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FROM THE FIELD

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Rachel Hagues and Hunter Parker

Abstract

In 2009, we went to a remote Tanzanian island to lead a program for adolescent girls. The purpose of the program was to educate girls on their rights and provide them with support in overcoming many of the disparities they face. Theatre of the Oppressed (Boal, 1979), one tool used, was adapted to fit the girls' needs. It proved to be useful across cultural and language barriers. Programs such as this that empower girls to value themselves and discover solutions to challenges is one way to begin bringing gender equality to the community level. Herein, we discuss the program and lessons learned as graduate students from the West working in a developing country.

*Two dark-skinned, lanky, attractive teenage girls stroll past the fishing village. They are supposed to be in school. The fishermen cannot resist taking notice of the girls' full figures. They strut over to the girls, their words full of flattery and compliments, bringing them fish as gifts. The ultimate goal of these fishermen is to take advantage of the seemingly naive girls. To the fishermen's dismay, the girls reject the gifts and stand up for themselves. Later, the girls meet some of their friends, who advise them to return to school and avoid walking past the fishing village. They declare: "A girl without an education is nothing." (*An example of a skit developed by Tanzanian girls we worked with, summer 2009.)

In the summer of 2009, we headed to a remote part of Tanzania to complete a service-learning project. As graduate students from the University of Georgia (UGA), we collaborated with local women leaders to implement a program for adolescent girls. Our work there originated out of the University's partnership with Ambassador Gertrude Mongella, former district representative to Tanzania's Parliament and past-president of the Pan-African Union Parliament. Ambassador Mongella began this partnership after receiving The Delta Prize for Global Understanding (http://deltaprize.uga.edu/), an award from UGA that recognized her as a strong advocate for world peace and one whose initiatives have brought greater understanding and cooperation between cultures and states.

Ambassador Mongella and the Tanzanian community identified several priorities in advance. The ultimate goal was that the community and the university participants would establish a long-term sense of trust and continue working together. Ideally, the local people would identify a need, and someone from the university with expertise in that area would agree to partner with the community to create a solution together. Students would also be part of the solution-development process, applying what they learned in the classroom to people in the real world.

Some of Ambassador Mongella's priorities included girls' educational achievement, career awareness, and personal development (Nickols, Mullen, & Moshi, 2009). We addressed those priorities through a service-learning project designed with a specific purpose: to provide adolescent girls with a safe place to discuss some of their personal challenges, ensure that girls understand their rights, make connections with other girls and women in their community, and together, develop ways to overcome some of the challenges they identified. A goal of service-learning is that it empowers participants to determine and meet their needs (Marullo & Edwards, 2008). Students do not simply enter the community, do a good deed, and leave; this ultimately changes nothing and likely benefits no one long-term. We approached the partnership from a critical service-learning perspective,

recognizing that we could contribute to social change and that this experience could potentially prompt a community response to injustice we were uncovering (Mitchell, 2008). Critical service-learning also possesses the mindset that community partners should be actively engaged in the design of the service-learning experience (Mitchell, 2008). We used Theatre of the Oppressed techniques to accomplish some of these goals, despite time constraints and language and cultural barriers. In this article we present some of the challenges faced by the local girls, barriers to working internationally, and finally, the usefulness of Theatre of the Oppressed for development work, particularly from a social work perspective. Also presented are lessons we learned as graduate students from the West working in a developing country.

Historical Background: Why Girls Are a Priority

In Tanzania for years, women and girls have not been valued or guaranteed the same rights as men. Historically, children were to be sources of help to their parents, and girls in particular were supposed to help their mothers with household duties and chores. As girls grew older, they were married off to "bring wealth to the family by way of bride price" (Omatseye & Omatseye, 2008, p. 163). Legally in Tanzania today, women are supposed to be equals, but in reality, women and girls are not yet treated equally in all aspects of society. Cultural practice still lags behind the law at multiple levels. For example, Ishengoma (2004) studied accessibility of resources by gender in the Morogoro region and found that "male dominance and control of resources limits women's decision making, efficacy and productivity at household and societal levels" (p. 55). In another study, Muganyizi, Kilewo, and Moshiro (2004) reported that of 1,004 women interviewed in Dar es Salaam, 20% had previously been raped and that known perpetrators were responsible for 92% of those rapes (2004). Additionally, 50.5% of those raped reported a repeated rape.

One area where girls' opportunities still lag behind boys' is in their access to education. Girls are often required to take on a greater amount of household chores than boys due to cultural expectations of gender roles (Evans, 2005). This results in girls starting school at a later age than boys typically do, or girls not being able to attend school regularly, or not having sufficient time to study due to their heavy load of chores. This has a negative effect on girls' educational performance. Sometimes girls are taken out of school at an early age, either to get married or because of an early pregnancy (Gilbert, 2004).

Huisman and Smits (2009) studied household- and district-level determinants of primary school enrollment for 220,000 children in 30 developing countries within 340 districts. They found that in most of the countries observed, there has been an increase in enrollment from the second half of the 1970s to the second half of the 1990s. However, of the countries studied, Tanzania was one of three where the opposite occurred. The situation in Tanzania worsened in the 1990s, with 14.3% of primary school aged boys and 24.8% of primary school aged girls out of school during the mid-90s. In 2000, an estimated 3 million, out of almost 7 million children were not enrolled in school (Ward, Bourne, Penny, & Poston, 2003). In 2002, the rate of females completing primary school in Tanzania's Kilimanjaro area was only 62% (Vavrus, 2002). The problems facing primary education vary among regions but include "shortage of essential resources, irrelevant curriculum, late school enrollment, and lack of qualified teachers…poor learning environment and lack of confidence among parents in the relevancy and quality of primary education" (Education For All Report, 2000).

In response to such gloomy statistics, Tanzania developed the 2002 Primary Education Development Plan, creating strategies with a focus on enrollment expansion in primary school. By 2007, enrollment had reached 97% for girls and 97.6% for boys. However, this data do not take into account the very high dropout and repetition rates (Okklin, Lehtomaki, & Bhalalusesa, 2008). From 2000 to 2005, according to Woods (2007), repetition increased more than three-fold for students in Standard 1 (first grade). Yet, Tanzania's secondary education sector "has been one of the smallest in sub-Saharan Africa," (Okklin et al., 2008, p. 66). Woods (2007) claimed the transition from primary to secondary school in Tanzania was the lowest in sub-Saharan Africa. As well, after truancy, pregnancy was the second leading cause of dropping out of secondary school (Okklin et al., 2008). Finally, as the education level increased, so did the level of disparity between boys' and girls' achievements (Okklin et al., 2008; Woods, 2007). For example, in 2004,

75.7% of boys passed the Form 2 (secondary school) examination, while only 56.8% of girls passed (Woods, 2007).

Poverty is a major inhibitor of children's secondary school attendance (Ward et al., 2003; Woods, 2007). One of the reasons for poor performance in Tanzania's education sector is that between 40% and 50% of the population live in severe poverty (Ward et al., 2003). According to Tanzania's Education For All (EFA) report the poverty rate in the rural areas was as high as 60% (EFA Report, 2000). Sometimes children are withdrawn from school early to help contribute to the family income, or so that money going to school fees or supplies could be applied to other family needs (Gilbert, 2004).

But poverty does not impact all children the same way. When a household suffers from poverty or economic pressure, girls are usually the first to be withdrawn from school, especially secondary aged girls (Evans, 2002). World Bank researchers (Beegle, Dehejia, Gatti, & Krutikova, 2008) used longitudinal data collected in the Kagera Region of Tanzania (the western part, near Uganda) from the Kagera Health and Development Survey to study children's behaviors. They found that girls do an average of 2.5 hours more chores each day than boys. This difference becomes more pronounced as the girls age. They also found that participation in childhood labor caused a significant increase in the likelihood of girls' marrying young.

Finally, in some school settings in Tanzania, as is the case all over the world, male teachers are guilty of sexually harassing their female students. "A girl's refusal to have sex can lead to public humiliation, unfairly low marks, exclusion from class or corporal punishment" (Evans, 2002, p. 57). This creates a learning environment for girls that is more than just unfriendly: Girls are sometimes insulted, teased, discriminated against, and even beaten. This inequity and harassment clearly breaches girls' rights to education (Evans, 2002).

Legislation alone cannot bring true gender equity. Along with legislation, discriminatory mental and social attitudes toward the rights of women and girls can and need to be eradicated at the community level through advocacy, communication, education, and information (Annan-Yao, 2004). Society must see women and girls as equal in status to men and boys if girls are going to find equal opportunity in education, and ultimately in life.

As research indicates, many factors inhibit girls' success in school and their ability to obtain their right to be educated. In the current project, we wanted to empower the local girls to challenge those factors. As stated, the purpose of our activities with the girls was to provide a safe place to discuss some of their personal challenges, make connections with other girls and women in their community, and together, develop ways to overcome some of the challenges.

Methods
Context, Setting, Etc.

The program was centered on an extremely isolated island located in Lake Victoria. Only two ferries visit each day. A ride from the mainland takes more than three hours.

We partnered with local women leaders to implement the program in an already existing club that focused on encouraging the positive development of girls. We conducted informal, unstructured interviews with some of the women leaders to gain a deeper understanding of the community and the practical issues the girls regularly face. Feedback from the women, along with the previous year's experience, subsequently informed the service-learning program. Additionally, we were not sure exactly what "personal development" included, but it was one of Ambassador Mongella's specific priorities. The informal interviews helped us understand much of what was meant by "personal development" in the community; the women seemed to consider it to mean that girls would be prepared to know what to do when faced with many of their daily challenges (e.g., saying "no" to sexual advances of older men, staying in and working hard in school).

The women reported that one of the most common issues for girls in this community is early sexual activity, sometimes beginning as young as 12 years old (personal communication, June 1, 2009). Teen pregnancy is a common problem in secondary school, and once pregnancy occurs, girls commonly leave school and never return. Often, girls drop out of school due to too many chores, which do not leave enough time for school. According to the women, some girls drop out as young as age 10. It is also common for girls who become orphans to drop out. Once orphaned, survival becomes more important than an education.

The monetary investment it takes to be enrolled in school is another reason children drop out (personal communication, June 1,

2009). Though the government did away with school fees for primary school, students still have to purchase a standard school uniform and any supplies they might need. And all children have to pay secondary school feels. Some families cannot afford those fees.

The Team

We, graduate students from different disciplines, collaborated to implement the program. Hagues had her master's degree in social work and was earning her Ph.D. in Human Development and Family Science. She had experience working with youth at summer camps and working with girls in impoverished neighborhoods in her hometown. As a young researcher, she was broadly interested in poverty and policy. Parker had formerly been a high school theatre arts teacher but had gone back to school to earn her master's degree in Fine Arts and Dramatic Media. Our combination of skills was unique because of our varied, yet overlapping backgrounds and experience in working with adolescent girls. The background of both collaborators blended an integral mix of research and practice.

The Girls

The girls who participated in the program were from impoverished families. According to statistics from the World Bank, the Gross National Income in Tanzania was only $430 (U.S.) in 2008, and this likely was less for the people on the island because of their isolation. They only began to get electricity in 2005, and in 2009, the schools still did not have any. The participants had many responsibilities at home. Many had to walk a long distance to participate in the program, but every day they came. Some days more than 60 girls participated. They made sacrifices to be there. Ranging from as young as 7 years to as old as 18, most were in primary school, but a few secondary school girls participated. All wore long dresses or skirts and all except for a few of the older girls kept their hair closely shaven to their heads. Because of the short haircuts, it was often the dress that let us know that the younger ones were girls since they had not yet gone through puberty. Most of the girls at the beginning of the week were quiet and seemed shy, but a few were outgoing and sometimes even goofy. These girls helped lighten the atmosphere, which helped some of the other, shyer girls relax.

All of the participants were recruited by the women leaders with whom we were working. The program took place on the campus of a local school; school was not in session because the schools were on a short summer break.

There are strengths in the community that benefit the girls. Specifically, women leaders were meeting with the girls on a regular basis. Girls were valued, encouraged, and uplifted by these women. More and more strong female leaders are emerging from the community, some of whom have gone on to become teachers and politicians (such as Ambassador Mongella). The girls look to these women as role models.

The Program

In the summer of 2008, Hagues spent two and a half weeks with many of the same girls and women co-leading a similar program in 2009. Other students from UGA spent up to four weeks with the women and girls in 2008, so trust was already established with the women leaders and many of the girls before the 2009 program began. In contrast to the 2009 program, the 2008 program was adult designed and driven, and much of it was shaped before we arrived. The 2009 program was based on the needs the girls identified, using Theatre of the Oppressed techniques (described later), and thus, allowed them to have a stronger voice in the program structure. For example, we asked open-ended questions such as, "Describe your life as a girl living in this community." Many of the things the girls identified were challenges. Recognizing they were the experts on their lives and the changes they would like to see, we followed-up by asking, "What is something about life for girls in this community that you would like to see different? What needs to happen for that change to take place?" We wanted the girls to identify these changes; the girls knew their lives better than we did and we did not want to bring in a "West is best" attitude.

Girls wrote their ideas down together in groups, and then would be asked to demonstrate, through the creation of a short performance, both the current situation and the change they envisioned. The initial 2008 program laid a foundation that allowed much more to be accomplished in 2009 than would have been possible if we had just shown up in the community for the first time, implemented the service-learning program in a week's time, and left.

The girl participants were adolescents. They were not only physically changing, but were making decisions that would impact the rest of their lives. The majority of participants ranged from as young as 10 to as old as 18. While growing up in a developing country may limit some of the choices these girls are able to make (due to lack of options, cultural expectations, etc.), some choices remain universal for all adolescents. During adolescence, a young person develops the capacity to think in new ways. She begins to think systemically about hypothetical situations, imagining the possibilities of who she can be, and develop the capacity to think futuristically, to plan, and to consider the consequences of her actions (Steinberg, 2005). Yet, an adolescent sometimes needs an adult's assistance to imagine what is possible.

As the ability to reason, plan, and consider one's self begins changing, adolescents are entering a stage of moratorium. This is the time when an adolescent is trying out different identity options (Low, Akande, & Hill, 2005). During moratorium, an adolescent may experiment with values, roles, ideas, etc., in an attempt to decide what is right for her. At the end of this time, an adolescent is thought to have achieved her identity (Low et al., 2005).

The adolescent stage of moratorium is an ideal time for adults to implement interventions into the lives of at-risk adolescents. Adults can provide adolescents with a safe place to "try on" the various identity options they may be considering. Providing a safe place for the girls to work through some of their challenges was one of the major goals of the service-learning program. Theatre of the Oppressed was used as a framework for doing that.

Theatre of the Oppressed

Augusto Boal's Theatre of the Oppressed encourages the use of drama and theatre techniques to "give people an alternative language to discuss, analyze, and resolve oppressions" (Low et al., 2005, p. 220). Use of Theatre of the Oppressed is compatible with service-learning in that both see the community members as experts on their own lives and the best people to develop solutions to their challenges. Those in the community who are there to serve may bring expertise or knowledge to the situation, but they are primarily there to collaborate with community members, not to bring their own outside solutions. Some would call this service-learning that is focused on "doing with" not "doing for" (Ward & Wolf-Wendel, 2000).

Theatre can be a mode of life rehearsal (Boal, 1992). Using techniques such as Image Theatre, Invisible Theatre, and Forum Theatre, Boal encouraged the people with whom he worked to reflect and evaluate as they learned about themselves, each other, and established community. These techniques invite participants to act out experiences, concerns, and cultural and community issues that may be more difficult to put into words (Blair & Fletcher, 2010). Our goal was to get the girls actively thinking about possible solutions to these issues, and either act them out, journal about them, or describe them to their audience (the other girls) after acting out the scene. According to Low et al. (2005), "…participants come to understand that if people want to make change, they must engage the problem and find solutions" (p. 220). Boal used drama as an expressive and communicative tool for various groups of people from a plethora of backgrounds who desired to bring change to a situation in which they were living. His methods remove any need for prior experience in performance, and sometimes are more effective when used with persons that are not skilled or trained actors. Many of his most practical methods and exercises are laid out in his book *Games for Actors and Non-Actors* (2002), which proves a highly useful and relatable guide for facilitators from different disciplinary backgrounds.

Michael Rohd is a theatre artist and educator who believes "education is dialogue" (Rohd, 1998). Many Boalian techniques and games are incorporated into his own book, *Theatre for Community, Conflict, and Dialogue: The Hope is Vital Training Method* (1998). While preparing for the program, we had the chance to speak with Rohd about using his techniques with the girls in Tanzania. His advice was to remain flexible and start by getting to know the girls and giving them a chance to get to know us before moving onto the issues or scenarios. Rohd mentioned that listening to the issues the girls brought up to find a way into a conversation about these issues, rather than imposing ideas and discussions, would build trust (M. Rohd, personal communication, April 29, 2009). This is what we were aiming to do. The program in Tanzania was designed using Rohd's framework as presented in his book, which

outlines specific games and exercises to use over the course of a week-long workshop in a manner that builds trust and ensemble skills before creating what he terms "activating material" that sparks problem-solving dialogue and positive change. Trust is the basis for any group – and this was no exception. The girls had to learn to trust each other, the women leaders, and us in order to feel comfortable opening up about some very personal issues. The majority of the first day and beginning of each subsequent day began with playing games as a group, allowing the girls a rare opportunity to laugh together and have fun. After a certain comfort level was established, girls were able to open up about serious topics, at which point drama became a tool for the adolescents to use to explore possibilities, talk about issues they were dealing with, and find solutions to challenges they faced. While the girls were assisted in thinking about their options, ultimately they were in charge of the topics and the potential outcomes.

Boal's and Rohd's ideas can be used to provide adolescents with tools and opportunities to explore themselves in a safe place. Boal developed many games meant to build trust and develop group cohesiveness. Many of these games were used and sometimes tweaked to be suitable for the Tanzanian adolescents, such as "Columbian Hypnosis" and "Apple Dance" (modified to "Orange Dance"). For example, in Columbian hypnosis, partner A and partner B take turns exchanging roles as the "mirror." The mirror must follow the leader's motions and facial expressions. Both partners should take a turn at being the leader and being the mirror. In the orange dance (modified from apple dance), two partners put an orange between their bodies (arms, back, forehead, etc.) and dance or move. The goal is to keep the orange from falling to the ground.

These games focus on building relationships, getting to know each other, and establishing trust. They helped ease anxiety in the group so the girls could be themselves and have the freedom to communicate openly and honestly about their lives. Girls were also led to create journals where they could express themselves and respond to regular assigned journal topics that directed their thoughts and prepared them for the next days' activities. Games, activities, and journaling also gave insight into the expressive possibilities of the group. They were able to form ideas that

served as the basis for short skits and songs they eagerly developed and shared at the end of the week.

Results

The first day of the program, the girls were asked to write in their journals about things they liked about school, things that they feared at school, and some of the challenges they faced in attending school. The following day they discussed their responses in small groups and then reported to the larger group. Girls willingly shared challenges such as: male teachers "falling in love" with girl students and soliciting them for sex, lack of teachers or materials, receiving harsh punishment, and getting pregnant and as a result, being expelled from school. The girls were then divided into teams and asked to use these topics to develop a short skit that would tell the entire group about the challenge. It was only on the second day of the program that the girls developed these skits. They were able to do this because they were willing to be honest – and even vulnerable – in front of their peers and the women. This allowed us to not only talk about sensitive issues, but gave the girls the opportunity to take charge of issues they regularly faced and work through these issues to find solutions.

As the week drew to a close, the girls were again divided into groups and asked to develop skits that focused on changes they would like to see in their community. With a wide-open topic area and very little guidance, the girls came up with powerful messages to communicate to each other. For example:

- A girl begins the habit of skipping school. However, her friends track her down and encourage her to come back and to stay in school. The lesson communicated was: "good friends are those that give you good advice."
- A woman challenges her husband because he is not able to meet the needs of his family, so he leaves home to look for food. While he is gone, the woman goes to look for money. In the process, several men pursue her, and she invites them (on separate occasions) into her home. Her husband finally comes home drunk, but the other men happen to be there and he discovers what his wife has done. The lessons the skit conveyed

were that married women should be faithful to their husband and not cheat on them, and married men should care for and provide for their families, not squandering their money on alcohol and not leaving their wives destitute.

- A girl is doing poorly at school. At the same time, older boys approach her with money for sexual favors. She refuses them on multiple occasions. During this time, she also realizes that she is not studying enough and decides to work harder in school. Her grades immediately go up once she decides to work hard. The lesson was do not be distracted by others, but focus on your education and you will succeed.

Discussion

The girls were willing to talk about heavy issues because they were in a supportive environment; they cultivated relationships with each other and with the women leaders who were present, and because of the established sense of trust from the previous year. Such success could not have happened if all of these factors had not been in place.

Many Lessons Learned

We went into the community expecting to primarily serve and teach, but came away with our own lessons learned. First, we did not expect that the women and girls would already be meeting together and be so well organized. Several local women were (and continue to be) heavily invested in working with the girls. The women even had officer positions (president, secretary, etc.) and designated duties. In the past, these women have given the girls lessons on HIV/AIDS, have taught them about the dangers of having sex with older men, and have encouraged them to continue in school. Because of the women's investment, the girls already had a good foundation of knowledge that equipped them to think and strategize about how to overcome some of their daily challenges and face some of their trials.

We were also encouraged to see that drama is a very usable, effective, and empowering tool in programs designed to foster leadership and personal development with youth. In particular, when informed by Theatre of the Oppressed and given a safe place to express themselves, these school-aged girls were not only willing to

share information about their lives, but were also able to develop and articulate solutions without much assistance from anyone besides each other. The girls identified with games involving rhythm and movement, and particularly enjoyed working in groups. In smaller groups, they readily disclosed many of the pertinent issues in their lives, and successfully illuminated them through improvisation, songs, and rehearsed performances.

Not only did drama prove to be an effective tool, but also a practical tool across language barriers. Though we had a translator from the community (with strong relationships with the local girls), there were days when, with only basic instructions, the girls were able to produce amazingly realistic, compelling skits that communicated a message, where language was not necessary.

Journaling was also a special activity for the girls. We brought paper, colored pencils, and supplies that the girls used to make journals. Because school supplies are expensive and hard to come by on the island, the girls treasured these homemade journals. Journaling gave the girls the freedom to express their ideas in writing which gave them a starting point when working in groups.

One surprise was how much the women leaders (who came regularly to watch and assist) respected us as graduate students. The secretary of their group came daily to take notes and document what was done. This was intimidating in many ways, but at the same time, it was extremely humbling. The women wanted to keep a record of what was done so that they could use some of the same tools later.

We were careful to include the women as partners, asking for their advice and input in the open-ended questions we asked in responding to the skits created. We recognized that while we were in the community short-term, ultimately these women who were invested in the lives of the girls were the ones who needed to be upheld as role models and mentors.

We would have been better prepared if we had studied issues of power across class, race, economic status, and in particular, taking into account colonialism and the perceptions of "the Other" that are still held on both sides – those of former colonialists and the colonized. This would have better equipped us to consider our own perceived power and would have helped us

recognize preconceived frameworks from which the women may have been operating (Heron, 2004). Such power, both given by the community and assumed by the students, may have had the unintended consequence of quieting some of the needs of the girls.

The last day of the program, the girls performed for the women leaders and us. The final performances were transparent and revealed some of the realities of their lives. While the language barriers may have hindered us from completely understanding what was said, the basic messages the girls conveyed through their performances were complex and understandable despite the language barriers. This depth of engagement and dialogue exchange was not anticipated due to the relatively short program length, but was a rewarding outcome that will serve as an impetus for future program success.

Potential Long-Term Impacts

This program could potentially impact the girls for years to come. It allowed them to build relationships that required them to work together to come up with solutions to common problems. If they maintain these relationships, the girls will likely be able to continue supporting each other to overcome challenges many of them face, such as resisting the sexual advances of older men. This could result in a delayed age for pregnancies, an ability to stay in school longer, a more highly educated female population, and ultimately could boost Tanzania's economy as women are able to obtain higher paying jobs.

While on the island, we were able to visit several politicians and government workers. Each welcomed us and strongly encouraged us to come back and bring more students. We are hopeful that partnerships between this community and the University of Georgia will be further bridged in the future.

Implications for Future Programs and Research

Theatre of the Oppressed is a practical tool that could be used by other practitioners where language and cultural barriers exist. Not only is it usable, but it is also a method that can be easily taught to community members that they can continue to use on their own. It does not cost money so it may be used in communities with little monetary resources. Many of the tools and techniques can be used by laypersons with only a little practice. Books by Augusto Boal, who first

created this method, are readily available at any university library.

For social workers or other helping professions, Theatre of the Oppressed is a tool one could take into any setting. Besides being useful internationally, it can be used in community development work, family counseling, schools, and could be adapted to use with individuals. The point is that it empowers clients to think about the challenges they are facing, envision their desired solution, and figure out how to make that solution happen. Additionally, Theatre of the Oppressed aligns with social work values, as the facilitator recognizes that the clients or community members are experts on their own lives and are often seeking to overcome injustice.

Limitations

Although this partnership initially had much support from University administration as well as from this Tanzanian community, with the economic crisis in the United States it has been hard to maintain the same level of commitment. While the University would likely otherwise have stayed committed, the budget and lack of affordability of travel to and from Tanzania on the part of students has been a hindrance. We have continued to remain involved with this community (both authors returned in 2010 for a longer period of time and one again in 2012 for a nearly six-month stint) are hopeful that the University as a whole will be able to renew its commitment to this community in the future.

There are, of course, additional limitations (such as language and cultural barriers, limited time in the community, etc.) but university buy-in seems to be the most pertinent. Communities where universities are engaged need to know that the universities will do what they say they will do. University follow-through breeds a deeper level of trust on both ends and is helpful rather than harmful in the communities long-term. Donaldson and Daughtery (2011) would go so far as to say that the university's responsibility to the community after the service-learning project is over is one that needs to be addressed as an ethical issue. What is the extent of the relationship? Will it be a single project or an ongoing partnership? These are things that need to be discussed and agreed upon in the planning stages.

One additional limitation that needs to be addressed is the short amount of time we were

able to spend in the community. Despite the advantage we had since Hagues already knew many of the women and girls and was familiar with the community, a deeper level of understanding could have been obtained if we could have been there for a longer period of time.

Conclusion

Programs such as this one that empower girls to value themselves and discover solutions to challenges is one way to begin bringing about gender equality at the community level. The work of justice, we are reminded, includes an educational component as part of the empowerment process where the community partners are treated as equal partners in determining the need and the solution (Marullo & Edwards, 2000). In this case, both the partners and the graduate students were empowered through this service-learning experience the girl participants recognized cases of injustice they experience and were able to define their solutions, while the graduate students were empowered to lead. This program demonstrates the possibility for development when partnerships are embraced through creative dialogue. As well, when students are given opportunities to lead such programs, they gain a greater grasp of the needs of impoverished communities on an international scale, and become more equipped to address those needs as they become the leaders of the next generation.

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