Fred Coalter is Professor of Sports Policy at the University of Stirling. He has authored a wide range of articles and publications including: A wider social role for sport: Who's keeping the score? Routledge, 2007 and is responsible for Sport England/UK Sport's on-line Value of Sport Monitor

International Development through Sport (IDS) is an international development charity that harnesses the power of sport to transform the lives of some of the poorest children in the world

UK Sport is the strategic lead body for high performance sport in the UK. A key part of UK Sport's work is International Sport Development which is driven by a belief that the UK has an important role to play throughout the world in helping to increase access and the opportunity for children and young people of all abilities to participate in sport, physical education and play based activities

Comic Relief is a major charity based in the UK which strives to create a just world free from poverty for the most disadvantaged people in the UK and around the world

IDS, 40 Bernard Street, London WC1N 1ST

FSC
MIX
Paper from responsible sources
www.fsc.org
FSC® C022913

uk sport international

FUNDED BY
COMIC RELIEF

SPORT FOR DEVELOPMENT
AN IMPACT STUDY

ids
INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT THROUGH SPORT

SPORT FOR DEVELOPMENT
AN IMPACT STUDY

In 2007, IDS began a four-year impact study, funded and actively supported by UK Sport and Comic Relief, to test the hypothesis that "sport contributes to the personal development and wellbeing of disadvantaged children and young people."

The study also sought to: build a body of evidence and good practice around the use of sport for development; enable organisations taking part to develop their monitoring and evaluation (M&E) methods; sharpen grant-making policies and practices; and build relationships across the sport for development and development sectors.

The research was carried out in partnership with organisations funded by Comic Relief and IDS. For some, sport was the main activity, for others it was in addition to other activities such as youth work, drama and vocational training. All used sport to encourage personal development, to disseminate messages and, where necessary, challenge attitudes around issues such as gender and HIV and AIDS.

This booklet provides a brief summary of key findings of the project and summarises what the organisations involved learned from the research process itself. The approach taken was one of many that might have been used, and is designed to sit alongside other research work and contribute to the body of knowledge about the impact of sport for development. It has provided valuable learning, and this booklet aims to bring some of that learning to a wider audience and raise further questions for sport for development organisations and funders to consider.

WHAT WE **DID**

GETTING STARTED 2007

- Selection of local organisations for the research
- Launch workshop held to set out the process and agree common areas for investigation

SUPPORT PROVIDED 2007-10

- Small grants programme with each local organisation given £30k over 3 years
- M&E design and delivery support from Professor Fred Coalter over lifetime of project, including additional support in:
  – Programme design support
  – Data analysis workshops
  – In-depth interview training

FINAL RESULTS 2010

- Delivery of individual project data reports by organisations
- Delivery of final report by Professor Fred Coalter
- External process evaluation of the research study
- Dissemination workshop held bringing together funders and practitioners from the sport and the development sectors

PUBLISHED REPORT 2011

- For sharing with key stakeholders in the sport for development sector

WHO WAS **INVOLVED**?

ORGANISATION	ORGANISATIONAL AIMS	TARGET GROUP	SPORT ACTIVITY DELIVERED
Magic Bus, Mumbai, India	To empower children, youth and communities in areas of education, gender, health and livelihood using sport for development	Children living in urban slums aged 8-18	Peer leader training, traditional games, organised sport, outward bound activities
Praajak and Railway Children, Kolkata, India	To provide a safe house, education and life skills for children living on the railways and help them return to their families	Boys living and working on the railways aged 12-16	Camping, trekking, hiking, woodcraft, cooking and life skills
Elimu, Michezo na Mazoezi (EMIMA), Dar-es-Salaam, Tanzania	To develop life skills and build awareness of HIV and AIDS, gender equality and sexual health	Young people aged 12-18 at schools in poor communities	After school and weekend sports programmes and girls' empowerment project
Kamwokya Christian Caring Community (KCCC), Kampala, Uganda	To provide education and vocational training, health care, HIV awareness for orphans and other vulnerable children	Children and young people aged 12-26 living in local slums and affected by HIV	All Star Sports Academy (football) and the Treasure Life Centre (netball and other activities)

ORGANISATION	ORGANISATIONAL AIMS	TARGET GROUP	SPORT ACTIVITY DELIVERED
The Kids League, Gulu, Uganda	To promote health, life skills and fun among internally displaced young people, and to break down cultural and religious barriers	Young people aged 14-15 who have been affected by conflict	Football and netball programmes
Sport Coaches Outreach (SCORE), Limpopo Province, South Africa	To change lives and build stronger communities through sport	Community sports leaders aged 16-26	Training volunteers to carry out sport and recreation activities and deliver Kicking AIDS Out programmes
*Don Bosco Homes, Monrovia, Liberia	To provide education, vocational training, counselling and HIV awareness	Boys aged 12-14 back with their families after living on the streets	Football training and coaching
* YMCA Senegal, Casamance, Senegal	To provide education, vocational training and counselling	Children and young people aged 10-25 affected by conflict	Football training and tournaments

* Don Bosco and YMCA did not provide data for the final report
** Cape Town Child Welfare, South Africa, and Chisomo Children's Club, Malawi
      (not included above) had to withdraw from the study in Years One and Two

WHAT WE **STUDIED**

All of the organisations involved in the research project were working with different groups, in different contexts and using sport in different ways. However, a number of common outcomes emerged across projects and a standard set of data capturing tools was modified by each organisation, allowing for comparison whilst also responding to the specificity of each project.

The four areas listed overleaf are also common to many sport for development programmes across different countries and contexts.

PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT

SELF-EFFICACY = an individual's belief in her/his ability to plan and perform a task, to achieve a particular outcome and, to address difficult issues

SELF-ESTEEM = an individual's assessment of her or his own self-worth

Personal development was measured as changes in participants' 'self-esteem' and 'self-efficacy'. This was because sport for development programmes are often based on an assumption that children and young people from disadvantaged communities need their self-efficacy and self-esteem to be boosted in order to increase their resilience and address the main issues that face them. In other words, a "deficit" model of personal development.

It is also often assumed that that through the development of skills and sporting expertise, an individual's sense of self-efficacy will increase which will in turn lead to an increase in self-esteem and provide the basis for positive changes in the participants' lives.

GENDER EQUALITY AND WOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT

Promoting the equal rights of women and girls and supporting their full participation in all aspects of personal, social, economic and political development

Like many sport for development organisations, some of those participating in the research named *women's empowerment* as a focus of their work.

The belief was that by increasing girls' participation in sport and through the inclusion of messages around the role of women, attitudes towards them and their abilities would be changed. At the same time, by supporting girls to take leadership roles, their confidence would be increased and they would be empowered to take more control in the decisions that affect their lives.

HIV AND AIDS

Dissemination of information about HIV and AIDS, both for prevention and addressing stigma and discrimination

Sport is often seen as an effective vehicle for providing HIV and AIDS education, especially to young people who do not attend more formal education programmes. There is a range of different models in use, such as Kicking AIDS Out!, which uses sport and traditional games with integrated educational messages about HIV and AIDS.

The general assumption of most programmes was that if a young person's self-efficacy is increased and this is coupled with increased knowledge about a subject (for example, HIV and AIDS), that this will ultimately lead to behaviour change (i.e. safer sexual practices).

PEER LEADERS

Young people from the community, who are relevant and positive role models, trained to deliver activities to their peers

Many sport for development organisations use peer leaders to deliver their programmes. Participants identify with them easily and they are a cost-effective resource in the implementation of a project.

For the two organisations that focused on peer leaders in this research the individuals were chosen for their ability and desire to take a leadership role. They also received additional training in key areas of knowledge and facilitation with the assumption being that it would have an impact on their own personal development, as well as those to whom they would then deliver activities to.

"Besides being a sportsman, The Kids League has made me a role model in my village. It makes me feel proud of myself and of The Kids League as well."

Guma, 16, Uganda

WHAT WE **FOUND**

PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT

Sport programmes do have an impact on the self-esteem and self-efficacy of participants as the majority experienced a change in their self-evaluation. However, the strength and direction of change is different for each participant and might not always be as expected.

The most interesting finding was that the majority of participants were found to sit within the normal range of self-esteem and self-efficacy, challenging the prevalent "deficit model".

The scores of those young people with the lowest self-evaluations at the beginning of the programme increased most significantly by the end.

There were some cases of very high self-evaluations at the start of projects, which lowered as a result of taking part in project activities. As these very high levels of self-efficacy and self-esteem can be associated with young people who partake in risky behaviour, the experience of the programmes and working in a group perhaps led to a more realistic self-evaluation.

It was identified that one respondent, whose self-esteem went down dramatically, had been isolated and criticised within the group, illustrating that relationships between participants can impact on self-esteem and self-efficacy as much as the project activities and relationships with activity leaders.

KEY LEARNING

The assumption that all the young people in the programmes 'needed' to improve their self-esteem was not the case – the reality is more complex

Self-selecting programmes may tend to attract those that are relatively confident, meaning that the most vulnerable or excluded groups may not be accessing the project

GENDER EQUALITY AND WOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT

More positive attitudes towards women's participation in sport and right to education occurred or were reinforced across programmes. Participants' belief that girls should have full access to education was often close to 100%, even across different countries and contexts.

However, positive attitudes towards girls' access to education did not translate into changed attitudes towards women's role in the home or sexual relationships. In these areas more traditional perceptions and beliefs prevailed, e.g. that it is a woman's responsibility not to get pregnant.

In many cases this may have been because those projects working with girls were often not specifically designed to address the root causes of gender inequality and did not go beyond increased participation of girls in sport. Programmes were not engaging directly with key traditional or religious leaders to support and sustain changes in attitudes and behaviour in the wider community.

KEY LEARNING

Community and religious influences can be stronger than the influence of a sport programme, for example in changing attitudes towards gender, especially those relating to women's roles in the broader community

Programmes need to work systematically with external influencers to support and sustain changes in attitudes and behaviour beyond the playing field

"In a predominantly male-led community, EMIMA is one of the only places providing us girls with the opportunities to take on community leadership roles."

Msiba, 15, Dar-es-Salaam

"The good thing about using the games to educate others about HIV is that normally children are not going to sit and listen to you, but now you reach the playful guy. Now he'll play, listen and learn."

Vumisa, 22, South Africa

HIV AND AIDS

Most participants had a relatively high understanding of issues related to HIV and AIDS, most likely due to other (non-sport) organisations carrying out HIV-awareness programmes in their communities. It was also difficult to attribute changes in attitudes solely to the sport programme, given the range of activities that organisations were delivering, such as drama and education workshops.

Other lessons learned included that some information within programmes seemed to vary from that received from other sources. This indicated how important it is that organisations ensure their information is up-to-date with the messaging coming from the wider health and education sectors.

The research enabled organisations to identify specific gaps in participants' knowledge at the end of the project, showing them where programming needed to be improved and/or updated.

Although the aspiration of most projects was to bring about behaviour change, in general the programming only went as far as increasing knowledge.

KEY LEARNING

The research confirmed that young people experience sport in a wider context and alongside other activities where information about HIV may be provided. Organisations should ensure that their own information is up-to-date by working with specialist partners and a greater emphasis should be put on supporting, sustaining and monitoring behaviour change

IMPACT OF PEER LEADER TRAINING

Two organisations focused on the impact of their programmes on their peer leaders.

- One organisation trains peer leaders, where responsibility is devolved to the peer leaders to deliver activities to other young people in a fairly autonomous way. After the initial training further support is provided in a range of thematic workshops at various points throughout the year.

- The second selects peer leaders from a group of programme participants from the community in which the organisation is working and provides a month long curriculum-based training course, followed by a period of on-going support as they deliver their own activities.

Respondents said the training had increased their confidence, largely through meeting and discussing issues with other people, and some said that it had developed their leadership skills. As with most participants, surveys showed peer leaders had reasonably high self-esteem to begin with which was not surprising as they already had exhibited initiative and confidence to be chosen as peer leaders.
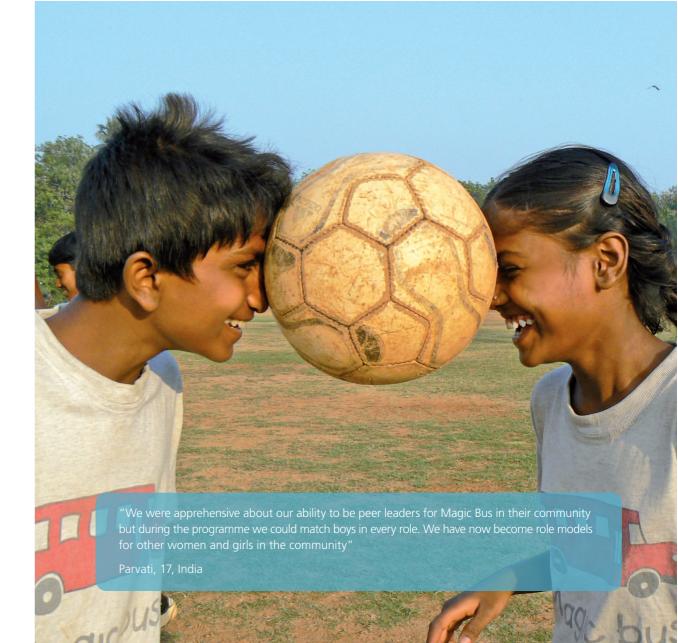
All claimed to have deepened their knowledge about HIV and AIDS through the peer leader training and most participants showed more 'positive' attitudes towards gender.
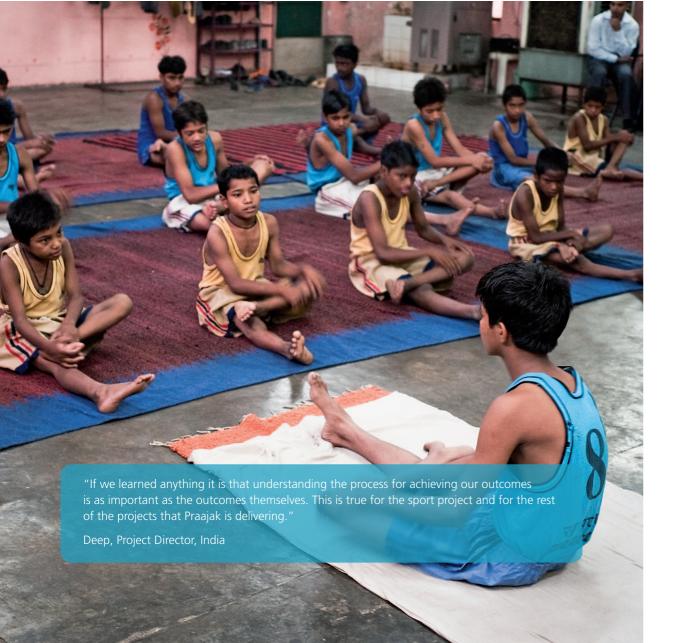
Results did raise some questions about the consistency and effectiveness of programmes provided by peer leaders sent into a community on their own compared to those based within an organisation.

KEY LEARNING

Peer leaders require on-going training and support to ensure that the quality and consistency of project delivery is assured, updated and reinforced

Female peer leaders are an important resource for challenging attitudes towards the role of women and for providing clear role models for other young women and girls

"We were apprehensive about our ability to be peer leaders for Magic Bus in their community but during the programme we could match boys in every role. We have now become role models for other women and girls in the community"

Parvati, 17, India

"If we learned anything it is that understanding the process for achieving our outcomes is as important as the outcomes themselves. This is true for the sport project and for the rest of the projects that Praajak is delivering."

Deep, Project Director, India

BUILDING MONITORING AND EVALUATION (M&E) CAPACITY

An important part of the research project was to enable organisations to strengthen their M&E systems, as well as encourage more positive attitudes to the role of M&E in enabling them to develop and improve their work.

All participating organisations reported that their M&E methods had improved, and that this would support them to develop more effective programmes. It was those organisations that already had some M&E systems and processes in place that were the most well-equipped and ready to understand and implement the research techniques.

An early finding was that all organisations had set ambitious, yet vague outcomes. This made it difficult to assess effectiveness. It was also not clear how the design of the programmes would lead to the desired changes, making outcome measurement difficult.

It was recognised that it is important for projects to set out their beliefs about the key programmatic elements that will be necessary in order to achieve the desired outcomes.

Overall we found that those that have a commitment to M&E and learning at all levels of their organisation have been the most successful in institutionalising learning and developing their capacity to deliver effective programmes.

KEY LEARNING

To be able to measure the impact, it is necessary to be specific about what programmes want to achieve. Specific programmatic activities then have to be designed and implemented to reflect the beliefs of participants and project staff about how these desired changes can be achieved

Clearly setting out this theory of how a programme intends to bring about change then provides the basis for measuring impact, as well as learning about what works and what doesn't within any given programme

WHAT **NEXT**?

The learning from the research has given rise to a number of conclusions and subsequent questions that organisations and funders can ask themselves to enable them to design and assess stronger and more effective programmes for children and young people:

DESIGNING PROGRAMMES

A well designed programme will have a clearly articulated programme theory, setting out beliefs about how to achieve the desired changes for your target group.

Are you reaching the young people you think you are? Are you reaching out explicitly to certain groups or are your programmes open access?

Have you asked what changes the young people want in their lives or are you making assumptions about what you think they need or want?

SELF-EFFICACY AND SELF-ESTEEM

Young people from disadvantaged communities often have high levels of self-efficacy, they are resilient and adaptable to challenging environments.

Are you working to a deficit model based on assumptions about the young people in your programmes?

Is it enough to just to focus on self-efficacy and self-esteem? Should your ultimate goal be more tangible, such as access to education and employment, changing behaviour, etc? If so, what do you need to have in your project to do this?

GENDER EQUALITY

It is not enough to assume that increasing girls' participation in sport will automatically address wider issues of gender inequality.

What other activities need to be included to positively support women's empowerment and gender equality?

Are you working systematically with community, traditional and religious leaders to enable outcomes achieved within a sports programme to transfer to their lives beyond the playing field?

HIV AND AIDS

Many communities already have a lot of information sources about HIV and AIDS.

Are you reaching those young people that other organisations aren't, including those who are out-of-school or children with a disability?

Is the information you're providing up-to-date and consistent with other reputable organisations?

Do your aims go beyond providing information to changing behaviour? If so, what parts of your project are designed to deliver and sustain this changed behaviour? How do you know this has occurred?

PEER LEADERS

Peer leaders recruited from the community can provide valuable role models for young people (especially girls and young women) and can have the most consistent and long-term impact.

Have you worked out a way to choose the right people as peer leaders?

Are your training models and follow-up support designed to ensure consistent and high quality delivery, messages and engagement?

MONITORING AND EVALUATION (M&E)

M&E should be used to support programme development, not just for accountability.

Do you have clear and realistic goals, well-defined outcomes and a means of measuring them?

Is M&E built into the planning stage of your programmes? Are staff trained to use your M&E systems? Do you use M&E to inform your practice and increase the effectiveness of your programmes?

Do you have credible plans for sharing your successes and challenges with beneficiaries, communities, staff, volunteers or other NGOs?

RESPONSES TO THE SPORT IMPACT STUDY

INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT THROUGH SPORT (IDS)

IDS has been on a learning journey to respond and adapt to the challenges of managing this Sport Research Initiative. In response to the findings and recommendations, IDS has refined its strategy towards developing and initiating research projects and continues to aspire to be an all round 'better partner'.

The impact study findings have alerted us to the importance of re-evaluating traditional assumptions about the nature and extent of expected impacts and the definition and measurement of success. We will support our partners to evaluate their interventions focusing on accurate beneficiary targeting, better understanding participant needs and the wider context.

IDS will support our partners' M&E activities and be guided by their individual philosophies and aims in pursuing our joint goals. As we continue to collaborate with other organisations to build on this project's findings, we will explore the potential of linking sport, social, child and development researchers to enhance our understanding, and using both British and local research institutions with varied methodologies.

While recognising the value of the project and all that has been learned from it, IDS is aware that the approach taken was one of many potential methodologies. Different approaches might well have yielded different results. The fact that a definitive evidence base has not emerged from this research does not diminish IDS's belief in or commitment to sport for development.

IDS has greatly enjoyed and benefited from working in partnership with Comic Relief. Our different specialisms have enabled us to consider and explore challenges and ideas collaboratively from quite different perspectives. We would like to thank Comic Relief for this opportunity to work together, UK Sport and all participating organisations for their valuable contributions.

COMIC RELIEF

Comic Relief has found the Sport Research Initiative to be a valuable learning experience, not only about the impact of sport programmes on the personal development and wellbeing of children and young people, but also in terms of the research process itself.

We are encouraged that the findings reinforce our belief that sport can have a positive impact on the lives of young people however this does not happen in isolation, but rather as a wider programme of personal and community development.

We acknowledge the need to support organisations to take the time to develop and fully understand their theory of change to allow for better setting and monitoring of outcomes for children and young people.

We will assess the relevance of the 'deficit model' across other programme areas and continue to challenge organisations in their assumptions about the groups they are working with and the issues they are addressing through their programmes.

We will support further learning and exchange between the sport for development and wider development sectors, so that organisations can learn from each other's good practice and understanding about how change is brought about.

Through the partnership with IDS, Comic Relief's own understanding of the role of sport has progressed immensely over the last three years. It has informed our own Sport for Change programme strategy and will continue to do so in the future. We are grateful to IDS and all the partners involved for their valuable contributions, time and insight.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The full version of the impact study and further information can be found at:
www.uksport.gov.uk/pages/research-and-publications/
and
www.sportanddev.org/toolkit/manuals_and_tools/?2477