The Deployment of Internally Displaced Teachers (DR Congo): A "Real Governance" Approach

Abstract

Through qualitative research in the Democratic Republic of Congo, this article explores the deployment of internally displaced teachers. Rather than understanding deployment as a technical matter, the article uses a "real governance" approach to analyse teacher deployment. It reveals how education is organized during displacements and why teachers return to their villages after displacements. The article argues that state actors with weak capacities in service delivery can be able to exert influence over public school teachers, even in remote conflict-affected zones. It makes this influence palpable through an analysis of concrete practices and relations. The article concludingly questions the appropriateness of the concept of resilience and reflects about the implications of the analysis for policy-makers.

Keywords: educational administration; internal displacement; teacher deployment; real governance; armed conflict; Democratic Republic of Congo

Highlights

- The article responds to the lack of research on internally displaced teachers
- State actors with weak capacities can exert influence over public school teachers
- Threats to withdraw school decrees and teacher salaries are important means to put pressure on teachers
- Non-state actors play important roles in the deployment of internally displaced teachers
- 'Resilience' has limited value to understand intricate returns of internally displaced teachers

Introduction

A large share of out-of-school children live in conflict-affected contexts (Winthrop and Matsui 2013). Global objectives, such as Universal Primary Education, can only be achieved if these children have access to education. Lopes Cardozo and Novelli (2018) argue that the field of education in emergencies has further grown due to three reasons: first, the successful advocacy of the importance of providing education in humanitarian crises, second, the securitization of development that has led to a focus on the "security benefits" of education (ibid, 241), and third, the increase of the number and intensity of

attacks against students, educational staff and facilities, to which I can add the better monitoring of such attacks (GCPEA 2018).

These developments mirror high levels of violence through state and non-state conflicts, often highly internationalized or with extended periods of rebel rule (Dupuy and Rustad 2018; Hoffmann and Verweijen 2018; Kalyvas and Balcells 2010). By 2017, conflict, persecution and generalized violence had caused the internal displacement of 40 million people (UNHCR 2018). Providing education to internally displaced persons (IDPs) is particularly challenging. Most IDPs go through periods of displacement of 10 years and more (Bengtsson and Naylor 2016, 29). These periods can include temporary returns and renewed displacement. Teachers in such contexts are frequent victims of direct violence and are trapped between different belligerent groups (Lopes Cardozo and Shah 2016). However, the governance of internally displaced teachers has largely remained a black box and this article contributes to its investigation (Bengtsson and Naylor 2016; Dennis and Fentiman 2007, 27; Ring and West 2015).

Teachers are among the first state agents to return once a government re-establishes control over a given territory. As I elaborate below, the research suggests various reasons for their return. One of the mentioned reasons is 'state pressure' (Lopes Cardozo and Shah 2016; Vongalis-Macrow 2006; Wilson 2000). However, many states in contexts of protracted armed conflict have low capacity, willingness or authority to deliver public services (Hoffmann and Kirk 2013). How can we then understand state pressure on teachers?

Drawing on empirical research in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) in 2015 and 2016 and adopting a "real governance" perspective (Olivier de Sardan 2008), this article makes three arguments. First, public servants of a state with weak capacity for service delivery can exert influence over public school teachers, even in conflict-affected zones, often assisted by other local actors. Second, there can be unintended links between sector-wide support of teacher governance and the deployment of teachers in emergencies. Third, a focus on resilience is insufficient to understand the intricacies of teacher deployment in armed conflict. Given the increasing attention and amounts of funding dedicated to education in conflict-affected contexts, such analyses seem timely.

This paper also responds to the lack of qualitative research on education in emergencies in the DRC (Dryden-Peterson 2009; Gladwell and Tanner 2014; De Herdt, Marivoet, and Muhigirwa 2015). The Congolese case can also inform analyses in other contexts for the following reasons: armed groups continue to proliferate (Verweijen and Iguma Wakenge 2015); the evidence points to a strong impact of armed conflict on education (DRC/MoE 2014; Gilchrist, Fellow, and Sheppard 2015; Jones and Naylor 2014); and international donors and NGOs have offered direct interventions and have supported the inclusion of education in emergencies and peacebuilding education in national policies (Bender 2010; UNICEF 2016). The paper unfolds as follows. First, I outline the methodology. Second, I discuss the conceptual framework. Third, I analyse the educational administration in the DRC in the context of the topic of this article. Finally, in the conclusion, I discuss the findings and reflect on their implications for policy-makers.

The analysis in this article is based on ethnographic work in south-eastern DRC and an examination of government and donor policy documents, laws and letters. In early 2015, Congolese colleagues and I conducted 87 semi-structured interviews in conflict-affected parts of the territory of Pweto. In a second conflict-affected territory, Mitwaba, I conducted 33 interviews. I mainly spoke to internally displaced teachers who sought temporary refuge in surrounding towns. Many of them did not want to return to their villages. However, one year later, all of the teachers had returned. Adding a comparative element to my research, in 2016 I visited schools along three main roads, which led me 60 km,

105 km and 120 km away from the territorial capital of Mitwaba. During these trips, which took place on a motorbike at sites that were difficult to access, I conducted 30 follow-up interviews. My interviews included only three female teachers. There are four reasons for this low number. First, according to the latest published statistical yearbook, the former province of Katanga had only 26.3 percent of female teachers in primary schools (countrywide: 28 percent) and 10.5 percent of female teachers in secondary schools (countrywide: 12.1 percent) (DRC/MoE 2015). Second, I conducted research in very rural regions. While the statistical yearbook offers no rural vs. urban breakdown, based on my experience I assume that the ratio of female teachers in rural regions is even lower than in urban agglomerations. Third, my interviews included many school principals. Again based on my experience, school principals in the DRC are predominantly male. Fourth, I did not intentionally look for female teachers but talked to teachers who responded to my expressed research interest. All in all, the research is not gender-sensitive, and all quotes are from male teachers. Given the high intensity of gender-based violence in some regions of the DRC, future research should make up for this omission to include the specific experiences of female teachers. The choice of schools was not based on a predefined sampling strategy, but was shaped by prior contacts, pragmatism and accessibility. I conducted interviews in French and translated excerpts into English. Data analysis has been an ongoing process, as each interview built on the previous ones. I coded all interviews with the qualitative data analysis software atlas.ti. Interview excerpts are anonymized in the paper.

"Real governance" and teacher deployment during and after conflict

For several reasons, belligerent parties attack teachers and students in various countries (Pherali 2013; Smith, Koons and Kapit 2014; van Wessel and van Hirtum 2013). These attacks can result in psychological effects, such as post-traumatic stress disorder. Delivering education can contribute to "physical, psychosocial, and cognitive protection of children, adolescents, and adult learners" (Davies and Talbot 2008, 509). Together with "family and community support" (Zuilkowski and Betancourt 2014, 476) and cooperation with "local organizations and community leaders" (ibid.), the reopening of schools can thus be framed as "restoring normality" (Davies and Talbot 2008, 513). While these are important arguments that are more nuanced than this short discussion implies (ibid.), they mirror an increasing focus on "resilience" (OECD 2013; Reyes 2013; Winthrop and Matsui 2013). The INEE Minimum Standards (INEE 2012, 122) define resilience as

> "the capacity of a system, community or individual potentially exposed to hazards to adapt. This adaptation means resisting or changing in order to reach and maintain an acceptable level of functioning and structure. Resilience depends on coping mechanisms and life skills such as problem-solving, the ability to seek support, motivation, optimism, faith, perseverance and resourcefulness. Resilience occurs when protective factors that support well-being are stronger than risk factors that cause harm."

This "instrumentalist" (Mosse and Lewis 2006) point-of-view side-lines a more nuanced reality. As Davies and Talbot (2008, 513) argue, "the implication is that it would almost be enough to get the children back into school and that the routines of schooling are as important as its content." Likewise, Winthrop and Kirk (2008, 657) criticize that "simple returns have shown to be insufficient. Although they provide a crude normalcy, students are aware whether attending school has any positive learning effects or not". Shah (2015) argues that resilience overemphasizes the abilities and skilfulness of local-level actors to cater to their own needs and thereby carries the risk of slipping into an apolitical

discourse. Lopes Cardozo and Shah (2016, 342) point to the strong link between an apolitical resilience discourse and teacher deployment: "[r]esilience, while now used as an accepted discourse for the continuance of educational provision in conflict-affected context, may put teachers in compromised and dangerous positions as the front-line actors tasked with maintaining the status quo." Shah and Lopes Cardozo (2016, 212) further argue that teachers are "expected to obediently follow the directives from above". These authors criticize governments' assumptions about teachers' willingness and ability to mechanically follow orders, notwithstanding their individual characteristics, skills, desires and political viewpoints. Vongalis-Macrow (2006, 104) contends that "teachers are key agents used by governing powers to enable emergency measures and signal the return to normalcy". Finally, the resilience approach is simply not helpful when it comes to explaining *why* communities return. The fact that schools *can* provide certain positive functions is not necessarily the main motivation for returns. While other factors might motivate teachers to return – intrinsic motivation, income or status and appreciation in communities (Boak and Smith 2009; Dennis and Fentiman 2007; Lopes Cardozo and Shah 2016; Ring and West 2015; World Bank 2010) – it seems important to unpack the role of government actors.

This article therefore enhances these analyses by focusing on concrete practices of government. How do administrators deploy teachers in an armed conflict? They can hardly force teachers if the latter are unwilling – teachers remain with an option to leave the teaching profession. Indeed, governing behaviour is a mediated process: Instead of understanding the state abstractly, Schouten (2013, 7), suggests to focus on the "mediation of interactions by symbolic and material entities", allowing for an analysis of state power in its diversity and manifested in localized practices. Taking this suggestion into account, I build on the following theoretical aspects.

First, the existence of educational administrators should not be taken for granted. Their positions result from historical socio-political processes (Brandt 2017a). Administrative decentralization in many countries has created a mass of new administrative positions in closer proximity to the people they are administering.

Second, the practices of administrators are mediated by practical norms, local level interactions and logistical techniques. "Practical norms…account for the numerous and diverse latent regulations which are embedded in civil servants' practices while not complying with official (explicit) norms" (De Herdt and Olivier de Sardan 2015, 3). Administrators need to find adaptive solutions with few resources while trying to respect formal regulations. This "real governance" (Olivier de Sardan 2008) perspective enlightens administrators' actual practices without judgment. Local level negotiations between teachers, state actors and non-state actors – such as faith-based organizations (FBOs) – also mediate administrators' capacity to deploy teachers (De Herdt and Titeca 2016, 478). Finally, "logistical techniques" (Mann 1984, 192) allow the state administration to gain spatial reach. These techniques are constitutive of what Mann (1984, 189) calls "infrastructural power", defining it as "the capacity of the state to actually penetrate civil society, and to implement logistically political decisions throughout the realm". One logistical technique in this article are teachers' salaries. Indeed, exercising power on teachers to reopen schools during and after conflict "presupposes that an entire network has been constructed through which it [power] can be exerted" (Srnicek 2010, 37).

Third, government is not a one-way street and must not be equated with force or coercion (Mann 1984). Teachers can react to and contest the use of logistical techniques. Therefore, the analysis considers teachers' agency and their multiple identities and motivations. This entails, for example, the "strategic manoeuvring educators undertook to keep their schools and classrooms open to students in the midst of conflict outside" (Lopes Cardozo and Shah 2016, 340). Such a perspective goes beyond

a "stark binary and portrayal of teacher agency as being one of compliance or resistance" (Shah and Lopes Cardozo 2016, 209).

Educational administration in the DRC

Investigating how administrators deploy teachers requires an understanding of educational administration and school and teacher registration processes. The DRC is split into deconcentrated educational divisions, which are again separated into educational subdivisions. The number of these subdivisions has grown since the early 2000s: 191 subdivisions in 2008 were transformed into 258 subdivisions as of 2016. The government subdivisional educational administrator is called 'Sous-Proved'.[1] Despite official decentralization, educational administrative offices respond to the national ministry in Kinshasa. The province under study consists of 10 educational subdivisions, four of which were created after 2008. The two conflict-affected subdivisions under study were created in 2008 and 2011. This not only means that their offices are not well equipped, but also that, for example, Mitwaba was still lacking a secondary inspector in 2014.

In addition to government administrative offices, faith-based schools belong to the public sector in the DRC. Locally, FBOs are represented by counsels, priests and parishes. While this facilitates a profound spatial penetration, their actual supervisory functions are unclear. All administrative offices, government and faith-based, are to a large extent funded indirectly through parents' financial contributions (De Herdt and Titeca 2016). Furthermore, local leaders can directly interact with teachers. Each territory is made up of sectors, chiefdoms and *groupements*, "administrative units that are ruled by traditional leaders linked to the state administration" (Kyamusugulwa and Hilhorst 2015, 251). These leaders can be elected or assigned.

Similarly to educational divisions, the number of schools in the country has increased drastically since 2004 (Brandt 2017a). These schools require formal registration. A school accreditation decree binds a school to a certain territory, but not to a specific location. The school's location in a particular village is registered through a field visit by the Ministry of Education's department for teacher payment (*Service du Contrôle de la Paie des Enseignants*, or SECOPE) and the subsequent award of a SECOPE matriculation number. SECOPE was created in 1985 to identify all schools and teachers in the country. After the turbulent 1990s and early 2000s, the World Bank pushed for a teacher census. Many interviewees cited a letter[2] from the Minister of Education from 2007. It announced a census and specified that schools were only allowed to function at the site where SECOPE registered them:

> An educational facility is registered at one particular location and cannot henceforth be transferred to another location for any reason whatsoever. The only location for which the decree is authorized is the location where SECOPE has registered the school. If a transfer nonetheless takes place, this facility is no longer part of the accredited public schools and teachers' salaries will be immediately suspended.

---

[1] French: Sous-Province Educationnelle, a name that describes the administrative unit and, in its abbreviated version, the person that is the head of the unit.

[2] N°MINEPSP/CABMIN/28668/2007 from 7th June 2007. *Recensement et contrôle des écoles et agents du Ministère de l'EPSP par le SECOPE* [Census and control of schools and staff of the Ministry of Primary, Secondary and Vocational Education through SECOPE].

Furthermore, the government prohibited teacher transfers during the school year. It thereby tried to turn the extremely dynamic education sector into a stable, and thus governable, entity. Since this first attempt did not resolve the situation, more censuses and capacity building measures for SECOPE followed. However, as of 2016, the teacher database was neither comprehensive nor reliable. An unknown number of teachers are fully or partially missing from the database. I argue that the attempt to control the stability of the teaching workforce has nonetheless become a crucial element of Congolese educational governance, to the detriment of teachers in recurrent armed conflict.

For teachers, registration with SECOPE is a condition for a government salary. The monthly salary for a primary school teacher[3] in November 2015 was Francs Congolais (FC) 103,170 (US $111). This is far below the absolute minimum income of US $205 promised by the government in 2005, but it does represent an enormous increase since February 2004, for example, when the monthly salary was approximately FC 5,105 (US $13). In a country with few paved roads, how does this money reach teachers? As of 2016, the country had gone through the so-called bancarisation, a reform to pay all civil servants via individual bank accounts. Due to the lack of banking infrastructure, this ambitious reform turned out to be a chimera in rural regions. The Catholic NGO Caritas used the opportunity to become a major provider of teachers' salaries. Caritas had already paid teachers in Catholic schools before the bancarisation. From 2013 onwards, the number of teachers from all networks paid by Caritas grew significantly. In 2016, Caritas paid most teachers in Pweto and Mitwaba and two commercial banks in the territory of Pweto paid the rest. One way or the other, all teachers obtain their salaries, even during conflict. However, teachers also have to seek additional forms of income.

Since 1992, when the government was unable to pay teachers' salaries, the Catholic Church encouraged parents to pay monthly top-ups. Today, parents still fund the lion's share of the educational budget (De Herdt and Titeca 2016). All administrators share these payments. However, in the conflict-affected regions under study, the monetary economy is not very dynamic. Parents have low incomes and their contributions are rather small. Therefore, the government's payments make up a large share of the overall salaries. Finally, teachers in rural areas frequently engage in agricultural activities.

The preceding analysis may be summarized as follows. First, the number of educational subdivisions has expanded rapidly since 2004. As a result, the state administration can better monitor schools and teachers. Second, FBOs manage public schools, while chiefs can have supervisory functions. Third, several donor initiatives have supported the government department in charge of teacher identification. I argue that the underlying attempt to identify all teachers has become a major policy goal in the DRC that is also pursued at the local level. Fourth, teachers receive their salaries through a network of human and non-human intermediaries. Finally, parents fund a substantial part of teachers' salaries. The stage is now set for a closer look at armed conflict.

The triangle of death

Amidst the various complex and long-lasting armed conflicts in the DRC (Verweijen and Iguma Wakenge 2015), my study turns to a region that has received little attention: the *triangle de la mort* (triangle of death) in the former province of Katanga. This triangle comprises the area between the capitals of three territories: Manono, Mitwaba and Pweto. The militias in this area are known as Mayi

---

[3] This regards teachers outside of Kinshasa, grade 31, and allowances are excluded because they are insignificant.

Mayi. Mayi (water in Swahili) refers to a ritual of "sprinkling young soldiers with 'magic water', the mayi, which is believed to protect warriors from bullets" (Jourdan 2011, 90). Frequently evoking images of irrationality in Western eyes, the Mayi Mayi have often been misrepresented; however, their story is complex and dates back to the 1960s (Verweijen 2017; Vlassenroot and Van Acker 2001). For example, the described rituals foster coherence between group members, the attached code of conduct ought to lead to respectful behaviour and the ritual increases recognition by the population (Verweijen 2017). Whereas one of their main purposes is self-defence, it is increasingly difficult to distinguish "between self-defending Mayi Mayi and profit-seeking warlords" (Vlassenroot and Van Acker 2001, 67). Verweijen (2015) lists a wide repertoire of reasons for Mayi Mayi violence. Gradually, the label Mayi Mayi has become a catchphrase for all militias made up of autochthons (Vlassenroot and Van Acker 2001, 60), differing in size with a few or a few hundred members (Verweijen 2017).

The conflict under study dates back at least to the Congo wars (1996-2003). During the defence against Rwandan and Ugandan troops, former President Laurent-Désiré Kabila armed self-defence groups – Mayi Mayi. The fiercest periods of attacks in the triangle of death were from 2001 to 2006 and 2011 to 2016; they were particularly intense between December 2012 and October 2014. Since 2011, the group under study became known as "Bakata Katanga",[4] claiming to pursue an independent Katanga. These political claims date back to Katangan nationalism from the 1960s and 1970s. The re-emergence of these "neosecessionist movements" (Kennes and Larmer 2016, 183) must be understood in light of local grievances (Autesserre 2009), the instrumentalization by political elites (Kennes and Larmer 2016) and a generalized "criticism against the state" that "taps into widespread feelings of disillusionment with the current government" (Hoffmann and Verweijen 2018, 18). The militia is made up of people from the area under study.

While this short account cannot do justice to the history, particularities and modalities of rule of different Mayi Mayi groups (Hoffmann and Verweijen 2018; Verweijen 2015, 2017), it points to two reasons why militias affect teacher deployment. On the one hand, they are drivers of teachers' displacement. On the other hand, these militias can reassemble quickly and the persisting presence of potential or former Mayi Mayi discourages teachers from returning to their villages. Consequently, it is up to educational administrators to govern teachers' movements and make them return.

Teacher deployment in recurrent armed conflict

The first empirical section of the paper analyses teachers' and schools' long-term displacements. It underlines that teachers' displacements and returns can occur repeatedly. Moreover, it highlights the roles of educational administrators in organizing education during internal displacement. The second section sheds light on returning schools and teachers. I argue that educational administrators, aided by a web of human and non-human mediators, play a crucial role in making teachers return.

Displacements

Given recurrent conflicts, many people have experienced multiple attacks and displacements – from the Rwandan invasion in 1998 until 2003, the first wave of militia insurgency from 2003 to 2006 and the second wave between 2011 and 2016. Periods of displacement were both brief and long. People hid in surrounding forests or moved to neighbouring villages, more populated centres or

---

[4] Meaning "cutting/separating [the province of] Katanga".

neighbouring countries. Each educational subdivision under study has between 200 and 300 primary and secondary public schools. Thirty schools in each case were still displaced in 2015. As the following example illustrates, displaced populations frequently reopen their schools (Brandt 2017b).

In April 2015, a primary school principal recounted his schools' various displacements. All of the villagers fled and subsequently returned after an attack during the 2005-06 school year and a second attack in December 2012. After each attack, the teachers were dispersed to different areas and did not reopen the school during displacement. The militias attacked the village for a third time in December 2013. In the same month, the principal convinced the teachers to come to the capital of Mitwaba to reopen the school. "This time", stated one teacher from the school, "we have decided on a strategy…that all of us will flee to the capital of Mitwaba…You have to go where there are people, where one can work, where you're given something. And not just to stay where you are, not doing anything, we would be like monkeys." The school's village was particularly strongly affected by militia attacks. The principal continued, "[a]fter three teachers had been whipped and the village destroyed, we preferred to come to the capital of Mitwaba and stayed for some time. We asked the Sous-Proved for a building and he accepted."

This example suggests two things: first, attacks against teachers occur and second, teachers have agency to facilitate school openings during displacements. Moreover, it suggests important roles of the Sous-Proved, the subdivisional educational administrator. Indeed, the Sous-Proved is the key figure in finding other buildings and locations in which a school can function and authorizing it to do so. Often, the Sous-Proved asks other schools to share their facilities, with one school functioning in the morning and the other operating in the afternoon. Churches are also popular places to organize classes. Many ramshackle, temporary buildings are used, leading to students sitting on stones and being exposed to rain. While such conditions can be found in any rural region in the DRC, the situation is particularly alarming in these conflict-affected areas (Brandt 2017b). In the words of an educational inspector, "[s]chools continued to function with great difficulty…When schools were displaced we had to register them, and we asked teachers to construct new buildings, made of anything they could find…But it was difficult, when they started to build, one or two months later they might have to flee, they were displaced" (Interview, 28.04.15).

Strictly speaking, the displacement of a school contradicts the above-mentioned ministerial letter from 2007 that prohibits displacement. Even a temporary relocation officially requires the consent of the Proved, the head of the provincial educational administration hundreds of kilometres away. However, given the great number of displaced schools, the difficulty in quickly transporting formal letters and the urgency of the matter, the Sous-Proveds usually accept temporary displacements without demanding authorization from the Proved (Interview, 28.04.15), simply informing them of the general situation (Letter dated 05.03.13).

Nonetheless, one Sous-Proved stated that he requires letters from principals to back up his decisions. The following letter, written by a primary school principal on 16th January 2014 to the Sous-Proved in Pweto and to other educational offices, provides an example:

> I regretfully inform you that on 19/12/2013 the village of x…was burned down. Given the insecurity that is reigning in this area, we have made the decision to open our school in y…All of the classrooms, offices were set on fire, except nine or ten houses in the village. We have lost almost everything.

This is a common depiction of events in such letters. Through these letters, principals signal the ongoing functioning of the school to the Sous-Proved, document attacks and demand assistance. The signalling function should not be underestimated. Schools that are on the government's payroll are

valuable institutions for local communities. The Sous-Proveds, along with other educational administrators, try to ensure the functioning of schools even during displacement. Since it is difficult to acquire school accreditation decrees and a SECOPE matriculation number, "the decree needs to be protected, especially in regard to schools that have already received a matriculation number" (Interview with Sous-Proved, 19.02.15). While some teachers conclude that "[t]he educational subdivision is on top of everyone" (Interview, 13.04.16), the following interpretation also demonstrates the significance of SECOPE's field staff.

In the territory of Mitwaba, there are two SECOPE field offices. One of the SECOPE inspectors was in charge of 52 schools with 239 primary school teachers, 63 secondary school teachers and 19 administrative staff. This office did not receive any regular government funding and financed its activities through parents' money. In 2010, the government distributed motorbikes to SECOPE's field offices in the region under study. Underlining the importance of infrastructural aspects, the field staff used the motorbikes to visit areas that were difficult to access. Even the Sous-Proved did not go to these areas. The SECOPE employee reported that the schools were functioning with great difficulties. However, he made no reference to his role in enforcing teachers' presence at schools. "From our perspective, all schools functioned" (Interview, 28.04.15). A teacher strongly disagreed, stating that "SECOPE was only interested in the service and not in life" (Interview, 13.04.16), implying that SECOPE staff pressured teachers to work despite dangerous circumstances. However, since SECOPE is in charge of monitoring salaries, it has less control over unpaid schools and teachers. In 2012, SECOPE conducted a teacher census. The SECOPE inspector explained that all paid schools were accessible and functioned without exception, noting that "[t]here were schools *non-mécanisées* [without a SECOPE matriculation number] that we could not access" (Interview, 28.04.15). For him, the main reason was that unpaid schools did not need to receive salaries and therefore they could function wherever they wanted. Paid schools, in contrast, had to remain accessible. This suggests that salaries closely bind schools and teachers to administrators.

Another example of the differences in administering schools and teachers is offshoots of accredited schools. These small schools usually offer less than the full six years of education and function in small villages without any formalized government recognition. Teachers are paid exclusively by parents. None of these schools that I encountered continued to function during displacement, which corroborates the notion that accreditation decrees have an impact on the administration of displaced schools. I conclude that administrators supervise displaced schools and teachers, especially via decrees and salaries. The following section provides further evidence.

Returns

In line with my reciprocal approach towards "real governance" and teachers' agency, this section sheds light on whether and how teachers contest the government's decisions. Teachers have intrinsic motivations to return, but some of them have lived through horrific events making returns a precarious matter.

In general, the return to a village does not imply that entire villages return at once. Little by little, people start returning. Some of the population has usually remained in or around the village after attacks. Sometimes returning schools signal to the rest of the population that returns are safe. Boak and Smith (2009, 11) argue that teachers in the DRC return due to parents' financial contributions. Although this is an interesting theory, parents in these contexts are unable to pay significant sums. Moreover, as many schools continued to function during displacement, this argument does not explain why schools return. International humanitarian response, especially in the form of school

kitchens run by the World Food Programme, was unpredictable but common. Despite the incentives of such programmes for returning teachers, in many cases returns were more directly linked to demands and pressure.

One teacher stated, "[w]e returned because it was an order of the state, under the threat to block salaries and suspend the school" (Interview, 14.04.16). Another teacher was warned by the Sous-Proved and a priest. He concluded, "[i]f they find schools that have not been opened they will shut them down…We have agreed to return because these are the services. If you don't accept, they will remove you" (Interview, 12.04.16). However, fellow villagers also warned him that reopening the school would be a signal to the Congolese military that normal life had returned. The soldiers would then come to the village, which would cause new troubles with the militia. Nonetheless, he said that the teachers decided to return as they were lacking "many things, coal, wood, and food" (Interview, 12.04.16). In another case, the role of educational administrators was more indirect, as a principal elaborated (Interview, 12.04.16):

> *Researcher*: Why did you accept returning?
> *Principal*: Well it's the chief.
> *Researcher*: There are several chiefs.
> *Principal*: There's the village chief, and two other customary chiefs (*chef de terre*). They were behind this, they saw that their children were wasting time.
> *Researcher*: Because the population had already returned?
> *Principal*: Yes, little by little the population returned. Because where we stayed there was nothing to eat so we had to return.
> *Researcher*: Did the Sous-Proved and the SECOPE inspector also force you to return?
> *Principal*: No. Even our priest hadn't returned. It was due to the chief and his deputy. The chief himself stayed in another village. It was the deputy who contacted the educational authorities to make us return.

According to this excerpt, the customary chiefs turned to educational administrators to make teachers return. Local customary chiefs and elected leaders have important roles in these settings (Kyamusugulwa and Hilhorst 2015). Just as anyone else can, chiefs can decide to side with the militias, but they can also be severely harmed by the militias' activities. In addition, some chiefs are much more concerned about the provision of education than others. In one case, the local chief (*chef du groupement*) offered returning teachers accommodation in order to incentivize them to work in his area (Interviews, 26.02.15). In other cases, teachers felt abandoned by their chief (Interview, 13.04.16). Administrators have legal authority to enforce the contentious requests of a chief. At the same time, the precarious food situation was another reason these teachers returned. In the following case, the administrator exercised more pressure, leading to contestations from a teacher who had personal troubles with the militia:

> *Researcher*: Did you easily accept returning for this school year 2015/16?
> *Principal*: Yes, because it was a recommendation, and by the way, most of the parents returned, so we are condemned to return.
> *Researcher*: Whose recommendation was it?
> *Principal*: From our superiors.
> *Researcher*: Who exactly told you to return?
> *Principal*: Well, we worked in [another village], and at the end of the last school year we were told [by the Sous-Proved] that 'all schools have to be opened in their villages'. There's nothing to say against that, we were condemned to return…

> *Researcher*: Would you have preferred to stay in [another village]?
> *Principal*: Given the difficulties, and others still have their families in [another village], but we are here for the service. Luckily this year has been calm, God is great (Interview, 14.04.16).

I remember how the principal's first sentence confused me. He affirmed with a "yes" that he easily accepted returning, then framed it as a "recommendation" and finally talked about "condemnation". It felt as though he was saying "I returned voluntarily, but I had to". This excerpt suggests that the school did not signal to parents a calm return to their village. Instead, the pressure exercised by returned families and the government made the teachers return, as a priest from a religious school network underlined: "[t]he principal did not want to return, but the population and the Sous-Proved requested it" (Interview, 11.04.16). It is important to add that this principal had personal conflicts with members of the militia. It was certainly not a voluntary return.

Nevertheless, this principal is a "front line actor" (Shah and Lopes Cardozo 2016, 17). As Vongalis-Macrow (2006, 104) states, "teachers are key agents used by governing powers to enable emergency measures and signal the return to normalcy." The following excerpt mirrors this statement:

> *Principal*: Even when the Sous-Proved told us to return, we did it reluctantly, as we have seen things around here.
> *Researcher*: You returned this year?
> *Principal*: Yes, reluctantly. Thinking about the issues that took place around here.
> *Researcher*: Would you have stayed in [another village] if you had had the chance?
> *Principal*: Yes.
> *Teacher*: Absolutely.
> *Principal*: Why does the Sous-Proved not come here? People from [an NGO] came. Why didn't he accompany them in their car? Is it because he is afraid? He goes to [cities in the calmer South]…We would like the customary chiefs, the Sous-Proved and the SECOPE inspector to come first. And we will follow them. They should see what has been going on over here…At least the SECOPE inspector came (Interview, 13.04.16).

"We have seen things around here" points to the principal's direct encounters with members of the militia and attacks on the school building. The principal and teacher criticized their superiors very frankly. Having been pushed to return, they complained about the lack of support and named key actors who they verbally held accountable. The Sous-Proved had told me about their complaints, but said honestly that he was too afraid to visit their area. This excerpt points to conflicts between educational administrators and teachers who are both state actors.

A final case illustrates in more depth why teachers might be unwilling to return. At the end of the 2014-15 school year, a principal told me about the attack on his village: "[o]ur village used to be a Mayi Mayi hotspot. They came, we fled, for a while, they returned, they burned the entire village. Then, three teachers were whipped and tied up, we preferred to leave" (Interview, 28.04.15). Members of the militia arrived with a list of names, including that of a teacher, accusing him of cooperating with the military, tying him up and whipping him publicly. He almost lost his life. He told me the following:

> *Teacher*: When it comes to returning, I don't encourage it. Everything I have gone through, that does not allow me to return. If I were obliged to return, I would stop being a teacher.
> *Researcher*: Could you request a transfer?
> *Teacher*: I will request it, if I am forced, I stop. In order to stay in [another village] and wait for some time (Interview 28.04.15).

One year later, I visited this former Mayi Mayi hotspot, approximately 60 km north of the capital of Mitwaba. It was inaccessible by car due to an impassable bridge. Trying to find the teachers to whom I had spoken one year earlier, I was eager to hear their accounts. They had so openly talked about their experiences that I thought I could easily continue our conversation. However, they did not have much to tell me, saying that they had returned because they had no choice: "[t]he SECOPE inspector and the Sous-Proved compelled us" (Interview 12.04.16). After three displacements over the last 10 years, all of the teachers in that school have returned, even the one who would rather stop being a teacher than return. Again, government actors occupy a pivotal role in making teachers return. In the conclusion that follows, I summarize my argument and reflect on the implications for policy-makers.

Conclusion

In this article, I have drawn on empirical material from south-eastern DRC to analyse the deployment of internally displaced teachers. Despite increasing attention and funding dedicated to education in emergencies, the administration of education during internal displacement has largely remained a black box (Bengtsson and Naylor 2016). I have expanded the argument that teachers are front line actors used by governments to re-establish territorial control (Lopes Cardozo and Shah 2016; Vongalis-Macrow 2006), which I have done in three ways. First, I have shown that few teachers see one option – remaining displaced versus returning – as fully advantageous. Being displaced entails enormous hardships. For example, expenses for food and housing in semi-urban areas are higher and possibilities to work in agriculture are limited. Once communities return, displaced teachers have no more children to teach. Returning then becomes a viable option. Second, some teachers are against returning. They can protest but have few means of refusing the government's decisions. While teachers have the ability to at least discursively contest returns (Shah and Lopes Cardozo 2016), they must comply if they want to remain in their positions. Third, I have concretely demonstrated what "state pressure" can look like. Educational administrators, in close collaboration with local chiefs, priests and parents, play an important role in organizing education and deploying teachers in recurrent armed conflicts. Administrators authorize temporary displacements, assign displaced teachers and schools to new buildings, send and receive letters from teachers and their superiors and help coordinate the activities of NGOs. Most importantly, they use school accreditation decrees and salaries to put pressure on teachers to return once the government has formally declared pacification of their home region. Notwithstanding the question of whether they are actually able to withdraw decrees and salaries, the threat of doing so is at the very least a symbolic logistical technique. Even very low salaries can serve this purpose, as teachers have limited alternative income sources. The case of the DRC, where teachers' salaries have stagnated at a low level for several years, underlines this dynamic. Therefore, I have argued that administrators in a state with overall weak administrative and financial capacities are able to exert influence over the teaching workforce in conflict-affected zones, aided by a web of chiefs, parents and possibly students and faith-based organizations, and supported by a socio-material network that makes salaries available in remote areas. I have embedded this argument within a wider analysis of teacher governance; ensuring reliable data on teachers has become a dominant norm and objective of teacher governance in the DRC (Brandt 2018), including conflict-affected regions.

I use the arguments above to unpack the limited and potentially harmful use of the concept of "resilience", given its tendency to exclude questions of political economy and political sociology

(Lopes Cardozo 2015; Shah 2015). Viewing returns and the continuous delivery of education as "resilience" (see, for example, Winthrop and Matsui 2013) would not do justice to actual dynamics. In fact, returning comes at a high cost: periods of pacification are often of short duration and reflect a mere absence of violence rather than a positive peace (Galtung 1969; Novelli, Lopes Cardozo, and Smith 2015). In the context under study, Mayi Mayi have repeatedly resurged. As they are not a stable entity they can reassemble under certain conditions. After their returns, teachers must work amidst past or potential opponents. However, it would be imprecise to only view teachers as victims. A focus on resilience or state pressure would hide the fact that teachers actively recreate a crude normalcy and negative peace, as they want to maintain access to the state's resources and because they want to remain in the teaching profession. In addition to, for example, health providers, teachers are among the last "outposts" of statehood (Wilson 2000, 4), redrawing and demarcating ever-shifting and blurred internal borders between government- and militia-controlled territories. A recent example from another region of the DRC suggests an alternative to resilience and teachers' recreation of 'normalcy': Teachers from Beni went into an unlimited strike to protest the on-going insecurity in their region (Radio Okapi 2018). This example illustrates a practical alternative to 'resilience' through political collective action.

What, then, do these findings imply for policy-makers and project designers? To begin with, the article increases the visibility of internally displaced teachers. This is as relevant for the DRC – see the more recent conflict in the Grand Kasai region (Rolley 2017) – as it is for other protracted crises. Second, the article highlights the importance of understanding how government actors really work. Programmes should try to include them in their activities without becoming accomplices of government actions that risk teachers' lives. Finally, the article can serve as a case study to illustrate the limits of technical approaches to education, conflict, development and peacebuilding, bearing in mind Li's (2007b, 17) reflection that "[m]en in their relations, their links, their imbrications are not easy to manage." Schematically speaking, each intervention seeks to represent a world "in which problem (a) plus intervention (b) will produce (c), a beneficial result" (Li 2007a, 265). Supposedly technical elements, however, can have political implications. In this article, I have developed this argument by focusing on teacher and school registration and teachers' salaries. Indeed, teacher registration can become a straightjacket if pursued in a conflict; salaries are not only incentives to enhance teachers' effectiveness or retention (INEE 2009; World Bank 2010), but also instruments in the hand of the administration to exercise pressure on teachers. Salaries are important to retain teachers, but their impact should be well thought out. The cases of registration and salaries demonstrate that development programmes should "tread lightly" (Li 2007b, 18) when intervening in highly sensitive contexts. As of now, "[d]espite the fact that many IDPs live in conditions of protracted displacement, international support for education for IDPs is generally treated as a short-term humanitarian response" (Bengtsson and Naylor 2016, 32). These a priori short durations may be set off by the fact that "education interventions in conflict-affected contexts often continue for many years" (Monaghan and King 2018). If this is true, it is even more important that implicit or explicit theories of change of projects do justice to the particular circumstances and experiences of teachers. Attacks, displacements and returns shape teachers' identities and policy-makers should be well aware of the types of experiences teachers have gone through.

Bibliography

Autesserre, Séverine. 2009. "Hobbes and the Congo: Frames, Local Violence, and International Intervention." *International Organization* 63(2): 249–80.

Bender, Lisa. 2010. "Innovations in Emergency Education: The IRC in the Democratic Republic of Congo." *Background paper for the Education for All Global Monitoring Report 2011*.

Bengtsson, Stephanie, and Ruth Naylor. 2016. *Education for Refugees and IDPs in Low- and Middle-Income Countries. Identifying Challenges and Opportunities*. HEART (Health and Education Advice and Resource Team).

Boak, Erika, and Harvey Smith. 2009. *Study on Governance Challenges for Education in Fragile Situations. Democratic Republic of Congo Country Report*. Euro-Trends.

Brandt, Cyril Owen. 2017a. "Ambivalent Outcomes of Statebuilding: Multiplication of Brokers and Educational Expansion in the DR Congo (2004-2013)." *Review of African Political Economy* 44(154).

———. 2017b. *Constructing Schools in a Recurrent Armed Conflict in Democratic Republic of Congo*. Reading, UK: Education Development Trust.

———. 2018. *Illegibility as a State Effect. The Limits of Governing Teacher Identification in the Democratic Republic of Congo*. PhD Thesis, University of Amsterdam, unpublished.

Davies, Lynn, and Christopher Talbot. 2008. "Learning in Conflict and Postconflict Contexts." *Comparative Education Review* 52(4): 509–18.

Dennis, Carolyn, and Alicia Fentiman. 2007. *Alternative Basic Education in African Countries Emerging from Conflict; Issues of Policy, Co-Ordination and Access*. DfID.

DRC/MoE. 2014. *République Démocratique Du Congo. Rapport d'Etat Du Système Educatif National. Résumé Exécutif. Pour Une Éducation Au Service de La Croissance et de La Paix*. UNICEF, UNESCO - IIEP Pôle de Dakar. http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0023/002326/232623f.pdf.

———. 2015. *Annuaire Statistique de l'Enseignement Primaire, Secondaire et Professionnel 2013/14*.

Dryden-Peterson, Sarah. 2009. *Barriers to Accessing Primary Education in Conflict-Affected Fragile States. Case Study, Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC)*. Save the Children.

Dupuy, Kendra, and Siri Aas Rustad. 2018. "Trends in Armed Conflict, 1946-2017." *Peace Research Institute Oslo Conflict Trends* 5.

Galtung, Johan. 1969. "Violence, Peace and Peace Research." *Journal of Peace Research* 6(3): 167–91.

GCPEA. 2018. *Education Under Attack 2018*.

Gilchrist, Thomas, Algrant Fellow, and Bede Sheppard. 2015. *"Our School Became the Battlefield". Using Schools for Child Recruitment and Military Purposes in Eastern Democratic Republic of Congo*. Human Rights Watch.

Gladwell, Catherine, and Lydia Tanner. 2014. *Hear It from the Children. Why Education in Emergencies Is Critical. A Study on the Role of Education for Conflict-Affected Communities in the Democratic Republic of Congo and Ethiopia*. European Commission, Norwegian Refugee Council, Save the Children UK.

De Herdt, Tom, Wim Marivoet, and Ferdinand Muhigirwa. 2015. *Analyse de La Situation Des Enfants et Des Femmes En RDC 2015. Vers La Réalisation Du Droit à Une Éducation de Qualité Pour Tous*. UNICEF.

De Herdt, Tom, and Jean-Pierre Olivier de Sardan. 2015. "Introduction: The Game of the Rules." In *Real Governance and Practical Norms in Sub-Saharan Africa. The Game of the Rules*, London: Routledge.

De Herdt, Tom, and Kristof Titeca. 2016. "Governance with Empty Pockets: The Education Sector in the Democratic Republic of Congo." *Development and Change* 47(3): 472–94.

Hoffmann, Kasper, and Tom Kirk. 2013. "Public Authority and the Provision of Public Goods in Conflict-Affected and Transitioning Regions." *Justice and Security Research Programme Paper* 7.

Hoffmann, Kasper, and Judith Verweijen. 2018. "Rebel Rule: A Governmentality Perspective." *African*

Affairs (December 2017): 1–23.

INEE. 2009. *INEE Guidance Notes on Teacher Compensation in Fragile States, Situations of Displacement and Post-Crisis Recovery*.

———. 2012. *Minimum Standards for Education: Preparedness, Response, Recovery*.

Jones, Amir, and Ruth Naylor. 2014. *The Quantitative Impact of Armed Conflict on Education in the Democratic Republic of the Congo: Counting the Human and Financial Costs*. CfBT Education Trust.

Jourdan, Luca. 2011. "Mayi-Mayi: Young Rebels in Kivu, DRC." *Council for the Development of Social Science Research in Africa* XXXVI(3&4): 89–111.

Kalyvas, Stathis N., and Laia Balcells. 2010. "International System and Technologies of Rebellion: How the End of the Cold War Shaped Internal Conflict." *American Political Science Review* 104(3): 415–29.

Kennes, Erik, and Miles Larmer. 2016. *Katangese Gendarmes and War in Central Africa*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press.

Kyamusugulwa, Patrick M., and Dorothea Hilhorst. 2015. "Power Holders and Social Dynamics of Participatory Development and Reconstruction: Cases from the Democratic Republic of Congo." *World Development* 70: 249–59.

Li, Tania Murray. 2007a. "Practices of Assemblage and Community Forest Management." *Economy and Society* 36(2): 263–93.

———. 2007b. *The Will to Improve. Governmentality, Development, and the Practice of Politics*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.

Lopes Cardozo, Mieke T. A. 2015. "Education as a Stronghold? The Ambiguous Connections between Education, Resilience and Peacebuilding." *NORRAG Policy Research Note* 2.

Lopes Cardozo, Mieke T. A., and Mario Novelli. 2018. "Education in Emergencies: Tracing the Emergence of a Field." In *Global Education Policy and International Development. New Agendas, Issues and Policies*, eds. Antoni Verger, Mario Novelli, and Hülya Kosar Altinyelken. London: Bloomsbury, 233–54.

Lopes Cardozo, Mieke T. A., and Ritesh Shah. 2016. "'The Fruit Caught between Two Stones': The Conflicted Position of Teachers within Aceh's Independence Struggle." *Globalisation, Societies and Education* 14(3): 331–43.

Mann, Michael. 1984. "The Autonomous Power of the State: Its Origins, Mechanisms and Results." *European Journal of Sociology* 25(2): 185–213.

Monaghan, Christine, and Elisabeth King. 2018. "How Theories of Change Can Improve Education Programming and Evaluation in Conflict-Affected Contexts." *Comparative Education Review* 62(3).

Mosse, David, and David Lewis. 2006. "Theoretical Approaches to Brokerage and Translation in Development." In *Development Brokers And Translators: The Ethnography of Aid And Agencies*, eds. David Lewis and David Mosse. Bloomfield, CT: Kumarian, 1–26.

Novelli, Mario, Mieke T. A. Lopes Cardozo, and Alan Smith. 2015. "A Theoretical Framework for Analysing the Contribution of Education to Sustainable Peacebuilding : 4Rs in Conflict-Affected Contexts." http://learningforpeace.unicef.org/partners/research?consortium/research?outputs/.

OECD. 2013. "What Does 'Resilience' Mean for Donors? An OECD Factsheet." http://www.oecd.org/dac/May 10 2013 FINAL resilience PDF.pdf (October 13, 2017).

Olivier de Sardan, Jean-Pierre. 2008. "Researching the Practical Norms of Real Governance in Africa." *Discussion Paper. Africa power & politics. Overseas Development Institute* (5).

Pherali, Tejendra J. 2013. "Schooling in Violent Situations: The Politicization of Education in Nepal, before and after the 2006 Peace Agreement." *Prospects* 43(1): 49–67.

Radio Okapi. 2018. "Beni : Les Enseignants Refusent de Suspendre La Grève." https://www.radiookapi.net/2018/10/17/actualite/education/beni-les-enseignants-refusent-de-suspendre-la-greve (October 17, 2018).

Reyes, Joel. 2013. "What Matters Most for Education Resilience: A Framework Paper." *SABER Working Paper Series* 7.

Ring, Hannah Reeves, and Amy West. 2015. "Teacher Retention in Refugee and Emergency Settings: The State of the Literature." *International Education Journal: Comparative Perspectives* 14(3): 106–21.

Rolley, Sonia. 2017. "RDC - Violences Au Kasai." *RFI*. http://webdoc.rfi.fr/rdc-kasai-violences-crimes-kamuina-nsapu/chap-01/index.html (June 10, 2018).

Schouten, Peer. 2013. "The Materiality of the State: Social Contract Theory, Infrastructure and Governmental Power in Congo." *Millennium - Journal of International Studies* 41(3): 553–74.

Shah, Ritesh. 2015. "Protecting Children in a Situation of Ongoing Conflict: Is Resilience Sufficient as the End Product?" *International Journal of Disaster Risk Reduction*: 1–7.

Shah, Ritesh, and Mieke T. A. Lopes Cardozo. 2016. "Transformative Teachers or Teachers to Be Transformed? The Cases of Bolivia and Timor-Leste." *Research in Comparative and International Education* 11(2): 208–21.

Smith, Melinda, Cynthia Koons, and Amy Kapit. 2014. *Protecting Education Personnel from Targeted Attack in Conflict-Affected Countries*. Global Coalition to Protect Education from Attack.

Srnicek, Nick. 2010. "Conflict Networks: Collapsing the Global into the Local." *Journal of Critical Globalisation Studies* 2(2): 30–64.

UNHCR. 2018. "Global Trends. Forced Displacement in 2017."

UNICEF. 2016. *Peacebuilding, Education and Advocacy in Conflict-Affected Contexts Programme. UNICEF Programme Report 2012-16*. Learning for Peace; UNICEF.

Verweijen, Judith. 2015. "From Autochthony to Violence? Discursive and Coercive Social Practices of the Mai-Mai in Fizi, Eastern DR Congo." *African Studies Review* 58(2): 157–80.

———. 2017. "Mai Mai Milities in Oost DR Congo: Een Demystificatie." In *De Alledaagse Rebel. Tien Rebellengroepen in Het Zuiden*, eds. Jeroen Adam, Bert Suykens, and Koen Vlassenroot. Ghent: Academia Press, 89–110.

Verweijen, Judith, and Claude Iguma Wakenge. 2015. "Understanding Armed Group Proliferation in the Eastern Congo." *Rift Valley Institute PSRP Briefing Paper* 7.

Vlassenroot, Koen, and Frank Van Acker. 2001. "War as Exit from Exclusion? The Formation of Mayi-Mayi Militias in Eastern Congo." *Afrika Focus* 17(1–2): 51–77.

Vongalis-Macrow, Athena. 2006. "Rebuilding Regimes or Rebuilding Community? Teachers' Agency for Social Reconstruction in Iraq." *Journal of Peace Education* 3(1): 99–113.

van Wessel, Margit, and Ruud van Hirtum. 2013. "Schools as Tactical Targets in Conflict: What the Case of Nepal Can Teach Us." *Comparative Education Review* 57(1): 1–21.

Wilson, Fiona. 2000. "Representing the State? School and Teacher in Post-Sendero Peru." *Bulletin of Latin American Research* 19(1): 1–16.

Winthrop, Rebecca, and Jackie Kirk. 2008. "Learning for a Bright Future: Schooling, Armed Conflict, and Children's Well-Being." *Comparative Education Review* 52(4): 639–61.

Winthrop, Rebecca, and Elena Matsui. 2013. *A New Agenda for Education in Fragile States*. Center for Universal Education at Brookings.

World Bank. 2010. *Teacher Policy and Management in Fragile and Conflict-Affected Situations. A Review of Issues, Policies and Experiences*.

Zuilkowski, Stephanie Simmons, and Theresa S Betancourt. 2014. "School Persistence in the Wake of War: Wartime Experiences, Reintegration Supports, and Dropout in Sierra Leone." *Comparative Education Review* 58(3): 457–81.

Acknowledgments