

Original Research

GIZ/YDF and youth as drivers of Sport for development in the African context

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Abstract

The 2010 FIFA World Cup attracted key development agencies to the African continent such as GIZ, which created a Youth Development through Football (YDF) programme for implementation in ten African countries. With a critical mass of participants in South Africa (40,344 youth between 7 and 25 years old) and nine other African countries (41,307 similar youth participants), an inside-out approach ensured optimal delivery in collaboration with multiple stakeholders from a variety of sectors. A social impact assessment conducted in 2011 revealed changes at the overall objective level. The S•DIAT (Sport-in-Development Impact Assessment Tool) was utilised, which followed a pre-post comparative design and mixed-method approach with purposive sampling. This paper is based on qualitative data obtained through structured interviews and focus groups. A total of 21 managers, 51 participants and 51 of their significant others were interviewed, while 231 research participants took part in 36 focus group sessions. Most Significant Changes (MSC) were evident in the lives of peer-educators who received training, earned an income and experienced upward social mobility, despite slight improvements in their overall employability status. Social benefits were recorded but relatively high expectations of gaining access to a sustainable income did not materialise and the implementing youths' socio-economic vulnerability posed a threat to programme and institutional sustainability.

Introduction

The academic discourse around Sport for Development (SfD) has for several years, focused on legitimising the body of knowledge with an increase in academic rigor and a comprehensive scientific base (1-6). A myriad of local and regional studies (7-11), as well as the global mapping of research (12), contribute to a growing evidence base in this field of scientific inquiry. This is partly due to the international engagement of the United Nations (13) and key international stakeholders such as the IOC (International Olympic Committee), which signed an agreement with the UN, and FIFA (Fédération Internationale de Football Association), which supported Sport for Good initiatives across a plethora of practices and stakeholder engagement (14-15).

There is a lack of understanding and clarity of conceptual frameworks as research is conducted from very diverse disciplinary perspectives and in different contexts (16). In addition to conceptual and scientific papers, a theory-practice articulation is pursued at various forums such as the Next Step Conferences, the sportanddev web-based virtual communication and across a range of highly profiled deliverables (12, 15-17). Nicholls, Giles and Sethna argue that the "lack of evidence" discourse might be traced to the "unheard stories and subjugated knowledge" from local constituencies at the receiving end of sport for development initiatives (18). It is the absence of the "local voices" and community uptake that necessitate a more inclusive approach and global-local collaboration to understand local effect and impact (7).

Keywords: sport for development; Africa; GIZ/YDF; peer-educators, role models

As the first wave of constituting a body of knowledge (7, 13) reaches some maturity, research communities also focus on stakeholder engagement at various levels of sport for development phenomena – from policy development, strategic partnership formation, and finding common ground for implementation and impact assessment. Stakeholders such as corporates (Social Corporate Investment initiatives), government agencies, development agencies and the Non-Government (NGO) sectors have unique yet interrelated interests in the sport for development sector (7, 16). Stakeholder engagement within the sector is seldom the focus of research, as increased research endeavours focus on communicating and disseminating localised development dynamics and effects. A typical study in this vein focused on localised experiences of beneficiaries such as a study on the Homeless World Cup (19).

Multi-levelled stakeholder engagement and meaningful strategic partnerships are also evidenced in the work of John Sudgen (20) where the government sector and community-based agencies collaborate with an international NGO (Football for Peace) to bring about peaceful co-existence in Israel. It is often NGOs with high levels of agency that provide widely recognized models such as: MYSA in Kenya, Go Girls in Zambia, the Magic Bus in India (2) and Grassroot Soccer with a local or regional footprint (21).

From the Comic Relief's investigation of Sport for Development work, it is evident that multi-stakeholder involvement is essential for sustainable and grassroot-level delivery (12). The engagement of and partnership with the government sectors were thus a key component for legitimacy, access and integrated delivery of services and products (22). Affiliation to various forums and agencies and making inroads into the development of policies and practices for co-delivery of Sport for Development initiatives, seem to be a second wave within this movement.

The building of strategic partnerships and increased networking laid the grounds for another trend (23). It is during the contextualisation of sport for development work where the initial neo-liberalism (24) has made way for inquiry into social capital (25), critical pragmatism (20) and post-modernist frameworks, allowing local agency to surface. Grounded theory development constitutes an identifiable third wave that is also recognizable in increased networking, sustainable practices, ideology transfer, methodological innovation and strategic research

(researcher-stakeholder collaboration) in this field (26-27). It is within this context of network formation that Mintzberg (28) critically reflected on three distinct development approaches, namely i) the top-down government planning approach, ii) the inside-out indigenous development approach, and iii) the outside-in 'globalisation' approach.

The top-down approach is often followed by international and national level development and government agencies where programmes are developed (outside the implementing context) and then delivered in a relatively uniform way. This rather autocratic approach ensures relative coherence and standardised deliverables evidenced in a "splash and ripple" implementing model (20, 22). The inside-out approach is mostly followed by foundations and corporates in search of local NGOs that could deliver sport for development programmes "on their behalf".

The delivery model could be described as a "plant and grow" approach where sport for development philosophy and strategic imperatives are directive for implementation such as sport-specific (e.g. football or basketball) or thematic (HIV/AIDS prevention or life skill programmes) (7-8). The third approach mostly starts with a local NGO (such as MYSA in Kenya) addressing real issues and could be described as a "spark and flow" process (2, 12).

These types of approaches are distinguishable but in reality, diverse and hybrid models emerge especially if local NGOs provide the downward or outward implementation of externally developed programmes, in addition to what they might already have had on offering (7).

Sport for development initiatives and stakeholder engagement should also be understood against the colonial past and in the aftermath of the establishments of independent governments (29 - 31). It is against this context of post-Colonial poverty and multi-stakeholder engagement that the GIZ/YDF (Deutsche Gesellschaft for Technische Zusammenarbeit)/Youth Development through Football) programme should be understood. The following combination of approaches were followed, namely the inside-out model of implementation (recruiting, capacitating NGOs and spreading the sport-for-development philosophy) and top-down delivery model (development of a toolkit for standardized and quality delivery of thematic programmes) (30).

As such the programme spearheaded sport for development with diverse NGOs on the African continent.

In-depth impact assessments were undertaken by independent academics, directed by well-designed indicators and supported by a monitoring and evaluation system. This paper reports on the qualitative “quality of life” and “community development” fields that translate into four indicators, reflective of local realities and community-level uptake.

This research followed a strategic directive of addressing challenges, supporting good practices and ensuring evidence-based recommendations for optimal programme effect in terms of deliverable social impact (30). Different levels of analysis relates to multi-levelled stakeholder engagement, strategic partnership formation and programme delivery in diverse contexts with the focus on sustainability and identification of the Most Significant Changes (MSC) as programme-related social impact (7, 30).

GIZ/YDF as Key Strategic Partner

GIZ implemented the Youth Development through Football (YDF) as a supranational programme in partnership with SRSA (Sport and Recreation South Africa) and mainly NGO partners and networks in ten African countries. The German Federal Ministry of Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) and the European Union (EU) funded the project that forms part of the German-South African FIFA World Cup 2010. The project commenced in 2007 and aimed to spread the philosophy and build operational capacity across a wide spectrum of stakeholders. In the initial pre-2010 FIFA World Cup phase in South Africa, the programme had as key deliverables, to spread an excitement, awareness and engagement of this mega-event within a Pan-Africanist philosophy (31). Advocacy for South Africa and Africa as host country and continent, main events and tours were undertaken such as the Peace Caravan (also called Caravanamani) across the Great Lakes Region in Eastern Africa (32).

In July 2011, 40 344 boys and girls between the ages of 7 and 25 years, benefited from and were supported by YDF projects in South Africa and 41 307 in other partner countries in Africa. Through training offered, a further 12 389 participants (in South Africa) and 29 730 (in other African countries) were reached (although this figure is under-reported due to non-completion of required training data-sets to be completed by trainers) (30).

SRSA emerged as the key government partner and close collaboration was established between the two head offices in Pretoria. The drive for a change in ideology and

methodology guided the initial recruitment of delivering partners, first in five Southern African countries (i.e. South Africa, Namibia, Botswana, Lesotho and Zambia), followed by five “other” African countries.

Regional (in-country) partners and networks were recruited and formal agreements signed to provide delivery channels and broaden service-level agreements for optimal local ownership that should develop into a sustainable and traceable legacy. Existing GIZ in-country head offices were mainly influential in Lesotho (facilitating the collaboration between the Lesotho Football Federation, NGOs and government sector for life skills training and HIV/AIDS prevention), and Zambia (featuring a similar profile with partners in the field of environmental care and water conservation). The absence of a strong NGO-partner with substantial ‘reach’ within the country, along with strong local links with the Namibian National Football Association made them a key partner for the implementation of life skills to young football players.

Collaboration with Nike South Africa (a key strategic corporate partner) was instrumental in forming the Sport for Social Change Network (SSCN). Currently this network has 42 members from Southern African Countries who are co-funded by Nike South Africa and GIZ/YDF for sport for development initiatives. The following diagram displays the stakeholder engagement and positionality of GIZ/YDF, relative to that of SRSA, GIZ in-country head offices, sport federations and the NGO-sector.

Figure 1. Stakeholder relationships of GIZ/YDF



From this diagram it can also be concluded that GIZ/YDF has been a key driver in bringing diverse stakeholders together to deliver sport for development programmes, as well as life skill programmes to the football fraternity (e.g. football federation and affiliated clubs). Most significantly is the civic society engagement and the inclusion of the NGO-sector that has experienced high levels of marginalisation from the government sector, which mostly funds their own top-down programmes through schools and sport club structures in communities.

The SSCN network has the potential of developing into a

representative movement for the NGO-sector in Southern Africa with constituted ownership. Networks as strategic partners inevitably offer positive opportunities to build sustainable capacity from an outside-in approach and delivery through existing in-country structures. Engaging with the Ghana network (with NGO and government partners), as well as the Western Cape network (mostly constituted of NGOs) is a strategy for developing local capacity and reach. The following two tables provide an overview of the GIZ/YDF partners and sectors in Africa, with the South African partners in Table 1 and “other” African partners in Table 2.

Table 1. GIZ/YDF Partners in South Africa

Partners in Different Provinces of South Africa	Stakeholder Sector
Gauteng: Altus Sport, Dona's Mates, Ndlala Ntombazana, Mokopane Academy of Sport South Africa, Social Development Agency (SASDA), Play Soccer South Africa & SA Cares for Life	NGOs
Western Cape: Yabonga Children's Project, Amandla Ku Lutsha, Oasis, New World Foundation, Football4Hope, Arise, Soccer4Hope, African Youth Events Promotions (AYEP) & West Coast Community Foundation	
Eastern Cape: Umzingisi, African Footprint for Hope & Invomvo	
Northern Cape: Agang Youth Centre	
KwaZulu-Natal: Umgungundlovu Sport Academy, Phindivuye, Ecofuture & Sportstech	
Free State Province: Mangaung University of Free State Community Partnership	
Limpopo: African Youth Development Fund	
North West Province: Leseding Community Development Project	
Mpumalanga Province: Scouts Association South Africa (SASA) & Siyakhula Youth Health and Development Organization. Multiple provinces: Grassroots Soccer & Conquest for Life	
SRSA (Siyadlala, Community Mass Participation Programme)	Government (SRSA)
Western Cape Network	NGOs & Government
SAFA Moteo & Early Bird Football Club	South African Football Association
Volkswagen SA & Nike SA (Sport for Social Change Network)	Corporate Sector

Table 2. GIZ/YDF (contractual) Partners in “other” African Countries

Country	Partners	Stakeholder Sector
Botswana	SEDYE	NGO
Lesotho	Kick4Life	NGO
Namibia	Namibia Football Association	National Sport Federation
Mozambique	Lurdes Mutola Foundation & GIZ head office	NGO, GIZ Health & GIZ Education
Zambia	EduSport, Breakthrough Chiparamba Sports Academy & GIZ/YDF network, GIZ head office	NGO GIZ (Water and Sanitation)
Swaziland	Swaziland Social Transformation Network, National Football Association of Swaziland	Network (NGOs) National Football Association
Kenya	Mathare Youth Sports Association (MYSA), Society Empowerment Project (SEP), Moving the Goalposts, Vijani Amani Pamoja (VAP) & Kesofo	NGOs
Rwanda	YDF-network, Esperance	NGOs & Government Sector
Ghana	Play Soccer Ghana, ACRO & UNHCR, Ghana YDF-network	NGOs, Government sector & Sport Federations

In 2009, the partnership base was significantly broadened and the outside-in strategic approach was well-established (28). High profiled NGOs such as Moving the Goalposts, VAP and MYSA (Kenya) and Esperance (Rwanda), as well as a regional network in East Africa was established and earmarked for ‘capacity building’. The capacity building also took place in the development of a module on Life Skills through Football, followed by other modules with local content (e.g. the Health and Hygiene project in Zambia, Gender and Violence Prevention). From the two tables, it is evident that a majority of the support for sport for development programmes is focused on South African NGOs.

With the structuring of the SSCN and multiple partnerships between civic society structures (NGOs), football associations, the corporate and government sectors, a strategy for sustainable delivery is followed.

Upon the fulfilment of contractual agreements with NGOs outside South Africa, GIZ/YDF expanded its reach by focusing on resource development and training. South African based NGOs were involved in offering training to other organisations with Soccer for Hope (Western Cape Province), Umzingisi (Eastern Cape Province), Altus Sport and Dona's Mates (Gauteng Province) and took leadership roles. It is against these dynamics that research was conducted.

The research design offers a synthesis between different methodologies prevailing in evaluation and anthropological research practices for determining social impact according to a pre-post design. The paper will predominantly report on four indicators in recognition of the influential role of youth and community-based organisations (NGOs). It will be substantiated by qualitative data captured through interviews and focus groups (9, 13) during site visits to seven African countries and 10 leading NGOs during the first five months of 2011.

Methodology

The S•DIAT (Sport for Development Impact Assessment Tool) (7, 12) was utilized in a Participatory Action Research framework. Local representatives received training in the particular tool and assisted in representative and purposive sampling, as well as with the logistics and access to research participants. These trainees assisted in the actual data collection by serving as translators and were also consulted in the interpretation of results. In this way, socio-cultural and linguistic barriers were overcome whilst local knowledge and narratives could be accurately mediated.

The triangulation of methods and involvement of local researchers provided the reciprocal agency and meaningful communication between researchers and research participants. Local voices became the privileged voices as advocated by researchers who want to bridge the knowledge gap (18).

The following samples and methods were implemented for data collection and triangulation:

The following individuals were interviewed:

- 21 managers or decision-makers and 48 implementers (e.g. coaches and peer educators),
- 35 high/secondary school participants and 16 primary school participants, and
- 51 significant others (e.g. family members and close friends).

Decision-makers and managers were asked a set of structured questions to establish how the programme is implemented, managed and delivered, as well as its observed effects as it relates to the intended and unintended consequences of the sport for development intervention and stakeholder engagement.

In addition to the qualitative aspect of programme delivery, implementers were interviewed about their own experiences as recipients of the intervention and how it contributed to "change" in their own lives and that of their participants' lives. For them and the participants, the non-directive controlled interview technique provided a framework for capturing live-experiences in terms of the most significant changes as related to the GIZ/YDF-related effect.

This portion of the impact assessment went beyond a typical impact assessment and entailed the collection of 121 in-depth comprehensive case studies where significant others, friends and team members of a particular "case" (e.g. coach, administrator or participant) were interviewed.

Focus group research participants:

- Network members (Ghana, n=13; Western Cape, n=6; Rwanda, n=10),
- 112 implementers (73, 65.2%) males and 39 (34.8%) females), and
- 90 high/secondary school participants and 101 primary school participants.

Focus group participants were collected according to differential (break) characteristics by separating groups in terms of gender, age and programme participation.

Whereas implementers and network members were a (gender and age) mix, participants were separated according to age-division participation and programme-representation was ensured if there were multiple interventions.

In most cases, participants firstly completed the questionnaires (not included for this paper) and were then selected for focus group participation up to a maximum of 10 members per session. More “talkative” participants were selected and the nominal group technique employed to ensure that all members were awarded the opportunity to contribute equally during discussions.

Ethical considerations required all research participants to sign a consent form and in the case of school children, permission was obtained from the principal, along with the presence of a teacher during data collection. All case studies have been sent back to the research participants and life stories were only selected for publication (under a pseudo name) once the participants were able to examine it and grant permission to do so. However, extensive observation was not possible in the given time frame and set schedules.

Though the comprehensive data sets cannot be optimally reported due to the publication parameters, the most significant themes and narratives will be reported as expectations are [partially] met, needs addressed, good practices and challenges identified. This will be followed by recommendations for optimal effect and effective implementation. Social effects (intermediate impact) and longer-term impact observable at different levels (macro-, meso- and micro levels) will be reported with the focus on sustainable change at all levels of engagement (30).

Results and Discussion

The four indicators underpinning the overall objective of the GIZ/YDF programme focus on how youth are included as drivers in social and economic development in South Africa and other African partner countries. The first indicator in this regard, refers to the training offered for implementing the GIZ/YDF toolkit. It entails different manuals with a core model on football coaching integrated with life skills, as well as short modules of choice.

Toolkit Training and Delivery

The indicators monitor the number of youth being trained and implementing programmes, across a spectrum of life skills, HIV and AIDS focused programmes and sport coaching.

The aim of the first indicator states that ‘1000 youths (should) be trained in the YDF toolkit and for 1 000 youths to be implementing the programmes’. Across the spectrum of implementing parties, 1 820 youths were involved in the

delivery of tool-kit modules.

The training of coaches mainly focused on knowledge and skills for programme implementation and did little to improve the implementing youths’ chances of career advancement or their employability outside the sphere of programme implementation and coaching. However, several NGOs could earn funding for having qualified as “master trainers” and offer training (on contract from GIZ/YDF) to other coaches and implementing partners in their communities. A coach from Zambia explains:

‘I am now a volunteer and earn no money except when I facilitate a workshop. I presented six workshops for two to three days and earned 30 000 Kwacha (6 USD) per day. I also get a travelling allowance when I do workshops. I present a workshop maybe every three months. At the matches that we play every weekend, I get food.’

The remuneration and access to food is deemed as highly beneficial. During focus group sessions, the income-generating opportunities were highly valued. Most coaches and peer-educators are temporarily employed per contract from funding partners or paid for services rendered (as explained in the narrative). The VAP coaches indicated that some of them hold two or three contracts according to the programmes or services delivered as contractual deliverables between the NGO and funder. This leaves them economically vulnerable and many engage in informal trading to make ends meet. Several coaches from Kenya were trading in second hand clothing, whilst a young coach from Lesotho borrowed “start-up” money for her small business from Kick4Life. This indicator is thus inevitably linked to another one that focused on socio-economic empowerment.

Socio-economic Empowerment

This indicator states that ‘at least 60% of youth implementers should be exposed to opportunities (i.e. networks), sport-related experiences and training that will enhance their employability to be realised in the long term’.

This particular indicator can only be measured in a more longitudinal study as employment opportunities in the sport sector in developing countries are relatively scarce and transference of skills to other sectors still needs scientific documentation and analysis for conclusive results.

During the research, most peer-educators were positive about the training that they had received and their exposure in participating on different forums (especially prior to and during the 2010 FIFA World Cup). They were less optimistic that they will obtain permanent employment in the long run. Being a coach, administrator and even an owner of an NGO, the opportunities for sustainable income generation are relatively bleak in the context of poverty. Especially in the field of sport coaching, players cannot afford to pay membership fees and are thus highly dependent on sponsorships and free services.

Against the background of severe poverty and lack of material resources to afford school fees (as reported by many peer-educators in Kenya and Zambia), the general educational levels of peer-educators are relatively low. In all the interviews with peer-educators it was evident that many in Kenya and Zambia found themselves trapped as a coach (earning a meagre stipend), but did not have the financial means even 'to pay for the release of school results'. In one case, a student from Livingstone (Zambia) completed his final school year in 2001 but could only save enough money to pay for the release of his results in 2011.

A common motivator for peer-educators in Lesotho (Kick4Life) was that they could earn access to a scholarship to complete their schooling. During focus group sessions, it was clear that most peer-educators did not complete their schooling or possess post-school qualifications. This situation is relatively worse for young

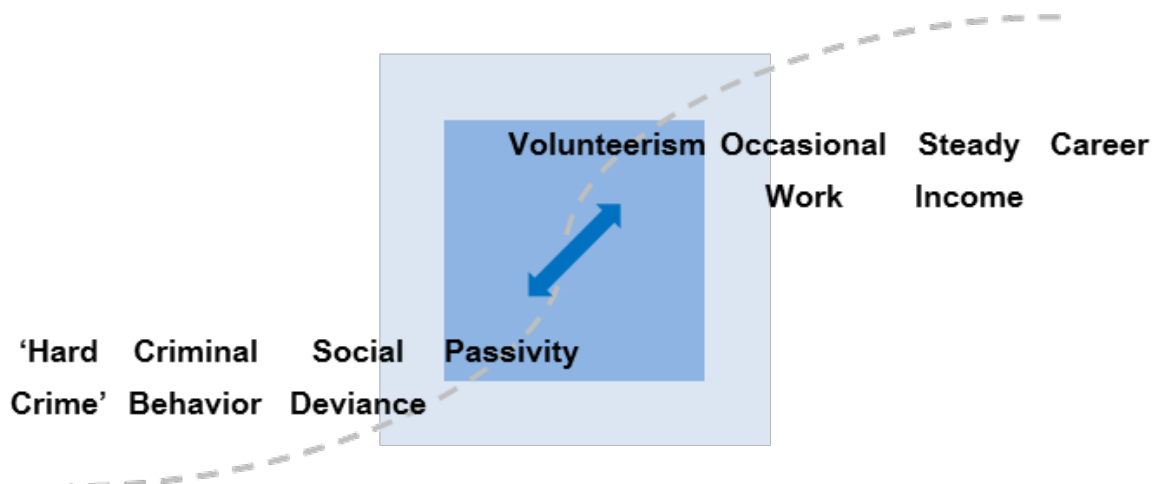
coaches from Esperance (Rwanda) where some youth are responsible to earn their sustenance when living with foster families. A young boy from the rural areas had to leave school and 'sell air time for cell phones' for his foster parents in Kigali.

Due to high levels of unemployment, a relatively large proportion of implementers were older coaches who had been involved as "volunteers" in various roles of delivering community sport. In the context of extreme and chronic poverty, youth and older citizens view NGO ownership or "working" for one as a viable option in the absence of formal employment. From the interviews and focus groups it was evident that there were high expectations of finding employment or at least an opportunity to earn a regular income.

Two coaches in Orange Farm (Gauteng Province) have been volunteering for more than ten years, have two children but cannot afford to marry or live together because they would have to support their households and extended families to survive. This scenario is well-known in impoverished communities where HIV and AIDS-related deaths have forced people to leave their children (known as Orphan and Vulnerable Children or OVCs) to care for themselves (20).

The following figure indicates how volunteerism is seen as a pivotal force to help youth lead a productive life compared to their counterparts that might have slipped into a deviant life style.

Figure 2. Career Pathway Scope of Sport for Development



Volunteerism in the African context of poverty translates into “paid volunteerism” as coaches and peer-educators generally receive a small stipend for implementing programmes or providing their services under contract from funders such as GIZ/YDF. For many being able to earn a small income is considered as “being employed”, it is also status-conferring in communities. As indicated in Figure Two, the alternative of being unemployed and not engaging in any type of community work would result in youth who are inactive, unengaged, or have too much free time, which causes young men to engage in anti-social types of behaviour.

Recommendations offered for reducing the socio-economic vulnerability and retaining the services of peer-educators, include the request to offer (additional) training in sport administration, event and project management to develop more competencies that could enhance their employable status. During focus group sessions, many implementers also identified a need for attending courses in computer literacy, driving skills (and a driver’s licence), internships, scholarships (for the completion of schooling or post-school training), and work-related placements within or outside the sports sector.

It is also for this reason that ‘accredited training’ and training that ‘could build a CV’ are highly acclaimed. Interview data obtained from significant others of peer-educators and coaches confirm perceptions of parents that youth should be able to find employment. A peer educator in Botswana explained:

‘I am very much pressured by my parents to find a job. When I coach, they like me doing something for the community...it is not serious...it is not proper work.’

A mother of a coach in Kenya (from VAP) had the same opinion when she indicated that her son is coaching and working long hours for the NGO but only ‘gets little money’. In Rwanda (Esperance), Lesotho (Kick4Life) and South Africa (Umzingisi) the parents of implementers are relatively desperate for them to earn a steady income. It is also the one factor that was a threat to the retention of implementers. Sustainable service delivery is threatened if peer-educators or coaches had to leave to find employment, whilst it might be considered as desirable according to the strategy of “youth empowerment”.

Youth to Increase Institutional Capacity and Sustainability

The third indicator states that ‘at least 60% of partner organisations acknowledge that the youth contribute to the institutional capacity and sustainability of programme delivery’. It is noted that 18 of the 21 managers who were interviewed, confirmed that peer-educators are the main contributing factor to institutional capacity. This viewpoint was also held by significant others who acknowledged the youths’ contribution as key to the very existence of community-based organizations. Peer-educators and local coaches are needed because they are meaningful bearers of local knowledge and ensure that programmes are needs based and community-driven. All current leaders of NGOs were once implementing members and have been nurtured for such positions by founding members or mentors.

Some options exist for employment in the NGO sector as evidenced in Edusport (Zambia), Kick4Life (Lesotho), Esperance (Rwanda), MYSA (Kenya), Soccer4Hope and Yabonga (South Africa) where actual pathways were created. Given the economic vulnerability of most organisations, however, the possibility of offering youngsters a career within the existing structures is not an option.

The inside-out approach followed by GIZ/YDF allowed for implementing partners to maintain local ownership. In some instances, there was initial resistance to the Toolkit training as most partners already had their curricula and resource material. They negotiated the utilization of the toolkit as a resource by integrating it into their existing delivery framework. This indicator should be viewed in relation to the next one that is reflective on the role of youths as potential agents of change.

Youths Recognised as ‘Drivers’ for Social Change

This indicator states ‘that at least 60% of youth report that they are recognized as catalysts for social change (e.g. role models, provide leadership, change power relations, and address local needs)’.

During the focus group sessions, all implementers were positive about the elevation of their personal status in the organisation, club, programme and/or wider community. Most of the peer-educators said they felt a ‘special calling to be a role model to the youth’.

Another widely reported experience relates to the peer-educators being recognised by parents and teachers as significant others of their participants. For peer-educators (mostly unemployed youth) being greeted as ‘coach’ is emotionally rewarding and status conferring. Similar findings were reported by various researchers conducting impact assessments in local settings (7-11).

In one of the organisations that is a partner of the Western Cape network, all the implementers were HIV positive and they felt empowered to be ‘open about our status...people come to us with all the questions and they would also tell us about themselves or others who are also HIV positive’ (focus group response). They have found a calling and have become a valuable source of knowledge and support in their communities.

Special recognitions also afforded to ex-elite players as in the case of the Namibian Football Association where several coaches are recognized due to their own career performances, or as in the case of one young coach living among his players in an impoverished township - ‘being a father figure to these boys is very valuable to us [single parent mothers] as most of the boys grow up without having a father as a role model’ (interview significant other of a young male participant). A similar case presented itself as a coach from the Western Cape network explains:

‘Currently I am a role model to the guys [players]. I am like a father to 110 kids. I have to look after them and take their minds away from their home circumstance. Most are abused children. Many of them do not want to go home.’

Special recognition that school-going peer-educators receive, often give them a purpose in life as expressed by a mother of a girl offering the Reading and Writing Programme of Altus Sport (an NGO in the Gauteng Province of South Africa):

‘She loves teaching other children and I can see that it is important. We (as a family) appreciate what she is doing in the community – caring for children and helping them.’

The peer-educator is acknowledged as a person who is valued in the community, and this brings the recognition to the family or household as people who are doing meaningful and selfless work for the community. In the African context of poverty such altruistic work is an integrated component of a collective consciousness and ethic of care.

The GIZ/YDF programme is indeed comprehensive in scale (reaching about 81, 651 participants in ten African countries). The inside-out approach (28) evidenced by forming strategic partnerships with the NGO-sector and other networks (such as the Sport for Social Change Network co-funded by Nike South Africa) contributes to an extensive reach. The development of “toolkit modules” (including life skills, gender education, health and hygiene, violence prevention and environmental care) afforded NGO employees the opportunities to earn income as master trainers for their implementing parties. With this strategy, the focus is on enriching existing programmes and institutional capacity building. In this way GIZ/YDF is indeed a significant force in offering sport for development in African countries. The strategic partnerships with government (Sport and Recreation South Africa) and national sport associations (e.g. Namibian Football Association) aim to leave a legacy once the programme comes to an end.

The implementing youth are the community-based drivers of behavioural change, and the most significant benefit for them is to be recognized as role models in their communities (7). This is particularly status-conferring as social capital is vested in the trusting relationships that they have with their participants. Young men who act as programme implementers are acknowledged as father figures to vulnerable youth, whereas they also demonstrate high levels of resilience, agency and self-worth. For many of these “paid volunteers” who receive a small stipend according to contractual agreements, sport for development work has become a way of life in contexts of poverty where opportunities for upward social mobility are scarce.

Conclusion

Some of the knowledge gaps remaining in the current sport for development body of knowledge relate to multi-stakeholder dynamics and power relations at different levels of engagement (1). From the analysis of issues relating to the status and empowerment of youth as part of the NGO-sector, development agencies are challenged to address real issues for programme sustainability and youth development through sport. This might be a highly contested issue for youth acting as peer-educators and programme implementers, who are most often unemployed and socio-economically vulnerable. The trainings that are provided to them are most often narrowly focused on knowledge and skills for specific programme implementation that do not contribute to improve their employability status.

However, if they would receive accredited market-related training that would aid them to find stable employment, the sustainability of an organisation and a particular programme might be negatively affected. NGOs are particularly vulnerable and dependent on contracts for their sustainability. Furthermore, a high turnover of human resources (in this case peer educators or coaches) threatens sustainable and quality service delivery (30). A good practice in this regard is observed when out-of-school (unemployed) youth can contribute their services and reciprocally qualify for bursaries or scholarships to pursue a career – inside or outside the sports fraternity.

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The implementing youth are the community-based drivers of behavioural change, and the most significant benefit for them is to be recognized as role models in their communities (7). This is particularly status-conferring as social capital is vested in the trusting relationships that they have with their participants. Young men who act as programme implementers are acknowledged as father figures to vulnerable youth, whereas they also demonstrate high levels of resilience, agency and self-worth. For many of these “paid volunteers” who receive a small stipend according to contractual agreements, sport for development work has become a way of life in contexts of poverty where opportunities for upward social mobility are scarce.

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