Stories of tragedy, trust and transformation? A case study of education-centered community development in post-earthquake Haiti

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A B S T R A C T

Haiti's catastrophic earthquake of 2010 left approximately 200,000 people dead, 1.5 million homeless and most government buildings destroyed. Even pre-disaster, Haiti's outcomes on the UN Human Development Index were among the lowest in the world, and since the quake the country has fallen into further decline. Today, most Haitians continue to lack basic services, struggle with daily survival, and confront daunting challenges in their change efforts. Many have called for reconstruction of society, and argue that local civil society organizations should lead the way in these efforts by valuing local knowledge, and building on small-scale community successes. This research investigates one community's change efforts toward a new form of community development and potential pathway to transformation in Haiti. We aim to apply learning from this case to inform development practice and policy in Haiti and similar contexts.

The case study community, Bellevue-La-Montagne, is applying an education-centered community development approach which has placed construction of a new school and education at the heart of collaborative rebuilding efforts by local residents and organizations, primarily Haiti Partners. Education and participatory practices are embedded in all aspects of the community development, including: social entrepreneurship, healthcare, environmental stewardship, community agriculture, planning and construction. These efforts involve participation of people and organizations (local and international) in dialogical negotiations that aim to share power and build capabilities of local people, and to create, change, or preserve structures and institutions consistent with the interests of local people. Participatory and phronesis research methodologies reveal nuanced understandings of the community development and its meaning for local people. In spite of substantial progress in development projects, findings reveal tension points that potentially threaten long-term sustainability, such as: the highly fragile nature of state-society relations, lack of a sense of agency of local people despite strong levels of participation, and differences between outcomes for the community as a whole and individual households.

Moving from revealed *community* change in this case to a broader and deeper *social* transformation will require key 'levers of transformation', identified in this case as: 1) education; 2) place identity, networks, and research; 3) social entrepreneurship and social innovation; and 4) state-society trust and accountability. These levers can be activated through participatory and education-centered community development strategies that provide important roles for local people and civil society, and a nuanced role for international organizations which is sensitive to power dynamics. Such development strategies would give 'voice' to communities in their struggles for change. Strengthening, networking and scaling community level innovation that shows promise of transformation, such as the case of Bellevue-La-Montagne, would contribute to Haiti's attempts to forge a new narrative, and to evolving international development planning policy and practice.

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1. Introduction

I'm not completely comfortable [with my life], because I'm limited. If I had continued in school, I could have a different future . . . I am my father's oldest daughter[1]; he had dreams for me, but things went wrong; I should have gone further in school to be able to get a job with a regular salary. Currently, I have no regular income. By now, I would have almost completed my education. I had to quit school [at age 19], when I was supposed to go into 7th grade.

Lisa (female, 25 years old), resident of Bellevue-La-Montagne, 2013[2]

Haiti has never had a tradition of providing services to the population (Singh & Barton-Dock (2015)).

The majority of children in Haiti do not attend school regularly. Only twelve percent of primary schools are public, and most of the rest rely on parent-paid tuition, which is difficult for most families to sustain. Basic services such as clean water, electricity, and healthcare are scarce or nonexistent in most communities, and malnutrition and hunger are on the rise. There are an estimated 200,000 formal jobs in a country of more than ten million people. Stories such as Lisa's are not unusual. She lives in a country where education is not a right, nor is access to basic human services. In short, Haiti is a country where there has never been a true social contract in which the state listens to or works with civil society (Tippenhauer, 2010; Singh & Barton-Dock, 2015).

Current conditions in Haiti are an outcome of the country's historical development, which has produced weak formal governance and economic structures, high levels of inequality, and limited social safety nets. The Haitian state was characterized as 'predatory', 'fragile' or 'failed' even before the catastrophic earthquake of January 12, 2010. There was hope that the disaster would open a window of opportunity for transformation (Pierre-Louis, 2011; Pierre-Louis, 2012). However, outcomes in Haiti have deteriorated since then. Haiti's ranking on the UNDP Human Development Index fell by three places in 2014 to 163 out of 188 countries and territories – by far the lowest of any country in the Americas. Adjusted for inequality of education and income within the country, Haiti ranks even lower (UNDP, 2015).

Foreign assistance with post-earthquake recovery has produced mixed results. Six years after the disaster, more than 60,000 people still lived in tent camps. While there are pockets of somewhat successful post-earthquake development (see Engle-Warnick, Bornstein, & Lizarralde, 2013; Engle, Bornstein & Lizarralde, 2016), most attempts of scalable recovery and rebuilding efforts have failed. The political effects of foreign interventions have undermined the sovereignty of the Haitian Government, which some claim, has become a 'virtual trusteeship' of 'the international community' (Fatton, 2014, 2016).

Given the numerous challenges and barriers to development, exploring instances where progress has occurred provides a possible roadmap for other endeavours. In this paper, I investigate the experience of an education-centered approach to community development in Bellevue-La-Montagne, an area where post-earthquake recovery initiatives have had some success. I explore this community development from various perspectives, in order to address the questions: What does this case contribute to learning about possibilities for community change and pathways to transformation in Haiti? And relatedly: Is Bellevue-La-Montagne an example of 'transformative community development' – that is, local participatory development that is having an impact on social change?

The article is set out in the following sections: 1.) Haiti context, conceptual framework and methodological approach; 2.) the community case study including background and vision of the lead organization, Haiti Partners; 3.) a 'behind the scenes' view of the community development underway based on perspectives and lived experiences of local residents, and a discussion of the 'tension points' revealed through analyzing various perspectives; 4.) identification of existing and potential leverage points for systems transformation for which this case provides a microcosm and is instructive to practice and policy across Haiti. I conclude by returning to the question of whether community development for social transformation is evident in this case.

1.1. Haiti context and conceptual framework

A central argument of this article is that much-needed change to Haiti's development trajectory can be furthered by learning from and scaling local community level experience with participatory development that shows promise of transformation, such as the case of Bellevue-La-Montagne presented here. Three points provide important context: 1) historical patterns of oppression and development have resulted in entrenched structural inequalities in Haiti; 2) since the role of government has been undermined by foreign interventions and internal politics, NGOs – large and small, local and international – have come to play a dominant role in the development landscape, with associated drawbacks and opportunities; and 3) the community level is a highly promising site of transformation when local people have the agency – through participatory development – to act, particularly in the areas of education, social entrepreneurship, and women's empowerment. In order to understand the context for local community development in Haiti and its potential pathways to transformation, it is important to begin with the broader backdrop of development challenges.

1.1.1. Dilemmas of development in Haiti

Historical patterns of slavery, oppression and isolation intertwined with deeply embedded structural inequalities and frequent disasters – most notably the catastrophic earthquake of 2010, present enormous challenges to changing the development trajectory of Haiti (Farmer, 2011; Schuller, & Morales, 2012; Wilentz, 2013). But it would not be the first time that Haitians overcame seemingly insurmountable barriers. The broader story that has contributed to shaping present-day Haiti began with an unprecedented historical success of the first, and still only, successful slave revolution, which led to the independence of the country in 1804. That feat, which was unfathomable at the time, came about during colonialism and a globalized slave trade, and led to other countries isolating Haiti and failing initially to recognize its independence (Girard, 2010). Haiti would go on to pay a massive 'debt of independence' to France until 1946, and various US interventions throughout history – not least an occupation from 1915-1934, and the support of brutal dictators during the Cold War – contributed to Haiti's inability to recover and its external focus. Export trade and international relationships were more important to government than inward efforts to build a solid society and political culture (Dubois, 2012). Haiti's central government has been oppressive, brutal, and predatory at worst, and at best, in short periods of relative stability, it has remained dysfunctional and corrupt (Heine and Thompson, 2011). The never-ending transition to a stable democracy began after the exile of dictator Jean-Claude Duvalier in 1986 with the establishment of

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[1] The father has had 20 additional children since Lisa.
[2] Research participants' names have been changed throughout in order to protect their privacy. All participant quotations in the article indicate a first name (pseudonym), gender, and age in 2013, which is the year of all quotations. All participants were residents of Bellevue-La-Montagne.

the Haitian Constitution of 1987, which has yet to be implemented (Deshommes, 2006, 2011, 2012). Foreign interventions since that time and adoption of neoliberalism in political, economic and agricultural spheres, have contributed to further instability, food insecurity, and obscene inequality (Fatton, 2014, 2016; Deshommes, 2006). In terms of economic development, strategies to create jobs through export processing zones (EPZs) for assembly industries have been a 'manifest failure' intended to exploit Haiti's 'ultracheap labour' (Fatton, 2014: 77). This approach has contributed to environmental degradation, reduction of land needed for agriculture, increasing numbers of people living in miserable conditions in vast urban informal settlements — and with jobs that, for the most part, fail to pay workers a living wage. Foreign donors bypassed the corrupt state and contributed directly to nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) in the following decades, and it is estimated that more than 10,000 NGOs now operate in Haiti (Schuller, 2012; Fatton, 2014).[3] These factors along with internal political conflict have contributed to the current situation where, in spite of massive contributions, international aid has failed to bring about better living conditions or institutions in Haiti, which remains in a 'conflict-poverty trap' even in the midst of high levels of social resilience (World Bank, 2006). Good paradigms for what could work to bring about lasting, systemic change have not yet emerged on a substantial scale (Heine and Thompson, 2011; Schuller, 2012; Tippenhauer, 2010). Continuing structural inequalities in the country are manifest in low literacy rates and an abysmal education system, massive poverty and deprivation, and cultural norms that disempower the majority of people and particularly women.

Ordinary people — the vast majority very poor — have limited access to the most basic services. If even prior to the earthquake Haiti was a human emergency, today it is a catastrophe. In spite of what seemed to be historic goodwill on the parts of international agencies and governments, there is little evidence today of good, scalable reconstruction projects with the potential to create systemic change. In the aftermath of the earthquake, foreign assistance patterns reinforced state incapacity by contributing only one percent ($25 million) of a total of $2.43 billion to the Government of Haiti. In fact, approximately 99 percent of post-earthquake relief aid went to non-Haitian actors (Fatton, 2016; United Nations, 2011). Robert Fatton Jr. (2014 and 2016) argues, Haiti has further lost sovereignty and been reduced to a 'virtual trusteeship' of the international community, and is now relegated to the 'outer periphery' of the world economic system. NGOs attempt to fill craters of need here and there, but there is little coordination, accountability, transparence, or consistency, and the performance and results of the thousands of NGOs vary enormously (Farmer, 2011; Pierre-Louis, 2011; Schuller, 2012; Schuller et al., 2012 Schuller and Morales, 2012).

While NGO accountability is problematic and performance is highly hetereogenous, NGOs represent a significant set of players in the development landscape of Haiti, as they do in many other countries of the Global South. A debate in the development literature revolves around the role of NGOs vis-à-vis the state in matters of community and international development. In recent decades, and arguably largely in response to the diminishing role of the state in social spheres, the sector of NGOs has grown significantly. In Global South settings, official aid has been diverted to (mainly international) NGOs with expectations of favourable development outcomes, particularly that activities of NGOs would help to mitigate negative effects of neoliberal macroeconomic policies on vulnerable people, and that a growing NGO sector would contribute to democratization through strengthening and pluralizing civil society (Fowler, 1991).[4] NGOs and civil society are murky and contested terms, and are not understood the same way between cultures or within any one culture. Here, NGOs refer to non-state not-for-profit organizations designed to serve collective aims, and include what are known variously as local civil society organizations (CSOs), community-based organizations (CBOs), grassroots organizations (GROs), as well as international NGOs (nongovernmental organizations). The size, scope, aims, and funding of this 'third sector' vary substantially.

Even given this diversity there is considerable debate over the role of NGOs in promoting democracy. Mercer (2002) calls into question the commonly held ideal of civil society and NGOs as inherently 'good' for democratic development. Mercer's critical review of the literature points to how some argue that NGOs can strengthen state and civil society, and others argue that strengthening NGOs undermines development of democracies. Gurstein and Angeles (2007) define civil societies in relation to their contribution to democratic planning and governance. Their definition is normative: 'dense networks of organizations and institutions that mediate between states and citizens, while challenging and transforming hegemonic state policies and market practices' (p. 5). Douglass and Friedmann (1998) lay out a set of debates and healthy criticism of notions of civil society and its value for planning theory and practice in an age of globalization that coincides with a new awakening to citizen rights. They point to tensions between the local and the global (or 'agency' and 'structure') addressed by civil society as revolving around three interconnected struggles: *the right to human flourishing*, *the right to voice*, and *the right to difference*. (I return to the first two, which are most related to the issues addressed in this case, in the next section.)

Local communities in the Global South, often supported by local and/or international NGOs, have provided sites of transformation in reducing poverty, improving livelihoods and creating social businesses, and strengthening community and environmental development projects (examples in Bornstein, 2003; Bornstein, 2006; Carley, Jenkins, & Smith, 2001; Devas, 2004; Friedmann, 1992; Mitlin, 2004; Mitlin & Satterthwaite, 2004; Perlman & O'Meara Sheehan, 2007; Yunus with Weber, 2007).

Recently, concern and criticism have grown concerning the transparency and legitimacy of NGOs and their contribution to international development outcomes, particularly in Haiti where most NGOs are not known to the state and have no accountability to Haitian actors. The main debate revolves around the fact that, on the one hand, the state is dysfunctional and corrupt in the best of times and Haitians cannot rely on the state to provide basic services, and on the other hand, NGOs who undertake development work and service provision are not accountable to the state and do not coordinate activities with each other, which results in huge inefficiencies. Most telling perhaps is that the plethora of NGOs in Haiti in recent decades does not appear to have contributed to development outcomes on a broad scale (Schuller, 2012; Deshommes, 2006). However, given that it will take many years to construct a legitimate, effective state in Haiti (let alone a

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[3] While actual numbers are unknown, it is estimated that perhaps 10,000 NGOs work in Haiti, which would give it the highest number per capita of any country in the world — the reason that Haiti is referred to as 'the Republic of NGOs'.

[4] A full discussion of the term *civil society* is outside the scope of this article. Our working definition is the following. *Civil society* refers to 'that part of social, as distinct from corporate, life that lies beyond the immediate control of the state. It is the society of households, family networks, civic and religious organizations and communities that are bound to each other by shared histories, collective memories and culturally specific forms of reciprocity' (Friedmann, 2011: 140). There is extensive literature on civil society constructions; my own understandings draw particularly on works by Abu-Lughod (1998); Douglass & Friedmann (1998); Friedmann (1992), (2011); Mercer (2002); and Storper (1996).

social contract), NGOs likely are needed, but they should be held accountable. Effective NGOs would not only build capacity and invest in Haiti and its people for the long term, but also would work to improve civil society and community relationships with the state, providing good practices that could be emulated and scaled. A question that arises is: How can the state be strengthened in conjunction with the consolidation of NGOs in Haiti, while improving living conditions for the people of Haiti and possibilities for transformation at community level? I turn now to a discussion of the community level and its potential as a site of transformation to the development paradigm operating in Haiti.

1.1.2. A conceptual framework for examining the community level as site of transformation

The context of the current situation in Haiti is that long before the earthquake of 2010, people's rights and access to decent living conditions were severely restrained, and so it is undesirable to 'reconstruct' what *was.* Rather, there is an opportunity to construct infrastructure – physical, political and societal – anew, which is what Fritz Deshommes refers to as a 're-foundation' of Haiti (Deshommes, 2012). Former Prime Minister Michèle Pierre-Louis (2012) called for *deconstruction* of the current paradigm – referring to the basis of production, education, access to employment, human rights, social systems, technology, infrastructure – and *reconstruction* of society. She argues that local civil society organizations must better organize movements to bring about change. She further argues to 'build on small successes by valuing local knowledge'. Likewise, Eric Nee (2016) argues that 'to create effective and long-lasting social change, organizations and the programs they create must in one way or another become embedded in the local community.'

I argue in three parts an approach to translating such local successes that value local voices and knowledge to contributing to transformative systemic change, which would prioritize: 1) addressing local challenges through a structure and agency lens; 2) developing locally-based solutions to education, entrepreneurship, and women's economic empowerment; and 3) learning from and connecting innovative community development approaches, in order to build transformative resilience.

First, local level challenges of deprivation and disempowerment can be better understood through critical analysis of structure and agency, power dynamics, and certain rights. An emphasis on both agency (or actor) and structural levels of analysis are core to Freirian critical consciousness and also to phronetic social science espoused by Bent Flyvbjerg (2001). Our notion of 'structure' draws from Anthony Giddens (1979) as institutions that frame social interactions, including the 'macro' governance, economic and social systems as well as cultural norms and rules of behaviour. 'Agency' refers to self-help for 'citizen driven change' (Sheikheldin & Devlin, 2015), self-efficacy (Brown, 1997), or what the Ashoka organization refers to as 'everyone a changemaker', in which each person feels empowered and responsible to take action that would contribute to positive social change (Drayton, 2006). Amartya Sen's defining of 'development as freedom' posits that true development enables people to lead the lives they value by eliminating constraints to freedom, such as lack of basic services, systemic inequalities, limited economic opportunity and poverty (Sen, 1999). Local level participatory approaches that incorporate social learning are identified as providing appropriate means for creating dialogue that could critically analyze and address relationships of power to bring about change (Friedmann, 1997; Gurstein & Angeles, 2007). Freirian critical praxis, Gramscian hegemony, and Habermasian communicative action theories provide a means for analyzing power imbalances. Flyvbjergian phronesis analyses that emphasize practical wisdom and gaining expertise over time through learning from multiple cases, are well suited to addressing issues of power, not only in community development practice and research, but as Chris Brown (2013) argues, also in evidence-based policy development.

Viewing power dynamics through the lens of certain rights has merits. The 'right to voice' and 'right to human flourishing' are two of the civil society struggles that Douglass and Friedmann (1998) cast as central to changing power narratives and enabling agency of people to contribute to structural change.

Right to voice refers to 'a democratic struggle for inclusiveness in democratic procedures, for transparency in government trans-actions, for accountability of the state to its citizens and, above all, for the right of citizens – all citizens – to be heard in matters affecting their interests and concerns at the local level of lifespace and community. It is thus as much about the process and form of engagement of citizens in the making of their world as it is about the ends they seek to achieve' (Douglass & Friedmann, 1998: 2).

Right to human flourishing is based on the principle that 'every human being has the right, by nature, to the full development of their innate intellectual, physical and spiritual potentials in the context of wider communities' (Friedmann, 2011: 151). Further-more, it involves 'a struggle for increased access to the material bases of social power – for housing, work, health and education, a clean environment, financial resources – in sum, for the basic conditions of livelihood and human flourishing' (Douglass & Friedmann, 1998: 2).

These rights and notions of agency and structure align closely with Henri Lefebvre's (1996: 1968) 'right to the city' as argued by He (2015: 673), which advocates a 'vision of a life fully lived for urban inhabitants'. David Harvey (1973) interpreted the right to the city as a collective right that would further social justice through more democratic management of resources, and Manuel Castells (1977) applied the theory to his work on urban social movements. Right to the city and, to a lesser extent, right to human flourishing, have been applied more recently to discussions regarding public space, social exclusion, migration policies, housing, and citizenship (Marcuse, 2009; Harvey, 2008; Amin and Thrift, 2002). These rights can be thought of as tool kits for radical change that enable collective critical analysis, which would provide possibilities and space for people to meet their needs, which would mean claiming rights of participation as well as rights of appropriation (He, 2015).

My reading of theoretical, practical and Haiti-specific literature highlights the need to adopt research approaches that identify context-appropriate and innovative community development in Haiti. Such development initiatives exist in pockets but, it is argued, need to be revealed, surfaced and analyzed.

Secondly, three essential elements for transformative change, which can be addressed at local level are identified as: education, community development that supports local entrepreneurship, and women's economic empowerment. Addressing these elements would complement efforts to tackle at structural level the worthy medium-term goals of 1) (re)building a social contract; 2) improving economic opportunity, and 3) reducing vulnerability and building resilience, proposed by the World Bank (Singh and Barton-Dock, 2015).

Regarding education, according to Rae Lesser Blumberg and Samuel Cohn (2016: 8), 'mass literacy is a prerequisite for development'. The effects of public education on development are well studied and well known, and without exception, every known study demonstrates a strong positive effect of education on rates of a country's growth (Blumberg and Cohn, 2016). In the case of Haiti, there has never been a tradition of universal public education; in fact, it is estimated that only 12 percent of schools are public, and the overall quality of education in Haiti is generally low and typical pedagogical practices are considered to be anachro-nistic (as discussed below in the case study section). If Haiti is to improve its education system and render it more accessible – both

financially and linguistically, the culture of and investment in the education system will need to be dramatically modified.[5] In the meantime, community-led innovations for quality education can provide important examples for adapting and scaling elsewhere.

A second element for change would involve supporting social entrepreneurship at the local level. There are an estimated 200,000 formal jobs in Haiti and many of the jobs that exist do not pay a living wage. Yet, Haiti has a young population of people who want to work and who have enormous potential to contribute collectively to changing their communities and country. There is an opportunity for fundamental change by cultivating skills and practices, and creating financial tools and mechanisms that would support local entrepreneurship and social business development – both to create jobs and to address social needs.

Relatedly, women in Haiti face particular challenges due to a culture of gender-based violence and structural inequalities. Cohn and Blumberg (2016: 24) argue that women's economic empowerment in particular provides a 'magic potion' to stimulate well-being and wealth in countries, which is based on three hypotheses: 1) the most significant variable that effects the relative equality of women and men is economic power (defined as access to credit, and control of income, land and other resources); 2) when women have more economic power, they have more control over their destinies, particularly with respect to fertility; and 3) men and women who have provider responsibilities usually spend income which is under their control differently – women spend disproportionately more on children's education, nutrition and health (Cohn and Blumberg, 2016). If such a 'magic potion' were to seep in and spread at community level, the potential for improved outcomes of children would increase dramatically.

Thirdly, context-appropriate and innovative community development approaches for Haiti exist in pockets but, it is argued, need to be surfaced, connected and strengthened in order to be sustained and to catalyze broader transformative change.

In present day Haiti, amidst grave difficulties and often inhumane conditions of daily life for many people, there are stories of people that are managing to self-organize, plan and rebuild (Schuller and Morales, 2012; Wilentz, 2013). Laurent Dubois (2012: 12) asserts the following.

> The social cohesion that has resulted from [Haiti's] long historical process was made dramatically visible by the 2010 earthquake . . . . Despite its massive poverty and its almost total lack of a functioning government, [Haiti] is not a place of chaos. Life in Haiti is not organized by the state, or along the lines many people might expect or want it to be. But it does draw on a set of complex and resilient social institutions that have emerged from a historic commitment to self-sufficiency and self-reliance. And it is only through collaboration with those institutions that reconstruction can truly succeed.

This article examines a case that is attempting to work with Haiti's 'complex and resilient social institutions' at local community level in ways that arguably have potential to contribute to transformative resilience. Transformation in Haiti – and developing **transformative resilience**, which is about changing and innovating collaboratively in response to trauma, and involves forging new development pathways (Folke, Carpenter, Walker, Scheffer, Chapin & Rockström, 2010; Goldstein, 2012; Gotham & Campanella, 2010) – is unlikely without sustained convergence of

social change at community levels and structural change at national and international levels. Investigating dynamics of 'agency' (of people and organizations at local level) and 'structure' (in terms of governance and systemic inequalities) in transformation in Haiti is a long term project.

While it is evident that Haiti has not yet fully transitioned to a stable democracy since the 1987 constitution, and that Haiti has become increasingly dependent on international aid and imported food and has fallen on the UNDP Human Development Index, what is sorely lacking is a solid knowledge basis of people's everyday lived experiences in Haiti and evidence of community-level change over time. Many anthropological and social movement studies have been carried out – notable are Smith (2001) and Bell (2013) – however, a gap remains in our understanding of how agency at local levels interacts with structural levels to effect transformative change that could be adapted and scaled across communities, particularly in the post-earthquake era. 'Voices' of local people and their agency or lack of power to create change that would enable them to realize their aspirations for change are not heard. This article addresses these issues of agency and structure and prospects for improved long-term change in Haiti, both through its research methodology in the field as well as the nature of the approach to participatory community development being studied. The research – by intent – is linked to a project of social transformation.

Widespread practices of transformative resilience will be essential to sustaining change on a diverted development pathway for Haiti, particularly because the 'social resilience' that Haiti is often lauded for can be a euphemism for 'self-reliance'. In order to harness possibilities for 'transformative resilience', it will be important to catalyze not only the social resilience already in evidence (Verner and Heinemann, 2006), but other forms as well, such as urban resilience, particularly in the post-disaster context (Bornstein, Lizarralde, Gould, & Davidson, 2013), and community resilience, as in the Habitat for Humanity case in Haiti (Engle, Bornstein, & Lizarralde, 2016). One form of community resilience building which has particular promise is Haiti's traditional 'konbit' system of informal solidarity cooperatives for collective agricultural, microcredit and community work. Louino Robillard (2013), a leading social activist in Cité Soleil, Port-au-Prince's largest informal settlement, documented case studies of a series of konbit across Haiti which show potential for scaling and connecting in ways that would contribute to community development and social change.

A premise in traditions of community-engaged scholarly inquiry is that community development has the potential to contribute to social transformation. In a post-disaster context, a window of opportunity for more rapid or deep transformative change can open, if only ephemerally (Oliver-Smith, 2002; Pelling, 2003; Pelling and Dill, 2010; Solnit, 2009). Community development has the potential to contribute to social and community transformation, including institutional adaptations that would build transformative resilience. Transformation can be effected through social innovation combined with participatory collaborative approaches, which are sustained through ongoing dialogue processes that allow for constant negotiation between organizations and community-level participants (Healey, 2006; Innes & Booher, 2010; Moulaert, Martinelli, Swyngedouw, & González, 2010; Ostrom, 1990).

Central concepts here are *community development* and *social transformation*. What do I mean by these terms, and how are they linked? **Community development** is an interdisciplinary field that combines spatial and material development with development of people and their capacity to manage change. 'Place' is an important dimension of community development, including people's relationships with the places they inhabit and their everyday

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[5] For example, language can be a barrier to participation in education. While virtually all Haitians speak Haitian Creole as their mother tongue, often schools operate in French only. Anecdotal estimates are that about five percent of Haitians speak and understand French well, so children are often disadvantaged at school learning in a foreign language.

interactions in shared spaces of communities. Community development is meant to enable people to mobilize existing skills, reframe problems, work collaboratively and find new ways to use community assets, and involves flexible processes guided by principles of participation and self-help. The key purpose of community development is, according to Ledwith and Springett (2010: 14), 'collective action for social change, principled on social justice and a sustainable world'. Major steps in community development processes are often identifying problems, engaging people and groups, assessing the situation and context, exploring possibilities, planning, prioritizing, and taking action (Kretzmann and McKnight, 1993; Ledwith, 2011; Ledwith and Springett, 2010).

Because 'community' is a constructed and contested concept (Liepins, 2000), it is important to disentangle it from 'development' and specify its meaning here. I intend 'community' in this paper as a socio-spatial construct − communities are place-based and consist of people living in geographic proximity, which are defined by political or physical boundaries. 'Community' here incorporates four elements, which are informed by Liepins (2000):

- **people**: who live in shared space;
- **meaning**: material, political, symbolic and cultural layers;
- **practices**: includes social interactions, collective relations, and ways that people negotiate change, participate in local life, exchange goods, resolve disputes and govern themselves; and
- **space/structures**: physical sites such as water sources, schools and markets where economic and cultural dimensions of life take place, and structural dimensions which are embedded in identities, networks, formal and informal institutions, and relationships of power.

This understanding of community is held within what is meant by community development here − a term which is value-laden. It values social and environmental justice, such as in 'just sustainabilities' by Agyeman (2013), social innovation (Moulaert et al., 2010; Mulgan, Tucker, Ali, & Sanders, 2007; Kendra and Wachtendorf, 2007), and dialogical participation. It aims at social and systemic transformation through informal networks and local praxis (as in Forester, 1999; Freire, 2011 [1972; Freire, 2011, Kennedy, 2011). Collaborative ways of working, thinking, and designing institutions underlie this community-engaged social research approach (as in Ostrom, 1990; Healey, 2006). John Friedmann's alternative development theory (1992) and social learning and social mobilization traditions of non-state actors in planning (Friedmann, 1987, 1992, 2011) provide key foundations for my perspective on community development in an international context. Friedmann (1992) also refers to alternative development as 'collective self-empowerment' in a similar vein to Brown's notion of 'self-efficacy' (Brown, 1997). Friedmann argues that external actors, such as NGOs with international ties, must be part of collective action for transformative change to occur, while he also warns that civil society actors (i.e. individuals within communities) need to develop 'voices' of their own. Expressing 'voice' and learning through stories and everyday life is central to this community development planning and research (Flyvbjerg, 2001; Healey, 2006; Ledwith, 2011; Sandercock, 2003a, 2003b). Community development can have substantial local impact on its own, however, it is not necessarily transformative to long-term social and cultural practices, which is why social transformation must be a jointly held aim in aspirations for paradigm change.

Social transformation is used interchangeably here with *social change*. Simply put by McLeod and Thomson (2009), social change is change in personal and social life. Healey (2006: 91) refers to social change as the 'continuous interaction between the creative activity of agency in relation with others, re-thinking, affirming and changing situations, and the organizing power of structural forces'. Social transformation, according to Friedmann (1987: 250) is the aim of radical planning, 'an activity in which knowledge is joined to action in the course of social transformation'. Social transformation here is spatially cultivated, meaning that people's perceptions about space and their everyday interactions in the physical places of their communities are deeply important. Or as Friedmann (1987: 297) expresses: 'A political practice aimed at social transformation can be effective only when it is based on the extra-political actions of ordinary people gathered in their own communities'. Social transformation involves a public learning process that leads to permanent shifts in institutions and values, according to Leonie Sandercock (2000). She argues further

> . . . just as in successful therapy there is breakthrough and individual growth becomes possible, so too with a successful therapeutically oriented approach to managing our co-existence in the shared spaces of neighbourhoods, cities and regions, there is the capacity for collective growth (Sandercock, 2000: 27).

Sandercock refers to such *'collective growth'* in the language of politics as *social transformation*. Cultivating social transformation and transformative resilience in Haitian communities is a critical challenge that many are attempting to address through rebuilding strategies, but successful and instructive examples are few. In order to address this challenge rebuilding strategies and practices will need to be brought to scale.

Promising community development initiatives can achieve broad social transformation only when they are scaled on three levels (Riddell and Moore, 2015): 1) 'scaling out' to bring social innovations to more communities; 2) 'scaling up' to influence systemic and policy change; and 3) 'scaling deep' to affect cultural norms and patterns at local level. This research argues that by highlighting, amplifying, connecting and scaling in these three ways examples of community development which are contributing to positive long-term change, Haiti will be able to step away from its current trajectory and find its pathway to a more humane, inclusive and just society. The following section sets out the methodology used to investigate community development strategy that aims to address the challenge of social transformation.

1.2. Methodology

This research explores experiences and dynamics of an education-centered approach to community development underway in Bellevue-La-Montagne. The research methodology combines case study and participatory approaches, and my strategy of inquiry focuses on combining both actor and structural levels of analysis − understanding *from within* and *from outside*, which is consistent with phronesis research (as in Flyvbjerg, 2001; Flyvbjerg, Landman, & Schram, 2012). Integrating various perspectives, including local voices and lived experience, provides for deeper understanding of dynamics of community change and potential for social transformation. Below I describe my case study approach, selection and design, followed by how participatory methodologies are interwoven throughout the research and how narrative analysis is a device for sensemaking and interpretation.

1.2.1. Case study

Case study has long been recognized as an appropriate methodological approach in a range of contexts in social science disciplines, and their use is expanding in the realm of qualitative social and interpretive inquiry, including in planning literature (see Creswell, 2007; Creswell, 2009; Denzin & Lincoln, 2005; Flyvbjerg, 2001, 2006; Flyvbjerg et al., 2012; Patton, 2002; Stake, 1995; Stake, 2006; Stake, 2010; Yin, 2009).

According to Yin (2009), carrying out case study research is a somewhat linear but regularly iterative process. After the initial

plan and design for the case study are developed, a researcher prepares for field work, collects data, analyzes, and then shares results. The preparation, collection, design, and analysis phases are rehearsed iteratively in order to continually refine approaches and update design and collection methods as needed. This iterative research design process reflects well my experience as I regularly modified strategies and methods based on field learning and feedback from field collaborators – including research participants – and advisors. I carried out research design, reconnaissance visits, and field testing of methods between 2011 and 2013. I continued data gathering and analysis remotely from 2014 through 2016.

Each case involves a particular domain, which Robert Stake (2006) refers to as its 'quintain' or 'thing' that is being studied. In this study, the quintain is education-centered community development. The case has been selected based on a purposive, information-oriented sampling strategy, which combines instrumental and paradigmatic selection. It is instrumental in that the quintain and its issues are dominant (Stake, 1995), and it is paradigmatic because I aim 'to develop a metaphor or establish a school for the domain which the case concerns' (Flyvbjerg, 2001: 79). My positionality as sister of John Engle of Haiti Partners is highly influential in the case selection. This has afforded me not only needed access to information about the case from the lead NGO's perspective, but also, because of John's reputation as a trustworthy person and his long-term residence in the community, local people extend their trust to me, which is fundamental to my being able to conduct in-depth participatory research in this setting. I am consistently aware and self-reflexive, however, that John's leadership role and reputation in the community affect how people see and behave towards me, which has both positive and negative dimensions, many of which are invisible or difficult to analyze.

Fig. 1 provides a graphic representation of the case study design. The principal case is a collection of community development initiatives centered around a new school in Bellevue-La-Montagne. The case study of education-centered community development provides a portrait of the local situation three years post-earthquake.[6] As Fig. 1 depicts in the central circle, the principal case involved work at three types of sites: 1) the school and social enterprise hub, which is also a community gathering place; 2) participant homes, where we conducted interviews; and 3) places identified through data collection as 'sacred places' and 'hot spots' of the area.[7] The bottom half of the central circle denotes data collection methods. The 'embedded cases' represent the twelve people with whom I carried out participatory research and individual interviews in their homes (also see Engle, 2015).[8] The

aim was to get 'behind the scenes' of the community development underway to hear and understand the perspectives of local residents. Additional data was collected through documentation from and interviews with NGOs, local leaders, international agency representatives, including from Haiti Partners, Yunus Social Business,[9] Architecture for Humanity, PADF, and FONKOZE.[10] Research collaborators from Haiti Partners accompanied me throughout the field work, providing valuable research assistance and contributions to research design, analysis, and interpretation.[11]

On the left side of the central circle of Fig. 1 are circles with context and participatory research methods. The case sets out how the NGO-community development collaborations came about and who was involved, based on data collected from interviews with and documentation from NGOs involved in the collaboration. The community study content focused on learning from collaborative education-centered community development approaches and participatory engagement frameworks. Participatory research methods were incorporated to understand community aspirations and enable a critical analysis of the main barriers to realizing them. I sought to understand as well how relationships of power shape community development and decision-making processes.

During the field work I investigated the historic community context and key events of recent years, particularly the earthquake; local social, political, and environmental conditions; the wider policy context; and important situational factors, such as lived experience of local residents.

1.2.2. Participatory approach with a Qualitative Longitudinal Research (QLR) sensibility

I have drawn detailed perspectives of lived experience primarily through participatory research and a social learning process with a group of twelve local residents (see Engle, 2015, for more detailed participatory methodology design and results, and Engle, 2014, for videos documenting the participatory research). I begin by answering, 'why this choice to favour a participatory and qualitative approach and long-term perspective?'

Participatory methodologies are now well established in fields such as education, urban planning, human geography, public health, and community development (Forester, 1999; Somekh, 2006; Ledwith & Springett, 2010; Sarkissian & Hurford, 2010; Wates, 2000). They are applied as well in international development and in post-disaster contexts (Mitlin & Satterthwaite, 2004; Nakkiran & Ramesh, 2009; Narayanasamy, 2009; Özerdem & Bowd, 2010).[12] According to Creswell (2007: 102), the rationale for a qualitative study is that 'a need exists to add to or fill a gap in the literature or to provide a voice for individuals not heard in the literature.' With this article I aim to add to existing literature on post-disaster reconstruction, international community development strategies and participatory approaches toward social change. The research is also meant to provide a voice for those not heard, namely community residents in Haiti who have endured substantial hardship, most recently as a result of the 2010

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[6] Most of the interview and observation data was collected during field work in 2012 and 2013, following reconnaissance field study in 2011. The in-depth participatory research including household interviews, participatory photography and participatory mapping was carried out in 2013, following field testing in 2012. Additional documents and email correspondence from Haiti Partners during 2014 through 2016 provided supplemental information.

[7] 'Sacred places' and 'hot spots' were identified in participatory mapping processes (as in Hester, 2010), and are described in Engle (2015). Research participants together designed and conducted a community walking tour to make stops for commentary at each of these places. The tour was audio- and video-recorded. Analysis and representation of this community walk is outside the scope of this article. An aspiration is to edit the video to produce a virtual guided community tour in order to document and share the community development and school as well as the lived experience of local residents.

[8] Participant interviews in their homes – also referred to as 'household interviews' in this article – refer to the home where the participant was living and the other people who lived in the home at the time of the interview. In some cases, participants' children were present during the interviews, and in one instance – a 20-year-old son of a female participant – took part as well responding to questions, particularly to point out the difficult plight of the family, saying that the husband/father of the household was often away from home overnight, frequently lied to his mother about his whereabouts and his income, and rarely provided financial resources to the family.

[9] Yunus Social Business (previously called 'Grameen Creative Labs') was founded by Muhammad Yunus, winner of the Nobel Peace Prize for his pioneering work in microcredit and microfinance, most notably as founder of Grameen Bank.

[10] I conducted semi-structured interviews with the following individuals: John Engle, Haiti Partners; Claudine Michel, Yunus Social Business; Kate Evarts, Architecture for Humanity; and Steven Werlin, FONKOZE.

[11] Research collaborators from Haiti Partners in the field were Benaja Antoine and Erik Badger. John Engle, Alex Myril, Kerline Janvier, Merline Engle, and Neslie Myril provided regular advice and field assistance.

[12] Participatory methodologies in international development include participatory learning and action (PLA) and participatory rural appraisal (PRA).

Case quintain: Education-centered community development

Principal case
ADECA, Bellevue-La-Montagne, Haiti
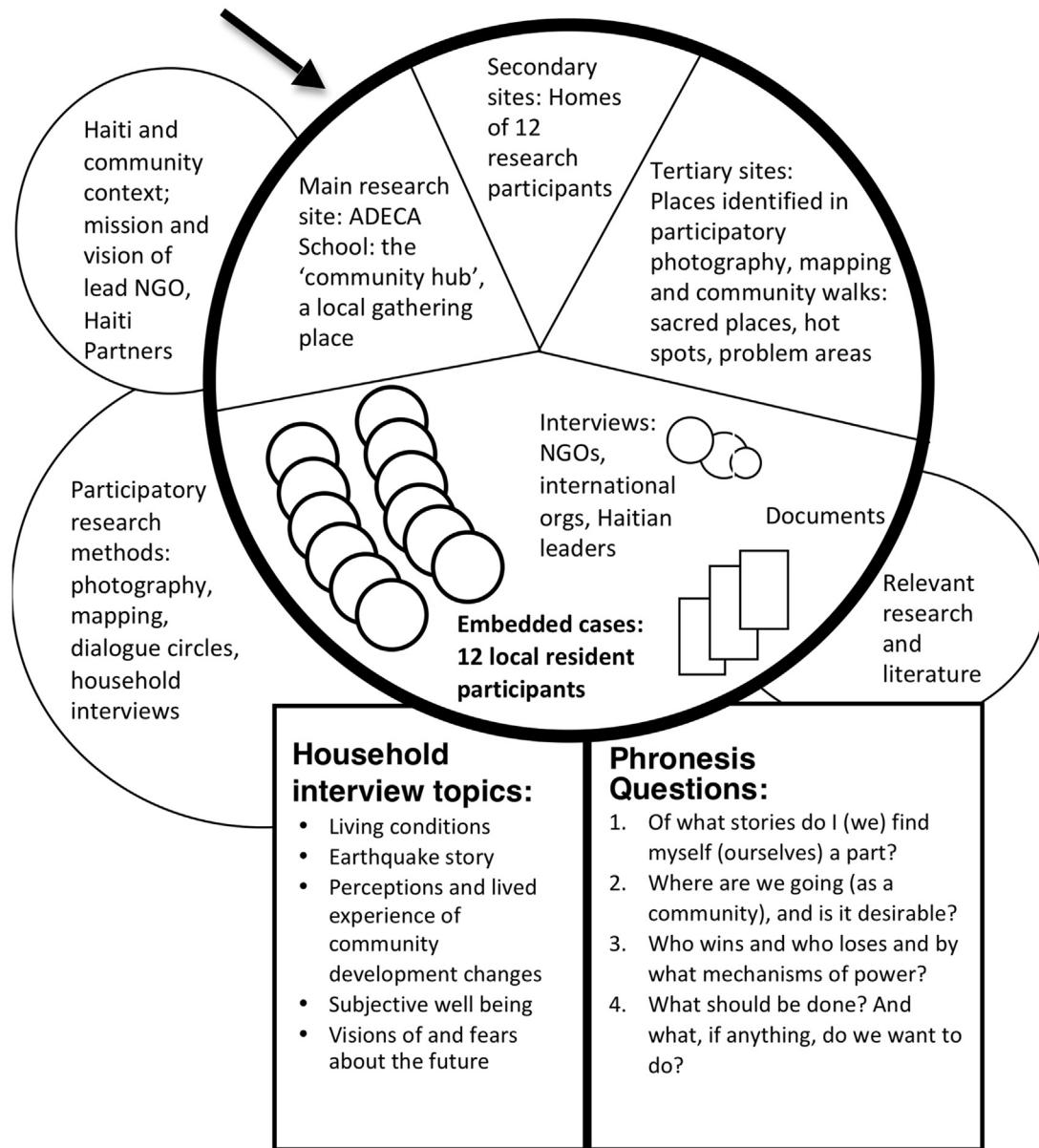Investigating community and social change

Fig. 1. Graphic representation of the case study design.

earthquake. According to Ledwith and Springett (2010: 93), participatory research entails that

> researchers, acting as facilitators and guarding against their own biases, seek to minimize any power differentials between them and the researched. The research design, therefore, is flexible, able to respond to changing contexts and emergent findings as they arise. Methods are often visual and interactive to allow participants with all backgrounds to participate in both generating and analyzing the data. . . . those who participate have their knowledge respected, have control over the research process and influence over the way the results are used.

Participatory methods recognize that people have their own community based, local knowledge systems that are often invisible from the outside, particularly to foreigners. They have the potential to yield more accurate data by drawing out and hearing the voices of those who are impoverished and excluded, thereby deepening understanding about community development impacts on local people and power dynamics at play. In order to maximize the potential of participatory methods, I designed them in a way that is specific to the local context. I used primarily participatory photography and mapping, and I chose to work with the same group of 12 people throughout in order to facilitate social learning of the group (Friedmann, 1987). The 12 participants, of whom six were women, ranged in age from 17 through 49. Some had been involved in the community development projects underway, and some had not. The level of formal education varied from zero years to post-high school training.

In method design, I drew on qualitative research sources (Berg, 1998; Crang, 2005; Denzin & Lincoln, 2005; Özerdem & Bowd, 2010; Patton, 2002; Reason & Bradbury, 2001; Somekh, 2006), participatory planning literature (Sandercock & Attili, 2012; Sarkissian & Bunjamin-Mau, 2009; Sarkissian & Hurford, 2010; Wates, 2000), as well as my own experience practicing these methods. Interviews and dialogue circles served as means for collective analysis of data gathered through participatory photography and participatory mapping. Local walks – including a participant-designed community tour and a group outing to the regional market – were decided upon collectively by participants and research collaborators. All collective activities were designed and intended to address phronesis research questions and to reveal interfaces of structure and agency (as in Flyvbjerg, 2001).

The strategy of inquiry focuses on understanding *from within* and *from outside* and engages participatory approaches within a wider aim or 'sensibility' of qualitative longitudinal research. Consistent with phronesis research (as in Flyvbjerg, 2001 and Flyvbjerg et al., 2012), guiding questions to elicit narratives from the point of view of participants, were the following:

1. ***Of what story or stories do I (we) find myself (ourselves) a part?***
2. ***Where are we going (as a community)? And is it desirable?***
3. ***Who wins and who loses and by which mechanisms of power?***
4. ***What, if anything, do we want to do? What should be done?***

The phronesis questions are integrated in inquiry design and aim to reveal 'tension points' at structural and actor levels of analysis with an emphasis on narrative, power relationships, and listening to least heard voices.

With regard to the study of social change, it is not possible to convincingly argue that dynamic change processes are occurring without a temporal aspect to the research. I conducted field work over several years, which provides limited understanding of change over time, but the research is designed with an eye to carrying out qualitative longitudinal research (QLR) with the same participants longer term. QLR is connected to a recent 'temporal' turn in social science research, which can provide 'strikingly different insights into policy problems' (Thomson & McLeod, 2015).

Qualitative longitudinal research is as much a sensibility as a methodology and gives close consideration to temporal aspects of research. It involves a dance of flexibly and adaptively designing the research over time in order to expose processes of social change. Because a key aim of this study is to understand whether NGO-community development collaborations are contributing to social change, and because social change is a long-term and often elusive set of processes, I have designed this study in a way that will enable longitudinal study to continue in the long term. *Qualitative longitudinal research* (or QLR) is a growing line of research. Several new QLR research centers have been established. Notable works include McLeod and Thomson (2009) and Saldaña (2003). Pelling and Dill (2010) call for more QLR-like research to be carried out in post-disaster settings.

Qualitative longitudinal research can expose processes of social change through the lens of individual or small group experience (McLeod and Thomson, 2009). Perlman and O'Meara Sheehan (2007), for instance, conducted a longitudinal study of sorts with favela residents in Rio de Janeira who she had interviewed for her doctoral dissertation in the 1960s, and then went back and found participants and their descendants 30 years later to learn how their lives and conditions had changed over that period.[13] I have collected data in case communities in ways that will facilitate going back to the same participants and community over time to study dynamics of change over time. Technological advancements in mobile data collection tools will help in the next stage of research with gathering, processing, analyzing, and storing information, such as photographs, video and audio recordings, textual surveys and interview responses.

1.2.3. Narrative analysis and uses of story

Participatory methodologies typically emphasize the use of story and narrative analysis to learn from local knowledge. Why story? Story can have the power to communicate ways of knowing that are especially appropriate in particular cultural settings, such as those with predominantly oral traditions (Sandercock, 2003a). Young (1995) argues that story is particularly helpful in cross-cultural settings where the researcher is trying to gain understanding of participants' ways of seeing and situated knowledges. One of the most important ways of acquiring knowledge in Haiti has traditionally been through stories and storytelling. Patton (2002) claims that narrative analysis can provide windows into cultural and social meanings by addressing two foundational questions: *What does this story reveal about the person and world from which it came? How can this narrative be interpreted so that it provides an understanding of and illuminates the life and culture that created it?* Flyvbjerg (2001) claims that not only is narrative our most basic form for making sense of our experiences already lived, but also that narratives can provide a forward glance, helping us to anticipate situations before they are encountered and enabling us to envision alternative futures. Using story and narrative in qualitative research is now well established in the fields of planning and human geography (for example, see Berg, 1989; Bird et al., 2009; Crang, 2005; Creswell, 2007; Eckstein, 2003; Patton, 2002; Sandercock, 2003b; Sandercock & Attili, 2012; Throgmorton, 2003; Wiles et al., 2005).

An important source of data in my research is story. I use story in three ways:

1) as a *mode of data collection*, where research participants are storytellers, as in interviews in which they share their earthquake stories, or dialogue circles in which they share stories about photographs they took;
2) as a *mode of representation*, where I as researcher am storyteller, as in the 'community core story' told below in the analysis section; and
3) as a *mode of reasoning and interpretation*, as in narrative analysis (or narratology), in my interpretations of data collected through participatory photography, mapping, and dialogue circles.

I collected individual story data through focus groups (called *dialogue circles* here), semi-structured and open-ended interviews, and other participatory exercises. These methods were carried out primarily in summer 2013 with 12 people (embedded cases in Fig. 1) in a process called '*Dyalog Foto*', which followed the less in-depth initial process, and *Fowòm Foto,* which I carried out in 2012.[14]

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[13] Janice Perlman's *Favela* (2010), while not technically QLR, provides an excellent example of research that 'revisits' families in Rio de Janeiro favelas more than 30 years after the original interviews were conducted. The study provides unique insights about changes that occurred in dozens of families at two points in time over thirty years. However, because participants were not interviewed in the intervening period, the study did not enable adaptive learning over time that might have revealed trends to point toward changes in local decision making and policy along the way.

[14] The basis for working with a group the size of about ten people in these participatory exercises stems from theory in Friedmann's social learning approach (Friedmann, 1987: 185).

In *Dyalog Foto*, I conducted a series of participatory activities over the course of a month. Photo workshops, participatory mapping, probe-based and semi-structured interviews, focus groups, and video interviews were incorporated. I made adjustments in the field as needed and appropriate, such as including a community timeline process, a day to visit the regional market together to learn about trading practices and local livelihoods, and the design and time to carry out a community walk of places most important (or controversial) to local residents.

During the *Dyalòg Foto* participatory methods, I collected data through interviews, participant observation, field notes, audio and video recordings, photographs taken by me and the participants, as well as additional outputs of the participatory methods, including maps, community timeline, and a community guided walk. I conducted interviews with NGO representatives, government and university officials, and representatives of international agencies. Data were collected in three languages: primarily Haitian Creole, and also French and English. All data were transcribed and translated to English for ease of analysis. The structure of the *Dyalòg Foto* process and related field work was designed to respond to phronesis inquiry questions (see above reference and bottom of Fig. 1).

The aims of analysis and interpretation carried out post field work were to address the central research issues (above), including the meaning of NGO-community development collaborations for local people and which conditions and strategies seem to potentially contribute, or not, to social transformation. I carried out analysis and interpretation using standards of rigor in qualitative research, drawing on narratology, thematic coding, and pattern analysis (such as in Ryan and Bernard, 2000). I also drew on case study sources for analytical and interpretive techniques, such as categorical aggregation and direct interpretation (Stake, 1995; Yin, 2009).

By triangulating methods to address the research issues, I have explored whether and in what ways collaborative efforts underway involving participation of communities and organizations (local and international) in dialogical negotiations achieve aims of sharing power and building capabilities of local people and groups. Narrative analysis is the principle mechanism I employ to interpret field data and learning presented in the next section describing the case study and then sharing 'stories behind the scenes'.

2. Case study: Education-centered community development in Bellevue-La-Montagne

The research site is Bellevue-La-Montagne, officially the fourth section of the commune of Pétion-ville, which is part of the Port-au-Prince capital city conurbation. Semi-rural and with a quickly growing population, Bellevue-La-Montagne is located about 20 km from downtown Port-au-Prince. It spans about 35 km^2 on a small peak plateau with steep hillsides and an undulating terrain, and, as its name hints, provides spectacular views overlooking Port-au-Prince and mountains to the north, and the Caribbean Sea to the northwest. The most common public transportation in Haiti, the colourful tap-tap pickup trucks that carry about 15 people (seven people lined in benches on either side of the cab and one person at the back), can access the lower elevations of the area. A good portion of the mountainous sector has rocky dirt roads and is accessible only by foot, motorcycle or all-wheel drive vehicle. Local groups estimate that approximately 30,000 people live in the area, most of whom support themselves through subsistence farming a-n-d

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[14] The basis for working with a group the size of about ten people in these participatory exercises stems from theory in Friedmann's social learning approach (Friedmann, 1987: 185).

market trading primarily of produce and animals. Even though the area has suffered from increasing flooding and droughts in recent years and there is strong evidence of high poverty and malnutrition, it is often 'off the map' for international aid because it is technically in the jurisdiction of relatively well-off Pétion-ville. People speak Haitian Creole, the mother tongue of all Haitians, and a small number of people also speak French (the other official language of Haiti), English, and/or Spanish, with varying degrees of proficiency.

Bellevue-La-Montagne suffered substantial losses during the January 12, 2010 earthquake. Several schools and churches collapsed, and more than 300 homes were fully or substantially destroyed in just one zone in the immediate vicinity of the case study school, which is a steep mountainous part of the community. In the year following the earthquake, discussions between Bellevue-La-Montagne residents and an organization called Haiti Partners began regarding possible collaborative strategies for rebuilding. Even though Haiti Partners' co-founder and co-director, John Engle, had lived in Bellevue-La-Montagne for more than 15 years, his work had always been focused in other parts of the country.

In the year just before the earthquake, Haiti Partners' was working with schools in other jurisdictions toward goals of more student-centered pedagogy, improved institutional capacity, integration of parents into the life of the schools, and better infrastructure. At the same time, they were feeling that it was time to be more directly engaged in the neighbourhood vicinity where they were based, and where John Engle had spent so many years. They began slowly investigating interest locally in collaborative education and development projects.

In the wake of the earthquake, the desire and need to collaborate on local initiatives were heightened, and people in the area communicated the need for a school. Given the expertise and experience of Haiti Partners in education and democratic practice, they continued open discussions as they looked for a site to locate a school, and eventually found an available piece of land in a particularly impoverished area of Bellevue-La-Montagne called Bawosya. Over the course of the next two years (2010-2012), Haiti Partners held regular open public meetings inviting local people to share their needs, concerns, and aspirations for the area, and to give feedback on evolving plans for a new school and learning center to be built there. Based on early establishment of the need to create a school, this aim became the centerpiece of the development in both literal and metaphoric senses – it is a school-centered and education-centered approach to community development. I begin with some background on the history and experience of Haiti Partners to set the stage for their decision with community groups to take this approach (Fig. 2).

2.1. Haiti Partners: vision, mission and theory of change

> *Haiti is the spark that can ignite the rest of the world. Haiti's history epitomizes human depravity: genocide, slavery, exploitation. Haiti's history also inspires: First and only successful slave rebellion, a place of extraordinary resilience, a place where art and creativity flourish. Haiti has become synonymous with 'poorest country in the western hemisphere.' Haiti Partners is committed to making Haiti synonymous with 'can do' culture. In spite of countless odds, Haiti is improving based on the resilience, determination, and creativity of her people* (Haiti Changemakers, Ashoka (2014)).

Haiti Partners was founded in 2009 by co-directors John Engle and Kent Annan. It was spun off from Beyond Borders, an organization which John co-founded with David Diggs in 1993. The work of Beyond Borders had focused primarily on: 1)

Fig. 2. Map: Bellevue-La-Montagne's location in Haiti.

supporting alternative education and literacy training for adults and for children living in domestic servitude (called 'restavèk' children)[15]; 2) practicing and training in collaborative leadership and democratic methods; and 3) advocating for universal access to education in Haiti.[16] Haiti Partners spun off, in part, in order to complement the education and democracy work with two new strategic directions: community development and social entrepreneurship.

Haiti Partners' mission is to 'help Haitians change Haiti through education'. Their approach is based on the assumption that for a country to develop and evolve, children need an education, and that the type of education children typically receive in Haiti needs to change. They advocate for changing leadership to be more empowering to people, arguing that Haiti's brutal history of slavery, a colonial past, and 'top-down' aid over the years have reinforced an authoritarian leadership that are disempowering to people. Their approach is grounded in Freirian philosophy, and they believe that the best chance for change to come about is by working closely with local people and institutions that can transform a community. They have worked to change the traditional education in Haiti which often involves rote memorization and corporal punishment.

Haiti Partners consists of Haiti-based and US-based organizations with boards of directors and core staff teams in both countries. There are nine staff members in Haiti and eight in the US, including program, development, communications and finance coordinators. More than 200 additional people are employed or receive stipends in their schools and programs in Haiti, including teachers, administrators, cooks, college students and school directors. There are over 1,200 students enrolled in its seven schools. The revenue of Haiti Partners in fiscal year 2014-15 was $1.4 million. Other outputs of its work in schools in that year include: 21,429 school parent-service hours and 1,000 trees planted by students and parents. Haiti Partners has set up three social enterprises (two poultry farms and a bakery) toward funding six schools. Haiti Partners works to equip Haitians with skills and capacity that will enable them to develop their potential and change their country.

> For us, the key to change is to equip Haitians with a different type of leadership and educational model which is all about empowering others and helping people to develop their potential. Practically speaking, this means working with primary schools to create a new model of education which includes entrepreneurial training. It also means creating social businesses to fund education and training and creating vocational training. Haitians need to find and create gainful employment (John Engle (2012)).

They believe that the extreme authoritarian leadership model, along with antiquated educational practices, are largely to blame for Haiti's inability to evolve in a positive way and address the numerous societal challenges. Children are taught to memorize what their teachers tell them, rather than to think critically and creatively. They hold that employees and community members rarely have a voice in decisions that impact their work and lives and are not encouraged to innovate and collaborate. The following example, which comes from their experience with an employer who wanted to prevent employees from learning to read and write, illustrates the problem.

> Unfortunately, because of the extreme top-down leadership model, when someone is promoted to a higher position, they tend to diminish or exploit those beneath them. Because the vast majority of Haitians have grown up in scarcity, an 'abundance mentality' is inconceivable. Thus, when someone else gains, it's a threat to me. An example of this is how our literacy efforts in 2000, in partnership with Pétion-Ville Rotary Club, failed, when we were trying to have Haitian university students teach factory workers to read and write. Ultimately, it was mid-level management that sabotaged the [literacy] program because they were threatened by the possibility that others would grow and take their jobs (John Engle (2012)).

In order to help Haitians to analyze cultural tendencies, including authoritarian leadership and antiquated teaching methods, they developed a program called 'Circles of Change'. It involves a weekly practice over six months where facilitators model a completely different type of leadership with groups of 15-30 educators and leaders through a series of structured discussion

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[15] 'Restavèk' children, literally 'stay with' refers to children who live in domestic servitude in Haiti, typically in miserable conditions of squalor and abuse and without an opportunity to go to school. There are approximately 250,000 restavèk children in 2015. It is considered to be a modern form of slavery, and according to the Global Slavery Index, Haiti is ranked second to bottom on a list of 162 countries with modern prevalence of slavery in 2014: globalslaveryindex.org.

[16] For more information on the current work of Haiti Partners and Beyond Borders, see: haitipartners.org and beyondborders.org. Disclosure: the author is currently a member of the Board of Directors of Beyond Borders.

groups. More than 10,000 Haitians have gone through Circles of Change trainings. Haiti Partners applied this approach to a particularly challenging post-earthquake context, when they were asked by Habitat for Humanity, who had built one of the largest post-disaster housing settlements in the country, to apply the approach to create a community governance structure in their Habitat Santo Village in Léogâne (see Engle et al., 2016; Engle-Warnick et al., 2013 for a full analysis of the case). Haiti Partners is continually evolving based on input from hundreds of Haitians who are part of its network and who have participated in Circles of Change and contributed to innovative ideas and projects. One important example was the creation of social businesses to support its partner schools, discussed below.

Vision and strategy for the ADECA school (Children's Academy and Learning Center)

The long-term goal [of the school] includes creating an example that serves to help change the educational and leadership paradigm in Haiti. My nearly 25 years of working in Haiti has me convinced that there's very little hope for significant change until there's a type of education and leadership that encourages and inspires innovation and collaboration. We also feel that schools can be motors for community development and lifelong learning (John Engle (2012)).

ADECA is a big vision: high quality preschool, primary and secondary schools, training and meeting center, and agricultural/environmental/social business hub, which are grounded in the local community and cultivating civic engagement, innovation, and sustainability, and which serve as a reference for Haiti's Ministry of Education, NGOs, and other schools.

We operate the Children's Academy as an incubator for ideas and approaches that are reshaping education in Haiti (Haiti Partners (2015)).

The strategy for the Children's Academy ('ADECA' in Haiti; short for *Académie des enfants et centre d'apprentissage*) marks a significant departure for Haiti Partners. It came from their experience working with partner schools for a couple years, and while they wanted to continue working with existing schools to develop good practices and become more effective, they found themselves in a challenging position. On the one hand, they found that there were many changes that they felt should be made by partner schools, but on the other hand, they did not want to be a funder who used its power in ways that would perpetuate

dynamics of authoritarian leadership that it was fighting to change. They wanted to respect local autonomy and felt it counter to their philosophy to push changes. So they decided to become practitioners themselves – to build and manage a school in a way that would model the participatory education and leadership practices that they had been advocating. They intend for ADECA to provide a reference not only for their partner schools, but also for others across Haiti (Fig. 3).

2.2. Education-centered community development approach at ADECA

The Children's Academy and Learning Center (known as 'ADECA' in Haiti) is a vibrant primary school that serves as our model school. It's a place where educators from across Haiti come to see a quality school in action and discover methods of education and leadership that help them transform their communities (Haiti Partners (2015).

Education infuses every aspect of the approach to community development that Haiti Partners has built with the community and partners at ADECA. This approach has evolved to comprise six elements in Fig. 4: 1) the school and lifelong learning; 2) social entrepreneurship; 3) planning and construction; 4) environmental stewardship; 5) healthcare; and 6) participation. Short descriptions of these elements are set out below, and Table 1. provides aims, partners involved, some activities, and main challenges of each element, as reported by Haiti Partners. The challenges encountered are a snapshot of obstacles, concerns, and/or barriers that they face as an organization or challenges to improving the local situation. This data is a useful baseline to track change over time in the local community and development approach. Supporting details and the chronology of accomplishments, ongoing activities, and plans for the future are provided in Fig. 10: ADECA Timeline.

2.2.1. School as Center for Community Development and Lifelong Learning

Building on decades of work in leadership development and education, Haiti Partners opened its own school in 2012. From the ground up, we're building it as a place that's cultivating learning and innovation for children and adults of all ages, a center of activity that brings the whole community together (.

Haiti Partners opened the ADECA school in October 2012, with the first pre-school class of 30 three-year-olds. Those first 30

Fig. 3. Geographic setting: view from the southeast of Haiti Partners' school with capital city Port-au-Prince and the Caribbean Sea in background.
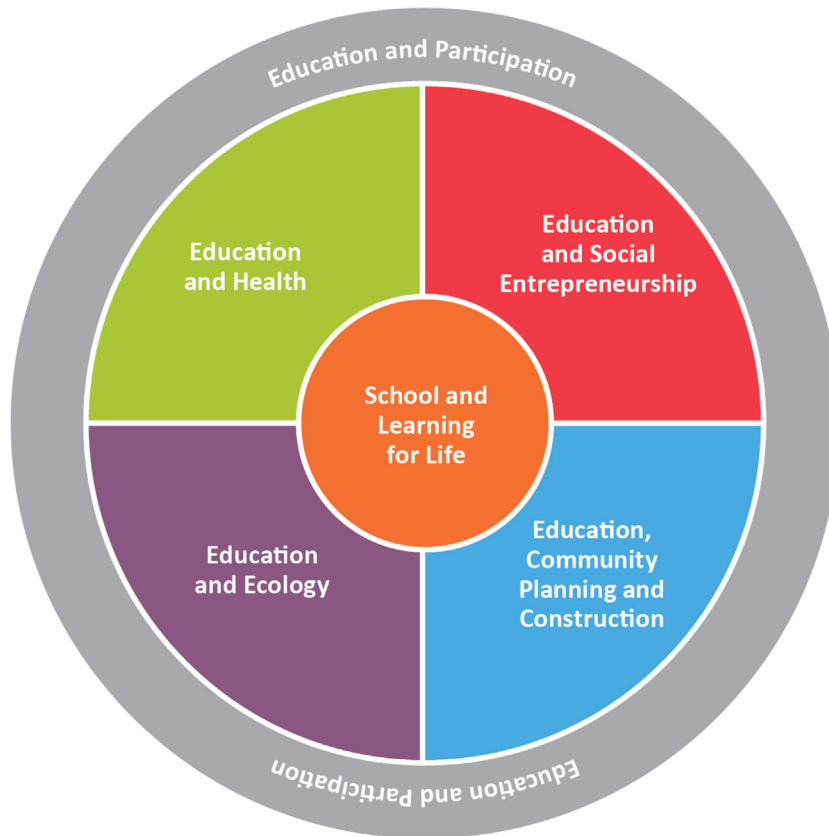
Fig. 4. Elements of Education-centered Community Development: Approach of Haiti Partners.

children will grow up with the school, as each year one additional grade is added. As Fig. 10 shows, by 2020, there will be a full primary school cohort, up to sixth grade. In 2021, the plan is to start a high school from grade seven, and continue to add one grade per year. As of fall 2016, there were three preschool grades and two primary grades with a total of 189 students. Haiti Partners intends to enroll an additional 30–60 students per year until there are approximately 1,000 students. Tuition is affordable for local families. The main contribution of parents to school operations is four hours per week in unpaid service. Currently, school parent activities involve: cultivating school gardens, maintaining composting latrines and school facilities, carrying out building and digging projects, assisting teachers in the classroom, and serving as community health agents. More recently, parents are also contributing their hours to become community organizers and trainers of SASA!, a program to end violence against women and girls, and ESK, an initiative which aims to end child servitude and protect the rights of children. Some are also training on social enterprise development, including making artisanal paper from natural fibers of local vegetal waste materials.

The ADECA school is both the physical and metaphorical center of the community; it is a gathering place for people, ideas, learning, and action – a 'community hub'. There are English classes ten hours per week for young people and adults, and a choir of 50 local young people, called WOZO, practices or performs at least twice per week. A variety of other trainings and activities happen on a regular basis. The school has become the central hive of activity and events for the area (Figs. 5 and 6).

2.2.2. Education and Social Entrepreneurship

ADECA is preparing and inspiring Haitians to succeed as changemakers (Haiti Partners (2015)).

Haiti Partners is working towards a plan where revenue from social businesses will cover school operating expenses. The first social business was a bakery which was open from December 2014 through July 2015. Yunus Social Business developed a business plan with the community and there seemed to be sufficient demand and market feasibility to establish a bakery. Unfortunately, the business model turned out to be flawed, in that the operating cost estimates were too low, primarily due to elevated transport costs to the remote community and its poor roads. The bakery was open for six months during which time it had a grace period on its loan from Yunus Social Business. Subsequently, Haiti Partners, Yunus, and the community 'productive cooperative' which was established to run the enterprise worked on a plan together for a second social business. As for the bakery, another Haitian operator is expected to lease the on-site space and pilot a venture to re-launch the bakery, using a different business model (Figs. 7 and 8).

Haiti Partners sees an additional potential opportunity for social enterprise and entrepreneurship with the parent volunteers at school. They believe that that there is better potential to change the educational paradigm in Haiti if parents build collective enterprises to support the school as a strategy for long-term sustainable funding, rather than to employ parents so that they can make a living and pay school fees to pay operating costs. While the latter may be the longer term solution, leaders doubt that there will be enough jobs in the foreseeable future for parents to find employment that would make paying school fees possible. Also, Haiti Partners and community residents need more experience in collaborative enterprise and thus will benefit from the training and learning that happens at the school based social businesses. In 2016, they are studying the feasibility of collective enterprises, among them an artisan papermaking social business — greeting cards, gift bags, packaging, journals, etc.—from recycled paper,

Table 1
Elements of education-centered community development in Haiti Partners approach.

Key aims	Partners	Accomplishments/activities	Main challenges encountered
1. School and Lifelong Learning Quality school education; Lifelong learning; Parental engagement; School as 'community hub'	AMURT, Life is Good, WOZO youth choir, WorldBlu	As of 2016: 155 children in pre-school – Grade 1; Daily English language learning courses/hangouts; Youth choir engages 50 local young people; Youth group meets every Sunday. In development: curriculum for vocational training.	-Changing mindsets and culture around shared vision – positive, open, engaged and collaborative, curious, motivated. -Galvanizing parent engagement of 4 hours/week in service + 2 hours/week of parent education.
2. Education and Social Entrepreneurship Entrepreneurship training; Creation of social enterprises and productive cooperatives to benefit community & provide school revenue; Grow a culture of social entrepreneurship	Yunus Social Business (formerly Grameen Creative Labs), Ashoka	2015: trained 12 local people in entrepreneurship and started a micro-credit lending program for local residents. In development: gaining legal status (as a cooperative) for a new construction company with local residents; determining curriculum to use for Entrepreneurial Program in new training center; determining entrepreneur/financial literacy curriculum to use.	-Finding right social business idea to support school operations + serve the community. -Finding partner and curriculum for entrepreneurship program; then ongoing mentorship, coaching, etc. -Building momentum with CPBM (the cooperative set up to operate the social business): need good practices and culture, and good leadership.
3. Education, Community Planning and Construction Planning, design and construction of site and buildings (school, social enterprise, and other-community serving buildings); skills training in earthquake-resistant construction; and job creation	Architecture for Humanity, Extollo, Miyamoto, Architects: BAR & Ken Linsteadt, Degenkolb & DCI engs	As of 2016, 4 structures on site: 1) main school building with classrooms + health clinic; 2) first two floors (of three) of 7500 s.f. building for social business, training center and guest house to sleep 28; 3) mens' and womens' composting toilets; and 4) small office building. Landscaping and vegetable gardens are installed. 13 people (4 women) received professional training in masonry and carpentry.	-Lack of local government planning and lack of basic service provision (waste collection, electricity, road repair, water and sanitation, etc.). -Finding funding partners. -Leadership staffing of construction company. -Instilling a positive culture with construction team.
4. Education and Ecology Train better ecological + agricultural practices; foster culture of environmental stewardship; maintain composting latrines; local reforestation	Give Love, local orgs and agronomists	As of 2016: creating and beginning implementation of a 5-year project that establishes environmental stewardship and highly effective gardening practices as a norm.	-Finding good agronomist partner. -Finding funding to do more. -Identifying best way to cultivate school garden as social business, eg.: moringa, masketi (castor oil), tilapia, hydroponics, coffee.
5. Education and Health Healthcare and medicine for locals; improve child nutrition; first aid training; end gender-based violence; end 'restavèk' practices	Haiti Clinic (local and US staff), Beyond Borders, Vitamin Angels	Health clinic sees 120-140 patients per week. Training to end practices of violence against women and girls and to end child domestic servitude. Training of residents as community health agents to visit neighbours, provide first aid, deliver medicine, etc. Provide multivitamins daily to students under 5.	-Students (and other local people) need more protein and nutrients. Malnutrition is chronic. [Exploring if moringa and/or Tilapia could be part of the solution.]
6. Education and Participation Nurture civic engagement culture; instill values of respect, learning, collaboration + accountability into edu + community life	Dozens of local orgs, hundreds of local residents, WorldBlu	Democracy building and participation are cross-cutting across all elements above; ADECA staff using WorldBlu scorecard assessment in 2016 (first school in Haiti to do this). Circles of Change 6-month trainings in civic engagement in 2011-12 with 80 local residents. Parent projects: landscaping, road work, classroom aid.	-Deepening 'culture of participation' to 'culture of changemaking', in which each person feels empowered + responsible for collective action.

cardboard, banana bark and other organic material. They hypothesize that the ever-growing number of hours that parents contribute to the school could be put to more productive use and translate to funding. Parents could provide labour toward making products that get exported and sold, generating funds that help cover school operating budgets. They see benefits not only for ADECA, but also as a model for other schools and communities to follow).

2.2.3. Education, Community Planning and Construction

Before the earthquake, Haiti Partners was not involved in community planning and construction. But when their partner schools were destroyed in the earthquake and needed to be rebuilt, they realized that construction practices needed to change, and that additional buildings and schools were needed in Haiti because so many were destroyed, and because of an increasing population and lack of local construction firms. So, they got into the construction business. After contracting Haitian firms for school construction for two years, they decided to partner with Extollo International to train locals and provide supervision and oversight on earthquake-resistant construction of the ADECA school. Architecture for Humanity Haiti and BAR Architects of San Francisco are partners in site planning and building design.

As of 2016, five structures had been built on the ADECA site: the main school building which houses classrooms, a health clinic and pharmacy; the first two floors (of three) of a building to house the social enterprise bakery and training facilities; mens' and womens' composting toilets; and two small buildings for administrative offices. Landscaping and vegetable gardens have also been installed. Thirteen local people (including four women) were on the construction team and received professional training in earthquake-resistant masonry and carpentry. Two additional buildings are planned to be built over the next five years to house additional classrooms, an auditorium and kitchen (also see Fig. 11).

Fig. 5. Haiti Partners' school building, with its earthquake resistant, open-air design, houses two large classrooms upstairs, and a health clinic, pharmacy, and offices on the lower level.

Fig. 6. Inside a classroom: a school teacher guides a story time exercise with kindergarteners on a play parachute donated by a volunteer visiting from the US.

Fig. 7. Bakery operations: set up in 2014 as a social enterprise cooperative designed to meet a local need and provide a sustainable funding source for school operations.

Fig. 8. Rendering of social enterprise building: first floor houses bakery operations, upper floors to house vocational training facility and lodging accommodations.

A longer-term aspiration of Haiti Partners is to build space to accommodate online university education for students that graduate from ADECA high school (Figs. 8 and 9).

2.2.4. Education and Ecology

The first initiative of ecological stewardship, composting latrines, served the dual benefit of providing a much-needed sanitation solution and fertilizer for gardens. The partner is US-based GiveLove, which was founded by actor Patricia Arquette.

GiveLove has become well-known in Haiti for its culturally-appropriate technology and design, and innovative maintenance for human waste composting, which provides an alternative to the typical pit latrines. Pit latrines can contaminate groundwater and are not a long-term solution, and water-based sewage is not possible. Human waste compost provides a quality and sustainable fertilizer for crops in Haiti, where chemical fertilizers that risk depleting soil nutrients over time are common.
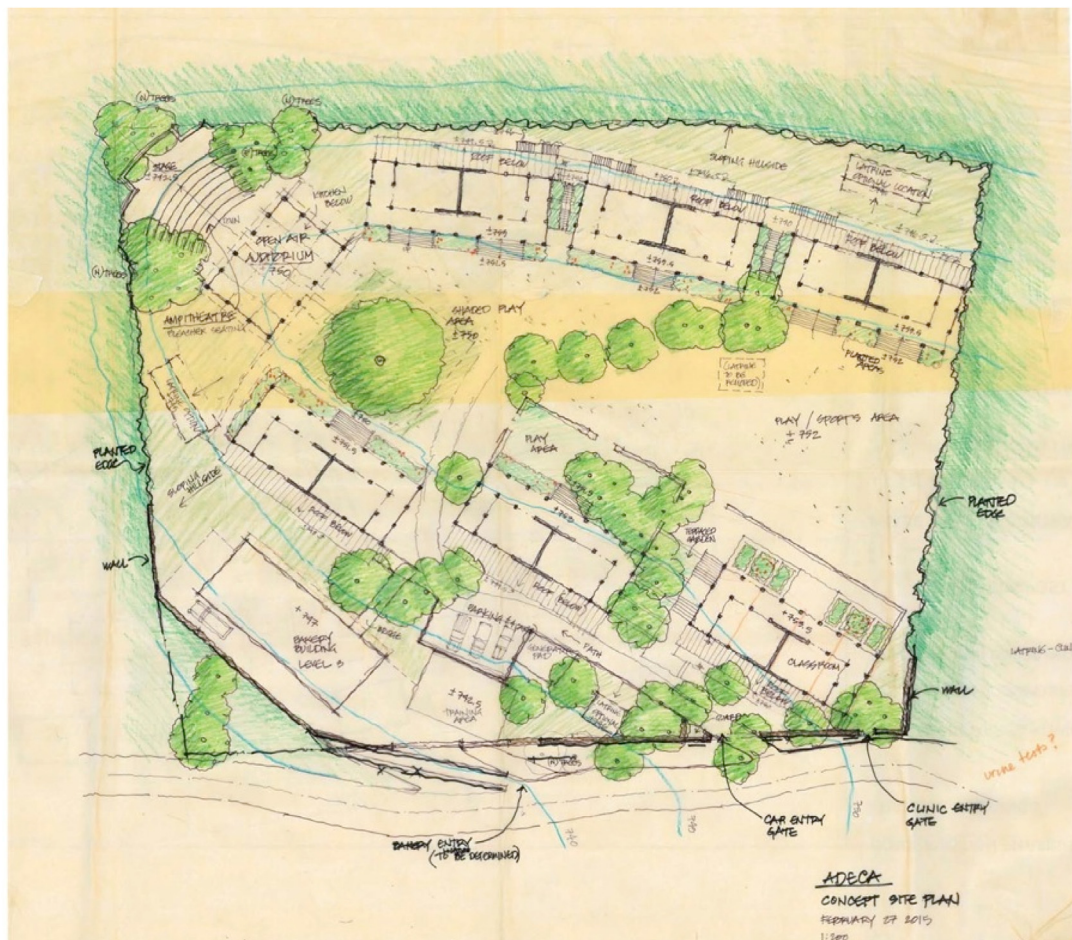

Fig. 9. Site plan by BAR Architects: plans include five classroom buildings and an open air amphitheatre.

Fig. 10. Construction with Extollo: local people were trained in masonry and carpentry and employed to construct the buildings. School parent volunteers contribute to site planning and maintenance work.

In partnership with local agronomists and other organizations, Haiti Partners and local residents are developing a five-year project to build on existing community gardens on site to establish environmental stewardship and more effective gardening and produce cultivation practices as the cultural norm. A focus will include practices of permaculture and local re-forestation. Similar to other parts of Haiti, the Bellevue-La-Montagne area is 98.0-98.5% deforested. Environmental stewardship training and ecological agricultural practices are being integrated into the school curriculum (Figs. 12 and 13).

ADECA Timeline

Year	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Community Engagement and Lifelong Learning	Hire Haitian project staff	Ongoing leadership training								
		Monthly community meetings (2nd Sunday of every month at 3 pm)								
	Local Wozo youth choir practices each weekend (Saturday & Sunday 3-4pm; travelled for performances to US in 2011 and 2012)									
		Policy requires that parents contribute 4 hours weekly toward school and community projects								
		Create school committee	School committee meets periodically		School committee meets monthly					
		Edikasyon Se yon Konvèsasyon (ESK) - weekly education sessions for parents on children's rights, positive discipline, restavec, healthy family relationships, etc.								
		Earthquake-resistant construction training and construction jobs for some parents and other members of the community								
				Weekly spiritual and personal development meetings with local youth (Sunday 4-6pm)						
				English classes (4-6pm Monday-Friday)						
				Literacy classes for parents and other community members - in cooperation secrétaire d'État à l'alphabétisation (4 times per week)						
				Training for parents and community members in gender equality and women's rights toward ending violence against women and girls						
					Entrepreneurship training for parents, youth and other community members					
Construction	Planning and construction of first building - 450 square meters plus composting latrines									
		Planning and construction of 2nd building - 500 square meters								
				Planning and construction of 3rd building - 450 square meters plus composting latrines						
					Planning and construction of 4th building - 550 square meter auditorium/kitchen/ampitheater					
Academic Education		Start 1st preschool class	Start 2nd preschool class	Start 3rd preschool class	Start 1st grade class	Start 2nd grade class	Start 3rd grade class	Start 4th grade class	Start 5th grade class	Start 6th grade class
		Hire teachers and support staff (2 teachers plus assistant per classroom)								
		Weekly staff meetings and ongoing staff development								
		Partnering with AMURT for teacher training seminars, on-site coaching and ongoing professional development								
		Agricultural and environmental education - includes maintaining school gardens and using fertilizer from school's composting latrines								
				Partnering with Life is Good for teacher training seminars, on-site coaching and ongoing professional development						
				Entrereneurship education for teachers and all school staff						
				Integrating financial literacy and entrepreneurship training in grades K-6						

Fig. 11. Timeline planned for school and community development.

Fig. 12. Human waste composting latrines: designed by Give Love and maintained by local people, these latrines address a sanitation need, and the harvested compost is used in community gardens or sold.

2.2.5. Education and Health

Haiti Clinic set up operations in the school building in 2013 to address the local need for access to healthcare services and medicine. Hospitals are far away, difficult and expensive to reach, and care is often of low quality. Many local residents reported that they were accustomed to living with pain or discomfort, and that often people would die when they became sick, because they were not able to access care of a doctor or medicine. Haiti Clinic doctors reported a chronic challenge of malnutrition and related problems among large numbers of local people, including children.

Fig. 13. Gardening lesson: School children are trained in environmental steward-ship, including ecological and organic growing practices.

As of 2016, Haiti Clinic was serving 120-140 patients per week. On-site staff consist of a Haitian physician, dentist, nurse and health agent. The Haitian physician has a strong background in community and preventative medicine having received medical training in Cuba, and then following the earthquake, completed a Global Health Delivery Systems degree at Harvard. In addition to daily outpatient services and the pharmacy at Haiti Clinic, a number of community health initiatives and training programs are underway. Dozens of local residents received training to act as community health agents to visit neighbours, provide first aid, deliver medicine, etc. Ten community health agents are school parents who apply their four hours of weekly school service to this work. At ADECA school, lunches were originally provided to all children, but funding reductions prevented continuing the program. They hope to reinstate school lunches in the future. In the meantime, multivitamin supplements continue to be provided to pre-school children through the support of an organization called Vitamin Angels. As for food, the school provides healthy snacks daily, such as peanut butter, locally-grown bananas, and hard-boiled eggs. Parents are encouraged as well to provide children with snacks, including locally-grown fruits and vegetables.

In partnership with Beyond Borders, Haiti Partners is implementing programs to end practices of violence against women and girls and to end child domestic servitude. They aspire in the future to provide accelerated learning at the school for the former ' restavèk' children – including those who were sent away by local families into servitude, as well as any local children who were in servitude and did not attend school (Fig. 14).

2.2.6. Education and Participation

Through a carefully developed experiential program, called Circles of Change, we've promoted leadership and civic engagement with more than 10,000 Haitians. They have been exposed to leadership practices that honor human dignity and nurture respect. They're infecting others. This approach to leadership, that is completely new in Haiti, is helping to create a collaborative culture where innovation and entrepreneurship can thrive (Haiti Changemakers (2014).

Fig. 14. Haiti Clinic: equipped with outpatient rooms and a pharmacy, the clinic's doctor and nurse − along with regularly visiting volunteer doctors from the US − serve thousands of local residents each year.

Democracy building and participation cut across all aspects of education and community development wherever Haiti Partners works. Consistently over two decades, its leaders and associates have trained people in methods to change traditional leadership and education paradigms through participatory practices (as discussed above). They have earned an excellent reputation with international agencies and community leaders for the effectiveness of their participatory processes.

Community involvement and parental engagement in the life of the school have been core values and practices from the beginning of discussions between Haiti Partners and residents of Bellevue-La-Montagne. Architects shared early-stage drawings with residents inviting input and feedback every step of the way, frequently making changes based on learning from local knowledge. They held public open space meetings to invite dialogue on themes such as 'What does education mean, and what is the role of a school in the development of a community?' Even prior to embarking on detailed planning, design or construction for the ADECA school, Haiti Partners invited 80 local residents to take part in one of its six month Circles of Change training programs in civic engagement, which was implemented in 2011-12. Many of those 80 participants remain actively engaged years later in the school and community development projects, and some are now school parents, who are active volunteers in improving the school and keeping it running, and in ongoing education programs.

Haiti Partners draws on WorldBlu's ten guiding principles for democratic organizations for its work in communities, schools and its own organizational practices.[17] As part of its commitment, Haiti Partners' own employees anonymously evaluate the organization annually based on those principles, and it consistently receives high assessments. In 2016, school staff assessed leadership using this tool, and results made it the first school in the world to achieve recognition on the 'WorldBlu List'. Relatedly, Haiti Partners believes that continuing to model participatory practices and instill values of respect, learning, collaboration and accountability into education and community life will help to evolve a culture of changemaking. This would mean that local residents would feel a sense of agency to act, initiating projects with others and making changes that would improve local social, economic and environmental outcomes.

In short, transformative community development is what Haiti Partners aims to achieve through its education-centered approach. For them, that means inspiring and preparing Haitians to be changemakers, and supporting collaborations and movements to realize the change to which they aspire (Fig. 15).

On the surface, these education-centered community development efforts underway appear to be successful, but what do they mean for local people, and what is their potential to contribute to social transformation? We turn now to view the community development from the perspectives and lived experiences of some area residents.

3. Stories from behind the scenes: What does the development mean to local people?

> I would really like to see a change [in my life and the community] but I don't see how to do it. Only God can change things.

Widline (female participant, 47 years old)

This section provides a view from 'behind the scenes' of the community development projects, drawing on the lived experiences and views of local residents. As described in the methodology section above, we carried out in depth participatory research with 12 local people in 2013: two had children attending ADECA school,[18] two were employed at ADECA, six others had participated occasionally or regularly in local activities, and two had minimal involvement in the community developments projects. The research participants are represented as the 'embedded cases' in Fig. 1. Fifty percent of participants were women, and the group ranged in age from 17 to 49 years. The number of participants was capped at 12 people to provide for social learning during the course of the field work. Beyond the participatory research with this group, I have also drawn on the following sources to inform my analysis: daily de-briefings with field research assistants; direct observation of daily life and interactions, such as while participants were taking photographs during field exercises; informal

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[17] WorldBlu's ten principles for democratic organizations are here: http://www.worldblu.com/democratic-design/principles.php.

[18] As of this writing in 2016, five participants have children enrolled at the school.

Fig. 15. Public Open Space meeting on the role of education in community development: 300 people gathered to discuss the topic together; many led small discussion groups on related matters of their choosing.

discussions with other local residents; interviews with key informants, such as with local NGO leaders; and my field notes.

The aim of this qualitative research with local residents was to go beyond where the usual development perspective stops in order to expose not only dynamics of community development and change, but also to gauge whether social transformation is occurring. This latter means revealing what is less visible from the outside and what the community development means to people and implies in their lives. While building schools, providing quality education, starting social enterprises, and fostering a culture of environmental stewardship can contribute to positive community transformation, as the case makes evident is initiated or underway, a deeper understanding of the implications of these developments on local people's lives is essential to revealing the extent of social transformation. In short, community transformation implies that significant physical and spatial change elements are central along with community engagement and capacity, whereas social transformation is reflected primarily in changes to cultural norms, practices and beliefs.

My notion of community recognizes various power and discourse dimensions. This research therefore involves participatory methods to understand local complexities less visible from the outside, which expose tension points. Such tension points are born of acknowledging different ways of seeing and knowing, and facing uneven power relations. I investigated community dynamics in the field primarily through participatory methods (see Engle, 2015) and semi-structured in-depth household interviews with questions in six topic areas: household living conditions and livelihoods; earthquake stories and experiences of life since then; perceptions of the community development underway and local people's participation in change and 'voice' in decision making; subjective well being; and visions and concerns for the future of the community.

The findings in this section are based primarily on field work in 2013, and to a lesser extent preliminary field work in 2011 and 2012 as well as remote follow up in 2014-2016. Incorporating a temporal aspect to this research enables study of social change dynamics over time and longer-term impacts of community development and education projects. Therefore, it is designed as Qualitative

Longitudinal Research (QLR).[19] Data collected during household interviews and participatory research in 2013 serve as a baseline; the intention is to go back to the same participants and their families every few years in order to track changes over time. (Note: the full breadth of the baseline data is not represented here. While it contributes to the broader research agenda, it is outside the scope of this paper.)

3.1. Hearing voices of local resident participants

To analyze and interpret participants' interview responses and dialogue circle discussions, I drew on phronesis inquiry questions, which had also informed the context-specific research design.[20] The phronesis questions are: 1) Of what stories do I (we) find myself (ourselves) a part? 2) Where are we going as a community, and is it desirable? 3) Who wins and who loses and by what mechanisms of power? 4) What do we want to do?/What should be done? This line of inquiry revealed several overarching narratives, which I illustrate below with direct quotations from participants (translated from Haitian Creole). (Also see Table 2.) As well, I have interpreted a 'community core story', which synthesizes narratives from data collected through various dialogue circle discussions, including on a 'community timeline'. The 'tension points' revealed through synthesizing case data and 'behind the scenes' participant views follows later in this section. Additional findings exposed through the participatory photography and participatory mapping carried out with the same 12 participants are set out in a separate paper (Engle, 2015).

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[19] QLR (Qualitative Longitudinal Research) is about employing qualitative methods to explore phenomena or communities over time. The unit of analysis is usually the individual, and it is particularly useful when aiming to understand change over time between agency and structural determinants (McLeod and Thomson 2009: 63-64). For example, how *pathways* are constituted; how *changes* and *adaptations* take place; and/or the *impact* of major events or changing circumstances.

[20] Phronesis means 'practical knowledge' or wisdom. 'Phronetic social science' posits that a different and highly relevant kind of knowledge is produced through 'intimate familiarity with practice in contextualized settings' (Schram 2012: 17).

Table 2
Narratives and Tension Points in Bellevue-La-Montagne case.

Phronesis inquiry questions	Narratives exposed	Tension points
Of what stories do I (we) find myself (ourselves) a part?	Vulnerability, scarcity, violence	**1. MEMORY.** Collective community memory exposed the turbulent history of slavery, disasters, dependency, and oppression; a nostalgia for Duvalier era; and a broken education system that perpetuates societal problems of distrust and classism.
Where are we going as a community? Is it desirable?	Community progress, yet individuals' stagnation and structural inequality	**2. OUTCOMES.** Community development outcomes vis-à-vis individual and household circumstances pose challenges, as many local residents' lived experience of hardship remains unimproved.
Who wins and who loses and by what mechanisms of power?	Sense of powerlessness, acceptance, resignation	**3. CULTURE.** Participatory culture is not necessarily 'changemaker' culture. Local residents have come to actively participate and take great pride in the school and community development, however, a sense of agency to bring about change is not yet evident.
What do we want to do? What should be done?	Aspirations: 1) collective action to become a 'model' community; 2) connections with others in Haiti and abroad; 3) a better life and future (e.g. lower food prices, jobs, education, electricity)	**4. RELATIONSHIPS.** Dynamics in the relationships of governments, civil society, NGOs and the 'international community' are fraught with mistrust, lack of accountability and inertia; there is a sense of paralysis about how to structurally improve the situation and move forward.

3.1.1. Narratives of vulnerability, scarcity and violence

The day of the earthquake, the sky was dark [January 12, 2010]; we thought it was going to rain . . . my mother was cooking . . . the beans were in the pot . . . [and she told me to] 'go light the fire'. I was holding the baby. All of a sudden I heard the house go 'too toot, too toot', I felt a stone hit me . . . I felt the house shaking . . . I thought everything was over. I yelled, 'be prepared, Jesus is coming!'. I looked down toward the city and saw a lot of smoke. I went to my neighbour's house, and her child was killed . . . rocks had fallen on her bed and crushed him. All the houses around were destroyed. If I had put my baby in bed as I normally did at that time, he would have been dead, as that room was completely destroyed. We lost everything.

Esther (female participant, 32 years old)

When the earthquake hit, I was working in the field. While I was turning the ground, I was lifting the pickaxe, I felt I was swinging, something was sweeping me away. I didn't know what to do, so I dropped the pickaxe. I lay down on the ground. There were other people at home, I heard them calling me. I asked what was wrong. They said they didn't know. I learned the house was destroyed. I asked if there were people inside. They said there was noone. Everybody was outside. I said thank God, if everyone was outside, there was noone inside, to heck with it. No problem, we can build houses, but we can't buy human beings. As long as you were not inside, if there was food inside, everything inside got broken, that's not a problem. All I care about is that you were not inside.

Yves (male participant, 47 years old)

Following 'Mr. Earthquake', I have become very sensitive to noise . . . I was traumatized after the quake and my heart was constantly beating fast. Sometimes I still have headaches for no reason; I had hit my head too.' [From a woman who was seriously injured when an iron bar punctured her back in the quake, and she directly witnessed many other dead and dying, including two people right next to her on whom a concrete wall fell and severed both their bodies.]

Evelyne (female participant, 28 years old)

Research participants were devastated by the earthquake. All twelve knew precisely where they were when the earthquake occurred at 4:53pm on January 12, 2010, and all suffered great losses. Each of their homes was destroyed in the quake, as were most local residents'. Representative of the area population in this sense, participants had lived in small homes of one, two or three rooms, of concrete or dirt floors, metal roofs and concrete block or stone and stucco walls. Before as after the quake, most have no electricity and none have indoor plumbing. Six years post-earthquake, only a few local residents have been able to rebuild their homes and none of the research participants have. Most have made repairs or built new 'temporary' shelters with corrugated sheet metal or plastic tarps. When it rains, many peoples' homes flood, and they worry that they will be blown over by high winds in frequent hurricanes. People expect to continue to face disasters regularly – hurricanes, flooding, and perhaps, another earthquake. This sense of precariousness pervades decision-making and contributes to short-term thinking and lack of a sense of agency about the future.

People of Bellevue-La-Montagne were first victimized by the earthquake, and then again by scams and promises post-earthquake [such as to rebuild homes].

Felix (male participant, 23 years old)

Further devastation immediately post-earthquake occurred with unfilled promises and outright scams by people who would take homeowners' cash deposits for housing materials and either never be heard from again, or bring small amounts of cement to appear legitimate, and then never return. Understandably, people were discouraged, and frustrated that they had no way of knowing who or when to trust others. Given the lack of enforceable contracts in Haiti, the issue of trust is highly important to almost all relationships and transactions.

Everyday life is a struggle for most participants, who appear to be a fairly representative subset of the local population in this regard. Most are subsistence farmers or market traders who live day-to-day trying to earn enough to feed their families. A regularly visiting doctor claims that malnutrition in the community is chronic[21]. When people have the means, they make coffee in the morning and eat it with bread. One or two cooked meals during the day generally consist of rice and beans; also cornmeal, spaghetti, sweet potatoes, avocadoes, mangoes, plantains, tomatoes and peppers are common. Many report that they and their children sometimes go to bed hungry. Only two of twelve participants have jobs with regular salaries. Market traders in the group reported average net incomes of roughly $1–2 US for a days' work. The subsistence farmers either own or rent small garden plots.

When we can get it we eat meat; also rice, beans, plantains, corn, sweet potatoes, avocadoes, oranges. We get them from our

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[21] This American doctor with Haiti Clinic sees hundreds of local residents during visits several times per year. After malnutrition, the doctor cited sexual health problems as the most pervasive concern, and which were found in nearly all women and girls from age 13.

gardens and the market. We eat 2-3 times per day, or once per day when things are tight. Sometimes we go to bed without having eaten, we wake up, make coffee, and have nothing else all day. Or a good Samaritan comes and brings some food for us, we cook a meal and go to bed. Sometimes we don't have salt or oil, so we just boil whatever it is, take some greens from the bushes, and eat them. We can't buy on credit, because we won't have money to repay it.

Alexandre (male participant, 31 years old)

What I heard from elders in the community, during Duvalier, life was very good because if they went to town with 20 [Haitian] dollars, they would not be able to carry the goods. But now if you have 1,000 [Haitian] dollars, you will be holding only a little plastic bag to carry what you purchased. 100 [Haitian] dollars cannot buy a good pair of sandals. Life has become very hard for us.

Maxim (male participant, 17 years old)

The high cost of food relative to income and the labour required to meet daily needs – such as carrying water, hand washing clothing, and charcoal cooking – contributes to the daily struggle. Additional costs for healthcare, housing materials, school fees, and funeral expenses add up and contribute to people's daily struggles and stressors. Participants expressed desire for electricity (only a few have occasional access), and for better roads. They suffer disaster setbacks, particularly hurricanes, at fairly regular intervals.

Participants expressed desire to improve themselves and the area's reputation. They feel a stigma as a 'backward', violent community, and a few expressed that 'God is shining a light' on them through the local development. The community is changing; people are proud to have the school, the construction training, outsiders visiting, and new connections, and they want to 'rise to the occasion'. Many participants want to shed their reputation as a violent, 'backward' place – and to change certain behaviours and practices of violence.

What I would like to see change [in the community], I would like for us to collaborate, for us to not be fighting, because we're beginning to develop here. There are certain things we shouldn't do. For example, I hear noises, fighting, rock throwing, and machetes hitting. That shouldn't be, because now we have important people coming to the community. It's up to us to show that we respect ourselves; there are certain things we shouldn't do.

Yolette (female participant, 27 years old)

Participants were nostalgic for the Duvalier dictatorship era. They claimed that not only was food more affordable then, but that they felt safer. Following the fall of the dictatorship, Haiti began in 1987 its never ending transition to democracy. The transition is ongoing and people feel that life has become more difficult and less secure during this period.

During Duvalier it was safer. You were not afraid; you'd see people outside playing dominoes, drinking. Well, if you're in the street [now], you're walking, someone comes up to you, he asks you a question and you don't answer well, he crushes you right there.

After [President] Aristide left, they were going around in broad daylight, killing people, robbing people, taking everything they had. Although people slept in bushes and trees, they had to sleep with one eye opened.

The reason it was better and there was more security during Duvalier was that there were no gangs at the time. Maybe there were bandits, but no gangs yet. I think the TV brought a number of things here in Haiti. The biggest gangsters, they come hiding here in Haiti; there are children out in the streets; they are the most dangerous ones. There used to be [tonton] macoutes [who were recognizable for their uniforms and signature sunglasses] before, but now people don't know who people are.[22]

For me, there is no government that doesn't make mistakes. But I think Jean Claude [Duvalier] and his Dad [Papa Doc Duvalier] spent 29 years in power. The only thing I can blame Jean Claude for is the pigs he killed, because they were like life. They killed our pigs, they gave us 40 [Haitian dollars] for a large pig, 20 for an average, 5 for a small. And our life was finished since then, because it was our asset. For me, that's the only mistake I can blame him for. After they killed our pigs, they came with other pigs and you needed a lot of money to buy one.

His [Duvalier's] government was a good one, you found food easily. It was a good government as long as you didn't make trouble.

That's what we would like from government–to provide food, to provide peace, to provide jobs.

Miracle (male participant, 49 years old)

I asked participants if there were many tonton macoutes who had lived in this area, and if so, is that why local residents had a sense of security?

There were many. Most of the people around here were [tonton] macoutes. It would be better if we had them again.

Jean (male participant, 47 years old)

3.1.2. Narratives of community progress, yet individuals' stagnation and structural inequality

All research participants reported that, in general, the school and community development represented positive change for the life of the community and children's opportunities for the future. However, only two of the 12 have regular jobs as a result of the development, and none of the participants had been able to afford materials to rebuild their earthquake-ravaged homes. Of the ten without salaried jobs, they reported that their own livelihoods have not significantly changed as a result of development; nonetheless, they have great hopes for the community's future. Participants indicated that the school and development projects underway have become deeply significant for the community's identity and people's aspirations for the future.

. . . every other locality is advanced, this locality has never been advanced. It wasn't until [Haiti Partners] came to build the school here; the locality has changed. I can say, well, we're not living the woods anymore. That's what I see; we didn't have a school nearby, sometimes one of my children went to school up there in the mountain, when he was going to the official 6th grade exams, I had to take him all the way down [to the city] for the exams. Moreover, to go to the doctor, you had to go all the way to Pétion-ville to see the doctor. But now, we have doctors in the locality and free of charge on top of it. Our school, nearby. And we are going to have bread; everything will be close by. In the future, you will have a supermarket; if you need certain things, you'll be able to buy them. You see it is a good thing.

Witelle (female participant, 45 years old)

Participants expressed pride and a sense that their voices had been heard in decision-making about the new school and other development projects. They are encouraged by the attention from outsiders, and expressed that they like to see foreigners coming to visit.

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[22] 'Tonton macoutes' were the members of the security force under the Duvalier dictatorships. They were notorious for their brutality and for perpetrating violence and fear, and for nighttime raids were many people would 'disappear' from their homes and were usually never seen or heard from again. Some say that the sole functioning institution of the Duvalier years was the military apparatus, when there were as many as 300,000 tonton macoutes. A striking contrast: in 2015 in Haiti, there are estimated to be 200,000 formal jobs of all sectors in the entire country.

Every time Mr. John [Haiti Partners] is doing an activity, he always invites us so we can brainstorm together and determine what is good for the community.

Yves (male participant, 47 years old)

Amidst what they consider to be positive community change, ten of 12 participants expressed that their own personal circumstances have not improved as a result of local development. They do not have the means to rebuild their homes and their incomes have not increased. Those with young children who attend or will attend the school are hopeful that their children will have better lives with more opportunity as a result of their education.

A number of new jobs have been created for school staff and construction workers, which has been generally positive, but has had some unexpected and unintended consequences that surface gender-based structural inequalities. In at least of couple of cases, men who have jobs have used their income/power to have additional sexual partners and children, and their wives and older children are now worse off.

3.1.3. Narratives of a sense of powerlessness, acceptance, and resignation.

Participants shared stories and sentiments that reveal a sense of powerlessness and resignation that 'God decides, so there is not much we can do.' Besides God, they expressed that, to a far lesser extent, power can come from their working collectively ('putting their heads together') and from trusted international allies, such as Haiti Partners. In terms of leadership, a vacuum was left when the local vodou priest, who was seen as the primary local leader, was killed several years earlier.

There's not a leader in this community; the leader we had was murdered. After that, others looked down on us. Some people are angry that the school was built here; they say we don't deserve it. They didn't think something great could happen here . . . It was God who sent this project here to help us.

Widline (female participant, 47 years old)

Some feel a lack of agency to make change, not only for reasons of 'God deciding' or resource constraints, but also due to uncertainty about the future, particularly regarding the next disaster, 'which could happen anytime', as many participants expressed. This sense of acceptance and lack of agency keeps people stuck and accepting of their circumstances, rather than organizing to fight for systemic change. Relatedly, while there is evidence that a culture of participation is evolving locally, it is still far from a culture of 'changemaking', in which people feel empowered, motivated, and responsible to change their situation.

In reporting on their well-being, most individuals claimed to be generally content with their lives, citing a main reason being that neither they nor any family members were in hospital. Most also reported that they felt their lives and daily activities were valuable and had meaning. Those reported to be the least happy with their lives were young men with higher levels of education (high school) who were not able to find jobs.

A sense of powerlessness is connected with the lack of available jobs. There are far fewer jobs than people who want and need them, and in some cases new jobs created through the community development have caused tensions and family difficulties. Some people are jealous of others for being hired for coveted jobs.

People also do not have a sense of power or voice to be heard by government. In our participatory actor mapping session in which we named all organizations, actors, groups, and agencies who have any engagement or provide services in the community, after two hours of identifying and discussing, not one state agency or governing body had been mentioned – not even police. It is worth noting that one participant is himself a local government representative!

The Haitian state doesn't even think about us, even the mayor is not giving us support; if one section of the road gets damaged, we are the ones to find a way [to repair it], friends, we buy them sugar and sweet drinks to give drinks to other people to do it. There is no mayor thinking about us where we are, it's like we ourselves need to have our own mayor here in the 4th [section of the ward], or our own president. A president never came here, let alone the mayor. Since I'm a CASEC's assistant [local government representative], when there is a problem with robbers, I usually call the Pétion-ville police station; when I tell them where I am they tell me they don't know the place Blanchard 2, I should go down to the Pétion-ville police station to get them. They tell me they don't have any fuel and that if I can find some men I should bring the robber down to Pétion-ville. I feel hopeless when that happens.

Yves (male participant, 47 years old)

Consistent with what I have heard from many Haitians, participants do not expect that the state will ever act in their interests. This is rational; there is not evidence that it ever has, and there is no history nor experience of a true social contract in Haiti. Expectations of the state are very low.

As long as you have a population, they have security, they can eat, the people feel they have a good president. Nowadays they don't feel any president tried to work to bring down the cost of living. They take their money and hide it in Swiss banks, they won't be staying [here in Haiti], and they have a place to go. They don't work toward bringing down the high cost of living.

Jean (male participant, 47 years old)

Where there is good, there has to be bad. A government never comes into power with destruction. If not, you're not a real government. Here's how it happened. We Haitian people, this is what we need: beating, food, entertainment and if there needs to be a killing, they will kill you. Here's how it was during that government, Duvalier himself gave an order in the morning, later if the order had not been followed, immediately the day after he sanctions. The bandits causing trouble, he calls you to the [Presidential] palace, before we used the name bandit, he calls you and asks you how many presidents there are, he says he's the only one and he has you taken away to be killed. When the rest of them heard that you went there and didn't return, they walked straight and stopped doing what they were doing. This is how the Duvalier government functioned that made it good for the population. If a market trader increased the price of food, he [Duvalier] decreased it immediately – he set the prices. . . . What does he do? [Duvalier] gives you food at a cheap price to fill your stomach, he has you beaten up to keep you from being violent and he gives you milk and sugar at a cheap price, what else do you need? A government needs to give the population food, drink, entertainment, and beating.

Miracle (male participant, 49 years old)

On my way to my market stall the other day, I stopped on the side of the road to sell someone some tomatoes, and a person from City government hit me on the arm with a stick! It's forbidden now to sell in the street, you know.

Lisa (female participant, 25 years old)

On the notion of 'a right to human flourishing' that I introduced, one person responded:

I think it's a nice idea but I don't know about those governments; if It's up to governments, we will never flourish. Ask the government how many people are living in Haiti, they will not be able to tell you. The state is supposed to know how much electricity, how much money is spent on food, water, they're very strict about that elsewhere, but the governments here don 't know anything about you.

Evelyne (female participant, 28 years old)

3.1.4. Narratives of aspiration for: 1) more connections with the outside world, 2) collective action to be a 'model' community, and 3) a better life and future.

Participant interviews, participatory photography and participatory mapping exercises consistently revealed that participants see the new school buildings and grounds, and the education programs being carried out, as catalysts for improving outcomes of their lives and especially for the future lives of local children. Participants all reported that they highly value the school and related development projects. And for those who took part in local co-design and participatory engagement sessions, all reported that they feel that their voices were heard and taken into account in decision-making processes.

During interviews, participants were asked their impressions about positive or negative aspects of the school and local development projects underway, and all reported positive aspects and a great sense of hope for the community as a whole. There was disappointment by two young male participants that they did not have access to the new construction jobs and hoped that that might change in the future.

The participatory photography exercises involved photo-taking of 'sacred' and favourite sites as well as images of aspirations, and all participants included photographs of the school in their 'positive' photos. One of the participatory mapping exercises involved identifying and assessing importance and effectiveness of all agencies and organizations working locally. The school and education programs came out at the top of the list in terms of both their importance to the community and the effectiveness of their impact.

Participants were eager to share their views, life experiences, and earthquake stories during the course of this research, and asked to be identified in its representation. When I returned and shared videos about them that I had produced and shared with others in the 'outside world', participants seemed pleased, and I carried out 'probe' interviews to document their reactions and whether and how their lives had changed in the interim period. Participants are pleased and proud that visitors from elsewhere in Haiti and abroad come to see their community and new school. While many participants know of relatives in other regions of Haiti or in the US, Canada, or France, only one person of twelve had ever travelled outside of the Port-au-Prince region. None receives remittances from outside.

> If it were not for the meetings related to the school, ADECA, I would not be sitting face to face with you today for an interview and I would not know you either . . . it is thanks to the school that we're working in partnership and, as a result, you and me meet today.
> Yves (male participant, 47 years old)

People aspire to live in a community with quality schools, health services, electricity, roads, visitors. While aspirations for the collective seem clear to people, none reported specifically what action they personally would like to take. They spoke generally about 'putting their heads together' to work for change, but they did not give evidence of a sense of agency to move forward. This is not surprising given the circumstances. Not only is the community emerging from a traumatic past, but participants also face daily challenges to meet their survival needs. In addition, participants have no to low levels of formal schooling, most did not have a stable or adequate source of income, and all but one have not had an opportunity to visit other parts of Haiti beyond their region, let alone other parts of the world. That said, amidst the vulnerability of this situation, participants showed a collective will to take action, in whatever capacity they could. Those who were school parents or who expected to be at some point, showed particular interest in engaging in the life of the school and in participating in volunteering and education activities.

> I'm very happy about the school. One good thing for me with the school is that I became president of the parents' committee. I am the one who, along with other parents, plant flowers and keep the school yard nice. In the future, I would like for the school to educate the kids well and for the kids to be able to speak the three languages [Haitian Creole, French, and English], and also for the school to grow for more children to come in future years.
> The school is a great thing for the community . . . There are 10-year-old children who go to other schools who haven't learned certain things the three-year-olds who go to our school have learned.
> Esther (female participant, 32 years old)

> If we all cooperate, in five years, we can have a village – a model area. It could have a park, a swimming pool, a grocery store so that people don't have to go all the way to town for their goods; a soccer field, a dance club for entertainment and stress relief. There will be churches, schools for all levels of education – preschool, elementary, secondary and college.
> Evelyne (female participant, 28 years old)

> Ten years from now, I hope that everyone whose house was destroyed will have a new house and will live in a nice community and have a better life.
> Witelle (female participant, 45 years old)

3.1.5. Community Core Story

I have woven together narratives above and other findings from the methods – from individual stories, image and mapping analysis, and collective dialogue sessions – and searched for patterns to interpret a meta-narrative, or 'community core story' (such as in Dunstan and Sarkissian, 1994). This narrative is one interpretation and is by no means a complete representation of all the qualitative data collected. As a next step in this longitudinal research, I intend to take this core story back to the community as a basis for discussion about how life has changed in the intervening period and how participants would want to have the community core story evolve over time. Such an approach is consistent as well with phronesis research and its fundamental questions, as described above in the methodology section. The core story consists of six vignettes: 'forgotten' place; the 'good years'; violence and insecurity; never-ending transition to democracy; the earthquake; and community pride and connections. Each vignette is briefly described in first person plural – intended to represent voices of community residents.

- **'Forgotten' place.** We are considered by surrounding communities to be 'backward', and some say we're violent. We are a 'forgotten' place – development happened around us, but never came here. When people are sick here, they live with pain, or die because health clinics are too far away and medicine is too expensive. If we need the police and call for them, they usually say they don't know where we are, or they want us to pay for their fuel to come find us. We dont have money for that. Some of our kids go to school, some of the time, but it's hard because the schools are far away and cost money. Sometimes we have to choose whether to eat or send our kids to school.
- **'Good years' under Duvalier dictatorships.** When Papa Doc and then his son, Jean-Claude, Duvalier were in power (1957-1986), life was much better here. We could afford to eat and we were safer. The tonton macoutes [Duvaliers police, many of whom lived nearby] only gave you trouble if you were making trouble yourself. As long as you minded your own business, life was much better.

- **Post-Aristide violence and insecurity**. Following the coup détat and exile of Aristide in the early 1990s, life became insecure. Food prices surged, there was little opportunity to improve our livelihoods, and criminals often came up through our village. On the bright side, during that time, in 1997, the Germany Embassy paid to have water piped here, so for the first time we had a nearby water source.
- **Never-ending transition.** Throughout the 2000s, food prices increased; we had regular disaster setbacks that affected our homes, roads, and crops – primarily hurricanes and floods; and we continued to lack connections to the outside world. Few of us had telephones or ever left the region. We continue today to lack electricity, good sanitation, good roads. Democracy and decentralisation of government never came about as expected.
- **'Mr. Earthquake'.** The 2010 earthquake – what we call 'goudougoudou' or 'Misye tramblemendete' – was devastating. We suffered huge material losses; some of us were injured and saw others die. Most of us had small one to three room homes; nearly all were destroyed, and we cant afford materials to rebuild. Scam artists made it worse in the aftermath. Many of us paid what meagre money we had for the promise of materials, which never came. Who knows when the next quake or other disaster will come?
- **Community pride and connections.** With the construction of the school, the health clinic, the bakery and all the training and participation activities happening here, we feel less forgotten and have a sense of pride and hope for the future. Our community is improving, and surrounding communities no longer look down on us. Even though life is difficult – food prices are still high, there is little opportunity for work, we have droughts and floods that threaten our crops, and we still have not been able to rebuild our homes; we are glad about the new school and the other community development projects, and we think life will be better for our kids because they will get a good education and have connections with the outside world. We don't expect the Haitian government to care about us or provide services here, but we will work together and with trustworthy international partners to build a better community and future.

3.2. Tension points revealed through the research

Focusing on tension points is central to phronetic social science, and is meant to highlight how power relations stand in the way of addressing problems. In this discussion section, I integrate interpretations from the descriptive case study section with the 'voices' heard from local people to identify tension points. Tension points are the 'fault lines' that phronetic researchers surface and put into question with an aim to create space for better practices to emerge, such as by activating 'levers of transformation' (which are set out in the next section). Tension points involve relationships of power that are particularly susceptible to change, 'because they are fraught with dubious practices, contestable knowledge and potential conflict' (Flyvbjerg et al., 2012: 288). They are weak spots in any struggle where disagreement creates an opening for research to sway opinion and move a decision in a particular direction.

Tension points in this case are revealed primarily through field work analysis (including participatory research, household interviews and observation), as well as document study, and interviews with Haiti Partners. Four such tension points, as revealed through field work and participants' and NGO narratives, are around: memory; developmental outcomes; a culture of change; and relationships between the state and the people. Each is described below.

Tension point 1. MEMORY: Collective community memory exposed the turbulent history of slavery, disasters, dependency, and oppression; a nostalgia for Duvalier era; and a broken education system that perpetuates societal problems of distrust and classism. Most Haitians have not had access to a decent quality formal education system. Sadly, even those that do have access to education are usually part of a system that is classist and perpetuates patterns of oppression and mistrust. Universal access to education has never existed in Haiti, so it is outside of people's experience and expectations. People tend not to expect any services from the state – the only specific expectations that were raised by participants were to have some level of public security and affordable prices for food. Sense of security and affordable food prices are how many judge a regime, and the lack of those two were the reasons that most residents interviewed gave for being nostalgic for the Duvalier years – they were less hungry then, and they felt safer. In our research dialogue circles, it was difficult to have a critical dialogue about the Duvalier years given the hardships of life today for participants and local residents.

The tensions around history and memory suggest that it will be important for Haitians to develop culturally-relevant curricula and education programs about Haiti's past and present, that incorporate Freirian critical consciousness analysis, as part of the country's path toward a quality and accessible education system.

Tension point 2. OUTCOMES: Community development outcomes vis-à-vis individual and household circumstances pose challenges, as many local residents' lived experience of hardship remains unimproved. It is agreed by visitors and locals alike that community change is underway in Bellevue-La-Montagne around the ADECA school and associated initiatives. However, change for individual residents and households, for the most part, is far less apparent. Only a few of hundreds of immediately local households have been able to rebuild their earthquake-destroyed homes and most people suffer from malnutrition and struggle to meet basic needs on a daily basis. What does this mean for social change, in a longer term perspective? Research participants reported that it was fine with them, for now, that the community is advancing while their circumstances remain unchanged for the most part, and they hypothesize that over time, as the community changes, their individual and household circumstances will improve as well. Those participants with children who attend ADECA or will attend ADECA, and those who are employed at ADECA are most optimistic. All participants seemed to derive hope and a sense of pride from the attention that the new school and community development brings from visitors from outside the area and abroad. And they sense that their reputation among surrounding communities is improving.

While the community as a whole is improving in terms of education, amenities and connections with outsiders, living conditions and circumstances of most individual resident households do not seem to have improved. In part, the setback of the earthquake contributes to this. Likewise, while there seems to be evidence of community transformation in the case study, whether social transformation is occurring is unclear. This study is designed as qualitative longitudinal research (QLR) to enable tracking changes in household outcomes over time. A related tension with participants is wanting a better life for their children (a long-term aspiration), juxtaposed with potential disasters and losing everything (short-term fear). People value community well-being over their own personal living conditions. All 12 participants lost their homes in the earthquake, and none have been able to rebuild, primarily because they lack resources for materials. Yet, they are so pleased that their children can attend a beautiful new school and that other people in surrounding communities are impressed by the local development.

Participants are proud to value community and collaboration over individual gain. Some participants expressed that they felt their community had been 'chosen' by God for the school and other development projects underway, and they share a new sense of pride and hope for community change. They are encouraged as well to have foreign visitors to their area, as they claim that no 'blan' (white people) had visited regularly in the past, as they now do.

Tension point 3. CULTURE. Participatory culture is not necessarily 'changemaker' culture. Local residents have come to actively engage in community development activities, however, a sense of agency to initiate change is not yet evident. Thousands of people have been involved in participatory activities led by Haiti Partners and other local groups, from taking part in public Open Space meetings, to weekly Sunday community meetings to discuss design and implementation plans, health training, volunteering, and involvement with community gardening projects. There is evidence of a growing culture of participation, where people attend meetings and trainings, are actively involved in community development activities, express themselves and feel that their voices are heard and taken into consideration in decision making. The key challenge now is to evolve that culture in a way that people would have a stronger sense of agency, or self-efficacy, and would take collective action to express themselves not only to Haiti Partners and local community members, but also to local government, larger organizations, and others in power working outside the community and whose work affects (or could affect) their lives. Importantly, an evolution to such a 'changemaker' culture would mean that local people would initiate their own projects including (social) enterprises and other activities that demonstrate a stronger sense of agency for taking collective action to bring about change.

However, it is important to understand this situation in light of the current context described in the first section of this paper. Local level challenges of deprivation and disempowerment are deeply entrenched, and structural inequality is embedded in cultural norms and historical practices to such an extent that in many cases, people are not conscious of them.

Tension point 4. RELATIONSHIPS. Dynamics in the relationships of governments, civil society, NGOs and the 'international community' are fraught with mistrust, lack of accountability and inertia. Haiti's tumultuous history and perpetual lack of functioning institutions that operate in the public interest have left a void of a social contract, and hence a lack of trust of people in institutions of the state. There is simply not a perception that governing institutions – Haitian or international – have provided sustained support in a way that was in the interests of local people or communities bettering themselves. At best, those in power have typically been patronistic in their aid regimes in ways that would perpetuate dependence, and at worst Haitian governments have been predatory or ruthless, while international agencies have acted more in their host countries' or donor agencies' countries' interests, than in the interests of 'ordinary' Haitians. This has led to a situation where people tend not to trust institutions and have no expectation that a government would ever act in their interests. If aid is bestowed, it is often carried out in a short-term, 'relief' perspective, and is not about building capacity of residents so that they can change their longer-term livelihood, education, or development trajectories. There has never been a social contract in Haiti, so, for the most part, people judge a government's success based on whether food was affordable and they felt safe under the regime. By these measures, research participants were highly nostalgic for Duvalier years. A number of tonton macoutes lived in the area, which seems to have provided a sense a protection to local people during the Duvalier dictatorship era from 1957-1986. People in this area feel less secure in the post-dictatorship years

from 1987 to the present, which coincide with the years of transitioning to democracy and attempts toward a decentralized state.

In this context, people have become highly reliant on themselves, their neighbors and social networks for basic survival. That Haitians are 'socially resilient' has become a euphemism for 'self-reliant'. Because of the long-term and deeply embedded practices of state oppression and domination of people and their means to livelihoods – primarily agricultural production – Haitian culture has evolved highly complex means for social resilience, which at community level replaces what a social contract between state and society would be expected to provide. The sophisticated informality that has evolved in the absence of a social contract involves community members' delicately balancing an egalitarian existence (Dubois, 2010). Culturally specific traditions of this existence have emerged from the 'lakou' socio-spatial configuration of community life, as well as cultural traditions of vodou, which emphasize values of solidarity and equality, while concurrently can have a tendency to reproduce skewed relationships of power, and that can perpetuate patterns of oppression.[23]

The post-earthquake period has seen further decline in the breakdown of state-society relations, during which time living conditions appear to have deteriorated as well for the vast majority of Haitians. In the post-disaster period, Haiti has been reduced to a 'vitual trusteeship' of the international community, according to Robert Fatton, Jr. (2014 and 2016), who characterizes Haiti as one of a handful of countries on the planet (and the only in the Americas) which has fallen to the 'outer periphery' of the world economic system. With this backdrop, bringing about social transformation at community level is extremely challenging, yet equally imperative. Fundamental to social transformation is changing state-society relationships and improving accountability as well as transparency of state agencies, NGOs operating in the country, and importantly, rendering international agencies responsible to Haitians for the results of their policies and practices.

This would imply moving from goals of 'social resilience' in Haiti to 'transformative resilience', which would be cultivated through practices of 'transformative community development', such as the ADECA case. 'Transformative community development' refers to a community development that is contributing not only to community transformation, but also to social and systems transformation. Glimpses of systems transformation are underway at ADECA, such as forging new relationships with police and getting them involved at the school with education programs. Much more is needed, however, if state-society relationships are to be improved.

In the next section I address how tension points, like crises, can open possibilities for change. Tension points revealed in this case can create space for better practices to emerge through activating existing and potential levers of transformation. Such levers are instructive for scaling to broader policy and practice change in Haiti as well as systemic change proposals put forward as priorities in the report 'Haiti: Toward a New Narrative' (Singh and Barton-Dock, 2015).

4. Leverage points for transformation

'Leverage points' in systems theory are 'places within a complex system (a corporation, an economy, a living body, a city, an ecosystem) where a small shift in one thing can produce big

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[23] *Vodou* is a philosophical and spiritual worldview with 6,000 year old roots in the part of West Africa now known as Benin. *Vodou* provides a window into the inner life of the Haitian people. For further readings on *vodou* and *lakou* traditions, see Bellegarde-Smith and Michel (2006) and Smith (2001).

changes in everything' ([Meadows, 1997: 1](#)). Leverage points represent possibilities for transformative change. I have identified existing and potential 'levers of transformation' based on synthesizing analyses of: 1) the tension points revealed from 'outsider' and 'insider' perspectives; 2) literature in the theory and methodology sections above; and 3) my research in Haiti (notably [Engle, 2014, 2015; Engle-Warnick et al., 2013 Engle et al., 2016](#)) as well as my own professional experience in community development and social change. Learning from the Bellevue-La-Montagne case points to a number of possible strategies to activate levers of change.

4.1. Lever of Transformation 1: Education

The slave rebellion history and struggle for independence in 1804 to become the world's first black republic seem to be widely known in Haiti. However, there would appear a lack of a collectively understood and shared 'critical consciousness' about subjugation and oppression perpetrated in various ways particularly in the 20th century through, for example, the American occupation, the genocide of Haitians by Dominicans, and the extent of the Duvalier brutality. Also there seems to be a lack of information among Haitians about other countries with similar struggles, and about Haiti's role in the world and what it has in common with many other countries, such as former dictatorships transitioning to democracy and which also have suffered ongoing 'conflict-poverty' traps. By creating context-appropriate curricula and mechanisms for sharing historical knowledge and engaging in collective critical analysis, Haitians would have tools to together forge pathways toward reducing their vulnerabilities and strengthening resilience.

Because of the deeply embedded structural inequality in Haiti and lack of awareness that associated cultural norms and political practices are contestable, it is essential to provide education that enables critical analysis of current structures and power dynamics. The elements of agency of individuals, collective action of local residents, and structural levels of analysis are core to Freirian

critical consciousness and also to phronetic social science espoused by [Flyvbjerg (2001)](#). Likewise, collective rights – right to the city, right to human flourishing, and right to voice (discussed above), provide toolkits for radical change. These education approaches can empower change by making people aware that their situation is not a given and that alternative pathways to a better life for people and country are possible, and can be collectively envisaged and acted upon.

Beyond the content of education, as mentioned previously, the traditional educational approach in Haiti does not encourage critical thinking, creativity, questioning, or solutions-based thinking, but rather has been one of rote memorization and often corporal punishment. The participatory approach to education at ADECA is directly counter to traditional ways and involves cultivating a love of learning, integrating parents into the life of school, and working to change the educational system to one that helps children develop strong character through values-based education. Values of mutual respect, integrity, compassion, empathy, trust, and collaboration are central to the approach and aim to contribute to strengthening ethical citizenship and leadership from an early age. Also, a positive culture of learning and lifelong education pervades each element of the community development at ADECA, which is slowly taking hold in terms of social attitudes and practices, as evidenced through local residents' engagement in regular dialogue to review and plan the community's future and their own roles in it ([Table 3](#)).

4.2. Lever of Transformation 2: Place Identity, Networks and Research

The importance of location and 'place' – including history, environmental conditions, amenities, and visual imagery – contribute to collective identity among local residents. Place matters. Bawosya is now 'on the map' because of the new school, local development, and visits from outsiders. Local people expressed a place attachment and pride to live there, when until recently they felt shame. The context-sensitive and high quality

Table 3
Levers of transformation from community to structural levels in Haiti.

Phronesis inquiry questions	Narratives exposed in Bellevue-La-Montagne case	Tension points revealed	Levers of transformation: community to structural levels	Priorities for Haiti (Singh & Barton-Dock, 2015)
Of what stories do I (we) find myself (ourselves) a part?	Vulnerability, scarcity, violence	1. **MEMORY**. Turbulent history of slavery, disasters, dependency, and oppression; nostalgia for Duvalier era; broken education system that perpetuates societal problems of distrust and classism.	**Education**: Develop culturally-relevant curricula and education programs about Haiti's past and present, that incorporate Freirian critical consciousness analysis. Expand the reach of character strengthening and values-based educational and education-centered community development approaches and practices of Haiti Partners to existing and new schools in Haiti, including public schools. Relatedly: Strengthen literacy skills, improve education system, and increase access to education.	*Reducing vulnerabilities and building resilience.*
Where are we going as a community? Is it desirable?	Community progress, yet individuals' stagnation and structural inequality	2. **OUTCOMES**. Community development outcomes vis-à-vis individual and household circumstances.	**Place Identity, Networks and Research:** Support, connect and profile place-based examples of education-centered community development across Haiti that are committed to quality planning and architecture and show promise of transformative change/transformative resilience, and track changes in individual and community outcomes over time through longitudinal study.	
Who wins and who loses and by what mechanisms of power?	Sense of powerlessness, acceptance, resignation	3. **CULTURE**. Participatory culture is not necessarily 'changemaker' culture.	**Social Entrepreneurship and Social Innovation:** Invest in social enterprise creation and fostering a culture of social innovation at community level, and nationally through networks. Build on, strengthen and share ADECA aspirational model of social enterprise for financial sustainability to support school operations, provide jobs, training, and long-term social and economic development.	*Creating greater economic opportunities and better jobs.*
What do we want to do? What should be done?	Aspirations for connections, a 'model' community, and a better life and future	4. **RELATIONSHIPS**. State, society, NGOs and international community relationship dynamics fraught with mistrust, lack of accountability, inertia.	**State-Society Trust and Accountability:** Build new State-society relationships that engender trust and engage outsiders constructively – such as international agencies and NGOs, but that do not continue to institutionalize dependence and exploitation.	*(Re)building the social contract.*

planning, architecture, and construction contribute to the place dimension. Earthquake-resistant construction and excellent site and building design of the school, social enterprise and training facility, composting sanitation, and recreation area and gardens are hallmarks of this case and provide important examples for other communities. To address what is perceived as uneven outcomes among individuals and for the community as a whole (e.g. high quality construction of the school, and poor housing and living conditions of local residents), it would seem important to connect this case community with others in Haiti which are attempting similar efforts so that they can exchange experiences, learn from each other, and potentially join forces to effect wider practice and policy change. Establishing networks of community development practitioners that are taking education-centered approaches would potentially lead to more examples of transformative change in Haitian communities where transformative community development and transformative resilience seem to be operative. Profiling and networking such communities and supporting a movement among them would help to inform and inspire others. Learning exchanges could be topic specific, such as ecological education and agricultural practices that draw on and improve local knowledge. Research documentation of learning and exchanges could then be shared with additional communities. In addition, research over time within and across communities will be critical to understanding dynamics of change which is truly transformational. Consistent with and building on the World Bank goal of reducing vulnerabilities and building resilience, it seems clear that Haiti must move beyond 'social resilience', which is already apparent, to a transformative resilience which would permanently alter social, economic and environmental practices,

beginning at community level. Field-based community-level research over time will be important to track whether community development interventions are having a positive impact on the lives of local people as well as on broader societal systems and state/society relations.

4.3. Lever of Transformation 3: Social Entrepreneurship and Social Innovation

While establishing a 'participatory' culture is an important step toward facilitating a sense of agency among people, it is not sufficient. If the goal is a 'changemaker' culture where each person has a sense of self-efficacy and empowerment to initiate change, then it is important to build a culture of social entrepreneurship and social innovation in local communities and schools, and to provide recognition and investment at national level. Also, direct investment in social enterprise creation at community level will help to inspire such practices. A culturally-relevant means for doing this would be to build on and recognize the validity and power of the 'konbit' culture described in Robillard (2013). Beginning December 2015, Haiti Partners supported local community members in doing just that through the creation of several Village Savings and Loans groups. Organizers see this as a key strategy to have an impact on local individual and family outcomes. Group participants are provided with access to credit as well as training on how to save and spend money well. As of March 2016, 100 local people are members, and Haiti Partners intends to scale the initiative further. They see it as a critical strategy to nurture changemaker culture.

As of 2016, there is evidence that a culture of collective changemaking may be slowly emerging. Not only do school parents
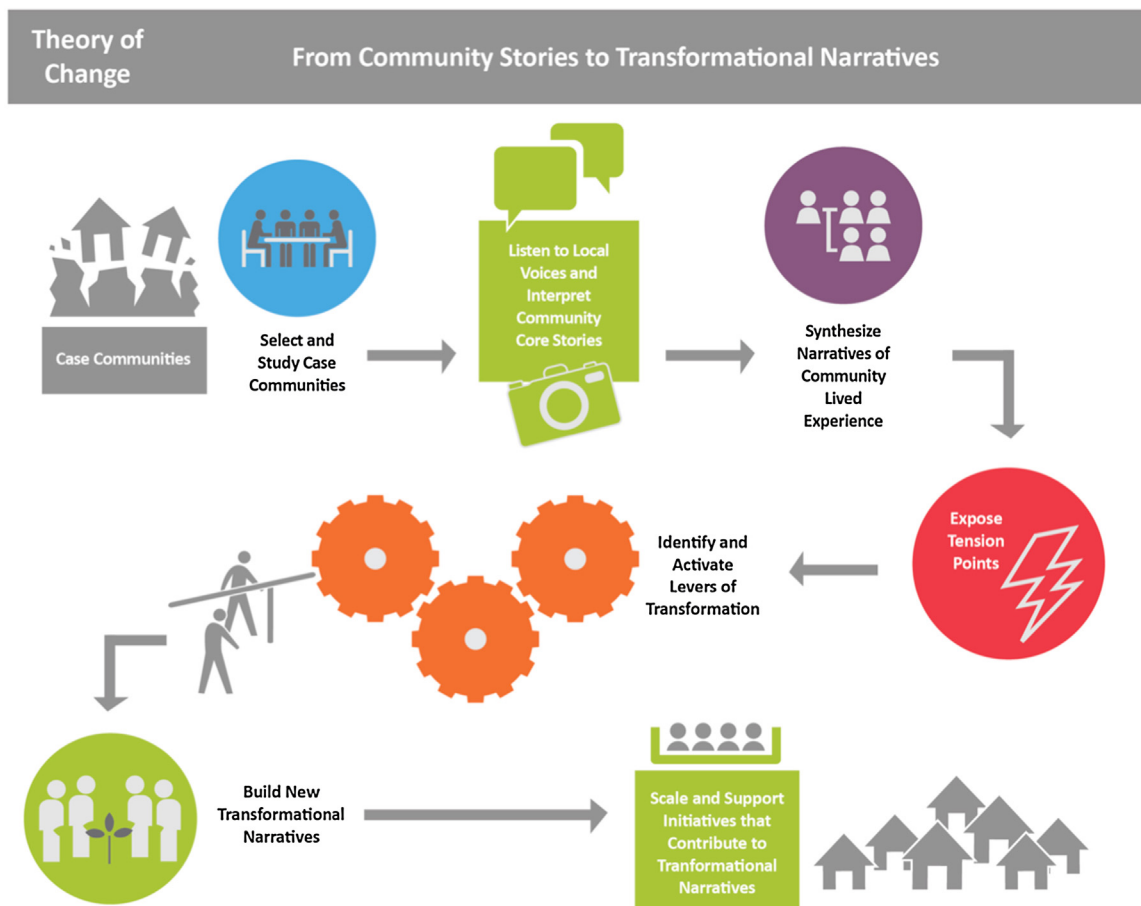

Fig. 16. Theory of Change: From Community Stories to Transformational Narratives.

volunteer four hours per week as described previously, but recently, young people and adults in the English language class and the 49 members of the local social enterprise cooperative decided to commit to offer four to eight service hours per month for collective community projects. An additional way to support social innovators would be to recognize and reward social innovations and to connect social entrepreneurs who are working at community level. Supporting the kind of community-driven social entrepreneurship, such as Haiti Partners' work with Yunus Social Business and PADF in creating social enterprises and cooperative businesses, such as the bakery in the Bellevue-La-Montagne case, provides one long-term strategy for creating better economic opportunities and jobs in Haiti.

4.4. Lever of Transformation 4: State-Society Trust and Accountability

Given that there is no history or experience of a true social contract in Haiti, it is essential to build new state-civil society relationships through new forms of engagement. Given the long

Theory of Change — **From Community Stories to Transformational Narratives**

Select and Study Case Communities · Listen to Local Voices and Interpret Community Core Stories · Synthesize Narratives of Community Lived Experience · Expose Tension Points · Identify and Activate Levers of Transformation · Build New Transformational Narratives · Scale and Support Initiatives that Contribute to Tranformational Narratives

This **Theory of Change** was derived through an inductive (also called 'bottom up' or 'grounded theory') approach, in which theory is built from the ground up through learning from experience in the field and patterns observed. Core elements are described below.

Select and Study Case Communities. Participatory community development case examples are selected based on an information-oriented sampling strategy and to develop a metaphor or establish a school of thought for the domain which the cases concern. In the case of Bellevue-La-Montagne, this is education-centered community development.

Listen to Local Voices and Interpret Community Core Stories. By listening to voices and stories of local people and engaging context-specific methods, including participatory photography, mapping and dialogue circles, we interpreted community core stories.

Synthesize Narratives of Community Lived Experience. Various methods are triangulated and data are analyzed to reveal narrative patterns. Data collection methods include interviews, observation, document study, and participatory methods. An aim is to value local knowledge and lived experience of community development processes and change underway.

Expose Tension Points. Scrutinizing emerging narratives from different perspectives exposed tension points, which involve relationships of power particularly susceptible to change because of dubious practices, contestable knowledge, and potential conflict.

Identify and Activate Levers of Transformation. Like crises, tension points open possibilities for change. Certain levers show promise for transformation with relevant community development processes underway, and others represent opportunities for developing new innovative interventions.

Build New Transformational Narratives, then Scale and Support Initiatives that Contribute to those Narratives. Activating levers of transformation opens pathways to new development trajectories and changing narratives. Resulting transformative community development experiences can be scaled up, scaled out and scaled deep.

Fig. 17. Theory of Change Summary Description.

history and current situation where international agencies hold so much power in Haiti, they must be part of the solution initially but cannot be institutionalized long-term as central to it, if Haiti is to break its historic patterns of 'top-down' aid. Relatedly, due in part to the ineffectiveness of the Haitian state, international NGOs have played a dominant role in Haiti, but they typically lack accountability to either the Haitian state or local communities, and most of them are not even registered in Haiti. Haiti Partners provides a notable exception to this pattern. It is important to

evolve the accountability of NGOs operating in Haiti in a systematic way, so that local embeddedness, transparency, and true long-term capacity-building and investment are the norm, rather than the exception. As for local NGOs, while many are already connected and some social movements are strong, there is an opportunity to build better inter-connected networks of communities that have a direct voice in policymaking. Haiti will remain extremely limited if a social contract does not emerge, but it is not something that can be built overnight. Because formal
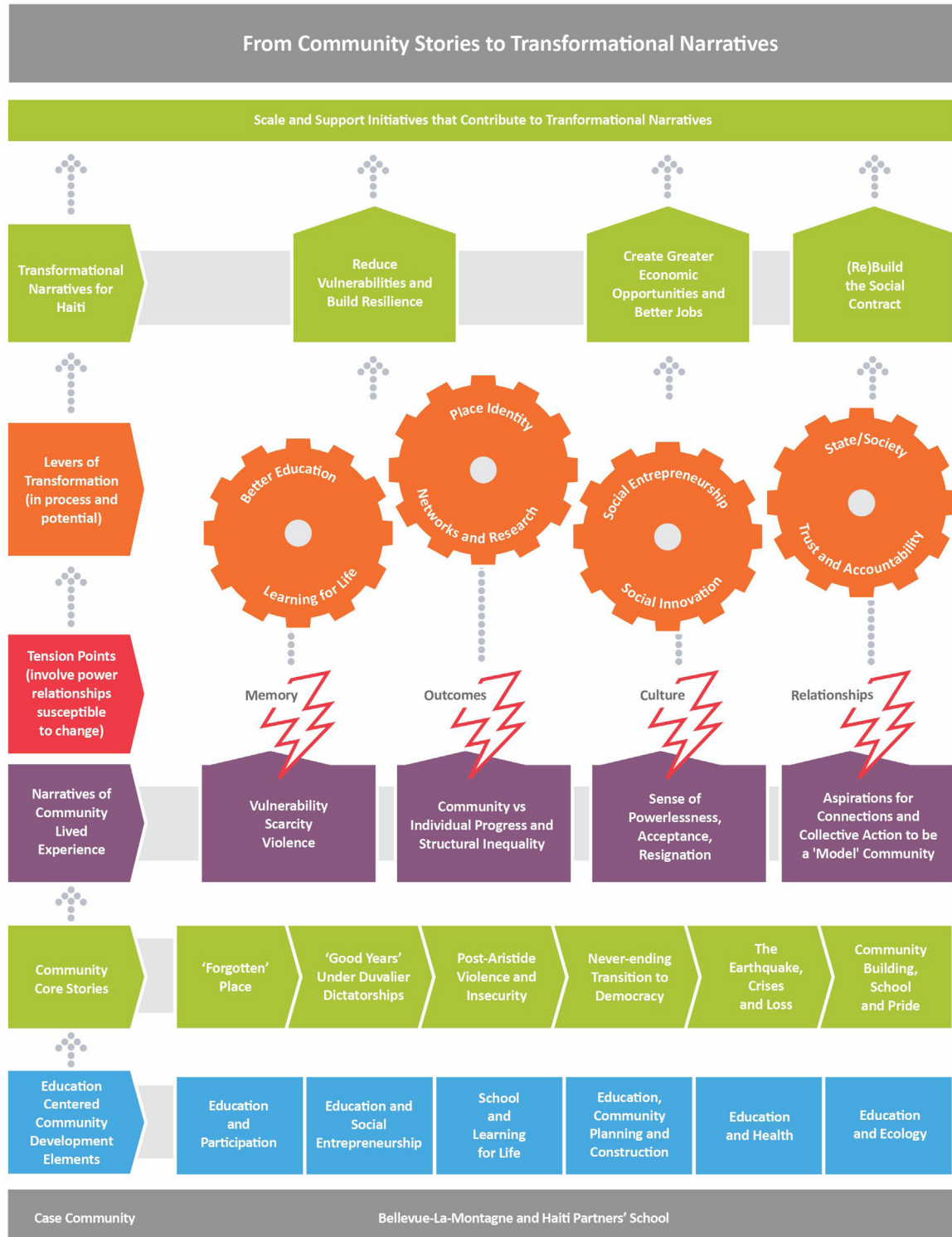
Fig. 18. Theory of Change Applied to Case Community.

institutions are unreliable and typically dysfunctional, informal institutions, such as relationships of trust, reciprocity, and respect are central to social interactions and successful development engagement. Also, building a social contract could be nurtured through connecting community level participatory practice and research – and linking to academics, governments, and partners inside and outside of Haiti, and, as appropriate, drawing on new technologies for this work particularly in areas where Haiti has been able to leap-frog, such as mobile telephones, data collection and citizen science applications.

4.5. Toward a Theory of Change

An overall aim of this research is to expose in what ways education-centered community development in this case is having an impact on community change and whether it is opening pathways to transformation. A synthesis representation of this case is set out above. A 'theory of change' has emerged from my theoretical readings and perspective, the processes of field work, analyzing findings and interpreting results. That theory is depicted in Fig. 16 and illustrated in a more linear way with a description, in Fig. 17. This theory of change was derived through an inductive (also called 'bottom up' or 'grounded theory') approach to knowing, in which the researcher conducts field work to build an abstraction or to describe the issue being studied (Lodico, Spaulding, & Voegtle, 2010). In inductive research no established theories need to be tested during the research process, but rather, patterns are observed and theory is built from the ground up. Inductive reasoning is based on learning from experience. The community case data and synthesis findings that inform the theory of change are illustrated in Fig. 18, and a summary explanation is provided in Fig. 19.

The diagram **'From Community Stories to Transformational Narratives'** is meant to be read starting at the bottom.

This research study **selected the case community** of Bellevue-La-Montagne, where NGOs and community residents applied participatory approaches to education-centered community development.

I interpreted '**community core stories** by listening to voices and stories of local people and designing context-specific methods, (including participatory photography, mapping and dialogue circles), in order to deepen understanding of development issues and power dynamics, with an emphasis on local people's perspectives. A community core story with six aspects emerged.

I synthesized results from various methods of data collection (interviews, observation, document study, participatory methods) integrating 'outsider' and 'insider' perspectives on community development processes and changes underway and lived experience of community residents. Four main **narratives of community lived experience** were revealed.

Interpreting the revealed narratives from different perspectives exposed '**tension points'**, which involve relationships of power particularly susceptible to change due to their contestable knowledge, potential conflict, or dubious practices. Tension points highlight how power relations stand in the way of addressing problems. '**Memory'** refers to collective memories of turbulent histories, disasters, and nostalgia for the dictatorship era, as well as a broken education system that perpetuates societal problems of distrust and classism. '**Outcomes'** exposes the tension of improving community outcomes vis-à-vis stagnation in individual circumstances. '**Culture'** represents the lack of a sense of agency evident among residents; participatory culture is emerging, but it has not yet crossed the threshold into 'changemaker' culture. '**Relationships'** among governments, civil society, NGOs and the international community are fraught with mistrust, lack of accountability and inertia.

Leverage points are places in complex systems where small shifts in one thing can produce larger changes in everything. They represent possibilities for transformative change. In the case community, some '**levers of transformation'** are in early stages of activation or process of cultivation, such as **better education**, **place identity and social entrepreneurship**; and several represent promising directions for change, through such levers as **network building, research over time,** and **state-society trust and accountability.**

Activating levers of transformation opens pathways to new development trajectories that would change narratives. The three **medium term priorities** are to**: 1) reduce vulnerability and build resilience; 2) create greater economic opportunities and better jobs; and 3) (re)build the social contract**. These specific priorities were identified in a World Bank report by Singh and Barton-Dock (2015), and they align with aspirations found in this research among NGOs and at local community level.

Community development efforts that are able to activate levers of transformation have powerful potential to scale up, scale out and scale deep, in order to effect shifts toward broader transformational narratives in policy, practice and culture.

Fig. 19. Summary Explanation of Theory of Change Applied to Case Community.

5. Conclusion

Is Bellevue-La-Montagne on a pathway to transformative community development, and what learning from this case is instructive for development practice and policy in Haiti and similar contexts?

The education-centered and highly collaborative community development approach that Haiti Partners has taken at Bellevue-La-Montagne is innovative and appropriate for Haiti and the local context. The participatory community development efforts underway there have placed construction of a new school and education at the heart of rebuilding efforts. Education and participatory practices are embedded in all aspects of the community development – including through social entrepreneurship, healthcare, environmental stewardship, community agriculture, site planning and building construction. These efforts involve participation of people and organizations (local and international) in dialogical negotiations that appear to aim to share power and build capabilities of local people, and to create, change, or preserve structures and institutions consistent with the interests of local people. Multiple methods and narrative analysis, including context-specific participatory methods, expose the validity of that proposition from the local participant point of view. Findings reveal the highly fragile nature of state-society relations, the importance of trust, new pride and possibility for the community, as well as tension points that potentially threaten the long-term sustainability of development projects, such as differences between outcomes for the community as a whole vis-à-vis individual households.

Nonetheless, the Bellevue-La-Montagne case shows promising results so far in terms of community amenities, education, local cohesion, hope, pride, jobs, training, and connections with others in Haiti and elsewhere. It is evident from this case study that community transformation is occurring, and glimpses of social transformation seem to be present, but it is early days to assess clearly. Community transformation involves material and physical changes to space and place, but it does not necessarily manifest immediately a change in culture. On the other hand, culture change is central to social transformation, which generally happens more slowly over time.

Continuing to study community outcomes and participant lived experience changes over time will be imperative in order to clearly understand the extent to which social transformation is in process, particularly in ways that contribute to transformative resilience and long-term sustainability of the community development projects. Critically, social transformation that would render the community transformation resilient and lasting in the face of the absence of Haiti Partners, is not clear. If Haiti Partners were gone tomorrow, would the community development underway continue in its current trajectory? Have the gains made during the first five years of work of this remarkable effort rendered the community more resilient? While it is early days to assess with certainty, it is clear that there is potential for transformative community development here – that is, community development that leads to permanent changes in values and institutions. The intention is to carry out Qualitative Longitudinal Research every few years with the same participant households, as well as their descendants.

Following local residents' stories over time will enable tracking of outcomes and dynamics of social transformation. For example, to return to Lisa's story from the opening quote of this article, we will follow her and her children's lived experiences and outcomes over time. Lisa currently has two children – both enrolled at ADECA school. She earns a livelihood of approximately $1 per day as a subsistence farmer and market trader, and is an active parent at the school, and a board member of the new local cooperative set up to create social businesses to provide sustainable funding for school operations. Lisa currently lives with her children and partner in one small room of her mother-in-law's two room metal shanty, and she dreams that they will have their own home one day. Her hope is for her children to continue with a quality education that she could not, and to work with others to create a community that would serve as a model for all of Haiti. By tracking results related to these aspirations and the social and economic outcomes of Lisa's and other local children – and perhaps one day, their children's children – we will make visible whether, and to what extent, this education-centered approach to community development contributes to social transformation over the long term, or not.

At practical and policy levels, learning from this case can inform design and implementation of improved strategies for participatory and education-centered community development that provide important roles for local people and civil society, and a nuanced role for international organizations which is sensitive to power dynamics. Such development strategies would similarly give 'voice' to communities in their struggles for change and would activate key levers of transformation such as those identified in this case, including: 1) education; 2) place identity, networks, and research; 3) social entrepreneurship and social innovation; and 4) strengthening trust and accountability among the state, civil society and NGOs. These levers are in line with the medium-term priorities for policy action proposed by the World Bank in its 2015 report, 'Haiti: Toward a New Narrative', which are: 1) (Re)building the social contract; 2) Creating greater economic opportunities and better jobs; and 3) Reducing vulnerabilities and building resilience (Singh and Barton-Dock, 2015). These worthy and important goals – which are consistent with local aspirations – will need to be vigorously pursued at all levels if significant progress is to be made toward achieving them. The local community level has a particularly important role to play, given the lack of functional formal institutions of the state and the reliance of people on themselves, neighbours, and communities in order to meet even the most basic needs.

Education-centered community development, as exemplified in the Bellevue-La-Montagne case, shows promise as one pathway for scaling toward community and social transformation. This case provides an example of strategies for change at community level that have potential to contribute to changing narratives in Haiti, and of Haiti. By scaling and connecting similar community level initiatives, Haiti may create a narrative of social transformation that would permanently change its development trajectory and outcomes for communities across the country. It has the potential to provide a beacon for other outer periphery countries and marginalized societies around the world, particularly those in post-disaster settings and which are facing challenges of deep structural inequality.

Appendix A. Supplementary data

Supplementary data associated with this article can be found, in the online version, at http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.progress.2017.04.001.

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