

## **European Methodological Framework for Facilitating Collaborative Learning for Teachers (EFFeCT) project**

### **UK Case Study 5 – National/International level**

#### **The International Teacher Leadership Initiative – The case of Bosnia & Herzegovina Prepared by the University of Hertfordshire EFFeCT team**

**May 2016**

#### **Context**

In this section, background is given on the ITL initiative generally and then on the example of Bosnia and Herzegovina which is the subject of this case. The HertsCam Network, which plays a material part in the initiative, is a not-for-profit organisation which aims to support teacher and school development through programmes that enable teachers and other education practitioners to exercise leadership for the purposes of practice development, collaborative school-based innovation and knowledge building. Further information about HertsCam is given in Appendix 1, An Introduction to the HertsCam Network.

#### *International Teacher Leadership initiative*

The International Teacher Leadership (ITL) initiative was launched in 2008 by colleagues in the HertsCam Network. The term 'teacher' in the title includes any educational worker including support staff (Frost 2011a: 41).

With funding from the Open Society Foundation during 2010-2011, the ITL initiative operated in its early years as a project and described itself as such in 2011 - namely, as a research and development project with a team consisting of over 50 experts from countries supporting around 1,000 teachers in around 150 schools (Frost 2011a: 1; 2011b: 17).

In 14 countries (Albania, Bosnia & Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Greece, Croatia, Kosovo, Macedonia, Moldova, Montenegro, Portugal, Romania, Serbia, Turkey and UK) members of the international team developed programmes of support and evaluated them in action.

(<http://www.teacherleadership.org.uk/the-itl-initiative.html> Accessed 30.3.16)

With the ending of funding and changes in the countries involved<sup>1</sup>, from 2012 it settled on describing itself as an initiative, recognising that it has the characteristics of a self-organising network.

Colleagues in the HertsCam Network in initiating the ITL project were responding to interest in the HertsCam work on teacher leadership expressed by researchers and practitioners in a number of European countries<sup>2</sup>. Hence the project was not initiated by ministries of education or other officials, but was the creation of

enthusiastic individuals who have previously worked collaboratively on other projects and who have established networks within the country. Collaborations between schools and universities, NGOs and research institutes and local government agencies have been relied upon in order to fulfil the requirements of the project (Frost 2011a: 19).

---

<sup>1</sup> Activity ceased in Albania, Kosovo and New Zealand (which was originally involved). Two countries from the Middle East (Egypt and Palestine) joined the initiative

<sup>2</sup> <http://www.teacherleadership.org.uk/the-itl-initiative.html> Accessed 30.3.16

## The initiative operates an inclusive approach

in which it is assumed that all members of learning communities have capacity for leadership regardless of status or designated positions of authority.

(<http://www.teacherleadership.org.uk/the-itl-initiative.html> Accessed 30.3.16)

The first meeting of the ITL project team discussed the practice that had developed in the UK. It is evident that the experience and framework of thinking and practice developed by the HertsCam Network, and some of its language, has helped in designing the ITL approach.

Rather than formulating a set of behavioural specifications or a list of standards, the first ITL meeting agreed a set of principles that could guide future action: these were revisited at each subsequent team meeting as new members joined (Frost 2011a: 11). The adoption of the guiding principles are one of the facilitating factors of this case and the principles are shown in the section on 'Facilitating factors' below.

The aims of the ITL initiative are (Frost 2011a: 2):

- to establish programmes of support for teacher leadership that are appropriate to a range of different cultural / national settings and responsive to the particular challenges that arise in those settings
- to explore how the development of teachers' professional identity and their modes of professionalism can contribute to educational reform in a variety of cultural / national contexts
- to create and/or enhance knowledge networks for teachers
- to create and/or enhance a network of experts (academics, local government staff, NGO staff, policy activists, experienced teachers and school principals) who can continue to provide support for teacher and school development
- to promote and foster inclusive educational practices
- to contribute to the development of democratic civil society

The ITL initiative promotes teacher leadership as a process of enquiry-based development led by teachers with the purpose of generating shared knowledge about pedagogic innovation. This approach strives to enhance human agency and develop a culture of shared responsibility for reform and successful learning outcomes for all students. In ITL work,

there is a shared assumption that all members of learning communities have some capacity for leadership which does not depend on designated positions of authority. The concept of teacher-led development work provides a framework which enables teachers to initiate and lead projects that can be enacted over the course of an academic year.

(Frost 2011b: 5)

Deliberate and sophisticated scaffolding and support is seen as a requirement to enable teachers to develop as teacher leaders in this way, which may take the form of guidance materials, programmes of workshops, tools for planning and reflection, partnerships between experienced teachers and external agents such as university based academics or activists within NGOs. The teacher-led development work that teacher leaders engage in involves teachers, with or without positions of responsibility (Frost 2011b: 5-6):

- taking the initiative to improve practice
- acting strategically with colleagues to embed change
- gathering and using evidence in collaborative processes
- contributing to the creation and dissemination of professional knowledge

For the ITL initiative, professional development does not best occur through application of a training model, but from teachers' 'pursuit of a developmental goal which they have identified and initiated' and 'knowledge is created through the practical experimentation in the form of teacher-led development work' (Frost 2011a: 42). Its methodology is described as follows.

The methodology of the project builds on that used in the Carpe Vitam Leadership for Learning project (Frost, 2008a) and may be described as collaborative action research in that it is both developmental and discursive. It involves practical work to create programmes of support for teachers who wish to redefine their roles as 'extended professionals' (Hoyle, 1972) or 'champions of innovation' (Frost, 2008b). Data are used to inform the development of strategies adapted to each national and institutional context. As with the Carpe Vitam (LfL) project, principles and dilemmas are processed through critical discussion both within the project team and more widely through international conferences and networking for the participating practitioners.

Members of the project team design programmes of support for teacher leadership by collaborating with schools and other local partners who may have the capacity to provide support either practically or financially. The design of these programmes is informed by an analysis of the cultural contexts both nationally and in respect of the particular schools involved. Strategies, tools and materials developed in the UK are offered to all ITL participants for possible adaptation to the national context. Once underway, the support programmes are monitored and evaluated using data collection tools provided by the Cambridge team.

Developing practice and insights are subject to critical discourse through the project team meetings as outlined above. In addition, it is a key goal of the project to arrange international conferences for researchers, school principals, teachers, local authority advisers, NGO staff and other stakeholders in order to engage in reflection and debate about the outcomes of the project. (Frost 2011b: 8)

An idea of the kind of activities, support and tools in ITL work is given in this account:

In most cases, programmes consisted of a series of two hour meetings for groups of volunteers at the end of their school day. Sometimes the groups came together to share experience and, in a minority of cases, the meetings were held on Saturday mornings. The meetings featured workshops that enable teachers to reflect on their concerns and values, to plan development projects and to share experience of their leadership of those projects. A collection of tools developed in the HertsCam programme were shared and adapted for use in the workshops. In some cases the tools exemplify and illustrate the action the teacher might take. A vignette based on another teacher's experience might be used to help teachers imagine their own intervention; an example of a teacher's action plan might help teachers to plan their own projects. Other tools might provide a structure for a conversation or a format for a record of participation. The process through which teachers were supported can be represented as a series of steps set out in the box below.

- |        |  |
|--------|--|
| Step 1 | Values clarification   |
| Step 2 | Identification of professional concerns                        |
| Step 3 | Negotiation and consultation to clarify agenda for development |
| Step 4 | Action planning  |
| Step 5 | Negotiation and consultation to clarify action plan            |
| Step 6 | Leadership of enquiry-based development work                   |
| Step 7 | Networking to contribute to professional knowledge             |

(Frost 2011b: 9)

The ITL countries other than the UK face a variety of particular challenges that relate to their traditions and economic conditions. These include relatively poor economies and high unemployment with disruptive consequences for families (Frost 2011a: 5), a tradition of centralised decision-making that 'has had a stultifying effect and has created a lack of room to innovate at the

local level', and a tradition of professional training that uses the 'delivery model of teacher development' that is unpopular with teachers and ineffective (p6).

### *Bosnia and Herzegovina: 'Teachers as leaders of change' Project*

The case that is examined and presented in this report is the *Teachers as leaders of change* project implemented in Bosnia and Herzegovina (B&H) (as well as Serbia, though here we concentrate on B&H). The education system of B&H is complex, resulting in there being 13 ministries or governments of education, as well as deficiencies in the provision for teachers' professional development (Čelebičić 2013; see also Vranješević and Čelebičić 2013: 2). The country comprises three ethnic 'constituent peoples': the Bosniaks (the largest group, mostly Muslim); Serbs (the second largest group, mostly Orthodox Christian); and Croats (mostly Catholic) - and differences and conflicts were exacerbated during the war which took place between 1992 and 1994 (Čelebičić 2013: 1-2). The country has ambitions to create an education system

that is inclusive, de-centralised, efficient and transparent; that promotes a culture of evaluation and self-evaluation, justice, tolerance and constructive communication; that engages well-educated, reflective and motivated professionals; that is capable of meeting special educational needs as well as the needs of minority and marginalised groups and that includes the perspective of life-long learning.

(Vranješević and Čelebičić 2013: 3)

However, it faces a variety of problems (Vranješević and Čelebičić 2013) which include: the centralised nature of the educational system (p3); teachers being reduced to *implementers* of educational policies created by other experts in education (p3); a need for teachers to develop the capabilities required for taking more proactive role in the process of education (p3). Vranješević and Čelebičić (2013: 5) conclude that as a consequence teachers accept mostly passive roles in the education system and do not see themselves as agents of change... They perceive themselves as transmitters of knowledge and not creators of educational processes'. They also indicate another of the deep-seated challenges:

Learning for diversity is very difficult in this region because teachers frequently share dominant prejudices and convictions with other members of society

(Vranješević and Čelebičić 2013: 2).

## **Methodology**

The UK cases of good practice for the EFFeCT project consist of nested case studies, distributed across the levels of the school education system: School (1); Local (1); Regional (2); National/International (1). As nested cases studies, they are parts of a larger whole (the HertsCam Network) and have an integrity and meaning through that identity, over and above the individual characteristics of each case<sup>3</sup>.

A participatory approach was taken to the case studies. That is, we sought to mobilise and engage with the knowledge of participants in the practice and to utilise information, reflections and systematic evaluations generated by those participants. The process was informed by well-established traditions of co-operative research with practitioners, such as PALAR (participatory action learning and action research) (Denis and Lehoux 2009: 367, Zuber-Skerritt 2011), bridging the researcher/practitioner divide. This meant, for example, discussing in-depth with representatives of the HertsCam Network the aims of the case studies and potential sources of data generated within and by the Network, and seeking from them participant validation of our interpretative analysis. It also involved ourselves as researchers consciously integrating a critical, questioning approach into our examination of information sources and into our collective

---

<sup>3</sup> See Thomas (2011) on types of case studies including nested case studies.

discussions of the research process and emerging findings, and sharing and discussing critical questions with representatives of the Network. In this way we sought to ensure there was reflexivity in the participatory research process (Denis and Lehoux 2009: 368).

The data examined for the purpose of the case study of the ITL initiative in B&H were primarily secondary sources. Evaluation is integral to the ITL initiative: the support programmes for developing teacher leadership 'are monitored and evaluated using data collection tools provided by the Cambridge team' (Frost 2011b: 8). Local participants in the initiative used the methods of data collection best suited to local circumstances, but were asked to report the data using a common format.

Data was used in each local context to evaluate, review and develop support programmes. Reports of periodic reviews were collected and analysed by the Cambridge team; these fed the international discursive process. Through discussion and collective evaluation, the team was able to build expertise based on knowledge of how to support teacher leadership which would be made available to wider professional communities and policy makers.  
(Frost 2011a: 14)

We have been able to draw on reporting of the ITL initiative's evaluation in Frost (2011a - an account of the 'Evidence of Impact' on pp32-40) which makes reference to B&H as well as other ITL countries, and other sources, such as a film of the B&H project (see footnote 7) and accounts by Čelebičić (2013), Čelebičić and Vranješević (2014) and Vranješević and Čelebičić (2013).

The case study also drew from planned meetings about the case studies: there were two exploratory and planning meetings with co-ordinators of the network in which the aims of the study, information on the masters and other aspects of the network were discussed and collected, as well as a focus group to explore questions arising from the analysis and discuss our interpretative analyses of the case studies<sup>4</sup>.

The purpose of the examination of the documents and other information was to analyse, in terms of the criteria of good practice (participative professionalism, deep level collaboration, equity and deep learning, plus factors helping and hindering the good practice) the stated aims, processes and perceived outcomes of the ITL initiative in B&H.

Limitations of the method in relation to the case study of the MEd are acknowledged. We recognise that the secondary data examined should not be approached as objective representations. This is not to assert that straightforwardly objective representations are possible. Rather, we are recognising that the publications, papers and visual data constituting the secondary data are created by the HertsCam Network and are the outcomes of numerous decisions about how to present the network and its activities. They provide partial though nevertheless illuminating insights into the latter. It is important to recognise, therefore, that triangulation of the secondary data was not feasible for the purposes of the case study of the annual conference. For example, it was not possible in the time available to undertake an in-depth investigation to generate original data or to collect systematic data on the impact of the project from the viewpoint of colleagues and pupils of teachers participating in the project. Access to the evidence generated by the ITL's evaluation was limited because the more detailed evidence in teachers' portfolios are produced in local languages and hence more difficult to access (Frost 2011a: 32).

---

<sup>4</sup> Two meetings were held (on 7/12/15 and 15/3/16), between the researchers (Amanda Roberts and Philip Woods {both meetings}, and Leo Chivers {first meeting}), David Frost (former Director of Programmes, HertsCam, and senior lecturer, University of Cambridge, UK) (both meetings) and Val Hill (Director of Programmes, HertsCam, and Assistant Headteacher, Birchwood School, Hertfordshire, UK) (first meeting). A focus group took place at the University of Hertfordshire on 25th April 2016, involving the researchers (Amanda Roberts and Philip Woods), David Frost, Sarah Lightfoot (deputy team leader of the MEd programme) and Gisela Redondo-Sama (Marie Curie Postdoctoral Research Fellow, University of Cambridge).

## Practice

The *Teachers as leaders of change* project aimed to empower teachers in B&H to take a more proactive role in the process of educational change and was created by bringing together two projects: the APREME project (Advancing Participation & Representation of Ethnic Minority Groups in Education) and ITL initiative (Vranješević and Čelebičić 2013). It began in the academic year 2009-2010, with the goal of supporting teachers' capacities for leading change and enabling them to gain insight by reflecting on this engagement.

The aim of the *Teachers as leaders of change* project was to advance the participation and representation of minority ethnic groups in B&H (as well as Serbia, as noted above). The APREME project defined the topic (minority parents' participation in schools) (Vranješević and Čelebičić 2013) and ITL provided 'the key values, which underpinned the strategy (Frost 2008) and a framework for the project's methodology (Frost and Durrant 2003)' (Čelebičić and Vranješević 2014: 95). Funding for the B&H project came from the Open Society Institute (Frost 2011: 19). The ITL initiative guidelines and tools (Frost, 2011b) were adapted for the context of B&H (Čelebičić 2013). For example, in B&H tools were developed to help teachers to recognise the characteristics of leaders of change (Frost 2011a: 24).

Six schools in B&H (and five in Serbia) were selected to take part in the project<sup>5</sup>. The schools either had large populations of Roma children or were located in multicultural settings, and were committed to improving education by enhancing participation, partnerships and co-operation with families. In Bosnia, the work with the schools began with initial meetings in schools, aimed at informing school management and teachers about the project and establishing groups of teachers committed to working on development projects concerning parents' participation. The next step was to ask teachers to identify problems that they considered were important in relation to establishing partnerships with parents from different minority and marginalised groups. Twenty-eight teachers participated in B&H (24 in Serbia). There were six meetings in each school, including the initial meeting, which involved mentors for the teachers. In addition teachers and mentors were in touch through individual sessions. The mentors were highly experienced professionals involved in different ways in teachers' pre-service and in-service training. The role of the mentors was important in supporting teachers and helping them to become pro-active, rather than dependent on the mentors for direction, and in facilitating the sessions and meetings. Development ideas are the teacher's and the implementation and evaluation are done by teachers themselves through their teacher-led development projects and trying things out in practice, using the tools and methods of teacher leadership<sup>6</sup>. The teachers created 28 development projects in B&H (23 in Serbia). Examples included 'Developing active participation in reading lessons to improve children's reading' and 'Improving social skills for primary school students and strengthening unity in classrooms' (Frost 2011a: 26). The projects could be classified into five types:

- Informing parents about different aspects of school life
- Educating parents / Parents as educators
- Parents' participation in curricular activities
- Parents' participation in extra-curricular activities
- Parents as activists take the initiative to improve life in their local communities

As with ITL initiatives in other countries, a support group was established led by members of the international team and their partners or associates: in B&H the support group was called 'Supporting teachers to lead change' (Frost 2011a: 22-23).

---

<sup>5</sup> The source for the information in this paragraph is Vranješević and Čelebičić (2013: 6-11) unless stated otherwise.

<sup>6</sup> The kinds of support, tools and activities of ITL initiatives are explained in the section on 'Context'.

## **Participative professionalism**

The programme modelled participative professionalism through its participative character. Meetings were usually held after the school day.

The atmosphere was relaxed with teachers being encouraged to talk openly about the challenges they faced, the lessons learned and ideas for future work. Teachers did not hesitate to talk openly about problems they faced during their development projects....

Sessions were very participatory; the structure allowed for different suggestions and needs. During the sessions it became very clear that most of the teachers liked this approach. They were willing to participate...

(Čelebičić and Vranješević 2014: 100)

It was experienced as a participative way of being a professional teacher, as the quotes below from teachers in the B&H project illustrate.

I caught myself participating in discussions with all my heart, getting excited about the most ordinary talk between colleagues from our school and the colleagues from Hrasno. Exchanging ideas, listening to each other with respect, giving support to each other, one gets tremendous self-esteem...

(Teacher quoted in Bosnia and Herzegovina Final Report)

(Quoted in Frost 2011a: 24)

I learned that everything was easier through teamwork and that changes were definitely possible, although sometimes they seemed impossible. I learned that we should appreciate ourselves and our work more, because every change, no matter how small, is very important and big.

(Teacher B Final Report, July 2011, Bosnia and Herzegovina)

Quoted in Frost 2011a: 33)

In these responses can be seen the beginnings of the kind of professionalism that enacts distributed leadership. This practising and experiencing of participative professionalism gave rise in all of the ITL countries to the reframing of how teachers felt about teacher self-efficacy and how they understood leadership, coming to see it as a capability to change things that all teachers could exercise (Frost 2011a: 32-34). This transformation of perception is discussed further in the section on 'Deep Learning'.

## **Deep level collaboration**

The operation of the project and its supportive elements demonstrate deep level collaboration. The support group titled 'Supporting teachers to lead change', the regular meetings of teachers and the facilitation by mentors and critical friends (Čelebičić and Vranješević 2014: 100, Frost 2011a: 22-23, Vranješević and Čelebičić 2013: 6-11) help to give a sense of cohesion, identity and shared purpose.

There are signs that changes in habits of mind and practice, discussed in the section on 'Deep Learning' below, are beginning to create deep level collaboration in schools. The ITL's evaluation suggests that the projects in the participating countries, including B&H, contributed to changing the cultures in schools, enabling progress towards becoming professional learning communities where collaboration and teacher initiation of change is accepted as the norm (Frost 2011a: 37). This kind of development in schools, if it is able to continue, nurtures the organisational climate in which distributed leadership is able to grow and be sustained.

## **Equity**

Čelebičić (2013: 4) explains that during the academic year 2012-2013, inclusion was put at the centre of the programme in B&H with the title, 'Teachers as agents of change for education without

prejudice' and the aim of 'Enhancing the quality of educational processes, providing equal education for all children regardless of their ethnic background and belonging, and in accordance with their special educational needs'. The teachers' projects were focused mostly on teaching and learning in the classroom.

The focus of each teacher's project was closely related to the problems they were facing at school every day. The teachers were very clear that their projects had to result in improvements in practice that would have the most benefit for their students. The titles of some of the teachers' projects were:

- Developing partnerships with parents for the purpose of improving cooperation and communication
- Developing a strategy for increasing the number of students who do their homework independently
- Developing a strategy for improving students' working habits
- Developing a strategy for social integration of students through extracurricular activities
- Developing a strategy to promote cooperation through art and music activities with students
- Developing a strategy for the improvement of hygiene and the health habits of children with special educational needs
- Online psychological-pedagogical counselling for teachers in mainstream schools

(Čelebičić 2013: 4-5)

This focus on equity had a special importance:

Networking of teachers from different parts of B&H had a special purpose for us which was to create a network of ITL schools able to cooperate on different levels of activity, creating a network of teaching professionals who, through the exchange of experiences and support, would promote equal rights for all and the values of multicultural society.

(Čelebičić 2013: 6)

The impact on parents and students was reported as positive:

Teachers reported increased level of parents' participation and motivation to be involved in different aspects of school life. Parents were very glad to be informed about different opportunities for their involvement. They were motivated to participate and they attracted more parents to become involved. What is especially important is the fact that parents were involved not only in extracurricular activities, but they participated in curricular activities too which is rare in our schools. They were involved in teaching and that was genuine participation, rather than tokenism. Parents learned how to be effective allies to teachers in the best interests of children. Concerning children, they all had a chance to learn about other cultures and children from minority and marginalised groups experienced the visibility of their culture inclusion of their group perspective in school curriculum.

(Vranješević and Čelebičić 2013: 12)

Without more detailed data on the impacts, it is difficult to come to clear conclusions about the depth and degree of any outcomes reducing inequalities and marginalisation.

## **Deep learning**

Though the project was supportive, the aim was not to make teachers dependent on support. Rather, the opposite was intended (Čelebičić and Vranješević 2014: 100-101). Mentors supported teachers but had to make sure that the teachers developed their autonomy rather than look to the mentors to be the change agent. It led to teachers valuing of small changes, instead of being burdened by feeling need to change whole system. In this section, the initial difficulties that

teachers had in identifying problems to tackle are highlighted, an overview is given of the dimensions of professional learning being developed and the reframing taking place, and illustrative evidence set out of the changes in teachers and schools, concluding with a brief note on student learning.

### *Identifying problems to tackle through teacher leadership*

Identifying and defining a problem to tackle was challenging for teachers. The teachers express it in their own words below, and a researcher in one of the supporting agencies for the project explains how they sought to overcome this challenge<sup>7</sup>.

At the first session, when we were faced with a challenge to define one specific problem in the schools we work in, I was confused. I am a language teacher and usually I find it easy to articulate my thoughts, but still, I didn't know how to define the problem. That was the moment in which I realised that we, teachers, didn't have the strength to deal with the problems we face on daily basis.

(Nermina Husic, teacher, female, in Tuzla)

I have been thinking a lot about activities I could lead in my school; I didn't reach a final decision because there are many problems to choose from. The way students communicate, their success in school, the way they learn, there is a lot of room for improvements in those fields.

(Nerina Abazovic, teacher, female, in Mostar)

In December, when we started with the project, I didn't know what to work on. What I really wanted is to decorate this space to be suitable for children so we would all feel comfortable coming and spending time here.

(Razija Hamzabegovic, librarian, female, in Tuzla)

Often, teachers focus on issues and problems in the system itself, mostly seeing obstacles and rarely solutions to the problems. Therefore, when we asked them to define an issue they can influence, something one teacher can change, they had difficulties coming up with anything. As time passes, and as we continued to work with them, and as a result of their motivation, we managed to overcome these issues, as you can see in the results they achieved.

(Andrea Soldo, proMENTE, social research, female)

The researcher just quoted - from one of the supporting agencies for the project - drew attention to the commonalities between the problems and projects that the teachers chose to focus on<sup>8</sup>.

Though we had teachers from different schools, teaching different subjects, in the end we realised most of them focused on solving similar problems. Mostly, they focused on the potential children have, improving their creativity, their learning abilities and motivating them to do their homework. Also, they focused on co-operation and communication with parents, co-operation with their local communities, opening schools for positive influences from outside, and finally on improving co-operation on a school level. Even though the teachers have various school-level meetings, they really don't have many opportunities to gather and discuss problems they have and share what they think about these problems and other problems in their communities.

(Andrea Soldo, proMENTE, social research, female)

### *Dimensions of learning and reframing*

The succinct summary below of teachers' learning is about developing as members of a profession that sees itself as being made up of teacher leaders - Biesta's (2009) socialisation dimension of learning. It is also about Biesta's subjectification dimension - developing as an individual with some

---

<sup>7</sup> The quotes are from a film on the B&H project, entitled 'Teachers as Agents of Change for Education Without Prejudice' Project, carried out by proMENTE. The film was produced in 2016. The quotes in English are taken from the subtitles of the film.

<sup>8</sup> The quotes are from a film on the B&H project, entitled 'Teachers as Agents of Change for Education Without Prejudice' Project, carried out by proMENTE. The film was produced in 2016. The quotes in English are taken from the subtitles of the film.

independence of the communities into which the person is socialised - in that the project encourages teachers to think independently.

### **Impact on teachers**

At first, teachers found leadership challenging either because they thought they were not sufficiently competent or because they thought they needed to create major change in the educational system. Gradually they became more and more proactive. They learned about leadership by doing it; by taking small steps such as defining the problem and planning actions to create change, evaluating the results and planning next steps. With each step they became more confident and proactive. The idea of teacher leadership differs from other forms of professional support such as in-service teacher training for several reasons. First, this work is undertaken completely by teachers. The mentor is a facilitator who provides support, but the idea is the teacher's and the implementation and evaluation are done by teachers themselves. Second, it fosters teachers' autonomy and freedom to change and improve their practice; this is done by the teachers themselves through their development projects and 'experimentation'. Third, teacher leadership does not provide the content or prescribe what needs to be improved or changed. Instead it provides tools through which change can happen. Finally, teacher leadership is not exclusive. It does not require months of education and training, like some in-service training programmes. Every teacher can be a leader, as this comment by a teacher from Sarajevo [Serbia] illustrates:

*I learned that we should appreciate ourselves and our work more, because every change, no matter how small, is very important.*

(Čelebičić and Vranješević 2014: 103)

The professional learning taking place involves reframing of previous ideas, feelings and assumptions<sup>9</sup>. There is affective reframing, which is about alterations in the usual or 'taken-for-granted' set of feelings in relation to a practice or context - changing attitudes and feelings towards teaching as a profession, for example, of which there are examples below. And there is cognitive reframing, which refers to alterations in the usual or 'taken-for-granted' ideas concerning a practice or context - including learning how to work differently as teachers as many of the participants in the ITL initiative did.

Examples of reframing and professional learning, including Biesta's (2009) qualification dimension of learning (the knowledge, skills, understanding and judgement that enable a person to undertake a practice), are given in the next sub-section.

### *Illustrative evidence of changes in teachers and schools*

Reports from each of the ITL countries found that the projects enhanced teachers' self-efficacy and self-confidence (Frost 2011a: 32). The evaluation of the ITL initiative highlighted the following:

What helped them most was the teacher leadership itself, e.g. small steps from the definition of the problem and planning actions to create change, to the evaluation of achieved results and planning new steps. They were *learning by doing* which was very valuable for them and after each step they were becoming more self confident and proactive.  
(Vranješević and Čelebičić 2013: 11)

---

<sup>9</sup> Framing and reframing are discussed by, *inter alia*, Berkovich and Eyal (2015, submitted), Cornelissen and Werner (2014) and van Hulst and Yanow (2016).

The positive reframing that took place during the project is illustrated by the words of these teachers<sup>10</sup>:

I realised I am capable of making changes, I realised I am allowed to step out of the strict boundaries set by the government. Instead of waiting to be told to do something, waiting for specific policies that will let me do something, I found out I can work and implement ideas on my own.

(Nermina Husic, teacher, female, in Tuzla)

I believe teachers can accomplish a lot by applying their creativity, and being dedicated to their work. Using only paper, or plastic bottles we were about to create new things in some of our workshops. We can recycle existing useless materials into new and useful objects, sell this and gain some money we can invest in our school.

(Vanessa Malkic, social worker, female, in Tuzla)

I don't think lots of money or huge changes in the system itself are necessary to accomplish something on the ground level. We can start making changes, but first we have to work on our attitudes, we must realise how much potential we have. Only then, instead of setting our goals too high, on the level of the whole education system, we can reflect on our immediate surroundings and start making changes and solving problems we face on a daily basis. That is how we started here in our school, realising what a big impact we can have only relying on our creativity and strength.

(Bekir Saletovic, teacher, male, in Tuzla)

This teacher explained what the participation meant:

I caught myself participating in discussions with all my heart, getting excited about the most ordinary talk between colleagues from our school and the colleagues from Hrasno. Exchanging ideas, listening to each other with respect, giving support to each other, one gets tremendous self-esteem, and that is all I need. So I managed to go beyond the limits of my previous work, I set my goals on a higher level. Having seen the results of what I initiated with my idea in cooperation with my colleagues, I am encouraged to make new ways to continue something that improves the quality of work with children, which encourages me personally, thereby making me happier.

(Teacher quoted in Bosnia and Herzegovina Final Report)

(Quoted in Frost 2011a: 24)

As noted in the discussion on 'Deep Level Collaboration', the ITL's evaluation suggests that the projects in B&H and other participating countries helped to change the cultures in schools and move in the direction of becoming professional learning communities where collaboration and teacher initiation of change is accepted as the norm (Frost 2011a: 37).

... evidence from the ITL project indicates that teacher leadership itself plays a major part in helping to create a professional learning community. When teachers take the initiative and lead development projects seen to be beneficial not only to students' learning, but also beneficial in the way they draw colleagues into collaboration and self-evaluation, school principals are able to see significant shifts in the mindset and norms of practice amongst the school staff.

Frost (2011a: 43)

Teachers described the impact on their schools in B&H (Čelebičić 2013: p6):

- improvement of teamwork and cooperation between home-room and subject
- enhancing teachers' motivation
- better use of students' potential and interests

---

<sup>10</sup> The quotes are from a film on the B&H project, entitled 'Teachers as Agents of Change for Education Without Prejudice' Project, carried out by proMENTE. The film was produced in 2016. The quotes in English are taken from the subtitles of the film.

- strengthening teachers' competencies through co-operation and exchange of experiences

The account by Čelebičić (2013: 5-6) of the B&H teacher leadership programme highlights both Biesta's (2009) qualification dimension of learning (the knowledge, skills, understanding and judgement that enable a person to undertake a practice), as well the subjectification dimension:

During the whole programme the emphasis was on teachers' leadership skills and how to exercise these in taking the initiative and leading projects that will bring about change. Teachers developed awareness of their own capacity for leadership and they became more confident about leading change.

The teachers learnt how to initiate change and do development work as well as to value their own ideas. In feedback on their professional learning, teachers mentioned:

- finding the ways to improve the teaching process
- applying new techniques and methods
- documenting the working process
- applying leadership ideas
- setting higher goals in work
- getting out of routine
- encouraging to more creativity
- better cooperation with parents

### *Student learning*

With regard to students' learning, the evaluation of the projects in the ITL countries concludes that direct evidence of improvements in students' learning is difficult to access (Frost 2011a: 36):

...but members of the international ITL project team are confident that teachers' development projects have made very significant contributions to such improvement. Evidence of impact on students' attainment and on their capacity for learning is to be found in teacher's own portfolios and, although teachers have used different approaches to collecting such evidence, reports from project partners are clear that the development work led by teachers has had a major impact on the quality and extent of students' learning, as well as their capacity to learn in the future.

One of the teachers in the B&H project reported that:

Better results are also noticed at the end of the year, which was one of my goals too. Impact on me relates to my view of planning lessons, and my future work, as well as the work of possibly interested colleagues. I will try to make my lessons as diverse as possible, and connect with as many colleagues as possible with the purpose of joining ideas.

(Primary school teacher quoted in Final Report, July 2011, Bosnia and Herzegovina)

(Quoted in Frost 2011a: 36)

### **Facilitating factors**

Space being made available and the opportunity to gain the appropriate support are positive factors important generally for the collaborative, non-positional teacher leadership advanced by the ITL initiative. Making a general observation about the progress of such teacher leadership, thanks are given to 'the many headteachers, school principals and government officials around the world who *have made the space* for shared leadership to flourish and have *provided support and encouragement* along the way' (Frost 2014: iii). There are specific actions that senior leaders in schools can take, such as making additional time available or helping to facilitate opportunities for

collaboration. The more fundamental task, however, is concerned ‘with culture building or creating the conditions in which teacher leadership can flourish’ (Frost 2011: a).

In the context of B&H, the support and facilitation provided by the B&H project is a vital component in enabling teachers to design and carry forward the development projects, and to develop their sense of agency and autonomy (Vranješević and Čelebičić 2013: 13). The explication of a well-grounded theory of teacher leadership and developmental pedagogy, and the framework of principles, guides, tools and modes of support grounded in wide experience, that the ITL initiative is able to provide is an enormously important factor in making projects in member countries feasible and successful. This includes the framework of group and school meetings reported above and the support of mentors and the ‘critical friendship’ provided by the more experienced ITL initiative team members from the HertsCam team, largely through e-mail contact (Frost 2011a: 15).

The ITL approach is distilled in a set of principles that stand behind this support and are set out in Table 1. These principles and the ITL approach benefited from the established work of the HertsCam Network so that the participants in the B&H project were building on and adapting a substantial body of experience, ideas, practice and materials.

<p><b>Principle 1: A partnership between schools and external agencies</b> Such agencies might include university departments of education, government agencies and non-governmental organisations (NGOs).</p> <p><b>Principle 2: Mutual support through membership of a group and a network</b> Support groups can be established within single schools or within clusters of schools and these can be linked through networks.</p> <p><b>Principle 3: Collaboration with school principals</b> Dialogue with school principals can help to build support for teacher leadership</p> <p><b>Principle 4: Opportunities for open discussion</b> Teachers need to be enabled to think critically about values, practice and innovation.</p> <p><b>Principle 5: A project-based methodology</b> Teacher leadership is enacted through the initiation and leadership of development projects.</p> <p><b>Principle 6: Enabling teachers to identify personal development priorities</b> This releases passion, concern and moral purpose.</p> <p><b>Principle 7: Tools to scaffold personal reflection, planning and action</b> Well-designed tools scaffold, exemplify and illustrate teacher leadership.</p> <p><b>Principle 8: Facilitating access to relevant literature</b> This enhances the knowledge arising from teachers’ development work.</p> <p><b>Principle 9: The provision of guidance on leadership strategies</b> Expert guidance and mutual exploration strengthens leadership capacity.</p> <p><b>Principle 10: The provision of guidance on the collection and use of evidence</b> Systematic enquiry is a democratic and collegial leadership strategy.</p> <p><b>Principle 11: Mobilisation of organisational support and orchestration</b> School principals can support teachers’ development work and ensure coherence in the school.</p> <p><b>Principle 12: The provision of a framework to help teachers document their work</b> A structured portfolio enables teachers to plan, record and reflect upon their development work and can be used as evidence for certification and the like.</p> <p><b>Principle 13: The provision of opportunities for networking beyond the school</b> Teachers derive mutual support and inspiration when they network with other teachers. Moral purpose is cultivated throughout the system.</p> <p><b>Principle 14: Recognition through certification</b> Teachers’ leadership of innovation can be recognised through certification provided by universities or partners of other respected organisations.</p> <p><b>Principle 15: Professional knowledge arises from accounts of teacher leadership</b> Teachers can build professional knowledge through collaborative and critical discussion and exchange of ideas.</p>
--

**Table 1: Principles for supporting teacher leadership (Frost 2011b: 12-13)**

Across the ITL countries, the most useful tools (used in sessions and available online) were found to be (Frost 2011a: 24):

- formats and structures which provided scaffolds for group work and discussion
- illustrative examples of key documents such as action plans
- instruments to help participants analyse the culture of their school
- vignettes of teachers' development projects to illustrate the nature of teacher leadership
- guidance sheets to help participants prepare and compile their portfolios
- guidance sheets to help participants prepare to share accounts of their projects through networking.

The ending of the support and facilitation at the end of the B&H project was a concern in terms of sustainability (discussed under 'Barriers' below). However, following discussions with the teachers who participated in the project, networking was identified as an important next step. National network events were organised for all schools that participated in the project, as well as regional network events where teachers from B&H and Serbia got together and exchange their experiences.

For some teachers, because of the war and post-war isolation, that was the first time they had the opportunity to meet their colleagues from the other country, and discuss some professional issues. Those network events were great starting points for building allies, since this is a crucial element of the teacher leadership process: teachers need support from other colleagues and they need to explore different ways of how to make allies within their group of colleagues, nationally and regionally.

(Vranješević and Čelebičić 2013: 13)

## **Barriers**

As noted under 'Context', B&H and the ITL countries face particular and very testing challenges. These include relatively poor economies and high unemployment, divisions amongst the peoples of B&H, the centralised nature of the educational system reducing teachers to implementers of educational policies created by others, teachers' self-identity as a passive profession, an absence amongst teachers of the attitudes, values and capabilities to act as change-agents, and the fact that many teachers share dominant prejudices within society (Čelebičić 2013, Vranješević and Čelebičić 2013).

Sustainability after the project was a key challenge:

The main challenge we faced after the project was how to keep up with good practice. Teachers were highly motivated by their development work. They were very engaged in doing their development projects, but the question of sustainability of their motivation still remains. Do they need further mentoring and support? How can we make the core group (the group of teachers who participated in this project) sustainable? How can we attract more teachers from the school? After 'beginner's enthusiasm', are they going to go back to previous mode of professional work and cooperation? These questions were discussed with teachers. Teachers said they would like to have support in the future although this does not have to be regular. They found it important to have a "resource person" to whom they could talk to if needed. They were very proud of what they achieved and they would like to share that. We talked about modes of promotion of projects they created and some teachers mentioned so called "open classes" (classes that are open for all teachers who would like to participate) and public discussions on the level of town or even region through which they could share what they have learned during this process.

(Vranješević and Čelebičić 2013: 13)

## Conclusions

Building on and adapting the experience, ideas, practice and materials of the HertsCam work on collaborative teacher leadership, the ITL initiative in B&H effectively facilitated and supported development of participant teachers as active, participative professionals engaging in collaborative change to improve learning. There is evidence of professional learning, including reframing teachers' ideas and feelings in relation to teaching as an active profession.

Equity and inclusion were put at the centre of the B&H project. Working to overcome barriers and prejudices, reducing inequalities and helping to advance equal rights and a more cohesive society in which learning is supported were crucial aims informing the project. Without more detailed data on the impacts, it is difficult to come to clear conclusions about the degree to which the outcomes achieved these aims.

The beginnings of developments which embed change in the culture of schools appeared to result from the project. These suggest small movements in the direction of a situation where collaboration and teacher initiation of change become accepted as the norm and an organisational climate is created in which distributed leadership is able to grow and be sustained. The progress made is especially noteworthy given the context of the testing challenges that B&H and its education system face. It is not possible to assess from the data and information we have, how firmly established and sustainable are the progressive changes and small movements achieved by the project.

Nevertheless, for many of the participants, there were reported transformations in how they felt towards and experienced teacher-led change. This is illustrated well by one of the teachers quoted above who commented,

I caught myself participating in discussions with all my heart, getting excited about the most ordinary talk between colleagues from our school and the colleagues from Hrasno. Exchanging ideas, listening to each other with respect, giving support to each other, one gets tremendous self-esteem...

(Teacher quoted in Bosnia and Herzegovina Final Report)

(Quoted in Frost 2011a: 24)

## References

- Berkovich, I. and Eyal, O. (2015) 'Educational Leaders and Emotions: An International Review of Empirical Evidence 1992–2012', *Review of Educational Research*, 85: 1: 129-167.
- Berkovich, I. and Eyal, O. (submitted) 'Emotional Reframing as a Mediator of the Relationships between Transformational Leadership and Followers' Autonomous Motivation and Affective Organizational Commitment' (currently submitted for publication).
- Biesta, G. (2009) Good education in an age of measurement: on the need to reconnect with the question of purpose in education, *Educational Assessment, Evaluation and Accountability*, 21(1): 33-46.
- Čelebičić, I. (2013) Supporting teachers to lead change in Bosnia and Herzegovina, HertsCam [www.hertscam.org.uk/publications](http://www.hertscam.org.uk/publications).
- Čelebičić, I. and Vranješević, J. (2014) Improving the participation of ethnic minority families in schools through teacher leadership, in D. Frost (ed) *Transforming Education Through Teacher Leadership*, Cambridge: Leadership for Learning, The Cambridge Network, University of Cambridge Faculty of Education.
- Cornelissen, J. P. and Werner, M. D. (2014) Putting Framing in Perspective: A Review of Framing and Frame Analysis across the Management and Organizational Literature, *The Academy of Management Annals*, 8(1): 181-235.
- Denis, J-L. and Lehoux, P. (2009) Collaborative Research: Renewing Action and Governing Science, in D. A. Buchanan & A. Bryman (eds) *Organizational Research Methods*, London: Sage.
- Frost, D. (2011a) Supporting teacher leadership in 15 countries: International Teacher Leadership project, Phase 1 - A Report, Cambridge: University of Cambridge Faculty of Education.
- Frost, D. (2011b) The International Teacher Leadership Project, *inFORM 12*, Cambridge: Leadership for Learning, The Cambridge Network, University of Cambridge Faculty of Education.
- Frost, D. (ed) (2014) *Transforming Education Through Teacher Leadership*, Cambridge: Leadership for Learning, The Cambridge Network, University of Cambridge Faculty of Education.
- Thomas, G. (2011) A Typology for the Case Study in Social Science Following a review of Definition, Discourse, and Structure, *Qualitative Inquiry*, 17(6): 511–521.
- van Hulst, M. and Yanow, D. (2016) From Policy “Frames” to “Framing”: Theorizing a More Dynamic, Political Approach, *American Review of Public Administration*, 46(1) 92–112.
- Vranješević J. and Čelebičić, I. (2013) 'Teacher leadership: a concept that travels across cultural and national boundaries', a paper presented within the symposium 'Teacher voice, self-efficacy and leadership: an international perspective' at ECER 3013, Istanbul 10th-14th September 2013.
- Zuber-Skerritt, O. (2011) *Action Leadership: Towards a participatory paradigm*, Dordrecht: Springer.

## Appendix 1: An Introduction to the HertsCam Network

The HertsCam Network<sup>11</sup> is a network of teachers and schools which supports teachers in leading innovation in their own schools and in building knowledge about teaching and learning across schools. Support at the network and school levels (through school-based support groups, for example) enables teachers to lead collaborative development projects that improve the quality of teaching and learning. It has resulted in over 700 teachers in 40 schools developing the capacity to lead school improvement through school-based enquiries.

The conceptualisation of teacher leadership underpinning its work recognises the potential of all teachers to exercise leadership as part of their role as a teacher. The network aims to enable teachers, and others contributing to education in schools, to develop an identity as educators in which they confidently see themselves as agents of change - bringing about innovation, creating professional knowledge, exercising leadership and undertaking this agency as a member of a collaborative community. In this way, it is committed to developing an identity as educators in which the practice of inclusive distributed leadership is a defining feature.

The network serves the county of Hertfordshire, though there are some participants in the network from neighbouring counties. It was initiated in 1998 when Hertfordshire County Council proposed a partnership with the University of Cambridge to support schools in the region. The network has evolved to become an independent organisation, and since 2013 has been a charitable organisation governed by directors, trustees and an advisory steering committee representing network participants. Formal links with the University of Cambridge were drawn to a close and a new academic partner sought (which led to the current partnership with the University of Hertfordshire).

Its core activities are

- **Teacher Led Development Work (TLDW) programme.** This supports teacher leadership in primary, secondary and special schools by enabling teachers and other educational practitioners to plan and lead projects designed to develop the quality and effectiveness of aspects of teaching and learning in their own schools. It involves in any one year approximately 100 teachers and 100 projects, with 25 tutors and 14 school-based groups. Successful completion leads to an award of the HertsCam Certificate in Teacher Leadership, which can be used to achieve credit within other academic programmes.
- **MEd in Leading Teaching and Learning.** This is run and taught entirely by teachers in the network. It is as a 2-year, part-time programme which enables teachers to plan and lead a development project that makes a difference to the quality of teaching and learning in their school or other setting and to base this project in a critical appreciation of relevant literature, concepts and domains of knowledge. Average recruitment is 20 per year, with 215 teachers graduating between 1999 and 2013. In 2015, the University of Hertfordshire re-validated the MEd and since then has awarded the master degrees.
- **Network events.** There is a programme of six per year, hosted by schools. Typically between 50 and 150 teachers and other practitioners take part in poster displays and workshop sessions.
- **Annual Conference.** This is part of the yearly networking cycle and is its highpoint.

---

<sup>11</sup> The HertsCam website is at <http://www.hertscam.org.uk>