

Survey of Community Schools Report

Definition

Community Schools are to be found in many countries across all Continents. Of course they vary from country to country but they share certain characteristics. They will:

- Acknowledge parents as partners;
- School supports the community, community supports the school;
- Offer Lifelong Learning to family members and the wider community;
- Form partnerships with other agencies and business to ensure that services and opportunities are available for pupils and the whole community;
- Employ a holistic approach to their pupils recognizing that for pupils to be ready and able to learn influences external to the school must be conducive;
- Ensure that the school culture is open and ready to embrace new ideas from pupils, their families and the wider community.

Because Community Schools are open, pluralistic organizations they are well placed to make a valuable contribution to issues which so many countries are now facing:

- The integration of migrant communities;
- School is playing a leadership role in democratizing education;
- Working with families to improve children's health;
- Helping communities cope positively with economic transition;
- Learning about today's issues such as sustainable development.

Scope

This was a snapshot survey taken from questions sent to countries where we have contacts and where we know that there are NGOs supporting the development of Community Schools. It was completed by one NGO in these countries.

This survey provides us with a good picture of the spread, status, purpose and mode of operation of Community Schools in different countries. The results will help funding agencies with their strategic planning.

The surveys were submitted between: November 30 and December 20, 2011.

Summary of findings

Only two of the countries surveyed (Ukraine and Wales) have national policies which specifically support the development of Community Schools. All others have a legislative and policy framework which is conducive.

Community Schools in all countries are able to raise additional funds although having Community School status alone does not give them additional government funds. In most countries Community Schools raise funds from a number of sources.

In many countries, Community Schools were self-developed and in all the idea was introduced by the NGOs which specifically support their development.

Likewise, training is mostly offered by the NGOs and in only two or three countries is in service training offered by teacher training institutions. In Russia and Ukraine preparation for Community Schools is included in both initial teacher training and in Ukraine it is also offered as a post graduate course.

In all countries Community Schools have partnerships with other organisations. In all cases this includes local community organisations but few have partnerships with health and few have partnerships to tackle specific social issues.

Some networking occurs in all countries although the depth of this work varies considerably. In some countries networking is only local and ideas are only shared. In others, a more systematic approach taken and there are opportunities for schools to undertake joint initiatives. In two countries Community schools have had opportunities to network internationally.

All countries, apart from Wales have been established to promote citizenship and several also intend to compensate for under achievement in disadvantaged groups.

Key questions arising

The NGOs in all countries plan to increase the number of Community Schools. One NGO has seen only modest take up, whilst another has witnessed a dramatic decline in the numbers of Community Schools from 250 down to 10. There is a noticeable difference in the strategic thinking and planning described by the NGOs surveyed for their future plans. For those of us committed to the promotion and development of Community Schools this raises a number of questions about how best to support NGOs and other agencies which support Community Schools but do not have a clear, planned strategy for their development.

How significant is national policy specifically related to Community Schools?

What role might the NGO have in relation to policy development?

What level of research is available and do we know what happens to the findings?

How useful is a strategy for networking and how well understood is the way in which networks can develop actively?

What is the role of teacher training and what part should the NGOs play in this

What might be the priorities of rth support of NGOs?

Eg

Ideas and support for lobbying for policy development

Ideas and support for helping Community Schools broaden their understanding so as to tackle wider social issues

Managing networks

International networks

Sharing teacher training

Delivering demonstration training

Where might this come from?

Country profiles

Armenia

This has been operating since 2003 and has 10 Community Schools which are secondary schools, predominantly urban, in 4 out of 10 administrative areas **representing 24% of the whole?** They were introduced by the NGO but the status is conferred by the State or local authority even though there is no specific national policy. There are national policies conducive to the development of Community Schools. They can raise additional funds but only do so through their participation in externally funded projects such as programmes funded by the EU or Soros. Their main purpose is to promote citizenship, but they have partnerships with health, com orgs including those for disability, businesses, cultural and sport agencies. They agree that it is essential to the curriculum. They only network locally to share ideas but do not engage in joint projects. Teacher training is only available through the NGO. The only research and evaluation taking place on Community Schools is that under the International Quality Standards.

Future plans

To introduce International Quality Standards to other schools.

Bosnia Herzegovina

This has been operating since 2000 and there are now 24 schools both primary and secondary. Some are self-developed but all have been introduced to Community Schools through training run by the NGO. The Community Schools are in 3 administrative areas plus one on its own which represents 10% of the whole and are in both urban and rural areas and mostly where there is deprivation. They are not specially recognised by the State but are identified by the NGO. There is no specific policy but there is a conducive legal and policy environment. There is a lobbying campaign to encourage policy development supportive of Community Schools. They have been set up to encourage active citizenship but also to improve overall academic attainment and to tackle social issues. Community

Schools are able to raise additional funds which they do from the whole range of sources including business sponsorship, by participating in EU and other externally funded projects and through local fundraising, renting out premises etc. Community Schools network locally, nationally and internationally and share ideas but also work together in short term partnerships to carry out specific projects. It is essential to the curriculum and also there is visible strengthening links but the role of the school and its community are often separate activities. Teacher training is offered only by the NGO at this point. Research and evaluation is only related to specific projects and also to meet the requirements of funders. Partnerships are between Community Schools and health, com orgs including those for disability, businesses, cultural agencies, police, environment, humanitarian institutions and drug abuse.

Future plans

1. Meetings with responsible institutions from all cantons within the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina, plus Breko District and Republika Srpska: involve minimum 5 and maximum 10 schools per all levels: $12 \times 5 = 60$ schools, especially in Tuzla Canton where we will involve up to 50 schools besides the existing ones;
2. Advocate in Tuzla Canton to involve Community Schools as terminology into law for primary education;
3. Expand the network of Community Schools into high schools and into other Balkan countries depending on the possibilities;
4. Networking with schools on local and regional level for partnership;
5. Promotion of Community Schools and their activities through media;
6. Training for new schools about Community Schools and how to self-evaluate their own development ;
7. Consultancy to schools which are in the progress of becoming and identifying as open Community Schools;

This is a combination of MIOS's activities and the ones from Community Schools because we need each other as an argument that Community Schools really function and give (create) positive changes;

- Croatia
1. Implementation of inter-schools project on regional level
 2. Implementation of local project /networking/
- Serbia:
1. Implementation of inter-schools project on regional level
 2. Implementation of local project /networking/

Is this MUIOS' PLAN?

Czech Republic

This has been operating since 1992 although in 2009 the NGO supporting Community Schools ceased. There are 100 Community Schools both primary and secondary, both urban and rural, for pupils experiencing disadvantage and sometimes set up and managed by parents, representing **what percentage of the whole?** in 4 administrative areas. Community Schools are self-designated and not recognised specifically by State. There is no State policy although there is some mention of supporting their development in government documentation about education. Traditionally Community Schools have been perceived as most suitable for the Roma community and this perception will need to change if there is to be wider take-up. There is not yet widespread interest in Community Schools. They have been established to promote citizenship and to compensate for under achievement in areas of deprivation. There is some linkage between external contacts and the curriculum. They have partnerships with local com orgs including those representing disability and

ethnic groups. They also link with economic development agencies. NGOs offer in-service training. They are able to raise additional funds and do so from local and regional administrations, business sponsorship and local fundraising and renting out space. There is no training for teachers on Community Schools although the organisation represented in this study does offer training and national and international conferences. They also take staff from schools and local administrations to visit systems in other countries where Community Schools can be found. They network locally and nationally but this is not part of a strategic plan. They share ideas and conduct specific short term projects together. There is no research and evaluation on Community Schools other than that undertaken through the International Quality Standards and from time to time to meet the requirement of funders.

Future plans

The crucial point is to establish an umbrella organization on the national level, which will push ahead the concept of Community Schools and make it more understandable for wider pedagogical and parental public. But those plans have existed for at least 10 years already without any progress. We have established a new series of pedagogical articles aimed to share good practices and tools linked with the Community School concept. The series is published in cooperation with Raabe publisher's house, one of the biggest companies in this business in the Czech Republic. That is what could give more impulses for further networking between schools and make stronger bonds between those which would like to make stronger links between curriculum and the community dimension of schools. We also would like to spread International Quality Standards of Community Schools abroad to the neighbouring countries, Slovakia and Austria. We have already made some contacts on this matter.

Kazakhstan

This has been operating since 1997 with 10 Community Schools a mix of primary, secondary and vocational which represents 50% of all schools????? There was a time when Kazakhstan had 250 Community Schools so numbers have dropped significantly. They are self-developed and through International Quality Standards and training offered by NGO, They are in mostly rural areas and in areas of deprivation. They designate themselves or are identified by NGOs but not by government. The president's policies are conducive to the development of Community Schools but local administrators do not share this understanding. The policy environment is conducive but there is little interest. They are set up to encourage citizenship and self-governance by parents as well as pupils, but also to improve academic attainment and to tackle social issues. They can raise additional funds and do so from the local and national governments, usually via the NGO which then recruits them into specific projects and similarly through participation in externally funded projects. They also raise additional funds from business, parents and through renting out space. They network regionally, nationally and internationally on an ad hoc basis and not part of a planned strategy but the focus is on the inclusion of pupils with disabilities which is receiving funding and government attention at the moment. In this network they share ideas but do not undertake specific pieces of work. There are visible links between the community and the development of the Community Schools curriculum. Teacher training for Community Schools by an NGO and this is also offered to in service teacher trainers. Other NGOs help to include information about Community Schools through their own training. Evaluation and research is only through the work of International Quality Standards and to meet the requirements of funders. Partnerships are between Community Schools and com orgs, inc those representing ethnic groups, disability, business, and cultural agencies.

Future plans

Since we believe that the principles and objectives of Community Schools coincide with the development plan not only of the Kazakhstan government but also with the Millennium Goals, we plan to continue to spread the ideas of community active schools and to involve more schools. Most of our work is around the inclusion of pupils with disabilities since this is where there is interest and resources. Through this we promote the principles of Community Schools. We are currently looking for donors supporting seminars and conferences on the development of International Quality Standards for Community Schools. Therefore while looking for other resources, we are engaged in other social projects from the state, where we necessarily can emphasize the importance and relevance of the principles in the development of community active schools in our organizations, regions, local authorities and self-government in general.

Moldova

This has been operating since 2005 with 83 schools, with 79 secondary and 4 primary schools, in all areas introduced through an NGO that supports Community Schools. For the most part they are located in rural areas for parents who pay fees and are often managed by an NGO. They are self-designated and supported by NGOs but not specifically by the government. There is no national policy supporting Community Schools although the government is supporting child friendly schools and inclusive schools with a focus on pupils with disabilities, many elements of which are congruent with the principles of the Community Schools. Their purpose is to:

- create a democratic culture, open to partnerships with meaningful learning for all age groups.
- to involve the community people as well-informed equal partners in identifying and solving community problems,
- to transform schools to be a catalyst of social change in their communities
- to provide needed community services using local resources: e.g. by mobilizing community experts
- to offer vocational training for students and social services to everybody in the community (thus creating job opportunities)

They can raise additional funds which they do from engaging in special externally funded projects, business sponsorship, local fund raising activities, from parents, renting space and selling products. They network regionally, nationally and internationally where they share ideas, undertake joint projects and share plans for summer camps. There are visible, strengthening links between the community and the curriculum. The NGO offers in-service teacher training for Community Schools. The only research is being conducted through International Quality Standards or evaluation as part of the requirements of funders for specific aspects. Community Schools link with com orgs including those related to disability, ethnic groups economic development, cultural and sport.

Future plans

We plan to enrol new Community Schools through:

- the trainings we offer via various projects to teachers and school managers, while using as entry points child-centred methodology, social justice and equitable access to quality education (quality subsuming most of the principles of Community Schools)
- through conferences and round tables aimed at sharing the success stories and issues the Community Schools are dealing with
- through the information from Community Schools placed on Step by Step web-site with hyperlinks to local projects, the Community Schools project bulletin etc.

Russia

This has been operating since 1997. Now there are over 600 schools of which a few are primary but most are secondary and are to be found in 35 out of 83 regions. They are supported by a network of 15 regional centres, all NGOs? The schools have been self-developed and introduced by the NGO, through international websites and through the International Quality Standards. Although this is a large number it only represents about 1% of the whole. They are mostly in rural areas. There is no national policy supporting Community Schools, in some regional administrations they are given specific support. However the policy environment is conducive to their development. (Is this still the case after the recent change on legislation making it harder for NGOs?). They are established to encourage citizenship but also help develop life skills of young people, they tackle and solve educational and local/social issues, create safe and developmental environment around schools. They are able to raise additional funds and do so in all the ways possible, from local and national governments, involvement in externally funded project, business sponsorship, parents, renting space, selling products etc. The network locally, regionally and nationally but not yet internationally. They share ideas but also work on joint initiatives. There are visible strengthening links between the community and Community Schools curriculum. The only research is evaluation related to the requirement of funders and under International Quality Standards. Partnerships between Community Schools and local com orgs including those relating to disability and ethnic groups, businesses, cultural agencies and sport. Also with local authorities, ecological organizations, youth and civic NGO-s, law enforcement authorities, museums, High Educational Establishments, etc. In service teacher training institutes offer some courses related to Community Schools, there are also developing initial teacher training courses and NGOs offer in service training. There is no research evaluation specifically related to community Schools other than carried out under the International Quality Standards.

Future plans

Krasnoyarsk Center for Community Partnerships (KCCP) has been operating since 1997. Now there are over 600 schools of various types: secondary schools, gymnasiums, liceums; they can be found in 35 out of 83 regions, in cities and rural villages. Although this is a large number it only represents about 1% of the whole. They are supported by a network of 18 regional centres, most of them NGOs. The schools have become community schools in different ways: introduced by the NGOs through training programmes, self-developed, through national websites. There is no national policy supporting Community Schools, but in some regional administrations they are given specific support. However the policy environment is conducive to their development and according to the law they want all schools function as community ones. Community schools are established to encourage citizenship but also help develop life skills of young people, they tackle and solve educational and local/social issues, create safe and developmental environment around schools. They are able to raise additional funds and do so in all the ways possible, from local and national governments, involvement in externally funded project, business sponsorship, parents, renting space, selling products etc. They network locally, regionally and nationally and internationally via internet. They share ideas and also work on joint initiatives. There are visible strengthening links between the community and Community Schools curriculum. From time to time some research is conducted, self-assessment on regular basis is being introduced into schools. Partnerships are formed between community schools and local community organisations including those relating to disability and ethnic groups, businesses, cultural agencies and sport. Also with local authorities, ecological

organizations, youth and civic NGOs, law enforcement authorities, museums, High Educational Establishments, etc. Some in service teacher training institutes offer special courses related to community schools, there are also developing initial teacher training courses and NGOs offer in service training.

Ukraine

This has been operating since 2003 and now has 550 Community Schools, which includes kindergartens, primary, secondary and vocational schools, throughout all 27 administrative areas in urban and rural locations. They have been developed largely through the efforts of the NGO with training and through national and international websites. They are organised and selected by the NGO supporting Community Schools. There is a national policy context described below.

Centres of community development.

Historically, Ukrainian schools together with churches have always been the centres of community development. They not only provided the learning opportunities for children, but for all people living in the communities. There is the saying "If there is NO school in the village there is NO village" During the Soviet times schools became detached from the life of the local communities including parents and focused more on the academic results of the students. The democratic processes in the 1990-s required development of the new values, new practices and the new roles of the schools. Due to the closing of many institutions, like Houses of Culture and libraries, schools became the only centres for community development in many villages and towns of Ukraine. That is why the idea of reviving schools as community active schools is so important, as the community centres become so needed and demanded.

Although there are different interpretations about what community school means in different countries due to different financial and political conditions, in Ukraine the term „community active schools has been chosen. It means that although schools remained financially dependent on the government, they can involve parents and other community members in school governance, and initiate different programs for community members and projects aimed at the community development.

A decrease in the birthrate, which started in the 1990-s, reduced the teacher/pupil ratio and this was very difficult for small rural schools (5 children per 1 teacher on average). This causes ineffective use of the school resources, which mainly cover the communal expenses and salaries for teachers. Schools, especially in rural areas, do not have the resources for purchasing educational materials, professional development, etc. The world financial crises, which started in 2008, deepened that problem.

Maximizing the effectiveness of resources.

The Ukrainian government wants to see a more effective use of resources. An example of this is the project „Equal Access to Quality Education“ (www.mon.gov.ua), which was developed by the Ministry of Education of Ukraine and implemented during 2005-2010 due to a loan from the World Bank (www.worldbank.org).

One of the strategies to maximize the effectiveness of resources was the closing of schools with a small number of children or decreasing their levels (from secondary to primary schools etc.) Without a good infrastructure making this happen was difficult and there was considerable resistance from the affected communities.

The schools as a hub for the community became essential to their survival but it has also increased democratic processes because parents and others in the community have to take ownership of the schools and their work.

State-public model of school governance.

Another important factor in development of models of community active schools is the focus of the educational policy on the state-public model of school governance, which has been declared in many major educational laws. However, it is recognized that such a model requires further development and implementation. So – the Community School Program in Ukraine has become mainstream public policy.

Recent years have brought many changes and the Ukraine government has been committed to these reforms but there remain challenges ahead:

Low quality of education. The programs, curricula, teaching practices and teaching aids are not yet appropriate to the needs of building a civil society and a new knowledge economy.

Available limited resources for education are being spent ineffectively. Too many different forces and subjects are engaged in education, and all of them have their own interests. Imperfect management systems lead to the lack of costs; transparency of their spending is insufficient. Weak capacities to plan, implement, manage, monitor and evaluate quality educational policies and programs.

Ineffective financing. Funding for education is currently about 5% of GDP although an increase to 10% is planned but more than 90 percent is spent on salaries and utilities.

Problems of rural schools. Beside the common problems of secondary schools in Ukraine, rural schools have a number of their own specific problems.

Demography. A decrease in number of students (estimated number of children who will go to school decreases every year. It is especially visible in rural schools where the estimated decrease in the number of students by 2011 will go down to 30%). This leads to school closure. In Ukraine 700 schools were closed between 2001 and 2009 and 600 of them are in villages. Turning them into community centres helps some schools, but not all can be saved this way.

Material and technical basis. Poor material basis, lack of computers and internet connectivity, difficult transportation conditions.

Personnel. Due to the unfavourable demographic situation, an issue of excessive numbers of teachers remains unsolved. Conditions for teachers, with poor social protection, means that often the best teachers leave the profession; it is difficult to encourage talented teachers to work at school.

Financing. The budgets for schools are managed at the regional level where there is less public engagement and so decisions are not clear. This opens the way to schools succeeding or failing depending on their ability to exert influence, and decision - making processes become corrupt.

Effectiveness of resource management. Budget cuts, poor resource management, closed and corrupt decision-making processes lead to poor management and information to parents and the wider community. A lot of work is needed to help the local authorities see that unused space and staff in a school is a vital resource when used innovatively.

There are different approaches to these issues. The Community School Development Program of Ukrainian Step by Step Foundation is expanding the scope of services provided by the community active schools to wider communities (Community School Program). On the other hand the government's own Equal Access to Quality Education project is closing the schools and creating hub schools in educational clusters. Nevertheless, the best practices from these initiatives as well as their combination might be the basis for further educational policy development in Ukraine.

Community Schools are allowed to raise additional funds and do so from local and national government, business sponsorship, parents and through local fund raising. They network regionally and nationally where they share ideas but do not specifically work on joint initiatives apart from summer camp planning. There are visible strengthening links between the community and the curriculum. Partnerships between Community Schools and local com orgs although not commonly with those relating to disability and ethnic groups? There are often links with business and cultural agencies. Teacher training institutes offer initial teacher training, in-service and post graduate

training. International Quality Standards self-assessment is accepted as research but universities and institutes of higher education also carry out research and evaluation.

Future plans

The Ukrainian Step by Step Foundation has been implementing the project "Community Development in Ukraine through Community School Programs" during January 1, 2011 till December 31, 2013 within the support of the Charles Stewart Foundation. The main objective of this project is further development of the community school model, both in terms of expansion as well as improving its quality together with raising public awareness and introducing the model into the educational policy.

The goals of the project are the following:

- To expand the Community School Program to all 27 oblasts of Ukraine through the training activities for the schools and oblast In-Service Teacher Training Institutes.
- To improve the quality of Community Schools through introducing the International Quality Standards for Community Schools.
- To strengthen the national and international network of Community Schools through the development of the on-line database of community school resources.
- To develop and approve the changes to educational policy and regional action plans through conducting round table discussions and international conferences.
- The project includes 4 components, which will be interconnected:
- Expansion of the program to 120 schools in 27 oblasts of Ukraine in partnership with the Anti-Crises Humanitarian program of International Renaissance Foundation.
- Improving the quality of Community Schools through implementing the International Quality Standards.
- Developing national and international networks through establishing on-line data base.
- Development of educational policy through changes to the existing legislation and development of the action plan in the regions.

Wales

All schools in Wales are Community Schools because it is the Welsh devolved government policy. Support for Community Schools started in 1991 but the national policy is relatively recently secured in 2008. They are able to designate themselves but within this policy context. Despite there being a national policy there is also an ongoing lobbying campaign to ensure that this is upheld when administrations change and that due attention is paid their development and support. Although there is recognition that citizenship is encouraged by Community Schools they are specifically intended to address the issues of poverty and under attainment. They are able to raise additional funds and do this from local and national government, from external sources because they participate in special projects e.g. from the EU, from parents, businesses sponsorship and renting out their facilities, they do not sell products. They network at all levels although there is no specific strategy. Community Schools also develop their own work and create their own networks. They share ideas but also work on range of joint initiatives devised by others working with them or under their own volition. There are strong links with partnerships and this has an impact on the curriculum. Community Schools partner with all organisations as appropriate to their own local conditions so in some places this may include drug abuse agencies whilst in others there may be environmental partnerships. They build partnerships with other schools. They all work with health, economic development and most work closely with businesses and many have parent partnerships. There is

extensive research and evaluation through self-assessment for a number of topiCommunity Schools, not only as Community Schools, and also to meet the requirements of funders. The Schools Inspectorate service (Estyn) undertakes research and evaluation on specific issues as determined by the Government , e.g. schools addressing child poverty, provision for able and talented children. Universities and institutes of higher education also carries out research on Community Schools. Teacher training institutes offer some in service training related to Community Schools but no initial teacher training or post graduate training specifically.

Future plans

Government policy currently supports Community Schools.

ContinYou Cymru, the NGO, continues to support and lobby for greater understanding and recognition of the impact that Community Schools development can have.

ContinYou Cymru is considering new community focused approaches and different ways schools and their communities provide services for the local community.

Appendix One: respondents

Armenia	Center for Community Dialogs and Initiatives	Zhanna Dokholan elani1@yandex.ru
Bosnia-Herzegovina	International Association Interactive Open Schools	Edina Malkic muios@bih.net.ba
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