

# What we know



# What do we know from the first phase



# Overall picture

Principals welcome parental involvement and are, “to some extent” or even “a large extent”, satisfied with the contributions made by Parent Councils and individual parents.

Invitations to participate limited to a small number of informal and formal occasions

At formal meetings, for example, in over 75% of cases, only about one quarter of parents attend.



# Reasons for lack

principals attribute lack of participation to parents.

In particular, to their

- lack of interest,
- lack of time,
- lack of communication skills



# Clear role division

- Parents' contributions (even when invited) should not overstep the line between educational authority on one side and help with extra-curricular activities, fund-raising, or maintenance of facilities on the other.



# Main reason for not welcoming too much participation

- Principals, not parents, are accountable for school education



# Motivation

School principals initiate participation if they believe they will benefit from it

And when they initiate participation, parents respond

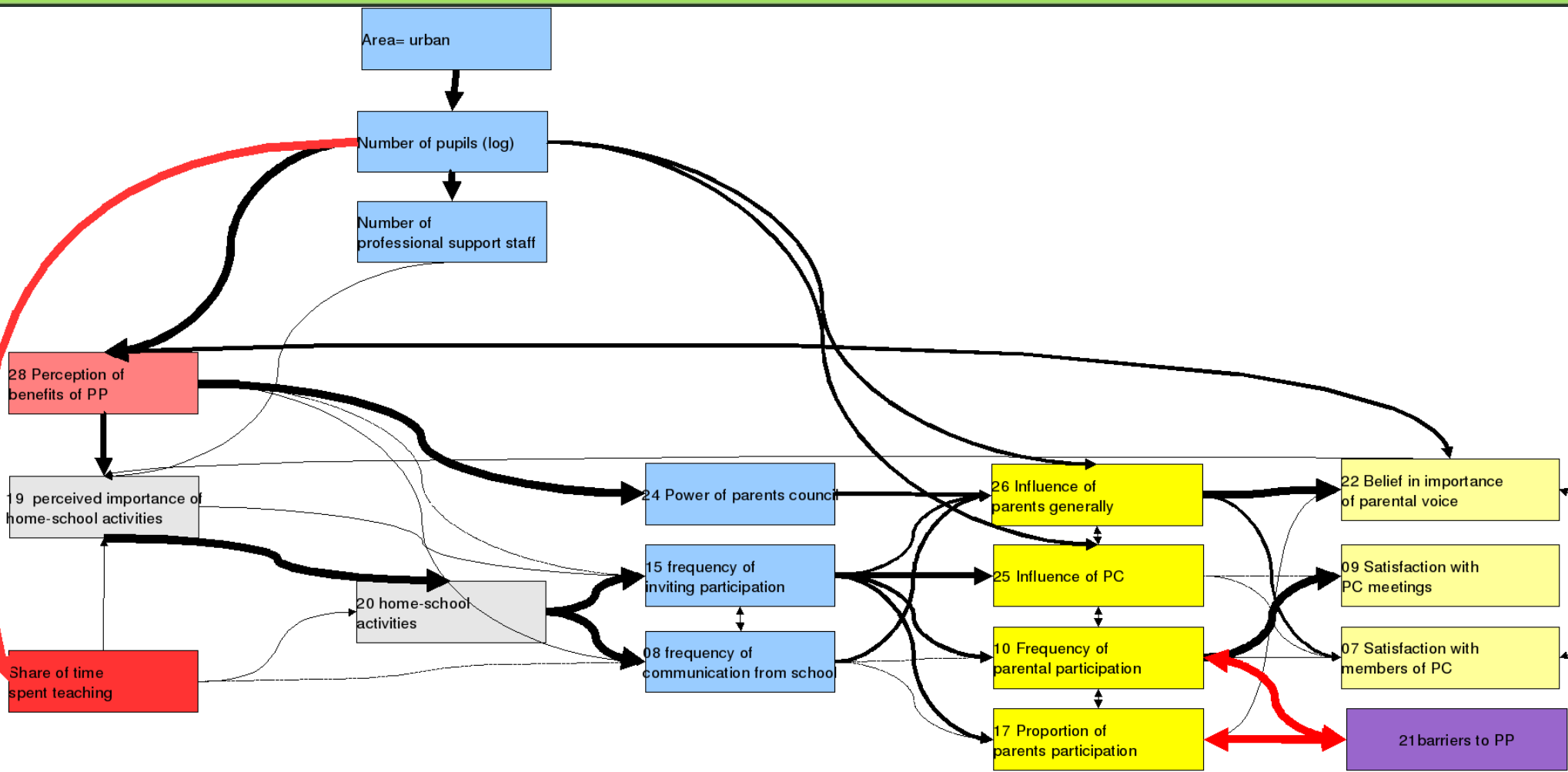
And when parents respond, principals are satisfied



# Outreach

Schools could do much more in terms of outreach to parents and to the community, but many do not see the need for this or say they “do not have the time or resources.”





Characteristics of principal

Characteristics of school

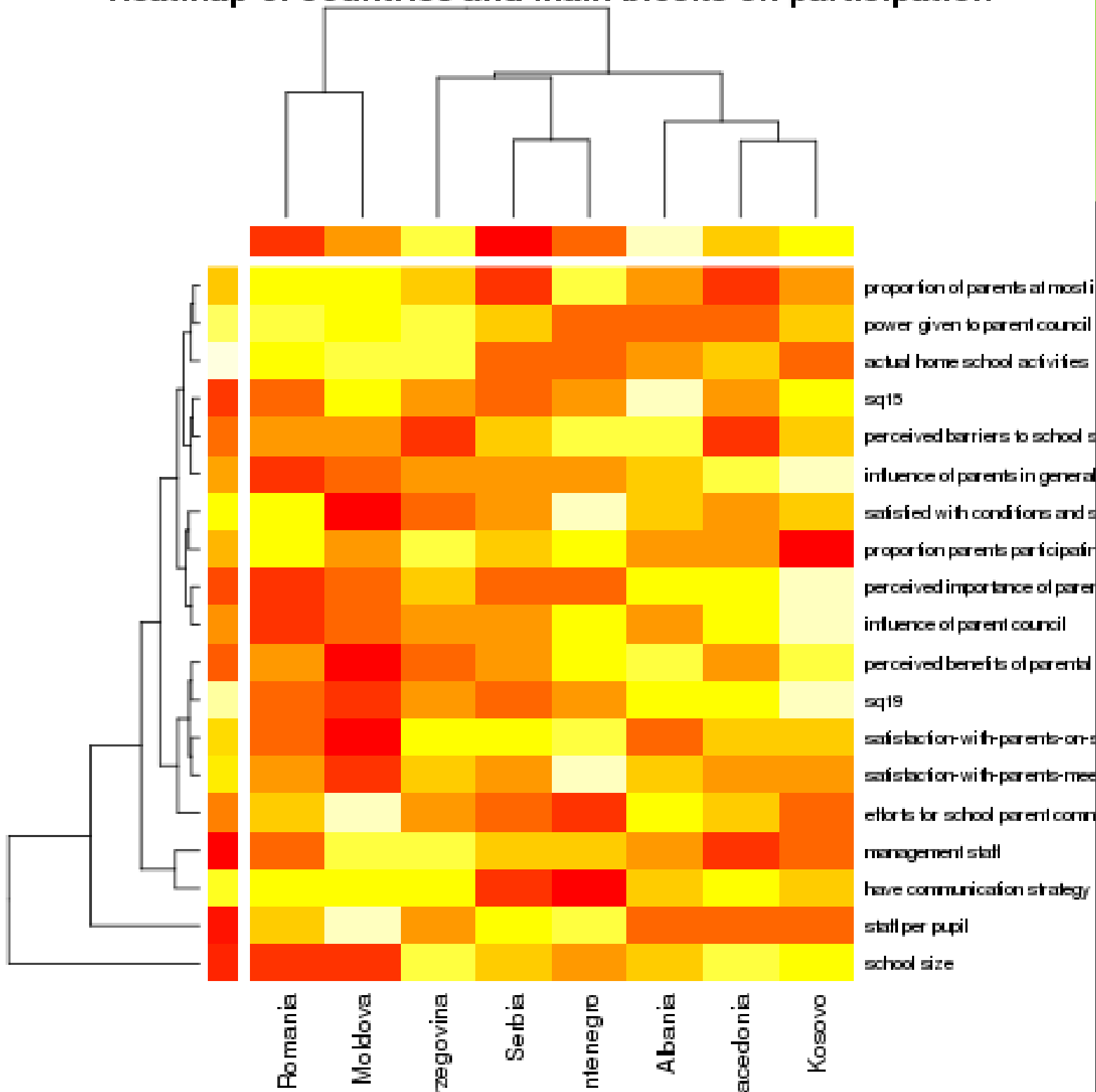
School effort for participation

Practice of participation

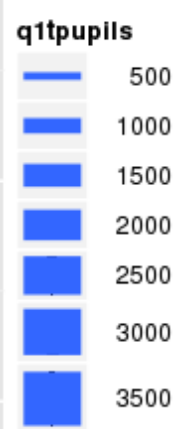
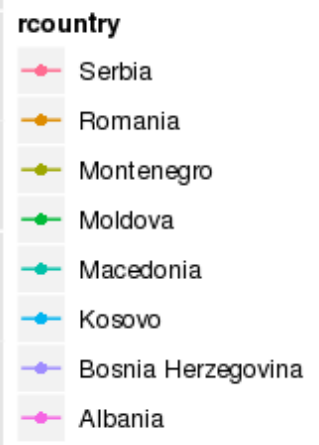
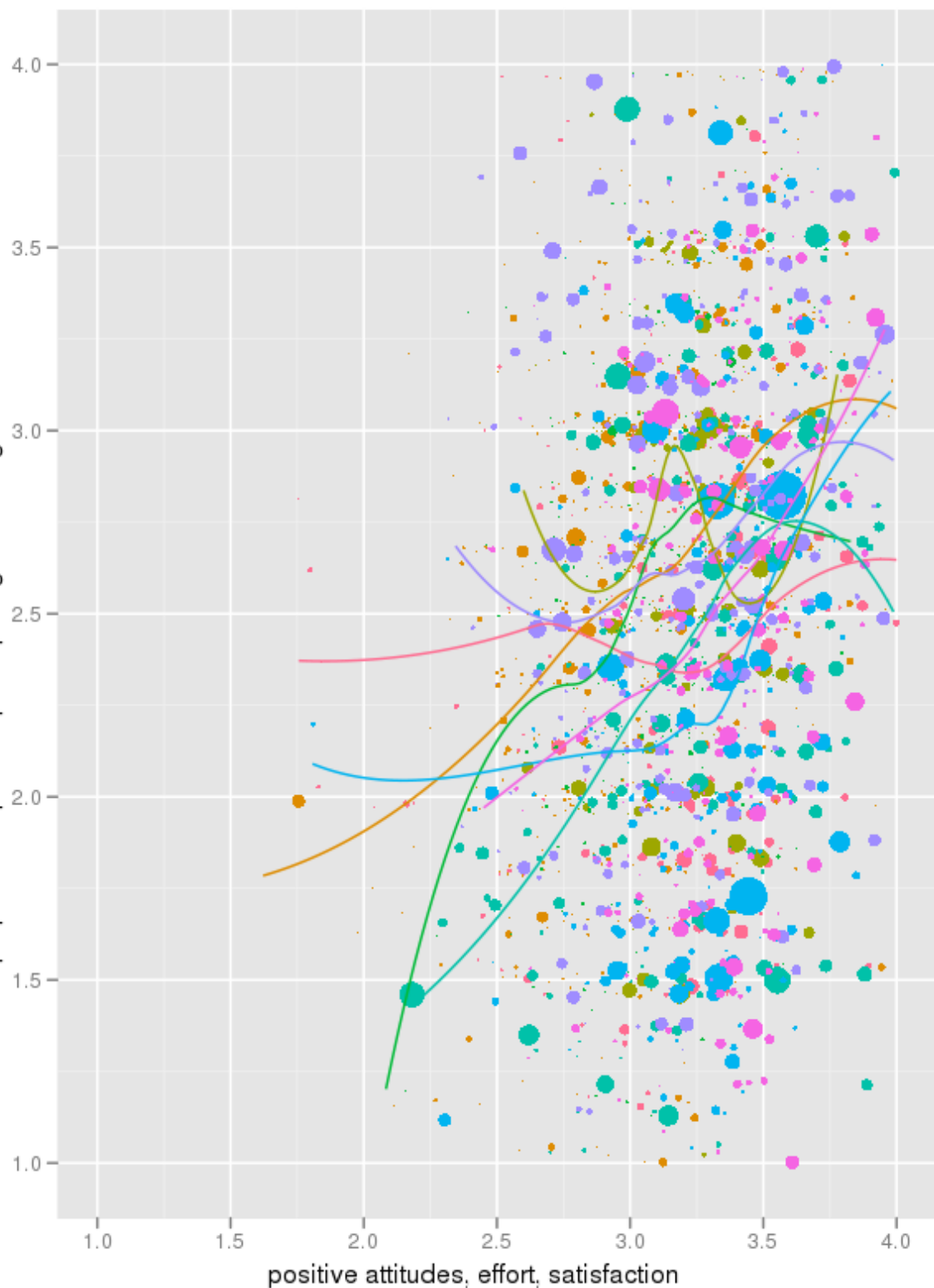
Consequences for principal



# Heatmap of countries and main blocks on participation



proportion of parents participating at meetings and events



# What do we know from the literature



# • Epstein:

- the family needs to recognize that child is a learner to whom the importance of school, homework and learning in general needs to be pointed out, while the school is to make every child feel special, accepted and included as it is within the family.
- Six main types of activities that connect families, schools, and communities: parenting, communicating, volunteering, learning at home, decision-making, collaboration with the community.



# Sheridan and Kratochwill

Collaborative relationships and shared responsibility for the educational outcomes.

Collaborative approach to schooling issues between the family and the school

- trust,
- good and sincere communication
- consensual decision making.

Only if both of the partners see each other as equal can their efforts jointly contribute to the best outcomes for children.



# Wendy Miedel Barnard (2004)

- found a significant association between parent involvement in early school and long-term school success.



# • Seitsinger, Felner, Brand & Burns (2008)

- strategies teachers use for facilitating parent involvement at the classroom level:
  - informing the parents on student performance and problems,
  - providing the information and recommendations on increasing the involvement in academics,
  - providing the connections with health and community institutions;
- the more often the teachers simply reach for parents, the more often parents from all socioeconomic groups tend to put some effort in engaging in the school life.



# • **Benson (1999)**

- while each partnership model has its strengths and weaknesses, their common feature is insisting on two-way communication between home and school.



# • Eleni Theodorou (2007)

- although the parental involvement issues have arisen on a large wave of discussions about the school democratization, it actually failed in recognizing the potentially harmful implications for vulnerable groups.



# Smit, Driessen, Sluiter and Slegers (2007)

- 6 types of parents:
  - the supporter,
  - the absentee,
  - the politician,
  - the career-maker,
  - the tormentor,
  - the super parent



# • Hoover-Dempsey, Bassler and Brissie, 1992

- 3 main sources of parental involvement:
  - psychological motivators promoting involvement,
    - believe „they are able to make a difference“
  - perceived invitations to involvement,
  - parent’s perceptions about life context elements that enable involvement



# • Adams, Forsyth and Mitchell (2009)

- antecedents of parent trust toward schools
- parent trust varies by factors that affect the opportunities for parents to make discernments about the trustworthiness of the school
- differences in organizational characteristics of school lead to variation in parent-school trust
- most of the inter-school variability can be explained by the parents' sense of influence
- systematic steps taken by the school taken in order to enhance the parent influence results in more trust



# • Nada Polovina (2007)

- school employees, students and their parents prioritise participation, but while parents ranked it as priority number one for teacher's it was on 5th place and for students 10th
- parents lack the information and school assistance on how to support learning of their children;
- absenteeism and lower achievement are correlated with lower frequency of meetings with teachers;
- parent-teacher relations are burdened by dissatisfaction, frustrations and “readiness to quit and disengage”, while the expectations of the other side are very high (teacher expected a lot from parents and vice versa).



# It's a multi-level problem

Country-level  
General / Specific - ...

Problem of  
Regular parents  
and Decision-  
making parents

Administrative district -level  
General – region...  
Specific - policy,...

Family-level (income,  
housing, **exclusion**,  
**minority**...)

Problem  
of which  
parent,  
which  
child

School-level  
General – size, type, region...  
Specific - Policy, beliefs / attitudes of  
principal, communication strategy ... ,

Fit / interactions

Parent-level  
General - gender,  
education...)  
Specific – role  
understanding, motivation,  
frequency of participation

**OUTCOME: trust,  
satisfaction with  
participation,**

Classroom-level  
Size, age, teacher variables ....

Child-level: general – gender, etc  
**OUTCOME: achievement, happiness**

- Need to address these two problems when we decide plan N or plan S



# How to measure the variables in the chart

i.e. which sources of information for which variable

e.g. parents' perceptions of principals' / schools attitudes and behaviour as well.

If plan S, can directly ask principals again ;-)

Level	Variable	Source
Country	?	<b>literature</b>
District - background	?	literature
District - main	<b>Participation policy, special projects</b>	
School - background	<b>Size etc</b>	<b>Parent? school?</b>
School - main	<b>Participation policy, special projects, frequency of invitations to participate ....</b>	
Classroom	<b>Age of children</b>	
Classroom - main	<b>teacher: frequency of invitations, communication style?</b>	??
Child - background	<b>Gender etc</b>	parent?
Child - outcome	<b>Happy, achieving ...</b>	parent?
Family - background	<b>Exclusion etc</b>	parent?
Family – main	<b>Participation-related attitudes, motivation,</b>	parent?
Family - outcome	<b>Trust, satisfaction with participation ...</b>	parent?

# Framework for analysis



# 1: Descriptive questions

- How frequently do parents participate
- What kinds of participation
- How satisfied with participation
- Etc etc ...



# 2: Correlational questions

- How do outcomes
- ... depend on the participation-related role-understanding / expectations/ motivation/ experiences in parents
- ... and on the match or lack of match between parents and school principals on participation-related role-understanding etc
- ... and on any/all other factors e.g. school /district policy



# 3: Differential questions

- how do the answers to the ...
  - descriptive questions
  - correlational questions
- differ according to countries, social inclusion



# Focus group outcomes

- Get rich information on nature and types of participation from parents' point of view
- Do families have a common style, and if so do fathers know about it :-)
- Possibly check specific phrases, concepts
- Get juicy quotes for country reports



# Discussion of survey



# Survey plan N or plan S

- Plan N: national sample of parents. Can also ask for name of school, so can use school-level variables like school size, perhaps policy. Can conduct “region”-level comparison with school principal data file.
- Plan S: school-based sample. i.e. select schools then select some or all children from each school and address their parents (probably mothers as first choice),
  - Can also collect school-level data or even ask principals again. But MUCH more complicated – what about missing data from hard-to-reach parents? Etc etc.



# Issues: plan N or plan S?

- Plan N: national survey
  - Face-to-face or telephone?
    - Telephone cheaper, more suitable for closed questions
- Plan S:
  - Gives enough within-school variance to be able to estimate school-level effects
  - Country teams more likely to be included
  - No, it will not be possible to match with school principals' survey!



# Major decisions

- Plan N or plan S
- Additional sample of active parents, or just all parents?
- What to do about multiple parents / multiple children; guardians / grandparents
- How to ensure focus on exclusion
- lower vs. upper elementary schools?



# If plan S (school-level sample)

- Any selection – size, location, extent of out-migration, specialisation
- ...



# School-level variables

- For selection of schools, or at least to be recorded
  - size, location,
  - extent of out-migration,
  - Specialisation?
  - Ethnic composition? Exclusion?
- Then select all parents, or just one year ??



# Parent-level background variables

- For selection or just recording ??
  - Mother /father?
  - Relative income? Own education? Urban/rural...
  - Ethnicity?
  - Asking about which child? Just one?
  - Age, Gender parent/child
  - How to measure exclusion?



# Parent-level background variables

- For selection or just recording ??
  - Very active parent??
  - Mother /father?
  - Relative income? Own education? Urban/rural...
  - Ethnicity?
  - Asking about which child? Just one?
  - Age, Gender parent/child
  - How to measure exclusion?



# Parent-level outcome variables

- Trust ...
- Satisfaction with participation...



# If national survey (Plan N)

- ???



# Comparison with phase 1?

- We will still be able to compare with phase 1 data at the level of regions inside countries, so we will be able to say things like "in regions where parents both parents and directors give a high priority to participation, .... "

