officials established

¹⁴For information about the educational decentralization in Latin America and Guatemala in particular, see De Lara C. G. *La Descentralizacion Educativa en Guatemala*. L In: ASIES/PREAL. (1997) Reforma Educativa en Guatemala pp. 105-132.

¹⁵National Plan for Educational Regionalization

*consejos asesores*¹⁶ for those actors to participate at the regional, departmental, and local levels. The process of regionalization has moved forward with respect to delegation of tasks and functions from the central government to the regional level. However, the decision making process continues to be made by top officials in the government without the participation of the actors at the local and community level. (ASIES/PREAL, 1997 p. 115). The long tradition of concentration of power at the center inherited from colonial times, did not change with independence. It continues to prevail in the modern times. Some of the obstacles that hinder decentralization are actors' negative attitudes from certain political, bureaucratic, and *gremial*¹⁷ sectors who are not ready to cede sociocultural control. This resistance is reinforced by the reluctance on the part of the traditionally marginalized actors teachers, parents, and other members of the community to begin to exercise their right to participate in the decisions that affect their lives.

The participation of different actors, mainly those who have traditionally been excluded in the decision-making process, is of particular significance in the country's struggle to consolidate its efforts toward democracy. The Peace Accords signed by the Government and the rebels on December 29, 1996, are not legally binding. But rather, they are commitments on the part of the two forces toward specific goals, such as broadening the participation of different actors in the political life of the country. "In recent years political efforts have been directed at making democracy work in Guatemala. These efforts have crystallized through the constitutions of civilian rule, the establishment of participatory rights, and the presence of prodemocratic participant urban populations (Del Cid, 1996 p. 126). The future of Guatemala's democracy has been the concern of many researches. According to Seligson (1995) promoting a stable democratic system corresponds to a certain extent to the political forces of the country. Nonetheless, the stability of a political system also depends on the masses' perceptions about it.

¹⁶Advisory Councils.

¹⁷Belonging to a union.

As far as the educational system is concerned, particular emphasis has been put in the urgency for preparing the educators to participate, in an effective and responsible manner, in a free society. Similarly, Indian groups have struggled to make the legal, economic and educational system to be more responsive to their needs. In education, for example, instead of having bilingual programs of "castellanizacion," Indian children are going to learn in their own native language. These changes are the result of negotiations that were underway since 1985 and resulted in the Agreement on Identity and Rights of Indigenous Peoples (Del Cid, 1996, p. 69).

In the face of these social and political challenges, the Guatemalan government, with the cooperation of various international organizations and financial aid agencies, notably USAID, has developed several reform efforts. These reform initiatives include: The National Program for Bilingual Education (PRONEBI). It started in 1979 and was funded by (BEST)-USAID from 1979 and 1984/85. Subsequently, it became a Division of the Ministry of Education. Second was the Girls' Education Initiative. This was a five-year scholarship program that helped primary-age indigenous girls to stay in school. This was a pilot program in 36 communities. It tried different ways to promote girl's school retention, completion, and achievement. It was coordinated by a local NGO, IDEAS/Datapro, with technical and funding support from USAID. Third, was the NEUBI program which was an UNICEF funded effort in multigrade schooling and carried out by Ministry officials in 14 schools in the indigenous region of el Quiche. Fourth was the Don Bosco program, a Catholic project that has worked in Guatemala for almost 20 years in the Alta Verapaz Region. Its goal was to impart secondary education to indigenous youth who have completed sixth grade. After completion many of them were sent to work as bilingual teachers in isolated communities that requested this service. Fifth were the USAID-funded *Nueva Escuela Unitaria* (NEU) program and the Improving Educational Quality (IEQ) project.

When the NEU program started in 1992, the expectations of the actors involved were many and challenging. Teachers were expected to have positive attitudes toward the new ways of teaching. They were to become facilitators of the learning process. That is to say to be guides rather than mere instructors. They were also expected to become active leaders in their communities. In addition, they were expected to manage the components of the program efficiently (Guatemala. Ministerio de Educación, 1996, p.55). However, most of the Guatemalan teachers were disenchanted by government's programs that were handed down to them. They were also distrustful of government officials and national or international "experts." One of the rural teachers shared with me her reaction when the NEU Director asked her if she wanted to participate in the new educational reform: "I do not want to hear about new educational projects anymore! All of those projects are deceitful! The government officials get the funding and we are just used. They come here and give us a bunch of brochures that we do not know how to use. Then, they send us someone, who does not either, to guide us! So we are stuck again. All is a deceit!"¹⁸ Resistance to new projects plus distrust of ideas coming from the top were very common among the teachers that I interviewed.

From another angle, government officials faced their own mistrust and misconception about the teachers' capacity to work responsibly. Very often the authorities point out the teachers' irresponsibility instead of their virtues and good will to work with the limited resources they have (Guatemala. Ministerio de Educación, 1996, p.50). Project administrators, on the other hand, wanted to engage the teachers in all possible aspects of the program. According to the NEU Director, "the participation of teachers was the most important component of the program. Very often, he says, educational reforms are perfectly designed; but, if the program is not appropriated by the teachers, they will not be able to use it. In such case, it is not possible to get the effect that one wishes."¹⁹ For him, therefore, crucial to the program was "to build, together

¹⁸All the interviews were conducted in Spanish. The translation is mine.

¹⁹Interview on February 5, 1999 in Nicaragua with Dr. Oscar Mogollón, NEU Director (1992-1996).

with the teachers, the appropriate educational model for the unitary schools in Guatemala." (Guatemala. Ministerio de Educación, 1996, p.33). These were, in general, the views and attitudes of the teachers, the government officials, and the program administrators when they decided to work together in the NEU educational reform.

Teachers' Perceptions of their Participation in the NEU Educational Reform

The first step, taken by rural teachers, toward participating in the NEU educational reform, was to respond to the invitation, by NEU administrators and regional authorities to attend the first meeting where the program was presented to them. Of all the 865 rural teachers of unitary schools where NEU was going to be implemented, 440 attended the meeting. After a process of selection based on the profile of the teacher, the school and the community, teachers from 100 schools were chosen for the NEU pilot program. In June of 1992, a second meeting was held by NEU administrators, with the teachers who had been selected to participate in the pilot program. This meeting was convened in order to ask the teachers to identify the needs and problems that they faced in their schools and to identify possible solutions. A plan of action was drawn by the teachers and NEU administrators in the areas of teacher training, curriculum, community and administration.

A widely diverse range of educational processes, activities and policies were affected by the NEU educational reform. At the school level, for example, new ways of teaching were introduced, new ways of managing the classroom, and new curriculum was introduced. Outside the school, a new set of activities were implemented. Most of those activities required the interaction of the teachers with other actors namely, parents, program administrators, evaluators and government officials. We will focus, next, on a more detailed examination of those process, activities and policies.

One of the most significant changes that the teachers made with respect to educational policies in their schools was new ways to grade, evaluate and promote their pupils. The new grading, evaluation and promotion system that the teachers implemented in NEU schools was radically different from the existing system endorsed by the Ministry of Education. The official system consists of the traditional pass-failed approach. That is, at the end of the academic year, the child either passes or fails the grade that he or she is enrolled in. The main difference with the new system is that children in NEU schools never fail grades. A child who, at the end of the academic year did not finish the instructional units that allow him or her to advance to the upper grade, is considered "in process". That child is encouraged to come back the following year and continue working on the same instructional unit until its completion, time at which the child is promoted to the upper grade. This flexible promotion system is more consistent with the rural environment of the child than the system supported by the Ministry of Education. One of the reasons why the flexible promotion system, is more responsive to the needs of the rural children is because it enables the students to advance at their own pace. With this flexible promotion system there are more possibilities of the child to be enrolled the following year. This is done knowing that the child will continue at the point where he or she left instead of having to start the same grade all over again. Consequently, the chances of the child completing all six primary grades increase. The grading system, therefore, is consistent with the flexible promotion system. In NEU schools, the teachers implemented a grading system based on positive reinforcement. That is, children in NEU schools are graded "Good", "Very Good" or "Excellent", instead of the traditional numerical system, endorsed by the Ministry of Education, by which a grade below 60 means "failed."

The policies on promotion and evaluation implemented by the teachers of NEU schools are not congruent with the official policies endorsed by the Ministry of Education. This discrepancy between NEU policies and the Ministry's policies affects the records kept by Ministry officials and has an impact in the administrative process. For example, supervisors who

either are not familiar with or do not support NEU policies, demand the teachers to produce the traditional grades and to present records showing children who failed grades. The tension between teachers and supervisors increased over time. A teacher describes the tension: "The Supervisor is not in agreement with our grading system. He does not agree with the flexible promotion either; he does not accept that. He even makes fun of it! All-in-all, he does not accept the new system!." This tension builds up when a child, that has been attending a NEU school, is transferred to a non-NEU school because the two type of schools follow different policies. As a result of the tension, NEU teachers, with the support of NEU administrators, presented their case to the Ministry of Education via the government officials so as to work out a policy solution that would accommodate not only their interests but also the interests of their pupils.

In September 4-5, 1997, a meeting of approximately thirty people was organized by the teachers with the support of the NEU administrators. It was attended by government officials at the local, regional and national level.²⁰ In that meeting, the teachers explained to the government officials, their new ways of teaching and the promotion and evaluation system that they had implemented. This meeting was, among other things, an historical event in which teachers petitioned government officials to accommodate their educational policies. The following statement, made by one of the teachers attending the meeting, shows his assessment of the situation: "One of the limitations that is affecting this program [NEU] the most is that there has not been a hundred percent approval by the Ministry of Education. In this occasion, we are meeting precisely to work on a document in which we will get green light to our evaluation system. We use flexible promotion and the supervisors might agree with it. But, if the authorities use records that do not reflect our system, then the supervisors are not able to continue supporting us. We run into problems at the end of the academic year because the supervisors want a legal base for our evaluation system to be officially accepted. We have struggled with this

²⁰I attended this meeting which was held at the time I was collecting data for my research.

problem for some years now and we have never had an affirmative answer." The views of this teacher were shared by most of the teachers that I interviewed.

A way to examine the issue of the appropriation of educational policies, by the teachers, is their use of words. For example, when teachers referred to policies implemented in their schools they almost always referred to them as "our" evaluation system or "our" grading system. This expression was used, not only when they referred to the promotion, evaluation, and grading systems, but also when they talked about their classroom activities. Most of the teachers that I interviewed made clear distinctions between the Ministry of Education's grading, evaluation, and promotion policies and their own.

The teachers who were part of the NEU program perceived themselves as a distinct group with their own teaching methods, instructional materials, evaluation and promotion systems. They perceived themselves as being different from teachers in non-NEU schools. Similarly, teachers in non-NEU schools perceived the NEU teachers as different. There was also tension between the two groups. Teachers who were not part of NEU resented not being part of "something good" that was taking place. A non-NEU teacher acknowledged, in an interview, that NEU schools had very good reputation in the region and were making a positive impact on the children. She resentfully stated, however, that NEU teachers formed "closed circles" to which the non-NEU teachers had not been invited. Additionally, she said, NEU teachers were not sharing their new knowledge and information with non-NEU teachers.

The self-perception of teachers in NEU schools as a distinct group, contributed, in my view, to their cohesiveness and group solidarity. Their cohesiveness and group solidarity was also strengthened by their participation in the *Círculos de Maestros*.²¹ The *Círculos de Maestros* were created, by initiative of the teachers, as a way to share their experiences with fellow

²¹Teachers' Circles.

teachers, to analyze different teaching methods and techniques, and to reflect on their role in the school and their communities. The *Círculos de Maestros* functioned also as a way to facilitate, individual and group reflection and work collectively in the areas related to their practice. In these meetings, for example, the teachers identified new methods of teaching and managing the classroom; agreed on trying new pedagogical methods; implemented them in their schools; and reported back to the group their experiences. These activities were supported and coordinated by NEU administrators. The decisions made in the *Círculos de Maestros* were conveyed to the NEU Director who, together with the local and regional authorities, made the necessary arrangements to provide financial and technical assistant for the implementation of the initiatives.

The *Círculos de Maestros*, in some cases, faced opposition by the supervisors. One of the teachers says: "we had fellow teachers who did not want to continue attending the meetings of the *Círculos de Maestros* because their supervisors were bothering them and told them to stop attending those meetings. They told the teachers that they were wasting too much time on those meetings and they were abandoning the children. There is some truth to that but some times there is a need to do that because if one does not get trained it is impossible to work." Another teacher expressed her frustration for the lack of support from the authorities and at the mean time her positive feeling of being supported by her fellow teachers. Thus: "In the *Círculo de Maestros* what we do is to support each other. However, she continued, I am going to be very honest, there are authorities that make demand on us. They come here to ask for our teaching plans. Sometimes we feel frustrated because we see that all this has given us good results. But, the authorities suddenly come to demand the teaching plans. We do not have teaching plans because the teaching is done through self-instructional guides. I gave thanks to God because when something happens to us, since we belong to the same *Círculo de Maestros*, we consult with each other. Sometimes there are disagreements but not as to give up the work."

Another example of the teachers cohesiveness and collegiality is the *Plan Padrinos*.²² With the *Plan Padrinos*, teachers in NEU schools invited teachers from neighboring schools to join the program. They sponsored new teachers, shared their experiences with them and guided them in all aspects of the program. By 1994, teachers from the *Círculos de Maestros* informed the NEU Director which schools they wanted to be part of the NEU expansion and the number of new teachers that needed training. Although, the expansion of NEU in Guatemala was planned from the beginning, the way to carry it out was the teachers' initiative and responsibility. Using the *Plan Padrinos*, the teachers who had participated in NEU from the beginning, planned and implemented the expansion of the program to other schools in the region. The Ministry officials and NEU administrators provided technical and logistic support. The teachers visited their colleagues in neighboring schools, invited them to observe them in their NEU schools and to attend the *Círculos de Maestros*. In these meetings, they had the occasion to share their experiences with the new teachers and encourage them to join the program. One of them describes the experience: "We think that the expansion should be done in two ways: one in which we are instructing the teacher that is nearest to our school and who comes to visit us to see how we work. That is very important. The other way is to tell all the teachers that even if they are too far from us they still can come and visit our schools even if they are not in the same region, so that they can learn about new ways of teaching. What happens is that we do not share the idea that the *licenciado*²³ is the one to teach us. They know the theory but we do not how to apply it. So, there is more trust among the teachers; we understand each other better. If I have doubts the other is my colleague, my *compañero*²⁴ so I ask him. But when an authority comes one feels inhibited."

²²Sponsorship Program.

²³Someone with a professional degree.

²⁴Fellow-teacher.

The *Multiplicadores*²⁵ was the way in which the training process was carried out for the expansion of NEU. The *Multiplicadores* was a process by which teachers who had implemented the new practices in their schools, trained their fellow teachers on the new methods of teaching and managing the school. Teachers who served as *Multiplicadores* were selected by their peers to train other teachers. According to the researchers who were evaluating NEU, those teachers "felt fulfilled to be able to share their knowledge and experiences with their peers; they felt valued as persons and professionals" (Improving Educational Quality, 1995, p.5). The transfer of the newly acquired knowledge, was done horizontally, from teacher to teacher, instead of vertically, from "experts" to teachers as it has been done in the past.

Another illustration of the teachers' collaborative work was the design, development, testing and implementation of self-instructional guides for NEU schools. One of the main features of NEU was to adapt the curriculum to the rural environment. To do so, teachers, with support of NEU administrators, worked together with parents and children in the design, development and implementation of the curriculum. The following statements is a reflection of a teacher who participated in this process: "It was a little bit difficult at the beginning because we thought the guides had to focus on the content [material to be learned] and not much on the process [how to learn]. So, we arrived to a consensus with the other teachers from region IV and region II. We went to test the self-instructional guides in our schools and two months later we met again to see how it worked. We made the necessary corrections, printed them again and went back to test them once more in our schools. After three or four tries we decided that the material was almost in a good shape. It was not perfect because the active learning pedagogy tells us that there is constant change and we have to be innovative. That is what we did. We worked on the materials. We took them to the field and tried to see if they worked. We planned to meet again. What worked remained and what did not work was modified." After that explanation, I asked the teacher: "Who made the decisions about the instructional guides?" "We,

²⁵Multiplyers.

the teachers" she responded. "The NEU Director gave us the guidelines and the first draft of the guides, but there is a huge difference between the first draft and the final document. Therefore, the decisions were made by us, the *docentes*.²⁶ We meet in the *Círculos de Maestros* and made decisions about a document, modified it, expanded it and determined which processes were involved."

Summary and Conclusions

This paper focused on the teachers' participation in the formation and appropriation of educational policies within the context of *Nueva Escuela Unitaria* (NEU) in Guatemala. The rural teachers that I interviewed said that they participated in different aspects of the NEU educational reform. The areas in which they participated included the design, testing, and implementation of new curriculum. They designed and implemented new grading evaluation and promotion systems. They also selected, sponsored and trained their peers. My research findings have shown that the NEU teachers no longer saw themselves as passive recipients of educational policies that were handed down to them, from the top by policy makers or "experts." On the contrary, they started to perceive themselves as viable contributors to the formation and implementation of the policies in question. This was done in part, through a process of cognitive self-awareness and social integration. By cognitive self-awareness I mean, a mutual recognition, by the actors involved, of being distinctive groups, with distinct interests, needs and preferences. Cognitive self-awareness involved their self-perception, as a group, of being able to take part of and influence the educational reform initiative. By social integration, I mean, the social process by which teachers, together with students, parents, authorities, donor agency representatives and other members of the community, worked together the decisions concerning the educational reform.

²⁶Spanish term commonly used to mean teachers

The teachers perceived themselves as a cohesive group working together with other actors -parents, students, government officials, program administrators, researchers, and representatives from the donor agency. In so doing, they all shared the responsibilities and commitments involved in the educational reform effort. Teachers shared their experiences, needs, and ideas with fellow teachers and authorities. In turn, the authorities participated in activities conducive to changes in the schools. The above mentioned actors identified common interests and coordinated their efforts in pursuit of meaningful educational reform. They constructed, articulated and implemented new educational procedures leading to the formulation and appropriation of new educational policies.

As is usually the case in human striving, the collaborative effort was not always smooth. In fact, there was tension and disagreement among various actors regarding the changes that were taking place. For instance, in one particular school one of the teachers joined NEU and used the new methods. On the other hand another teacher in the same school did not. The tension between the two of them resulted in the removal of both of them from the school. The parents, who were aware of the situation, requested that the newly appointed teacher did not use the new educational policies. There was also tension between teachers and some of the supervisors who did not support the changes, either because they did not agree with them or because they were not aware of the philosophy behind them. The pick of the tension with respect to the new educational policies occurred between the NEU teachers and authorities. The teachers realized that the new policies had to be approved by the Ministry of Education in order to be accepted by their supervisors. The teachers, with the support of NEU administrators, called a meeting with local and regional authorities as well as representatives of the Ministry of Education. In that meeting, the teachers voiced their concerns and informed the authorities about the changes that they had made in their schools. Moreover, teachers explained to the authorities the rationale behind those changes and the positive results that, according to them, were occurring in their schools. They expressed their conviction that the new practices and policies were beneficial to

the children and had made a positive impact in their schools. More specifically, they shared their beliefs that the new methods of teaching and new policies had contributed to the improvement of their pupils' achievements, retention, self-stem and democratic practices.

Being eager to voice their views and beliefs in issues related to their work is, in my view, the best example of teachers making a significant move toward effective participation in the decisions that affect their practices as teachers. Furthermore, teachers who have traditionally been less powerful actors have become an integral part of the key players in the formulation and implementation of policy choices. They have invested their time, energy, ideas, trust and goodwill in the accomplishment of the intended goals.

Policy formation and appropriation in NEU was a collaborative effort by different actors that participated in different times and at various levels. They also recognized that each group depended on the other for the accomplishment of the reform effort. They shared their ideas and concerns which contributed to the strengthening of their ties. In the process of sharing with their peers, teachers realized that they were not alone dealing with problematic educational issues. Most of them were having similar experiences in terms of managing overcrowded classrooms, lack of resources, absenteeism and drop out, pressures from the authorities, to name a few. With a sense of being stronger while being united, their joined their voices and channeled their concerns to the authorities. Although some of the teachers were skeptical of the authorities' response to their requests, they were convinced that, at last, they had contributed meaningfully to the formulation and implementation of educational policies that made sense in the rural setting.

Some of the sentiments expressed by the teachers that I interviewed were a strong sense of personal growth, personal change and personal satisfaction. Some of these sentiments are reflected in the following statements made by some of these teachers: "We started this work which is very good because it begins with the experience of the teachers. The opportunity to

participate and to create a new methodology was given to us. This is the best thing that could have happened to me." Another teacher said: "Before I was tormented because I did not know how to attend several grades in a multigrade school but that has changed. My attitude changed. Before I used to teach by lecturing, now I am a facilitator" Talking about the voluntary participation one teacher noted: "This is the most beautiful thing about the program. You were given the idea. You also got the opportunity to go and implement it in your community. You had the opportunity to accept it or to change it according to your location. So, that is the most beautiful thing. They gave us the opportunity to change. You did not do it because there is an imposition. Because when things were imposed to the Guatemalan teacher then they did not do it. But if they came to sell you the idea then they have given you the opportunity. That is when the change really happened." Referring to her personal change in relation to changes in the students, a teacher said: "This is the best thing that could have happened to me as a teacher. Because change has occurred from within oneself. One, as a teacher, has to change, because if there is no change in the teacher how can one expect change in the children of the community?"

On the basis of my interviews and interactions with the teachers, I came to the conclusion that they perceived themselves as been able to initiate actions and influence processes prompting outcomes that affected not only their professional but also their personal lives. They also have a sense of individual-collective professional development and professional accomplishment together with an increased feeling of group solidarity.

According to Paul (1987), participation, in some cases, contributes to capacity building through the sharing in the management of the project and taking on operational responsibilities for segments of the project. Some forms of participation, he adds, lead to an equitable sharing of power and to a higher level of people's political awareness and strengths. Although teachers in NEU played a more visible role and assumed the responsibility of different areas of the reform, the power remained in the hands of the actors who have traditionally made the decisions. In the

NEU case, the element of empowerment, in my view, was associated with the element of cognitive self-awareness and social integration. That is, teachers self-perception of being able to initiate actions on their own and thus, influencing the process and outcomes of sociocultural development.

Bottom-up Approach in NEU's Educational Reform

What I have tried to show in this chapter is the link between NEU's educational policy reform initiatives and the teachers' perception of their participation in educational policy formation and appropriation in Guatemala. This linkage constitutes, a nascent bottom-up philosophy. As I understand it, it is a critical and deconstructive approach to the study of cultural production and reproduction in the context of the sociology of education. The bottom-up philosophy is presented as both a critique and replacement of the traditional top to bottom philosophy which focuses on the national elites, experts and government officials. The bottom-up philosophy is quite the opposite. It offers a different and promising approach which emphasizes the involvement of diverse actors from different sociocultural contexts. These include, but not exclusively, the teachers, parents, and other members of the community. The bottom-up philosophy, as noted above in this chapter, is presented here as a serious contending alternative to the mainstream policy analysis. In other words, the bottom-up philosophy views the problem of educational reform policy not only from the perspective of critical thinking but also in terms of the need for effective democratizing administrative techniques. For one thing, the bottom-up approach employed here, is an attempt to examine the NEU's educational reform policies and practices which give priority and primacy to the participants themselves. NEU's educational policy formation, appropriation and implementation were designed to proceed from the point of view of the teachers, students, parents and other members of the community. As noted above, these are the key participant actors in the bottom-up approach as a challenge to the traditional top to bottom approach to the problem of sociocultural change via educational reform policy formation, appropriation and implementation.

Furthermore, the bottom-up philosophy is predicated upon and committed to the idea that any viable attempt at significant sociocultural transformation has to take into account such critical issues as empowerment, effective citizenship and sociocultural democratization. All these entail the processes and practices of broadening the social contexts, enabling a meaningful discourse and participation by various actors from diverse historical and cultural backgrounds.

As I understand it, the bottom-up philosophy initiated by the NEU project is not simply an ameliorative endeavor but a serious shift from a traditional technocratic view of educational reform policy. By widening the sociocultural context, the NEU project, it seems, undertook the view of policy as a normative decision-making activity grounded, in part, in every day life experiences. As such, NEU's project is a case study which, in my view, enables us to understand policy formation as essentially a kind of sociocultural practice -a set of activities embedded in and informed by certain cultural models and social relations. These activities are carried out by individual, organizational, communal, national and international actors, entailing collaborative effort toward the intended goals. In the Guatemalan case, the collaborative initiative was undertaken by actors from diverse sociocultural contexts -teachers, parents, members of the community, national and international organizations. While they were these various social actors involved, my focus in this chapter was on the key actors, namely, the teachers. These are the actors whose voices and direct participation in policy formation are central to this case study. Furthermore, as key participants, they were also involved in the process of policy appropriation. This meant that they were the social actors engaged in discourse involving their own interpretation and perception of policy choices and uses within the context of their own sociocultural practices.

Bibliography

- Adams, D. (1995). *Improving Educational Quality and Efficiency: Conceptualizing Change Within a Local Strategic Model*. Pittsburgh: Institute for International Studies in Education, University of Pittsburgh.
- ASIES/PREAL. (1997). *Reforma Educativa en Guatemala*. Guatemala.
- Bhatnagar, B., Williams, A. (1992). *Participatory Development and the World Bank: Potential Directions for Change*. (Discussion Paper 813) Washington: World Bank.
- Colbert, V., Arboleda, J. (1990). *Universalization of Primary Education in Colombia: The New School Programme*. Paris: UNICEF
- Coombs, Philip H. (1980). *Meeting the Basic Needs of the Rural Poor: The Integrated Community-Based Approach*. New York: Pergamon Press.
- Craig, H. (1998). *Guatemala: Changing Teacher Pedagogy in the Nueva Escuela Unitaria*. In: *Teacher Development Making an Impact*. Washington: USAID/ABEL
- Damico, A. (1978). *Individuality and Community: The Social and Political Thought of John Dewey*. Gainesville, University Press of Florida.
- Del Cid, S. (1996). *Ethnicity, Political Culture, and the Future of Guatemalan Democracy*. Unpublished doctoral dissertation, University of Pittsburgh, Pittsburgh.
- Education for All Summit of Nine High-Populated Countries. Final Report. New Delhi, India, December 12-16, 1993. Paris: UNESCO.
- Epstein, J.L. (1995). *School/Family/Community Partnerships: Caring for the Children we Share*. *Review of Education Research*, 67, (1) 3-42
- Freire, P. (1972). *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*. New York: Herder & Herder.
- Ginsburg, M. et.al. (1996). *Choices in Conducting Classroom-Anchored Research to Improve Educational Quality in Developing Countries*. *Research papers in Education*, 11 (3): 239-54
- Guatemala. Ministerio de Educación. (1996). *La Escuela Rural Guatemalteca en los Albores del Tercer Milenio*. Guatemala: AID-BEST
- Imber, M. (1984). *Teacher Participation in School Decision Making: A Framework for Research*. *Journal of Educational Administration*, 22, (1), 25-33
- Improving Educational Quality. (1993). *Semi-Annual Report*. Washington: Agency for International Development.
- Improving Educational Quality. (1995). *Informe sobre Capacitación para Maestros en el Proceso de Expansión de NEU*. Washington: Agency for International Development.
- Jonas, S. (1997). *The Peace Accords: An End and a Beginning*. NACLA Report on the Americas. 30, 6 May/June
- Jonas, S. (1991). *The Battle for Guatemala: Rebels, Death Squads, and U.S. Power*. Boulder: West View Press.
- Kevale, S. (1996). *Interviews; An Introduction to Qualitative Research Interviewing*. London: Sage Publications.
- Mantilla, M. et. al. (1996). *The IEQ Story in Guatemala*. In: M. Ginsburg and D. Adams (Eds.) *Policy-Practice-Research-Dissemination/Dialogue Spirals in Improving Educational Quality*. Pittsburgh: Institute for International Studies in Education, University of Pittsburgh.

- McGinn, N. (1996, October). Resistance to Good Ideas: *Escuela Nueva* in Colombia. Paper presented at the 1996 Conference of the Nordic Association for the Study of Education in Developing Countries, on Education Reform in Developing Countries: New Dependency or National Capacity-Building, Copenhagen, Denmark.
- Midgley, J. (1986). *Community Participation, Social Development and the State*. New York: Methuen.
- Paul, S. (1987). *Community Participation in Development Projects: The World Bank Experience*. (Discussion Papers, 6) Washington: World Bank.
- Pigozzi, M. J. (1982). Participation in Non-Formal Education Projects: Some Possible Negative Outcomes. *Convergence*, 15, (3) 6-17
- Psacharopoulos, C., Rojas, C., Velez, E. (1993). Achievement Evaluation of Colombia's Escuela Nueva: Is Multigrade de Answer? *Comparative Education Review*, 37, 263-276
- Reimers, F. (1993). Escuela Nueva. In: Reimers, F. *Education and the Consolidation of Democracy in Latin America: Innovations to Provide Quality Basic Education with Equity*. (pp. 18-21). Washington: Agency for International Development.
- Schiefelbein, E. (1991). In Search of the XXI Century School: Is the Colombian *Escuela Nueva* the Right Pathfinder? Santiago: UNESCO/UNICEF.
- Seligson, M. (1995). *La Cultura Democrática de los Guatemaltecos*. Resumen. Guatemala: Asociación de Investigación y Estudios Sociales.
- Shaeffer, S. (1991). *A Framework for Collaborating for Educational Change*. Paris, Unesco.
- UNESCO. (1986). *La Investigación-Acción en el Contexto de la Regionalización Educativa*. Guatemala.
- UNICEF. (1994). *Realidad Socioeconómica de Guatemala con Énfasis en la Situación de la Mujer*. Guatemala: Piedra Santa.
- Vieira, P., Junho, M.V. (1997). *The Limits and Merits of Participation*. (Policy Research Working Paper 1838). Washington: World Bank.
- Wolf, J. (1997). *Planning for Community Participation in Education*. Washington: Agency for International Development.
- World Bank. (1990). *Strengthening the Bank's Role on Popular Participation*. Washington, D.C.
- World Conference on Education for All: Meeting Basic Learning Needs. Jomtiem, Thailand, March 5-9, 1990. New York: Inter-Agency Commission.