



UNIVERSITY OF GOTHENBURG

“Show the world we are one”

The role of football in peacebuilding attempts

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Abstract

There is a growing field of local administered initiatives using formerly leisure activities or hobbies as tools to achieve social development of different types, from encouraging school attendance to facilitating peace attempts in conflict situations. Football is one such example, frequently used due to its wide reach both to participants but also to spectators with an interest in the game, though suffering from a lack of evidence to justify the rhetoric, particularly with respect to those claiming to support peacebuilding attempts. This paper aims to answer the research question: *In what ways do FIFA, the UN, grassroots organisations that work with football, and coaches delivering football, justify using participatory football projects in peacebuilding attempts through the formation of relationships between antagonistic (or potentially antagonistic) parties?*

In order to do so this paper uses two qualitative methodologies, *document analysis* and interviews, to provide a more holistic understanding of the different ways and justifications given for participatory football transforming relationships and thus aiding peacebuilding attempts. The study compares Lederach's theoretical understanding with the rationale from UN and FIFA, who promote this use of football together with the organisations running the projects on the ground, and coaches who are face-to-face with the focus of the relationship transformation process. The author was thus able to discern that, while there is some evidence that relationships at an individual level are transformed positively, little evidence exists that this transformation leads to changes of attitudes beyond: for example local communities or national power brokers. This thesis suggests further longitudinal studies are necessary within this field to provide evidence to prove or disprove the assertion that participatory football aids peacebuilding through the formation of relationships between antagonistic parties.

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Abbreviations

CAC – Coaches Across Continents

CCPA – Cross Cultures Project Association

F4P – Football 4 Peace

FHPU – Football for Hope Peace and Unity

FIFA – Federation Internationale de Football Association

IDSDP – International Day of Sport for Development and Peace

IYSPE – International Year of Sport and Physical Education

MYSA – Mathare Youth Sports Association

NPC – New Philanthropy Capital

OFFS – Open Football Fun Schools

POP – Participatory Orientated Paradigm

SADC – Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation

SIDA – Swedish International Development Agency

SRP – Spectator and Results Orientated Paradigm

ToC – Theory of Change

UEFA – The Union of European Football Associations

UN – United Nations

UNHCR – United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees

UNOSDP – United Nations Office on Sport for Development and Peace

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"Football touches many people's lives and it makes a difference, a big difference"

Mike Bassett, Mike Bassett: England Manager, 2001

"Sport alone cannot enforce or maintain peace. But it has a vital role to play in building a better and more peaceful world."

Dr Jacques Rogge, IOC President, October 2007

1. Introduction

Approximately 200 years ago, football began to be used in Britain's private schools to promote individual development and citizenship, in addition to footballing ability.¹ This contrasts with prior attitudes and attempts at prohibiting the game by monarchs and land owners desirous that their subjects' time was spent practicing the bow rather than on frivolous pastimes.²

Many organisations, governments and individuals continue to focus on these additional effects of football. There has though been a move away from the individualistic notion of 'muscular Christianity' towards a use of "the game ... to promote peace in certain politically and socially tense environments in communities plagued by separateness."³ The notion is that, "the function of projects of this nature [using participatory football] is not [only] technical sports development but moreover moral and social education."⁴ In this sense, the understanding of sport as a means of individual and social improvement remains although now as an often unthinking belief concerning the promotion of peace, through the building of relationships, based on a singular understanding that, "if kids [from different backgrounds] can play sports together, then in later life they will be able to work together to peacefully resolve differences with a mutual respect and understanding."⁵ Indeed this instrumental use of sport incorporates both national governments and global bodies.

However, there have been limited attempts to monitor and evaluate the value of utilising sport, despite many recognising the importance of treading carefully when using or proclaiming the benefits of participatory sporting projects.⁶ This has not prevented a myth arising of the potential role football can play in building relationships and contributing to peacebuilding.⁷ Such faith is reinforced by quotes from famous figures such as Nelson Mandela, often cited as saying that "sport has the power to change the world."⁸

¹ J. LeBlanc, *Straight Talk about Children and Sport*, Mosaic Press, Canada, 1997.

² J. Norridge, *Can we have our balls back please: how the British invented sport*, Penguin, New York, 2008.

³ J. Rookwood, 'Building peace by playing football', in *Football Perspectives*, 16 September 2012, accessed 2 January 2015 <http://footballperspectives.org/building-peace-playing-football>.

⁴ J. Rookwood and C. Palmer 'Invasion games in war-torn nations: can football help to build peace?', in *Soccer and Society*, vol. 12,2, 2011, p. 188.

⁵ N. Wills, *Laureus Special Feature: How can Sport deliver peace?*, accessed 10 November 2014, <http://www.laureus.com/news/laureus-special-feature-how-can-sport-deliver-peace>

⁶ Sport Development Peace International Working Group, *Harnessing the Power of Sport for Development and Peace: Recommendations to Governments*, 2008, accessed 1 October 2014, http://www.un.org/wcm/content/site/sport/home/unplayers/memberstates/sdpiwg_keydocs

⁷ UNOSDP, *International Day of sport for development and peace*, accessed 24 Sep 2014, <http://www.un.org/wcm/content/site/sport/home/unplayers/unoffice/idsdp>

⁸ S. Das, 'Sport has the power to change the world'. Madiba's sporting legacy', *Left Foot Forward*, 8 December, 2013, accessed 10 January 2015, <http://leftfootforward.org/2013/12/nelson-mandela-sporting-legacy/>

This study will use Lederach's discussion, on the importance of grassroots activism in transforming relationships in peacebuilding attempts, to frame and subsequently explore the different rationale given for using the particular case of participatory football as a potential tool to transform relationships and build sustainable peace.

The reasons for using participatory football are manifold. Many organisations use sport at a grassroots level to build relationships, (some of which will be used in this study) and almost all use team sports.⁹ This is deemed necessary at a practical level as it maximises the utility of space and forces participants to interact with one another thus enhancing the likelihood of building positive relationships. This study will focus on relationship building in the context of football because of its global reach both in terms of viewers (3.5 billion fans),¹⁰ but also the large number who play the game across different cultures and ethnicities, which gives it the potential to have a major impact in a way that other sports could not. It has been estimated that, at the turn of the 21st century, 250 million people worldwide both professionally and at amateur levels were actively playing the game.¹¹ Football, as the most frequently used sport in participatory sporting projects, is thus used as an example or indicator to test assertions of sports value.¹² Furthermore, a belief that "football can build bridges and bring people together",¹³ is clearly seen in the Peace One Day initiative 'One Day One Goal',¹⁴ and the handshake of peace implemented by the Federation Internationale de Football Association (FIFA).

A final benefit of using football in conflict resolution, and the more nuanced rationale behind its use, is that football contains almost real world contradictions within it. As Das states, football "can cause conflict [thus] rendering it suitable for teaching people about resolving conflict."¹⁵ Football can offer teachable moments in which conflict is at times encouraged, which then can be manipulated and utilised to show individuals how to deal with conflict – rather than just pretending that conflict and disagreements never occur.

⁹ There are of course exceptions, with boxing being one non-team sport in particular used to build relationships – usually by getting different gang members together in the same place or taking their aggression out in the ring with clearly defined boundaries rather than on the streets.

¹⁰ BBC, *Get Inspired: How to get into football*, 2013, accessed 20 September 2014, <http://www.bbc.com/sport/0/get-inspired/23152583> & M. Kunz, *265 million playing football*, 2007, accessed 25 September 2014, http://www.fifa.com/mm/document/fifafacts/bcoffsurv/emaga_9384_10704.pdf

¹¹ Norridge, 2008, p.157.

¹² As such, there are times that sources don't specifically mention football but do discuss team sports. In these instances I have not always explicitly stated the divergence as it remains relevant to my thesis.

¹³ J. Blatter, *Fact Sheet*, accessed 27 September 2014

http://www.fifa.com/mm/document/afsocial/fairplay/02/24/23/42/factsheet_en_neutral.pdf,

¹⁴ Peace One Day, *2013 One Day One Goal Annual Report*, accessed 19 September 2014,

http://www.peaceoneday.org/sites/default/files/2013_one_day_one_goal_report.pdf

¹⁵ J.Rookwood, 'Soccer for peace and development and social development', *Peace Review*, 2008.

2. Aim and Research Questions

The aim of the study is to explore the extent to which football can be used at a grassroots level to support peacebuilding using Lederach's holistic understanding of the concept of 'relationship'.¹⁶ The study also seeks to determine practical lessons concerning which causal links can be learnt and extrapolated from participatory football projects and applied to grassroots conflict transformation attempts in general.

Primary research question

In what ways do FIFA, the UN, grassroots organisations that work with football, and coaches delivering football, justify using participatory football projects in peacebuilding attempts through the formation of relationships between antagonistic (or potentially antagonistic) parties?

Sub-questions

- ❖ How does the rhetoric of the UN, and FIFA, connect with Lederach's understanding of the centrality of relations to conflict transformation?

Answering this sub-question involves a document analysis of interviews, speeches, policy statements and other public documents produced by the UN and FIFA to promote the use of participatory football projects and how these link with Lederach's theoretical understanding (as outlined in the preceding theoretical section)

- ❖ What evidence is presented by, and in evaluations of, grassroots organisations that work with football to support the idea that relationship building in conflict situations can lead to conflict resolution and peacebuilding?

Answering this sub-question involves a document analysis of three grassroots organisations (operating in one each of pre-conflict, during conflict and post-conflict settings) websites and evaluation documents conducted by actors both internally and externally from said organisations.

- ❖ What are the coaches' perceptions of the impact of participatory football projects in peacebuilding attempts?

Answering this sub-question involves interviews conducted via email with coaches from three different organisations.

¹⁶ J. P. Lederach, *The Moral Imagination: The Art and Soul of Building Peace*, Oxford University Press, Oxford, 2005, Chapter 4.

3. Delimitations

First, this research will not focus on any other area of social development or peacebuilding through football aside from the building of relationships between (potentially) antagonistic parties. For example it is not considering organisations like the “Mathare Youth Sports Association (MYSA) which has been twice nominated for a Noble Peace Prize, for pioneering the use of football as a tool to ... raise self-esteem and promote physical and environmental health in the Mathare community”.¹⁷ Similarly, large footballing events, such as the ‘Matches for Peace’,¹⁸ where old professionals come together to play a match, or the much maligned ‘handshakes for peace’,¹⁹ handshakes against racism,²⁰ rainbow laces (sponsored by a betting company) in support to LGBT rights,²¹ while worthy of investigation regarding impact, are not relevant to this study.

Second, this research will not investigate different techniques and justifications used for conflict transformation. Instead, the western based assumption that intervening in a conflict-ravaged community with a plan for football activity, is an acceptable form of intervention so long as a process of ‘do no harm’ is accepted.²² This simple principle means that, so long as an intervention does not make a situation worse, then it is in some way legitimate or justified. At best, these projects will have positive impact towards an ending or transformation of the conflict towards something more peaceful.

This essay will take as its point of departure the idea that interventions will happen (rather than whether they should) but query Lederach’s assumption that interventions to transform relationships is important to build peace. As such, this research will explore whether and how football works as a means of building relationships. The study will avoid any discussion as to the relative merits (practically or economically) of football against other projects or forms of intervention. The aim is not to see if football is better (in terms of effectiveness or efficiency) than any other means of acting as a space to build relationships, but rather, does it help at all, and if so, how is that space created?

¹⁷ Mathare Youth Sports Association, *MYSA Project Overview*, accessed 20 January 2015, www.laureus.com/projects/africa/mathare-youth-sports-association-mysa

¹⁸ Match for Peace, *The Match*, accessed 15 December 2014, <http://www.matchforpeace.org/>

¹⁹ Nobel Peace Centre, *Handshake for Peace*, accessed 1 December 2014,

<http://www.nobelpeacecenter.org/en/sponsors/norges-fotballforbund/handshake-for-peace/>

²⁰ The Guardian, *Fifa's Sepp Blatter: settle race rows with handshakes*, accessed 10 October 2014,

<http://www.theguardian.com/football/2011/nov/16/sepp-blatter-fifa-race-rows-handshakes>

²¹ Stonewall, *#rainbowlaces*, accessed 1 April 2015,

http://www.stonewall.org.uk/what_we_do/campaign/rainbow_laces/default.asp

²² M. Anderson, Mary B. *Do No Harm: How Aid Can Support Peace-or War*, Lynne Rienner Publishers, Boulder, Colo, 1999.

4. Relevance

*As I coached and travelled with the teams to residential competitions, I watched as friendships blossomed across the community divide.*²³

Comments and anecdotal evidence like this from Sugden are *de rigueur* when it comes to justifying the impact of participatory football projects with regard to peace. The understanding or analysis of the approach taken and the true impact that participatory football projects have for long term sustainable relationship building has been dramatically under-explored and, as such, “there is no real model of ‘football-based peacebuilding’”²⁴. This lack of a theoretical model concerning the position of football in relationship building, means that agencies and individuals offering ‘football for peace’ programmes and projects are frequently resting on the assumptions and faith that football can achieve certain aims and goals as well as the idea that “in a globalized world, [sport] is the single most global event.”²⁵ This is also reflected in funders’ approaches.

Funders of all types – governmental, inter-governmental, charitable, and non-governmental – are increasingly prone to requesting evidence showing objectives have been met over the short, medium, and long term.²⁶ Most ‘football for peace’ programmes are unable to provide such evidence as they are “often small in scale, limited in time and participants and short term.”²⁷ Furthermore, while some subscribe wholeheartedly to the idea that football can be used to “underwrite other peace initiatives as it brings people together in a neutral environment,” the extent to which “sport can overcome historical differences and disputes” has been under-explored by both academics and practitioners.²⁸

The academic disciplines of both peace and conflict studies, and of sports studies have generally remained aloof of each other’s discipline, with the former perceiving sport to be an ineffective and atypical means of achieving long term sustainable peacebuilding. In contrast, those from a sporting background are often considered to overemphasise the value of sport with little concern or interest for the social, historical or political context and nuances relevant in the different cases.²⁹ When research on the role of football in peacebuilding attempts has been conducted, it largely fits into one of two criteria. The first consists of a close analysis of a specific case study which tries to place a specific grassroots football

²³ Sugden, 2010, p. 264.

²⁴ *ibid.*

²⁵ Social Science Bites, 2014

²⁶ NPC, *Transforming the Sector*, accessed 25 April 2015, <http://www.thinknpc.org/our-work/transforming-the-sector/>.

²⁷ Rookwood, 2012.

²⁸ P. O’Kane, and L. McCloskey, The Management and Development of Association football in the Middle East, *Sport Management in the Middle East: A Case Study Analysis*, eds. S. Mohammed, S. O’Connor, and D. Hassan, Routledge, Oxford, 2013, p. 152.

²⁹ Rookwood, 2012.

project within existing academic literature concerning peacebuilding.³⁰ This category is clearly very limited and it is not possible to draw general conclusions concerning the role of football.³¹ The second category is research conducted by the grassroots organisations themselves to try and assess the effectiveness of their own projects in supporting peacebuilding attempts but which often fails to link it with academic literature.³² This lack of theoretical underpinning makes it hard to extrapolate lessons for the future making it difficult to place it within the broader academic peace and conflict research and thus global studies fields.

When research has been undertaken, it often concludes that “uncritical assumptions around the value of sport” hide the fact that often sport can and does have only a limited impact on the process of conflict transformation.³³ This is particularly true in large scale conflict where, “though [projects] will provide an increased incentive to engage in intra-community dialogue,”³⁴ such projects will not, in themselves, have a major impact on promoting peace. This lack of evidence may be part of the reason for the area being underexplored by academics. In an email exchange with Woodhouse, co-author of *Contemporary Conflict Resolution*, he conceded that, despite the growth of this fledgling field, much of the research remains focused either in theoretical discussion of football and its role, or is a very hard, evidenced based (usually economic or anecdotal) account of projects done by, and for, the organising institution.³⁵ Given the macro-scale of ongoing conflicts, and the small scale of most participatory football projects, to hope for a great change solely as a result of such grassroots project is both optimistic and naïve. If greater evidence of impact could be provided then increased, longer term funding for football projects could be applied which

³⁰ Including J. Sugden *Football for Peace in Context*, Meyer & Meyer, Aachen, 2007, C. Okada and K. Young, ‘Sport and social development: Promise and caution from an incipient Cambodian football league’, *International Review for the Sociology of Sport*, February 2012 vol. 47 no. 15-26, P. Richards, ‘Soccer and Violence in War-Torn Africa: Soccer and Social Rehabilitation in Sierra Leone’, *Entering the Field: New Perspectives on World Football*, eds. Armstrong, G. & Giulianotti, R. Berg, Oxford, 1997, p. 141-158. & S.Fleming and V.Escobar, ‘Sport for Development,’ *The Guardian*, 6 April 2014,

³¹ For example, Sam Dillaway focuses on the SDP and its rhetoric,³¹ and Lea-Howarth almost solely on Football 4 Peace (F4P). S. Dillaway, *Sport and Peace: An Analysis of Sports Programs’ Contribution to Building Peace in East Africa*, University of Bradford, Bradford, 2013, accessed 3 January 2015, http://www.academia.edu/4803483/Sport_and_Peace_An_Analysis_of_Sports_Programs_Contribution_to_Building_Peace_in_East_Africa and J. Lea-Howarth, *Sport and Conflict: Is Football an Appropriate Tool to Utilise in Conflict Resolution, Reconciliation or Reconstruction?*, University of Sussex, 2006, accessed 10 October 2014, http://www.football4peace.de/Downloads/Publications/Lea-Howarth_Dissertation.pdf

³² New Philanthropy Capital, *Teenage Kickz- The Value of Sport in Tackling Crime*, September 2012, accessed 15 September 2014, <http://www.thinknpc.org/publications/teenage-kicks/>

³³ P. Darby, and K.Liston. Sport for Development and Peace. Accessed 10 November 2015, http://assets.sportanddev.org/downloads/sport_for_development_peace_p_darby_k_liston.pdf

³⁴ E.Bryld, N. Masri-Pedersen, S. Fathallah and I. Christoplos, *Evaluation of the Open Fun Football Schools project in Iraq, implemented by Cross Cultures Project Association*, 2014, accessed 10 January 2015, http://www.sida.se/contentassets/54c9403e080547738387c0151e9d2f4e/evaluation-of-the-open-fun-football-schools-project-in-iraq-implemented-by-cross-cultures-project-association---final-report_3757.pdf

³⁵ H. Miall, O. Ramsbotham, & T. Woodhouse, *Contemporary Conflict Resolution*, Cambridge, UK, Polity Press, 2011.

would, in turn, enhance the potential contribution to the support of peacebuilding attempts. Alternatively, if it is shown that football projects do not in fact build or transform relationships, then the amount of money and time being spent in this particular endeavour could, and should, be reconsidered.

An academic investigation into the role that football may play in contributing to the prevention of violent conflicts is important for several reasons. First, it seeks to test the assumptions present in the rhetoric by a number of different organizations that sports can be used in conflict transformation. Second, as research into contemporary conflicts continue to grow and move away from the traditional understanding of territorial conquest, it is imperative for new methods of peacebuilding to occur to strengthen civil society and non-diplomatic routes towards building peace.³⁶ The question as to the role of using sport to achieve progress towards these ends needs examination. Thirdly, it seeks to combine lessons from a variety of case studies and data in contrast to most researchers on the subject who have traditionally only focused on singular case studies.

³⁶ M. Kaldor, 'In Defence of New Wars', *Stability*, vol. 2(1):4, 2013.

5. Background

The primary consensus from those organisations who utilise football as part of their approach, is that it can be an agent of social change and peace by bringing people together, their general focus being on the use of active engagement through playing the game. This concept forms the primary focus of this essay and will be outlined in a Theory of Change (ToC) diagram and discussion and be defined as the ‘participatory orientated paradigm’ (POP).³⁷ This area provides the context and background to the theoretical discussion which forms the basis of this paper’s research. Before the POP discussion, this section will involve a discussion on the ‘spectator and results orientated paradigm’ (SROP).³⁸ This paradigm involves the majority of academic literature on football, focusing on the violent and negative collective passions which can come out of supporting both club and national teams. This background section is used to show, not only the logic and justification for POP but also that evidence exists that football is not of intrinsic worth and that football can either be considered a fun game which can bring people together, or a ‘war’ which pits two sides against one another in conflict.

Since its conception, “administrators tried to use football to encourage moral improvement, fair and disreputable behaviour, but fans... often imposed their own ideas of partisanship and aggression on the game.”³⁹ This section aims to provide both theoretical and practical assumptions and applications of the POP and SROP. These two paradigms obviously have different variations but this section will try to provide an insight into both with evidence from different areas utilised and categorised in one of the two paradigms. While there are certainly examples of fights and aggression between opposing sides at a participatory level, this is only usually when there is a lot at stake in the game and thus the result becomes important.

5.1 Spectator and Results Orientated Paradigm (SROP)

In 1997, Giuliantti and Armstrong wrote that we are in the post-hooliganism research field involving observation and the study of “localist and regional cultural values and discourses through a common framework of rules and customs within the sport.”⁴⁰ Even with this shift, the focus of study has remained on spectators and how they interact rather than on those

³⁷ This ToC is not taken from one particular organisation but has been constructed by the author from a wide range of readings from different organisations and the way that they present their understandings of change.

³⁸ Authors own concept.

³⁹ Tony Mason, *Association Football and English Society 1863-1915*, Harvester Press, New York, 1980.

⁴⁰ G. Armstrong and R. Giulianotti, ‘Introduction: reclaiming the game- an introduction to the anthropology of football’, *Entering the field- New perspectives on world football*, eds. Armstrong and Giulianotti, Berg, Oxford, 1997, p. 2.

playing the game.⁴¹ This section explores this larger and more established spectator based research field to show that football has no intrinsic normative value.

Orwell recognised that football had the capacity to have a positive instrumental value in moral advancement, and also that the growth of professionalism and economic reward has led to football becoming a war.⁴² Expanding, he explained that football is “bound up with hatred, jealousy, boastfulness, disregard of all rules and sadistic pleasure in witnessing violence: in other words it is war minus the shooting.”⁴³ Notice here the particular focus on the ‘witnessing’ rather than partaking in football. The spectator “prefers to see his angels in the flesh doing battle with the demons of the day.”⁴⁴ In this way, the spectator is portrayed as baying and demanding violence.

There are those who agree with Orwell, that organised ‘association’ football today is ‘war’ but go further to argue that it’s very origins are grounded in this kind of warlike, violent attitude and history. Rookwood and Palmer assert that the very essence of football is based “upon the principles of invasion – attack and defence.”⁴⁵ Magoun, writing in 1938, argued that the original ‘football’ games, as played during the middle ages, were tremendously violent affairs pitting opposing groups against one another.⁴⁶ These events usually involved rival social groups (villages) who would literally fight one another to score a goal. Sir Thomas Elyot, in the early 16th century, protested that football “is nothing but beastlie furie and exstreme violence whereof procedeth hurte, and consequently rancour and malice do remain with them that be wounded.”⁴⁷ Homicides and injuries were all too common with fallen individuals often finding themselves trampled on by the rest of their – and the opposing – team. While these examples focus on the players, the emphasis was to ‘win at all costs’ thus showing the importance of ‘results’ in SROP.

Armstrong and Giulianotti concur that, far from modern, professional football being an aberration, it is instead entirely consistent with the whole history of football as a “‘story of rivalry and opposition” whose binary nature precedes, and contributed to the formation of, the modern game of ‘association football’.”⁴⁸ Recent literature though, focuses not on the players, but instead on the antagonism between rival fans and spectators. The 1980s saw

⁴¹ Although historically, and prior to the attempts at codification of the game, the focus was firmly fixed on the players.

⁴² G. Orwell, *In Front of Your Nose: The Collected Essays, Journalism and Letters of George Orwell, volume 4*, Penguin, Harmondsworth, 1970, p. 63.

⁴³ G. Orwell: ‘The Sporting Spirit’, *Tribune*, December 1945, accessed 10 October 2015, http://orwell.ru/library/articles/spirit/english/e_spirit.

⁴⁴ E. Galeano, *Soccer in Sun and Shadow*, Verso, London, 1998, p.17.

⁴⁵ Rookwood and Palmer, 2011, p. 191.

⁴⁶ Norridge, 2008, p. 163.

⁴⁷ *ibid.*

⁴⁸ G. Armstrong and R. Giulianotti, ‘Fear and Loathing Introducing Global Football Oppositions’, *Fear and loathing in world football*, eds. Armstrong and Giulianotti, Berg, Oxford, 2001, p.1.

hooliganism become of societal interest, a way to try and understand and explain individuals and groups in a microcosm of society. As globalization took hold and industrial jobs were outsourced, those men who had lost their jobs “desperately wanted to reassert their masculinity.”⁴⁹ These men found football as the arena (and excuse) in which such reassertion was possible. Since then, the field of study has grown to encompass the position of a ‘lived culture’, “indicative of shared social experience, and a natural expression of social intercourse.”⁵⁰ Academic interest over the past 30 years has thus focused increasingly on the uses of football in explaining and understanding culture and civilization.

Building upon this idea, Galeano offers a nuanced analysis of modern spectator football as a simulation or representation of war. Here he builds upon an idea first recorded in 1583 by Philip Stubbs who wrote that it was better to call football a “friendlie kind of fyghte than a play of recreation”.⁵¹ While today football sees less violence, the play acting war element of remains able to create and exacerbate distinctions between opposing sides:

*In soccer, ritual simulation of war, eleven men in shorts are the sword of the neighbourhood, the city or the nation. These warriors... exorcize the demons of the crowd and reaffirm its faith: in each confrontation between two sides, old hatred and old loves passed from father to son enter into combat.*⁵²

This simulation is reflected in theoretical debates and practice. International tours such as Moscow Dynamo’s trip to England in 1945 which, far from uniting Soviet and English people behind a shared love of football, instead provided “opportunities for public and collective displays of aggressive sportive nationalism.”⁵³ Other tours and certainly international tournaments serve to show that these tensions not only exist at local club level, but can apply to whole countries. When England play Germany, spectators reinforce the continued tensions and links between sport and war by singing ‘Two World Wars and one World Cup’.⁵⁴

The tensions and links to war and fighting against an opponent can be seen in the official song for the 2010 World Cup in South Africa where Shakira urges the supporters and players to be a “good soldier...Choosing your battles”.⁵⁵ International tournaments though can act as both a uniting and dividing force. In the lyrics for the 2014 official World Cup song, Pitbull

⁴⁹ F. Foer, *How Soccer Explains the World: An Unlikely Theory of Globalization*, HarperCollins, New York, 2004, p. 13.

⁵⁰ J. Hughson, D. Inglis & M. Free, *The Uses of Sport; a critical study*, Routledge, London, 2005, p.19.

⁵¹ Norridge, 2008, p. 164.

⁵² Galeano, 1998, p.17.

⁵³ Sugden, 2010, p. 259.

⁵⁴ This makes reference to England gaining victories against Germany in both the 1st and 2nd World Wars and the 1966 World Cup Final.

⁵⁵ Shakira VEVO, Waka Waka (This Time for Africa) (The Official 2010 FIFA World Cup™ Song), *Youtube*, accessed 15 May 2015, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pRpeEdMmmQ0>.

and J.L.O encouraged the fans to “watch the world unite, two sides, one fight” and “show the world where you’re from. Show the world we are one”.⁵⁶ These lyrics not only show that football can be a separating force – in that during international tournaments, it evokes and requires a sense of nationalistic pride – but also that football is capable of bringing people together and uniting different nations behind a common passion.

Football teams, and particularly national teams, can help to unite a country (although they mainly do so by uniting ‘against’ another country) and this challenges the idea of spectator football as intrinsically exacerbating tensions. Johnes explores this paradox by investigating the different identity formations during the industrial revolution in Britain whereby, particularly in mining communities; football simultaneously developed inter-village rivalries and united these villages in regional solidarity against other regions’ football teams.⁵⁷

Didier Drogba is perhaps the most famous football player from Cote d’Ivoire, whom he captained while playing club football for Chelsea. Drogba helped to halt “the continuing fighting in the country [Cote d’Ivoire], a call which led to a five-year ceasefire agreement”,⁵⁸ not least by playing an instrumental part in pushing for the playing of an international qualifying match in Bouake, “a rebel stronghold in the centre of Cote D’Ivoire, a move that strengthened sentiments of national unity and reinforced support for the peace process.”⁵⁹ However, as a competitive match, this example is a rarity, usually such ‘peace’ or ‘friendship’ games are friendlies with little (if anything) at stake which of course removes the tensions created by the desire for a result.

George Weah’s continued funding of the Liberian national football team through “years of civil war conflict and reconciliation” is another example.⁶⁰ George Weah, often regarded as one of the greatest Africa players of all time,⁶¹ is the first, and thus far, only African player to have won the World Player of the Year award.⁶² The move by Weah to fund the Liberian national football team was widely heralded as “the only thing we [Liberians] have to hold on to. Football is the glue that holds this country together.”⁶³ Here, football was able to prevent a civil war, rather than halting one. This shows that spectator related methods of football can help in the peace transformation process in different ways.

⁵⁶ PitbullVEVO, We Are One (Ole Ola) [The Official 2014 FIFA World Cup Song], *Youtube*, May 16 2014, accessed 1 June 2014. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TGtWWb9emYI>

⁵⁷ Johnes, 2010, p.7.

⁵⁸ Miall, Ramsbotham & Woodhouse, 2011. p.355

⁵⁹ *ibid.*

⁶⁰ R. Witzig, *The Global Art of Soccer*, CusiBoy Publishing, New Orleans, 2006, p. 74.

⁶¹ Winning the African player of the 20th century.

⁶² He also played for Chelsea in a career spanning numerous clubs in different countries.

⁶³ F, Massaquoi . ‘George Weah’, *Sports Illustrated*, April 16, 2001, p. 22.

These examples are fairly unusual however, with football more likely to have resulted in short term ceasefires rather than longer term impact.⁶⁴ An example of this is the 48 hour ceasefire instigated by Pele and his Santos team during the Biafra war in Nigeria in 1969. While the killing was halted during their time there, for the country to “reset and enjoy the presence of ‘the king’ of the beautiful game,”⁶⁵ as soon as the Santos team left, the killing began afresh.

History seems to suggest that the examples given above are exceptions to the norm. International sporting events (and particularly football), argues Sugden, contributed more to “damaging community relations [rather than]... making a positive contribution to peace and understanding.”⁶⁶ Perhaps the reason for this is the win-lose result obsession.

The most well-known instance of football contributing to conflict is the Soccer War in 1969. A series of aggressive World Cup Qualifiers between El Salvador and Honduras, between whom tensions were already high regarding territory and trade, led to a war.⁶⁷ Prior to the games, disputes and resentment between the two sides was already high. In the first two games, fans threw stones, sticks, rotten eggs, dead rats and let off firecrackers outside their opponents’ hotel in a brazen example of “psychological warfare waged by the Honduran [and Salvadoran] fans”.⁶⁸ This led to a third and final qualifier being held in a neutral country (Mexico). After El Salvador won, diplomatic relations were broken by each government and then, less than a month later, El Salvadorian aircraft and army entered Honduran territory and fierce fighting followed between the two sides, until a ceasefire was called on the 20th of July. Over 4000 were killed and over 100,000 Salvadorans residing in Honduras were displaced as a result.⁶⁹

These examples show that international football can unite people behind nationalistic sentiments but can also create or at least reinforce conflicts. While European literature is often centred on city or class rivalries (at least historically), worldwide, there are more instances of religion and ethnicity playing an important component in the rivalries and tensions between clubs.

Edensor and Augustin discuss at length the role of club football, ethnicity and identity in Mauritius and its role as “a site of ethnic, communal performance and contestation, ensuring

⁶⁴ These successful, spectator orientated methods of conflict transformation involve famous former or current footballers who occupy positions of power and are not affected by the conflict in the same way as the general population. This means that there is no guarantee that a famous player will use their influence to intervene, meaning these are one off instances rather than sustainable and widespread.

⁶⁵ Witzig, 2006, p. 73.

⁶⁶ Sugden, 2010, p. 260.

⁶⁷ *ibid.*, p. 261.

⁶⁸ R Kapuscinski, *The Soccer War*, trans. W. Brand, Granta Books, London, 1990, p. 157.

⁶⁹ Y. Veytskin, C. Lockerby & S.McMullen, ‘The Soccer War’, *Soccer Politics*, 2009, accessed 1 April 2015, <https://sites.duke.edu/wcwp/research-projects/the-soccer-war/>

that the game is riven with rivalries which articulate wider, entrenched social divisions.”⁷⁰ These tensions led to at least twenty-three cases of extreme violence between 1985 and 1999 some of which start and end at the stadium, although many spill over with the football appearing to be an excuse to act upon “wider ethnic tensions throughout the island.”⁷¹ This is also discussed by Paul Dimeo in relation to the rivalry between the football teams East Bengal and Mohun Bagan in Calcutta. Dimeo carefully plots the relationship, between immigrants from modern day Bangladesh and indigenous West Bengalis respectively, and says that such rivalry from “sibling competitiveness to starkly defined rivalry was almost immediate after the Partition.”⁷² In the process of his research, Dimeo agrees with Finn and Giulianotti that football matches must represent some kind of difference otherwise “there would be no social significance to this match between two opposed teams,”⁷³ and shows how the ‘difference’ can be exploited.

In these cases, identities of football teams and the tensions which exist are both the result of, and a contributing factor to, the tensions between antagonistic groups. This seems to show that results are often of limited importance in the tensions between rival groups – although Liverpool and Manchester United’s long running rivalry as the two most historically successful clubs in England would suggest other motives can be important. Instead it is the role of the spectators who cause football to exacerbate and act as a vehicle for the tensions between rival groups.

5.2 Participatory Orientated Paradigm (POP)

There is a growing field which is starting to try and provide theoretical and practical evidence to support assertions that sport can work before, during, and in post conflict settings to bring people from (potentially) opposing sides together to build new relationships. This is defined here as the Participatory Orientated Paradigm.

Football has, since the 1840s been considered to have an instrumental value in developing character and to “instil courage, teamwork, selflessness and toughness” in a boy.⁷⁴ Traditionally, and in tune with attitudes of the time, the rough and tumble of sports were

⁷⁰ T. Edensor, and F. Augustin. ‘Mauritius: soccer in a rainbow nation’, *Fear and loathing in world football*, eds. Armstrong and Giulianotti, Berg, Oxford, 2001, p.95.

⁷¹ *ibid.*

⁷² P. Dimeo, ‘Loyalty splits the city into two: football, ethnicity and rivalry in Calcutta’, *Fear and loathing in world football*, eds. Armstrong and Giulianotti, Berg, Oxford, 2001 p.106.

⁷³ G. Finn, and R. Giulianotti, ‘Prologue- Local Contests and Global Visions: Sporting Difference and Interantioanl Change’ *Football Culture: Local Contest, Global Vision*, eds. G. Finn, and R. Giulianotti Frank Class, London, 2000, p.8.

⁷⁴ Norridge, 2008, p. 170

considered unladylike. There is certainly a continued focus within the POP, on the benefits of participating in football for boys and young men with women and girls largely overlooked in both theory and practice.⁷⁵ While in recent years this conception of football as a sport for boys is changing, in some countries, the idea of football uniting antagonistic groups' (irrespective of the means employed) remains fixated with the idea that women and girls are the victims of war and very rarely the perpetrators. It is therefore considered largely unnecessary, or at least not a priority, to provide space for women to come together with one another.

The much heralded Olympic truce and the 1914 Christmas football truce are presented as moments where sport (and football in the Christmas case) acted as a uniting force, bringing opposing sides together. The Olympic truce occurred in ancient Greece where, during the build-up and the games themselves, wars between city states were suspended, the military were banned from entering the city of Elis (where the games were held), and legal disagreements and death penalties were prohibited. This truce was reborn with the revival of the Olympic Games in 1896 but has evolved from prohibiting violence, to promoting peace through contact between communities in conflict and creating a "window of opportunities for dialogue and reconciliation."⁷⁶ Tangible evidence of the impact of the Olympic Truce in creating or even contributing to long term sustainable peace is extremely limited.⁷⁷

The 1914 Christmas football truce refers to a truce between the British and the German soldiers during the First World War, where they laid down their arms and played a game of football. This has gained a status in the British psyche as a demonstration of the power of participatory football in uniting opposing forces; it was even used as the subject matter basis of a 2014 Christmas advertisement from a leading supermarket in the United Kingdom.⁷⁸ The belief that football was used as a space where the two sides came together and re-humanised one another is supported by anecdotal evidence from letters from the front citing that:

*There was no ill-will between us... there was no referee, no score..., [as such it was difficult to] sustain a demonised image of the enemy ... [who were] not all so black as they are sometimes painted.*⁷⁹

⁷⁵ M. Johnes, 'Great Britain', *Routledge Companion to Sports History*, eds. S.W. Pope & J. Nauright, Routledge, London, 2010.

⁷⁶ International Olympic Committee, *Olympic Truce*, accessed 10 March 2015,

<http://www.olympic.org/content/the-ioc/commissions/international-relations-/olympic-truce/>

⁷⁷ In total opposition to the stated aim of the IOC, 11 Israeli athletes were taken hostage during the 1972 Olympic Games by Palestinian militants in Munich, West Germany.

⁷⁸ Sainsburys, 'Sainsbury's OFFICIAL Christmas 2014 Ad', *Youtube*, 12 November, 2014, accessed 15 December 2014, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NWF2JBb1bvM>

⁷⁹ D. Downing, *The Best of Enemies: England v. Germany*, Bloomsbury UK, London, 2001, p. 12.

Despite such moments, the fighting continued with almost 3 million combatants killed over the following four years.⁸⁰ Although the incident remains largely ignored by German historians, and open to interpretation and criticism,⁸¹ in the United Kingdom it is often given as evidence that sport, and football in particular, can emphasise similarities between warring parties.

The power of sport is not confined to advertisements. Research by the sporting charitable foundation Laureus, shows that the potential power of sport can not only lead to the breaking of “the cycle of violence in the UK” by bringing rival gang members, and relevant authority figures, together in a safe space but also that such techniques can be applied globally due to the universality of such principles.⁸² Sugden argues that the universal appeal of football means that it is able to traverse boundaries that other sports cannot. He points to the example of Northern Ireland, where Protestants played games of an Anglo origin such as rugby and cricket, and Catholics played Gaelic games including hurling and camogie. However, because football was not tainted by the political signals and deep set symbolism of other sports,⁸³ it was able to traverse the boundaries,⁸⁴ and both Catholic and Protestant players represented the Northern Ireland national team even at the height of the Troubles.

Participation in any team sport is usually less about the opponent (whom you rarely know at a personal level at least at the amateur level) and much more about your own team and the sense of camaraderie around the game.⁸⁵ This sense of camaraderie builds togetherness and a desire to work together. At times, this sense of unity is increased by viewing the opposing side as the enemy. In attempts to diminish the likelihood of this occurring, the headmasters who encouraged football to be played in schools during the 19th century explicitly discouraged external rewards as they thought this would detract from the main purpose of the sport – to build good, honest individuals who respected their opponent and showed tolerance of others.⁸⁶

Many of the projects offering participatory football programmes focus on the different ways that football can be manipulated and the rules of the game adjusted and altered to create

⁸⁰ This statistic takes the whole of the war including the Western and Eastern fronts but the majority of the casualties on both British and German sides took place at the western front- with almost 1 million of these occurred during the Somme offensive. The War Times Journal, *The Western Front*, accessed 5 April 2015, <http://www.richthofen.com/ww1sum/>

⁸¹ S. Moss, ‘Truce in the Trenches was real, but football tales area shot in the dark’, *The Guardian*, 16 December 2014, accessed 17 December 2015 <http://www.theguardian.com/world/2014/dec/16/truce-trenches-football-tales-shot-in-dark>

⁸² NPC, 2012.

⁸³ This is despite it often being described as a colonializing and civilising tool by Britain during the 1800s.

⁸⁴ J. Sugden, ‘Critical left-realism and sport interventions in divided societies’, *International Review for the Sociology of Sport*, September 2010 vol. 45 no. 3, p. 264

⁸⁵ Author’s own insight

⁸⁶ Norridge, 2008.

teachable moments of controlled conflicts rather than just to let the young people play football together. This may be because in manipulating the game it is possible to control it and take steps to ensure that the relationships being transformed are not becoming more antagonistic. These idea will be compared and contrasted to Lederach's understanding of the centrality of relationships to conflict transformation.⁸⁷

5.3 Theory of Change

As we have seen, the advocates of POP view projects as not only helping individuals form positive relationships but also having a further impact on the local community and subsequently on the ability to transform and reduce conflict. It is helpful for what follows to be a bit more rigorous about this and to set out this hypothesis in a Theory of Change.

A Theory of Change (ToC) is a setting out of all of the steps in a ladder of change from preliminary actions towards a final result or set of results.⁸⁸ It can be presented in narrative and diagrammatic form to describe and define the interventions and subsequent outcomes which will lead to a final goal. Each outcome may require different interventions or actions to ensure they occur as the programme moves along the process of change.

Below is what appears to be the ToC for POP. This is the authors own ToC based on extensive reading and amalgamating a general sense of the logic behind the organisations working with Participatory projects. This shows the demanding series of assumptions and links which need to hold for the full POP theory to work and so a deeper discussion follows.

This ToC tries to rationalise and therefore give us some understanding as to how organisations, using the Participatory Orientated Paradigm⁸⁹ must – at least implicitly – believe that their actions lead to the intermediate and then final outcomes that they claim they can achieve.

Any ToC relies upon the understanding and belief in a number of different, potentially testable assumptions. In this case these appear to be:

Assumption 1 – Peace or conflict resolution requires local level engagement between conflicting communities – it cannot be created or sustained at central or 'top' level alone.

⁸⁷ See Section 8 'Results and Analysis'

⁸⁸ New Philanthropy Capital, *Theory of change: The beginning of making a difference*, 10 April 2012, accessed 10 May 2015, <http://www.thinknpc.org/publications/theory-of-change/>

⁸⁹ Which is discussed in greater depth and detail in the following section.

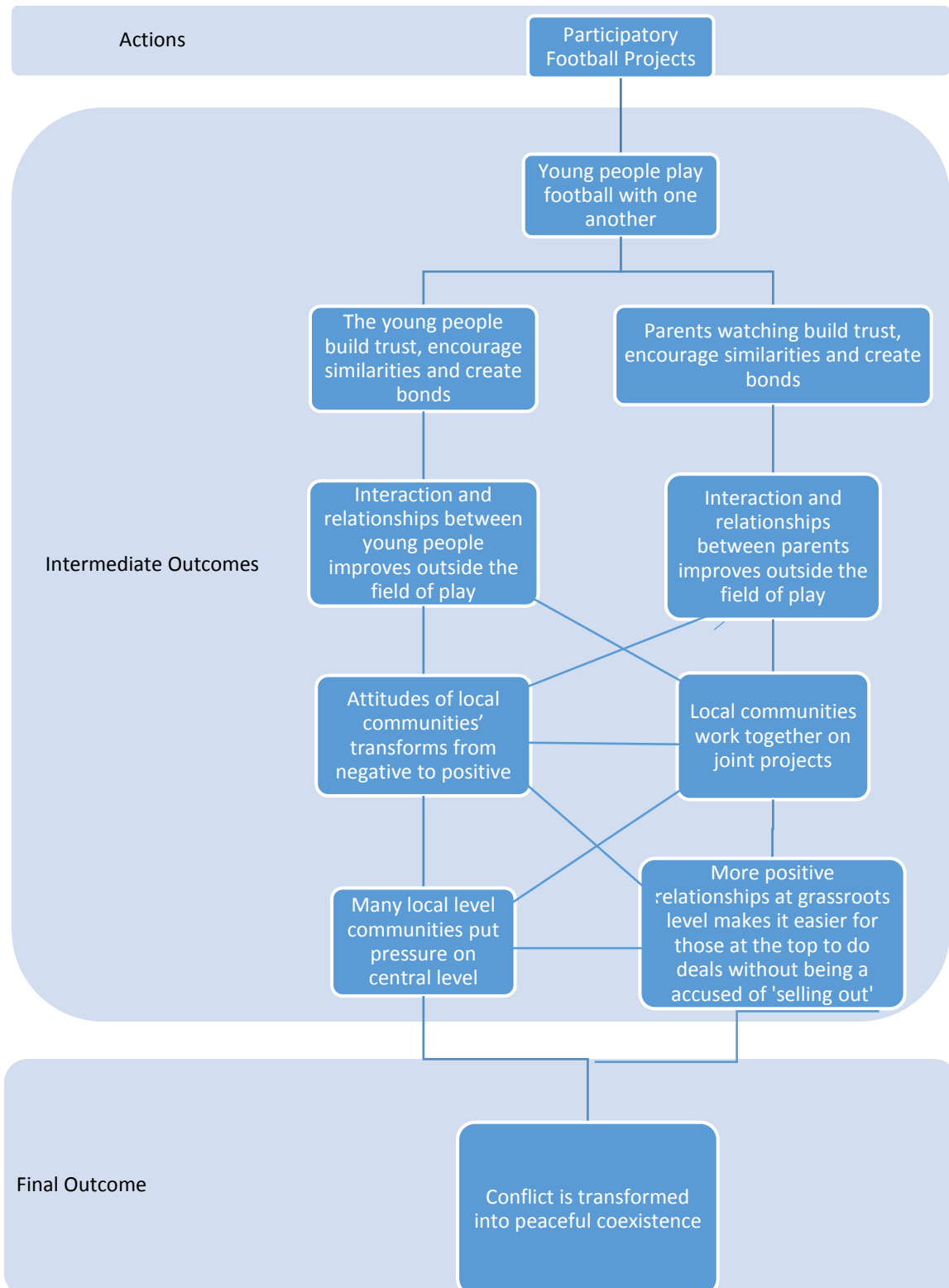
Assumption 2 – Local level engagement can take place in various ways including sport, art or other activities. Such activities provide a free space where individuals can build trust and recognise their similarities rather than their differences thus allowing people to connect and so change the status of their relationships.

Assumption 3 – Football is a better/equally effective way of approaching this than most/all other ways.

Assumption 4 – Adults are often too much involved in more formal conflict transformation for such approaches directed at them to work, so most attempts go through young people.

If these assumptions are taken as true, then it follows that participatory football projects will lead to conflict transformation and peaceful coexistence via intermediate steps. These steps move from the young individuals playing football with one another, via the relationship transformation between themselves and parents towards the changing of local communities. These local communities in turn create pressure from below for conflict resolution but also allow central actors, such as governments and those engaged in formal negotiations, to act in ways that would previously have been considered ‘betrayal’ or similar – leading to the final outcome of peaceful coexistence.

5.3.1 Theory of Change Model



This ToC model, showing how participatory football projects may lead towards conflict transformation, may seem rather basic. However, the benefits of a ToC, over and above traditional methods of evaluation with a beginning and an end, are first that it allows us to consider whether the causal logic is reasonable and can work at least in theory; and second that it provides the potential for specific and measurable intermediate outcomes of an initiative which allows for continual planning, action and evaluation en-route to the final goal. If each intermediate outcome is reached and recognised when the strategy is put into action, then it is hoped that a clearer understanding of causality can be reached and replicated in further projects as a starting point to be adapted to the local context. Alternatively, if in the operationalisation of the ToC, intermediate outcomes are not reached, then it is far easier to pinpoint where the project is failing and where further action needs to be taken to reach the ‘final goal’.

5.4 Concluding Thoughts

Whether one agrees with the idea that football based interventions can contribute positively to society, what is clear is that, over the past 200 years, it has been “an active rather than passive agent in social and cultural life,”⁹⁰ with a uniquely wide reach.⁹¹ In other words, rather than solely reflecting existing relationships between individuals and communities, football has actively formed and shaped individuals understandings and notions of who they are and how they relate to others. This section has sought to show that there is evidence to suggest that football has been an active agent for exacerbating and heightening tensions and antagonistic relationships between individuals (primarily, though not restricted to, spectators and results orientated focus) as well as offering instances of bringing individuals together (primarily through their roles as participants in football but also those fans who support the same team). It is therefore necessary to “exercise caution about claims that football or any other sport can resolve conflict or build peace.”⁹²

While it may be possible for sport to play a part in peacebuilding, it “is intrinsically value neutral and [therefore only] under carefully managed circumstances can it make a positive if modest contribution to peacebuilding.”⁹³ In this sense, sport alone “cannot enforce or maintain peace.”⁹⁴ The position of football as a social construct means that it is imperative we

⁹⁰ Johnes, 2010, p. 12.

⁹¹ Social Science Bites, David Goldblatt on the sociology of football, *Podcast*, 12 June 2014, accessed 10 December 2015, <http://www.socialsciencespace.com/2014/06/david-goldblatt-on-the-sociology-of-football/>

⁹² Miall, Ramsbotham Woodhouse, 2011, p. 254.

⁹³ Sugden, 2010, p. 258.

⁹⁴ J. Rogge, Sport for Peace: The Winning Difference, *International Olympic Committee*, October 2007, accessed 30 April 2015, http://www.olympic.org/Documents/Reports/EN/en_report_1250.pdf

do not essentialise the role that football can have in societies.⁹⁵ This also explains why we are able to find such a broad interpretation of the position football has, and could have, in society. Context is thus vital to both the potential role of football, but also the understanding and analysis of it as “not a ‘force for good’ any more than it is a ‘force for evil’.”⁹⁶ A clear distinction does seem to exist between POP (where space for all to pursue a common pleasure and pastime is created) and SROP (where spectators only unite against the opposing fans/team).

As can be seen by the size and scale of the sections, there has been more academic research on the negative impact that football can have as a dividing force. It is therefore surprising that, despite the vast majority of research countering the claim, in practice, football is considered such a potential harbinger of positive and substantial change.

⁹⁵ Sugden, 2010, p. 262.

⁹⁶ A. Rigby, ‘Tennis for peace anyone?: sport and conflict transformation.’ *Paper presented at IPRA conference, Leuven.*

6. Method

A qualitative study was chosen to examine the role of football as a means to transform relationships because it is considered the common tool to use as “a means for exploring and understanding the meaning individuals or groups ascribe to a social or human problem.”⁹⁷ A qualitative study facilitates the possibilities of understanding attitudes and causality which, while difficult to determine irrespective of which method is used, is extremely difficult to even infer from a purely quantitative analysis.

To investigate both if and how football can contribute to relationship building at a general and specific level, a variety of different qualitative methods utilising data from various sources and combining them is necessary.⁹⁸ Document analysis and interviews, two different areas within the field of qualitative methodological studies, were both used to create a holistic overview of the problem. This study is a micro-analysis of a small number of participatory football organisations and the projects they support and/or administer. Qualitative research is often critiqued for being subjective, influenced heavily by a researcher’s own prejudices and ontology. To ensure replicability, and avoid this criticism, this paper includes a detailed discussion of my data collection, public documents have been used whenever possible, and the questions posed to the interviewees are included in the appendix.

A deductive approach to this study was used, with Lederach’s relationship transformation used as a hypothesis against which to test and compare the results from both the document analysis and the interviews. Testing the results in this way also allowed insights into Lederach’s theory, particularly whether and how his idea of participatory football as a means to create spaces for new relationships works in practice. In this way, Lederach’s theory is an analytical tool as well as something that will be examined critically.

6.1 Why policy documents, evaluation and interviews?

Before conducting the research, it was necessary to decide what empirical data was needed in order to answer the research questions. To gain a broad overview of the key actors involved in supporting and perpetuating the idea that football could be used as a tool to transform relationships and thus conflict, three main areas were chosen to investigate further: policy documents, evaluation documents and interviews with coaches.

Policy documents

⁹⁷ J. Creswell, *Research Design: Qualitative, Quantitative, and Mixed Methods Approaches*, SAGE Publications, London 2009, p. 4.

⁹⁸ *Ibid*, p. 175.

To test whether Lederach's theory of relationship building was compatible with the discourse from participatory football projects, it was necessary to determine whether, at a theoretical level they largely corresponded to one another. If this was not the case, then to say that the data from the evaluations and interviews did not achieve what Lederach claimed they would, would be of little surprise, as there would not have been any indication that they desired to do so.

Evaluation documents

Studying evaluation documents formed the second stage of my evaluation of Lederach's theory of participatory football as a useful tool to build relationships and contribute to peace transformation. These documents were studies designed specifically by the organisation, potential/existing funders or other researchers to try and determine the impact and outcomes of the projects.

Interviews

The interviews carried out were with coaches on various projects run by the organisations. There were a few reasons for choosing to ask coaches questions rather than the participants. In part, the practicality of obtaining access to the individuals taking part as players in the projects is difficult because they are primarily children –meaning they are strictly guarded by child protection laws which restricts access. Interviews are in themselves time consuming and will only give a snapshot of one individual's perceptions about their life. Using coaches perceptions allowed a broader picture, with lessons and insights developed over working with many different individuals participating in the project, to be built.

6.2 Data collection

Having determined which data would assist the research, the data collection followed the same pattern and thus involved three main stages. I also contacted John Paul Lederach for advice regarding my theoretical section and key literature.

Having accessed and analysed the theoretical standpoint of Lederach, an email requesting his own insight on the topic was sent. He suggested contacting Woodhouse who, in turn, suggested key literature. Despite several attempts to contact the renowned 'football – for – peace' theorist and activist John Sugden, outlining the research project and inviting his thoughts no reply has been forthcoming.

Policy documents

FIFA and the United Nations Office on Sport for Development and Peace (UNOSDP), were explored to see how they presented the worth of participatory football projects, and causal links from football project to peace. Although there were some differences between the extent of hope placed on football by FIFA relative to the UNOSDP, the main public face was fairly similar in its rhetoric and the evidence used to support their stance. UNOSDP had many studies on their website whereas FIFA were not forthcoming with information or documentation.⁹⁹ The information for FIFA is thus a culmination of disseminated information from speeches and press releases used to complement the limited official policy documents available to the public.

Evaluation documents

To ensure an examination of a broad cross section of different countries in different states of conflict, Africa, the Middle East and Europe were focused on and one or two examples taken from each of these regions rather than spreading myself too thinly.

I chose the Middle East and Israel in particular because here, football has been “used as an instrument of peace, a tool for bringing people together” since the late 1980s.¹⁰⁰ This constituted the ‘in conflict’ section. I had hoped to look at Rwanda, as it is a clear cut example of attempts at post-conflict reconstruction where tensions remain high between the two opposing groups. Unfortunately, despite promising to send relevant evaluation documents, the contact at FHPU never sent them. Within Europe I chose to look at Bosnia and Herzegovina to view a post-conflict reconstruction of relationships. While choosing to look at gangs in UK and their relationships with the police may seem slightly tangential to my main line of enquiry, it successfully allowed an investigation into ‘pre-conflict’ settings where the two sides often come into contact and become antagonistic towards one another. It also allowed a more varied understanding and nuanced notion of the range of areas in which football is, and could, be used. Using pre, in-conflict and post-conflict examples allowed Lederach’s theory to be tested at a more general level to see if it worked, not just in one context, but actually generalizable.

Following requests for evaluation documents from those organisations that actually provide and evaluate their projects directly within different communities, some were sourced directly through the websites of some of the organisations internet homepages pages – as well as one from Laureus concerning an economic evaluation of four different projects including Kickz. My Mifalot contact, Keren Lavi, was only able to provide me with an evaluation carried out

⁹⁹ I received a reply from FIFA: “Due to their workload our staff members unfortunately are not able to reply to all of the requests individually. Thus, for the information you seek, we would kindly suggest that you visit our official website, www.FIFA.com, as it contains all public and available articles and information on the subject you have selected.”

¹⁰⁰ O’Kane, and L.McCloskey, 2013, p.152.

in 2011 of their ‘Get to Know Your Neighbour’ project and the pre-project results of a current piece of research being carried out as a follow up by Leitner. I combined this data with statistics given on the Mifalot website concerning the number of participants. With Cross Cultures Project Association (CCPA), I chose to complement an evaluation of the Bosnian Open Fun Football Schools (which focuses a great deal of attention on the financial sustainability of the project), with a case study research conducted by Gasser and Levinsen (the initiator of OFFS and the founder of CCPA) which examines the claims of peacebuilding in greater detail.¹⁰¹

Interviews

Having conducted a research study on those organisations using football to build relationships and transform conflicts (rather than other social goods), I sent a series of emails to the ‘gatekeepers’ of the organisations I was interested in studying further.¹⁰² The emails briefly outlined the research proposal, and a request for access to those individuals who ran the projects as coaches or other individuals on the ground. These organisations included Football 4 Peace, CCPA Sarajevo office, Laureus (with a focus on their project Kickz), and Coaches Across Continents (the latter, due to only being on the ground for 1 or 2 weeks a year at any one project and after asking specifically in what ways my research would bring benefits “to our [CAC] local coaches ... and/or ... CAC,” gave me the contact details for Mifalot.¹⁰³) Communications such as these, with individuals actively engaged in utilising football for conflict resolution, were used to build a broad picture of the questions I should ask the coaches. I focused my attention in part on the theoretical understanding gleaned from Lederach but also the aims and intentions of the organisation; as perceived by and through my contacts, policy documents, and evaluation documents.

Graham Spacey at F4P advised me on a number of individuals who had acted as coaches and whom I contacted via Facebook.¹⁰⁴ I also received advice and help from Vildana Delalic – Elezovic, project coordinator at the Sarajevo office for the Cross Cultures Project Association who not only forwarded my questions to the coaches but translated them into Bosnian before

¹⁰¹ This evaluation study used qualitative interviews involving a largely conversational model – often based on a semi-structured interview guide – with open, non-structured and non-standardised interviews.

¹⁰² Creswell, 2009, p. 178.

¹⁰³ Using their map of community partners to pinpoint desirous contacts and then requesting introductions via Brian. CAC, *CAC community Partners*, accessed 2 February 2015, https://www.google.com/maps/d/u/0/viewer?ll=14.604847,7.734375&t=m&source=embed&ie=UTF8&msa=0&spn=119.822641,272.8125&z=1&hl=en&mid=zBVIUqFDmD4k.kp_OcAZxrCU8

¹⁰⁴ Football 4 Peace International, ‘Football 4 Peace International’, *Facebook*, accessed 5 February 2015, <https://www.facebook.com/login.php?next=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.facebook.com%2Fgroups%2F2248287200%2F>

doing so and translated the answers.¹⁰⁵ Keren Levy, International Development Manager, at *Mifalot* did the same, in Hebrew.¹⁰⁶

Knowing the limited time available, structured questions via email were utilised.¹⁰⁷ These were open ended questions which allowed space and scope for the interviewees to express their answers more freely and provide room for different understandings and answers, without imposing boundaries and limits on the individual.¹⁰⁸ Tentative conclusions were already made regarding the differences between Lederach's theory, official policy documents, and the evaluations done by the projects. The interviews not only complement these initial findings but also provide insight into why the tentative results had been achieved.

Despite being offered assistance in reaching out to gain interviews from coaches and the coordinators at the Kickz programme as well as an organisation based in Rwanda (Football for Peace, Hope and Unity), this never came to fruition. Despite this, I carried out 11 interviews including receiving one very in-depth set of answers from Claire Rea who has worked with F4P in Northern Ireland and whose answers I used to complement the five received from both *Mifalot* and CCPA.

6.3 Analysis of material

Triangulating, “the combination of methodologies in the study of the same phenomenon”,¹⁰⁹ the data from interviews and the documents enhanced the validity of the results in this study. Conducting the interviews with the responses written down allowed the interviewee to check and reflect over what they had said, meaning they could ensure confusion and interpretation was kept to a minimum. Although of course the different languages and the fact that follow up questions were unable to be asked for greater detail may have impacted on my results, the above techniques were utilised to try and increase the validity of the research.

Policy documents

¹⁰⁵ Original questions can be found in the appendix.

¹⁰⁶ All of the other organisations I contacted (even those who ultimately did not prove useful in putting me in contact with coaches) requested a copy of the final findings.

¹⁰⁷ Creswell, 2009, p. 191-193.

¹⁰⁸ G. Bowen, ‘Document Analysis as a Qualitative Research Method’, *Qualitative Research Journal*, 2009, Vol. 9, p. 27 - 40

¹⁰⁹ N. Denzin, *The research act: A theoretical introduction to sociological methods*, Aldine, New York, 1970, p. 291.

The UNOSDP and FIFA's rhetoric based on their websites, quotes from key officials from press releases, and any policy papers they released from working groups were compared to one another and to the theoretical grounding based upon Lederach's work.

Evaluation documents

The third and final stage of document analysis, according to Bowen, should involve the interpretation of the data after first a superficial read and then a thorough examination.¹¹⁰ These initial stages allow key phrases and paragraphs to be pinpointed. The methods of evaluation used by the projects differed to a large extent. Some chose economic indicators, some had anecdotal information which they used to generalise bigger pictures and some tried to use quantitative data. Most gave limited evidence as to their impact, but instead focused on activity measurements: e.g. X number of children attended.

These documents allowed me to determine A) what evidence exists to show how effective the football projects were in practice in terms of building relationships, B) if the way that it was or was not effective corresponds with Lederach's understanding, C) whether the evaluations support the policy documents, and D) whether the different evaluations done by different organisations in different parts of the world contain some common themes.

Interviews

Analysis involved identifying recurring themes within each interview and then comparing and contrasting these across the group of interviews, the 'evaluation documents', 'policy documents' and Lederach's theory. Similarities and differences between these different data sets were drawn out and discussed.

This project does not focus on the individuals participating as players in the projects, and whether they have changed according to their own understanding. Instead, it utilises documents and some perceptions from the author as well as interviews with individuals engaged in delivering the participatory football projects. This means that the evidence and perceptions for the role of such projects in building relationships will form an observational rather than self-diagnosis level because it is the relationship transformation between the participants, which is the focus of Lederach's theory, and the ToC.

6.4 Ethical considerations

I felt it was best to assume an overt and open role during the research so that the respondents knew the subject of my research and how their responses would be analysed. This fulfilled a dual purpose because, in trying to find organisations in different countries, most of the interaction was done via email. To gain a level of interest and trust to begin with I had to outline my research. I responded to any and all questions that the interviewee had in a concise and professional manner.¹¹¹ Delivering the questions via email meant that the interviewee was able to take their time and reduced the likelihood that my presence would influence their answers to suit my desires or mood. Despite this, I was aware that those working for the organisations I contacted (as well as internal evaluators), were unlikely to have become part of the project unless they thought that there was some positive impact to be had from the use of football. This is likely to give a positive bias to their views which it is important to consider.

¹¹¹ A. Bryman, *Social Research Methods*, OUP, Oxford, 2008, p. 463

7. Theoretical framework

This section presents Lederach's theory of relationship transformation as a means to conflict transformation. Justification for using Lederach rather than other theorists is also given, along with a discussion of how his theory may be used in practice.

Lederach understands peace, as conflict transformation and the concept within this of relationship transformation. This move away from a traditional understanding of peace is a necessary way to combat the growing global trend of internal conflicts; featuring tensions between groups living in the same society. Lederach's relationship theory focuses on facilitating positive individual relationship transformation through interaction in social spaces, including 'youth soccer clubs',¹¹² where individuals can communicate and emphasise similarities and thus re-humanise one-another. On the basis of these interpersonal relationships, community peace can be built between previously antagonistic communities. To elaborate on the (potential) connection between sport and relationship transformation, other theorists will be used who begin from the same basic premise, but take Lederach's theory further on the understanding that sport can transform conflicts by "building relationships between different groups."¹¹³ Young people who "typically comprise half the population in war-torn countries,"¹¹⁴ are particularly in need of such relationship transformation as they are "socialised in warfare [and] can therefore lack an appropriate reference point for conceptualizing peace."¹¹⁵ In practice, most football participatory projects are aimed at these young people. The ToC has many similarities to Lederach's theory including explicitly stating some of the assumptions on which Lederach seems to agree (although only implicitly). Lederach does not discuss the potential role of spectators in either being a hindrance or a support to conflict transformation attempts through relationship building.

7.1 Traditional diplomacy no longer works

International and traditional diplomacy alone is increasingly deemed inadequate for dealing with the root causes of conflicts. The focus traditionally, tends to be on substantive issues of territory and governance where solutions are sought with respect to military capacities or opposing communities reaching a compromise. Furthermore, due to the internal nature of

¹¹² *ibid*, p. 86.

¹¹³ A. Krafchek, "Sports Peacebuilding: The Basics". *Beyond Intractability*, eds. G. Burgess and H. Burgess, Boulder, University of Colorado, 2012, accessed 10 November 2014

<<http://www.beyondintractability.org/essay/sports-peacebuilding-basics>>.

¹¹⁴ Wessells, 'Community Reconciliation and Post-conflict Reconstruction for Peace', *Handbook on Building Cultures of Peace*, ed. J. de Rivera, New York, Springer, 2009, 349.

¹¹⁵ Rookwood and Palmer, 2011, p.186.

most contemporary “armed conflicts, formal and governmental international mechanisms for dealing with conflict are limited.”¹¹⁶ This traditional method of conflict resolution fails to address the socio-psychological issues that render conflicts intractable, focusing on ending the way the antagonistic parties act, for example imposing a ceasefire (permanent or otherwise), rather than how ‘normal people’ relate to one another. The reasons for their limitations lie in the challenge posed by “the [often] long term nature of the conflicting groups’ animosity, perception of enmity and deep-rooted fear.”¹¹⁷ Equally, if no relationships are being formed at a grassroots or community level, then top level negotiations have less room to compromise.

7.2 Conflict transformation

As a result of problems with traditional methods and understandings of conflict resolution, as well as others not explored here, Lederach prefers to view the goal of peace not as the ending of violence but instead as conflict transformation.¹¹⁸ Lederach defines peacebuilding as something which “encompasses, generates and sustains the full array of processes, approaches and stages needed to transform conflict toward more sustainable, peaceful relationships”.¹¹⁹ In this sense, peacebuilding is a holistic phenomenon involving the transformation of relationships at different levels of society rather than an act which can be imposed on a population. In doing this, Lederach recognises that, rather than changing the means by which the conflict continues, (leaving space for violence to bubble back up to the surface) genuine changes to the relationships between the warring parties are necessary for it to be sustainable.

Lederach’s desired end goal of conflict transformation is the replacement of violent human conflicts by “nonviolent approaches that address issues and increase understanding, equality and respect in relationships.”¹²⁰ The core of this research and the aim of participatory football projects is indeed about engaging in constructive change initiatives that include and go beyond the resolution of particular problems or means of fighting conflicts.

This definition of peace as conflict transformation is methodologically sound because the writing and research about conflict converge in two common ideas: ‘conflict is normal in

¹¹⁶ J P. Lederach, *Building Peace: Sustainable Reconciliation in Divided Societies*, United States institute of peace press, Washington D.C, 1997, p.15

¹¹⁷ *ibid*, p.14

¹¹⁸ J P. Lederach, ‘Conflict Transformation.’ *Beyond Intractability*. Eds. Guy Burgess and Heidi Burgess, Boulder , University of Colorado, 2003, accessed 13 November 2014, <<http://www.beyondintractability.org/essay/transformation>>.

¹¹⁹ Lederach, 1997, p.15.

¹²⁰ Lederach, 2003.

human relationships' and 'conflict is a motor of change'. In this sense, conflicts will not cease to be, but they will cause change to the relationships which people have. Peace is not a static goal but is instead "a continuously evolving and developing quality of relationship."¹²¹ The transformation towards the building of healthy relationships and communities both locally and globally is often seen as the end goal of conflict transformation although whether the theory is teleological or not is open to debate and is not discussed by Lederach.

According to Lederach, conflicts "move through certain predictable phases transforming relationships and social organization."¹²² A violent conflict requires negative relationships between antagonistic groups. This can be both the cause of the conflict and the reason for its continuation. If the conflicts are to be transformed into something more akin to our understanding of peace (as non-violence) then it is necessary to positively transform these relationships. The centrality of relationships means that, rather than focusing on top down approaches, it is necessary for a significant proportion of ordinary people to have transformed their relationships with the opposing side and thus be ready for and open to conflict resolution.¹²³ How though is it possible to change such relationships?

7.3 Relationship building and restructuring

The theory of conflict transformation suggests that peace is centred and rooted in the quality of relationships. Lederach makes clear that in order to restructure relationships to produce just and peaceful relations,¹²⁴ relationships must be viewed "through the lenses of social crossroads, connections and interdependence."¹²⁵ This is because, "a lack of human contact engagement and bonding can contribute to hatred between ethnic groups."¹²⁶ Violent conflict often follows such hatred as it dehumanises one's 'opponents'. Hatred is a relationship and as such relationships between opposing sides already exist. What must change is the nature of these relationships and thus the interaction between them where positive relationships based upon mutual trust and understanding can flourish.

Relationships can include both face-to-face interactions and the relationships with our social, political, economic, and cultural context. In this sense, peace is a "process-structure," a phenomenon that is simultaneously dynamic, adaptive, and changing at the local, national and global levels. Those relational spaces, focused on by Lederach, encourage increased

¹²¹ *ibid*

¹²² *ibid*

¹²³ Sugden, 2010

¹²⁴ J.P. Lederach, *Preparing for Peace: Conflict Transformation Across Cultures*, Syracuse University Press, New York: 1995.

¹²⁵ Lederach, 2005, p. 78.

¹²⁶ Rookwood and Palmer 2011, p. 189.

direct face-to-face interaction while the others emphasise “the need to see, pursue and create change in our ways of organising social structures.”¹²⁷ These two different forms of interaction: direct and societal are both necessary to change the relationships at every different level of society as can be seen in the ToC diagram earlier in this paper. Such change can occur between individuals, between groups and finally between abstract concepts of unity.

Gordon Allport put forward a ‘contact theory’ in 1954 arguing that while contact between members of two (or more) groups can help to reduce any tensions between them, there are four key conditions for this to have a greater chance of changing relationships positively rather than negatively.¹²⁸ These four conditions are (1) equal status of the groups in the situation, (2) common goals, (3) intergroup cooperation, and (4) the support of authorities, law or custom.¹²⁹ This theory shows a more advanced understanding of what it takes to positively change relationships although it still rests on the idea that, should one learn more about another group, then anger and negative feelings towards the other group will be reduced. Despite attempted studies to determine definitively if contact contributes to relationship building and reduced prejudices, there is still uncertainty as to whether and in what circumstances contact leads to a reduction in prejudice and opens doors for new relationships to be formed. Having said that, a meta-analysis conducted by Pettigrew and Tropp concludes with findings that, “even when Allport’s conditions are *not* met, intergroup contact on average still diminishes prejudice.”¹³⁰ This suggests that, more often than not, contact between individuals can change relationships between individuals positively.

7.4 Football as a social space to change base relationships

Relationships of the immediate kind have two ways of being transformed. The first involves “efforts to bring to the surface in a more explicit manner the relational fears, hopes and goals of the people involved.”¹³¹ This is to breed a more open and honest environment but is sometimes criticised as potentially exacerbating or reinforcing differences. The second way is more relevant to typical POP. Football maximises communication and understanding by promoting similarities and humanising the other side without directly dealing with the perceived reasons for the antagonism.

¹²⁷ J P. Lederach, *Little Book of Conflict Transformation: Clear Articulation Of The Guiding Principles By A Pioneer In The Field*, Good Books, Intercourse PA, 2003.

¹²⁸ G. Allport, *The Nature of Prejudice*. Perseus Books , Cambridge, MA, 1954.

¹²⁹ T. Pettigrew , L. Tropp, U. Wagner, O. Christ, ‘Recent Advances in Intergroup Contact Theory’, *International Journal of Intercultural Relations*, Volume 35, Issue 3, May 2011, p. 273.

¹³⁰ *Ibid*, p. 275.

¹³¹ J P. Lederach, 2003.

Irrespective of which technique is chosen, it is necessary to create “safe and accessible social spaces” where opposing sides can meet with one another.¹³² The encouragement of such social spaces is used to counter the “deep societal divisions which people, when threatened, seek security in narrower, more localised groups.”¹³³ Rookwood and Palmer assert that Lederach believes the aim of sports projects, and local soccer clubs, is to try and reduce the societal divisions by introducing and mixing identity groups.¹³⁴ Lederach’s focus on the individual level when discussing football is not explicitly stated but it can be inferred that working at the atomised level to begin with and growing from this is thought to have a greater chance of success. Football projects are considered, in theory, to have potential for a safe social space for members of antagonistic groups to meet and form positive relationships with one another. The medium of football attracts individuals with a passion to play and, in this sense, the creation of these social spaces can be used to broaden and deepen relationship and conflict transformation beyond that of the traditional means of peacebuilding.

7.5 Application

The previous section has established a theoretical understanding of what Lederach says (and why). The aim of this piece of research is, as mentioned previously, to investigate the extent to which football can be used at a grassroots level in peacebuilding using Lederach’s understanding of the concept of ‘relationship’.

Key peacebuilding processes include reducing violence, transforming social relationships and developing sustainable capacities through intervention, education, research and evaluation.¹³⁵ Lederach places great importance on the notion of transforming conflicts and building peace through the move away from self-other relationships rather than other processes (although they may be linked). This theory has been utilised by different peacebuilding organisations with a general belief that the encouragement of “inter-group relations throughout society [should] be a key principle in peace-building efforts.”¹³⁶ Both the ToC discussed earlier regarding general assumptions to do with POP, as well as Lederach’s theory of conflict transformation through relationship transformation attest to the fact that relationship transformation to bring conflict transformation is extremely complicated.

¹³² *ibid*

¹³³ Rookwood and Palmer 2011, p. 185.

¹³⁴ *ibid*

¹³⁵ Rookwood, 2012.

¹³⁶ Sport and Development, *Defining peace and relationship-building*, accessed 13 November 2014, http://www.sportanddev.org/en/learnmore/sport_and_peace_building/defining_peace_and_relationship_building

While an important and interesting individual within the practical field of peace and conflict, Lederach is less used by academics and scholars. The main critique of those who act based upon Lederach's research is that there appears to be a somewhat simplistic idea that, if "children from opposing communities ... are put in the same 'mixing pot' and stirred round with a game of football, then they may ... live together more peacefully."¹³⁷ While his theory may suffer due to its lack of detail regarding the actual operationalisation of it, it is important then to see Lederach as, perhaps not a doyen of academic and specific literature on relationship building as outlined in this section, but instead as providing a framework which theoreticians and those working with these issues at a practical level, can take as a starting point and build upon. Organisations in the UK using football projects to bring authority figures and young people together; in Israel using football projects to bring young Israelis' and Palestinians' together; and in Bosnia and Herzegovina using football projects to bring Serb, Croat and Bosnian children together are all able to use elements of Lederach's theory to assist their practical work. Lederach does not discuss whether his theory works in all conflict situations. This study aims to determine whether participatory football projects implemented during all stages of conflict (pre, during and post), similar ToC, both in relation to one another and in comparison to Lederach's theory.

Lederach's theoretical understanding is an integral starting point for discussions into how his theory is used in practice in the next section. With this, it will be possible to evaluate and compare the practical application and assertions from football projects to a theoretical understanding of how football aids peacebuilding through the formation of relationships between antagonistic (or potentially antagonistic) parties.

8. Results and Analysis

This section presents and examines public policy documents sourced from UNOSDP and FIFA, evaluation data of participatory football projects from three organisations with an overt

¹³⁷ Rookwood and Palmer, 2011, p. 186.

desire to build relationships, and interviews with coaches from three organisations. The data collected will be analysed to explore in what ways do FIFA, the UN, grassroots organisations that work with football, and coaches delivering football, justify using participatory football projects in peacebuilding attempts through the formation of relationships between antagonistic (or potentially antagonistic) parties?

8.1 International Organisations

In this section, public documents, including press conferences, interviews, findings from working groups, and agency reports, from the UNOSDP and FIFA are used to determine how the rhetoric of the UN and FIFA connect with Lederach's understanding of the centrality of relations to conflict transformation.

The UNOSDP and FIFA place a lot of emphasis on the potential role of sport in development and peace. They concur with the idea that sport, “from play and physical activity to organized and competitive sport— is a powerful and cost-effective way to support development and peace objectives”.¹³⁸ Particularly over the past twenty years, the growth in this idea has meant that the activities of a range of governmental and non-governmental agencies including FIFA and UNOSDP has given rise to a growing industry concerned with using sport for a variety of different ends.¹³⁹

Despite the range of instrumental practices sport has been used for, there has been a move away from the traditional use of sport in “an ad hoc way by the United Nations, particularly humanitarian aid workers, to ameliorate the living conditions of victims of conflict or natural catastrophe,”¹⁴⁰ towards a greater mainstreaming which aims at more formalized, joined-up thinking to achieve various different social improvements – including education about malaria,¹⁴¹ the de-stigmatisation of HIV, information and education concerning landmines¹⁴²,

¹³⁸ It cannot be stressed enough that beyond some very brief anecdotal evidence, there is no indication of any impact and certainly nothing which in any way resembles a comparative cost benefit analysis for such a claim to hold any great sway.

¹³⁹ Darby & Liston, 2015.

¹⁴⁰ United Nations Inter-Agency Task Force on Sport for Development and Peace, *Sport for Development and Peace: Towards Achieving the Millennium Development Goals*, United Nations, 2003, accessed 15 February 2015,

http://www.un.org/wcm/webdav/site/sport/shared/sport/pdfs/Reports/2003_interagency_report_ENGLISH.pdf

¹⁴¹ Georges Malaika Foundation, *Kalebuka Football For Hope*, accessed 20 April 2015,

<http://www.gmfAfrica.org/kalebuka-football-for-hope/>

¹⁴² Spirit of Soccer, *What We Do*, accessed 10 September 2014, <http://spiritofsoccer.org/what-we-do/>

and increasing attendance at schools.¹⁴³ It is considered “an important investment in the present and future, particularly in developing countries.”¹⁴⁴ This rhetoric from both FIFA and UN shows the hope they place in football.

The UN in particular have been increasingly interested in the role that sport can play in achieving their goals, even announcing (in August 2013) the 6th of April 2014 as the inaugural annual International Day of Sport for Development and Peace (IDS DP).¹⁴⁵ This move posits sport as a powerful tool, placing its importance as parallel to ‘World Press Freedom Day’ and ‘International Day in Support of Victims of Torture’.¹⁴⁶ FIFA meanwhile, as well as organising tournaments, has increasingly looked to support national football associations in utilising the value of the game for positive social change using it to “convey crucial messages about HIV/AIDS, child’s rights, the environment, education.”¹⁴⁷ This is often given as their reason for giving the World Cup to South Africa and Brazil in recent years. On the inaugural International Day of Sport, President of FIFA Sepp Blatter stated his belief in “the power of football to inspire people, build bridges and change lives.”¹⁴⁸

8.1.1 Sport for Peace?

Both FIFA and the UN promote the idea that sport and football can be an extremely useful tool in promoting social change. This section seeks to determine whether the rhetoric and policy documents of these organisations regarding peace fits with the theoretical grounding espoused by Lederach.

There is clear evidence from both organisations that they believe that sport can play an important role in bringing peace to a community with a 2005 UN report arguing not only that sport can be used for preventing conflict but also for building a sustainable peace. It promotes social integration and fostering tolerance which “can work to reduce tensions and generate dialogue”.¹⁴⁹ Michael Kleiner, Coordinator for the International Year of Sport and Physical Education (IYSPE) at the UN, goes even further, claiming that the IYSPE presented

¹⁴³ Kits4causes, *Our Aims*, accessed 4 June 2014, <http://www.kits4causes.org/about-us#reason>

¹⁴⁴ United Nations Office on Sport for Development and Peace, *Why Sport?*, accessed 15 October 2015, <http://www.un.org/wcm/content/site/sport/home/sport>

¹⁴⁵ As agreed by the UN General Assembly when they adopted Resolution A/RES/67/296

¹⁴⁶ United Nations, *International Days*, accessed 3 March 2015, <http://www.un.org/en/sections/observances/international-days/>

¹⁴⁷ United Nations Office on Sport for Development and Peace, *Why Sport?*,

¹⁴⁸ FIFA, FIFA celebrates first International Day of Sport for Development and Peace, FIFA.com, 6 April 2014, accessed 6th April 2015, <http://www.fifa.com/aboutfifa/socialresponsibility/news/newsid=2314269/>

¹⁴⁹ United Nations Inter-Agency Task Force on Sport for Development and Peace, *Sport for Development and Peace: Towards Achieving the Millennium Development Goals*, United Nations, 2005, accessed 15 February 2015, http://www.un.org/sport2005/resources/task_force.pdf

“undeniable proof that sport and physical education are in fact key elements to peace and development in all societies on our planet.”¹⁵⁰ The Declaration of Berlin is the latest in a string of Resolutions and Declarations to push national governments and organisations to adopt more sports policies to advance peace.¹⁵¹

FIFA are equally eager to advocate for the positive role football can have in bringing peace with Sepp Blatter stating that, for example, “the World Cup in Russia [in 2018] will be able to stabilise all the situation in this region of Europe that is suffering now,” because he is “sure that football is stronger than any other movement.”¹⁵² While asserting such views as to the potential instrumental value of football in bringing peace, FIFA also accept a responsibility, for example pledging “to do our utmost to achieve global peace and a life of dignity for all.”¹⁵³ This responsibility stretches to support for members of the FIFA ‘family’, with the former Deputy General Secretary of the Liberian Football Association stating that “football is *the* vehicle that can bring unity for our people”.¹⁵⁴ This interview was part of a FIFA exercise of filming 26 human interest stories to emphasise and create “a testament to the role of football as a source of encouragement and hope; an affirmation of the true meaning of the world’s greatest game”¹⁵⁵

The public press statements and the rhetoric of both organisations confirm their belief that sport (and specifically football) can contribute to peace. The primary difference is that the UN provide a more nuanced understanding of how sports contribution can be manifested and understood, as we will discuss in the next section.¹⁵⁶

¹⁵⁰ United Nations, *Report on the International Year of Sport and Physical Education 2005*, United Nations, Geneva, 2005, accessed 17 February 2015,

<http://www.toolkitsportdevelopment.org/html/resources/20/2066E73C-CFEF-4FA9-9345-C9E6FED8D7D2/Report%20IYSP%202005.pdf>

¹⁵¹ United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, *Declaration of Berlin*, 2013, accessed 2 February 2015, <http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0022/002211/221114e.pdf>

¹⁵² Owen Gibson, ‘Fifa’s Sepp Blatter says 2018 World Cup in Russia will stabilise region’, *The Guardian*, 20 March 2015, accessed 20 March 2015, <http://www.theguardian.com/football/2015/mar/20/fifa-sepp-blatter-2018-world-cup-russia-peace-region>

¹⁵³ FIFA, FIFA World Cup to tackle discrimination, promote gender equality & peace, *Fifa.com*, 11 June 2014, accessed 21 March 2015, <http://www.fifa.com/worldcup/news/y=2014/m=6/news=fifa-world-cup-to-tackle-discrimination-promote-gender-equality-peace-2368213.html>

¹⁵⁴ FIFA, *Football for Peace*, accessed 5 May 2015, <http://www.fifa.com/newscentre/videos/video=681604/index.html>

¹⁵⁵ A. Koch, ‘Alexander Koch’, *LinkedIn*, accessed 10 May 2015, <https://ch.linkedin.com/pub/alexander-koch/29/21a/68b/da>

¹⁵⁶ Despite requesting such information from FIFA I was unable to receive much assistance (as discussed in the methodology section)

8.1.2 An Apolitical and Safe Space

The UN states that sport can “cross boundaries and break down barriers, making the playing field a simple and often apolitical site for initiating contact between antagonistic groups.”¹⁵⁷ In 2003, the UN Inter-agency Task Force on Sport for Development and Peace defined sport, for the purposes of social development as, among other things contributing to social interaction. These arguments put forward by different agencies within the UN show an understanding and faith in sport as being, by its nature apolitical and thus providing a neutral platform where individuals, and social and political groups can meet directly and to contribute to conflict transformation. In this sense, sport seems to fulfil the criteria of being a safe social space by Lederach.

The 2005 Report on the International Year of Sport and Physical Education points to a study done by the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SADC), which removes any hesitancy between making links between sport and its propensity for contributing to the conflict transformation process. The study states that “sport permits encounters on neutral territory unhampered by politics, thus preparing the ground for rapprochement and reconciliation between former enemies.” This understanding of the safe space being necessary to bridge-building and relationship transformation retains, and seems to take as its inspiration, the work done by Lederach and other non-traditional peace and conflict researchers. Indeed, it fits with the idea that, despite a general acceptance and acknowledgement at a theoretical level that football has no normative value, there remains a tendency for the UN to present the concept apolitical as almost of intrinsic good.

To emphasise this, Kofi Annan, while UN Secretary General, declared that sport “brings people together, no matter what their origin, background, religious beliefs or economic status... That is why the United Nations is turning more and more often to the world of sport for help in our work for peace and our efforts to achieve the millennium development goals.”¹⁵⁸ Annan is convinced that sport should be increasingly relied upon to bring opposing sides together and deliver where other means have failed irrespective of context. This fits with the POP and Lederach’s theory, whereby the spaces opened up allow for relationships to be built and to formal and informal lessons learnt about how to deal with other people.

8.1.3 Relationship Transformation and Bridge Building

The idea of bridge building is presented by senior figures at both FIFA and the UN. Blatter’s quote regarding the importance of football in building bridges is developed by UN Special

¹⁵⁷ United Nations Inter-Agency Task Force on Sport for Development and Peace, 2005

¹⁵⁸ *ibid*

Advisor on Sport for Development and Peace, Mr Wilfried Lemke who presents the role of sport as integral and seemingly the only real way to soften tensions between the two Koreas:

*Although the Korean Peninsula has been divided into two states since 1953, I am pleased to recount that sport has recently been serving as a bridge between the two, providing a platform for friendly interaction and cooperation. I look forward to continue facilitating more bilateral meetings between the two Koreas with the hope that the bridges built through sport intensify and solidify to become permanent.*¹⁵⁹

There has been a move away from a general idea that sport simply demonstrates that there is more that unites than divides us, towards the idea of local, grassroots participatory football as a key factor in peace attempts in the past decade. The UN explicitly states and holds up as its main theory of change that “by bringing individuals and communities together, commonalities can be found, and cultural or ethnic divides bridged.”¹⁶⁰ This idea stretches beyond acts by FIFA and UNOSDP to organisations within the UN such as UNHCR who have organised friendly matches between refugee communities and local people.¹⁶¹ The link between participatory football projects bringing individuals together and the impact that this can have on the rest of society is set out most clearly in the UNOSDP 2012-2014 Action Plan where they state that they aim to build peace at “both the community level and the individual level by changing perceptions and building relationships.”¹⁶²

This notion is replicated more simply by FIFA when they say that when “children meet they change their minds about their background, about each other. They discover that they are the same, they are just children.”¹⁶³ This notion suggests that such a changing of minds is possible irrespective of the context, let alone the other factors involved in the organising and delivery of projects which “promote the spirit of fair play and tolerance at all levels of the society”.¹⁶⁴

While recognising the different roles that sports can play in peace attempts, one of the key areas of focus of the UN is the belief that sport based initiatives can be a “means of

¹⁵⁹ United Nations Office on Sport for Development and Peace, *Annual Report 2013*, UNOSDP 2014, accessed 2 March 2014, <http://www.un.org/wcm/webdav/site/sport/shared/sport/Documents/Annual%20Report%202013/UNOSDP%20Annual%20Report%202013.pdf>

¹⁶⁰ United Nations Inter-Agency Task Force on Sport for Development and Peace, 2005

¹⁶¹ *ibid*

¹⁶² United Nations Office on Sport for Development and Peace, *Sport and Peace Thematic Working Group Action Plan 2012-2014*, accessed 4 January 2015,

http://www.un.org/wcm/webdav/site/sport/users/melodie.arts/public/2012-10-02_Action%20Plan_%20Sport%20and%20Peace_SDP%20IWG_2012-2014%20%28tbc%29.pdf

¹⁶³ FIFA, *Playing for Peace*, *Video*, accessed 20 March 2015,

<http://www.fifa.com/newscentre/videos/video=1262400/index.html>

¹⁶⁴ *ibid*

establishing and re-establishing relationships and nurturing points of communication that can eventually serve the peace process.”¹⁶⁵ This is also true of FIFA who are keen to put more money into grassroots projects to promote young people to play the game. UEFA, one of six continental confederations of world football's governing body FIFA, assist in funding such projects in Europe. One of these is presented by the UN in a document as supposed evidence that such projects can “nurture peaceful coexistence in countries such as Bosnia and Herzegovina... engender[ing] team spirit and help[ing] bridge ethnic and religious divides.”¹⁶⁶ The positive public relations that promoting the positive aspect of football gives to the game helps to recalibrate a game which has become separated and commercialised from its roots. In re-grounding its worth they present it as being of intrinsic worth and so less open to criticism thus growing the consensus of the good of their (FIFA's) product.

Sport and football are considered, by the UN and football's governing bodies respectively, as contributing to conflict transformation through a variety of different means but certainly through participatory football projects which open up social spaces and encourage the transformation of relationships.

8.1.4 Concluding Thoughts

Much of the discussion by both UNODSP and FIFA of sport and football's link to peace and conflict resolution concerns spectators and the professionalised side of the game rather than the POP concept theorised in conjunction with Lederach focusing on the centrality of relations to conflict transformation.

The UN and FIFA have, over the past decade, increasingly tried to connect participatory football with peace attempts. There is a claim for example that “the fundamental principles of sport, respect for opponents and rules, teamwork and fair play, are consistent with the principles of the UN charter and reflect the basic rules of a well-functioning society living in peace.”¹⁶⁷ This is a very partial view. The UN does acknowledge that football, as a reflection of society may include violence, corruption and discrimination, although nothing similar is presented by FIFA.

The UN also acknowledge that there may be some instances where the changes a participatory football project can create are limited: “for more complex networking and peace-building efforts, [projects]... generally cannot be undertaken until conflicts have

¹⁶⁵ Sport Development Peace International Working Group, 2008

¹⁶⁶ United Nations Inter-Agency Task Force on Sport for Development and Peace, 2005, p. 14

¹⁶⁷ United Nations, 2005, p.10

subsided.”¹⁶⁸ This quote challenges the universality of Lederach’s theory suggesting that in communities where violent conflict is an ongoing part of life, it may not be possible for football to help both for practical and psychological reasons. It may be impossible to organise the safety of the individuals or the coaches taking part. In this way, as the UNOSDP document emphasised, it is necessary to give due consideration to local socio-cultural contexts. Furthermore, getting children and young people together from different backgrounds and sides which would involve crossing borders (real or imagined) may prove extremely difficult. Equally when conflict is raging there is not enough safe physical and psychological ‘space’ to do it. Most football projects taking place in such conflict settings must therefore be in place primarily for one group at a time to distract them from the war time situation and give them a sense of normality, and in this situation, the change suggested by Lederach could not work.¹⁶⁹

In any case, POP on its own cannot achieve everything. To ensure that impact occurs outside of the project ‘walls’ of the grassroots projects and that any impact is long term and sustainable, changes in attitude at the bottom must be complemented with movements towards relationship changes at the top as well i.e. at government or community leadership levels. While the UNOSDP state that “Sport for Peace initiatives are not only evaluated at the programme level, but also for their impact on the peace environment at large”,¹⁷⁰ the author was unable to find any such reports. To thus look more specifically at the actual role of using participatory football projects to form safe spaces, build relationships and transform conflicts, it is necessary to look at some practical examples. Before we can say whether the projects work in their final aim, it is necessary to know if these projects are able to work at the intermediate levels, beginning with the transformation of individual relationships.

8.2 Evaluation documents

This section will be divided into three different sections: Pre-Conflict, Conflict, and Post Conflict. Each section examines one organisation and relevant internal and external evaluation documents as well as quotes from their websites to see 1) what evidence is presented by, and in evaluation of, grassroots organisations that work with football to support the idea that relationship building in conflict situations can lead to conflict transformation and

¹⁶⁸ Sport Development Peace International Working Group, 2008.

¹⁶⁹ This again raises the question why women are not looked at in greater depth and detail in other literature. There is a growing body of work discussing ways in which including women in the conflict transformation process is necessary for sustainable peace but neither Lederach, the UN or FIFA say how including women in the early stages of relationship transformation may, or may not, be useful.

¹⁷⁰ United Nations Office on Sport for Development and Peace, *Sport and Peace Thematic Working Group Action Plan 2012-2014*.

peacebuilding and 2) how closely these conform to Lederach's understanding of participatory football projects and the means by which they help achieve conflict transformation.

8.2.1 Pre-Conflict: Kickz - Goals Thru Football

Kickz, a project based in the UK, and co funded by the Premier League and the Metropolitan Police with projects in many cities, is used to look at the way the football can build relationships in pre-conflict situations. The project, aimed at 12 to 18 year olds and delivered in the evenings and weekends, has expanded from its 4 clubs in 2006 to "39 professional football clubs delivering Kickz projects to 30,000 young people" annually.¹⁷¹

Kickz is open to everyone in the community but the focus is on the development of positive relationships so as to prevent young people from offending, and support those who are already offending to stop. Developing positive relationships can help the young people and the authorities (police and social workers) better understand one another and react to difficulties before they enter into a violent conflict. They also help at the individual level building positive relationships and providing role models with mentors and thus build a sense of belonging, removing the antagonistic relationship between these individuals and society in general. While the Kickz programme is not a typical example of a pre-conflict between two groups where tensions may rise, this example can tell us a lot about whether relationships can be transformed through football projects in different contexts and if so how.

Kickz uses football as a hook to access and help young people in deprived areas where police staff attend "sessions to help break down barriers between young people and the authorities."¹⁷² Mistrust between two parties is often a hindrance to positive relationship transformation, indeed, it may be that mistrust leads to greater antagonism and violence.

The general understanding and findings from one of Kickz's local partners, Brentford Football Club Community Sports Trust, are that, "through a relationship-building strategy, the [Kickz] project offers free regular constructive, sustained multi-sport and leisure activities"¹⁷³ This idea of a focus on relationship-building is very similar in regard to the idea of relationship transformation, particularly as it provides an opportunity (in a safe space) for

¹⁷¹ New Philanthropy Capital, 2012

¹⁷² Premier League, *Kickz 2009 National report*, accessed 02 November 2014, <http://www.premierleague.com/content/dam/premierleague/site-content/News/publications/creating-chances/kickz-national-report-2009-ch5-crime-antisocial-police-relations.pdf>

¹⁷³ Chris Wickham, *Trust Running Kickz Programme*, Brentford Football Club, 3 December 2012, accessed 3 November 2014, <http://www.brentfordfc.co.uk/news/article/kicks-bfccst-523195.aspx>

the two sides to engage on positive terms and break down barriers between youths and authorities .¹⁷⁴

Evaluations

The reports state that proving cause and effect between the programme and crime rates is very difficult. However, a comparison of statistical data from the police and other areas as well as qualitative studies into specific cases with observation and interview are used to try and understand the initial impact of the Kickz programme. In 2008, evidence presented by the Premier League stated that “as part of a local strategy, crime/ ASB [anti-social behaviour] reductions of up to 50% could be linked to the scheme.”¹⁷⁵ Indeed, looking at the regions where there are more projects run by Kickz, London and the North West, “reductions in crime were over five times greater on the most popular days when Kickz was running.”¹⁷⁶ There is evidence also, that the projects do more than just keeping people off the street and distracting them: “If Kickz was working just as a diversion, the reduction in youth crime would be higher on the days of the week that the scheme runs. We analysed crime reported near Elthorne Park and found that the reduction was exactly the same on scheme days and on non-scheme days, at 66%”.¹⁷⁷ It is thus possible to say that these participatory football projects may help to reduce crime. However, whether this pre-conflict transformation is because of the relationships between the police and participants being transformed is open to question.

A case study of the Hillingdon Kickz Programme concluded that both “young people and police left having forged very positive, respectful relationships.”¹⁷⁸ This not only fits with the idea that participatory football programs can transform relationships but also that this is most easily done when at least one side is young and perhaps more open to change. Interestingly, and perhaps counter intuitively, some workshops within the projects, while having little to do with football seem to succeed in helping to transform relationships. One such example is a riot police demonstration which was designed as a relationship transforming exercise where the sides were able to dress up in riot outfits and take part in a race while throwing tennis balls at riot shields. “The intended aim of breaking down barriers was firmly achieved and the young people and police left having forged very positive, respectful relationships. Some young people even inquired about joining the force.”¹⁷⁹ Beneath the analysis conducted is an understanding that if there is a greater relationship built between those individuals from poorer socio-economic backgrounds and the police then this will result in less criminal

¹⁷⁴ Premier League ,2009,

¹⁷⁵ *ibid.*

¹⁷⁶ *ibid.*

¹⁷⁷ *ibid.*

¹⁷⁸ *ibid.*

¹⁷⁹ *ibid.*

activity as there will be a level of respect between the two – rather than the other becoming viewed as an opponent or a zero-sum relationship whereby for one side to win the other must ‘lose’. Part of the reason for this success is that, the coaches delivering the training sessions are also trained youth workers. Football is thus clearly given secondary position to the emphasis of creating relationships between the coach and players and the players themselves.

Unfortunately, and typical of such projects, the research has been unable to uncover non-anecdotal evidence which could prove causality between the relationships being built and any observed reduction in crime. Nevertheless, there have been attempts to determine the impact of the programmes on the changes in the rate of offending and attempts to determine the social and economic benefits of the Kickz’s projects by comparing the projects outcomes to those communities without the project happening. Of course, even if there is a positive impact, how big it is and how long it lasts are both further and more difficult questions to answer.

Taking a conservative estimate that Kickz in Elthorne Park is only responsible for a 5th of youth crime reduction within a one-mile radius, the project is calculated to create £6 of value for every £1 invested. Taken alongside the anecdotal evidence and individual case studies the authors argue not only that the Kickz project is being successful but that “the true value of these projects is greater than we can estimate using purely financial terms.”¹⁸⁰

The report researched and co-written by Laureus and impact experts New Philanthropy Capital (NPC) explicitly asserts that football “is used as a ‘hook’ to engage young people in a wider programme of education and support”.¹⁸¹ Many local based professional football clubs help to sponsor and also lend their name and logo to the projects as do lots of current and ex-footballers such as Dennis Bergkamp.¹⁸² In addition to the relationship building notion, there are a series of workshops including “sniffer dog sessions (to lead into anti-drugs discussions), dangerous dogs workshops, [and] anti-gun discussions.”¹⁸³ Millwall Kickz, described its Peckham project as using football as a hook. It meant that other activities such as “stop and search, demonstrating search arches, and discussing use of police powers deliver a positive message in a fun environment.”¹⁸⁴ This ‘fun environment’ seems to connect to the safe space that Lederach argued was vital for relationships to be changed.

There are two main conclusions which can be drawn from the analysis of Kickz. Firstly, while difficult, it is possible to see if POP projects like Kickz are making a difference.

¹⁸⁰ New Philanthropy Capital, 2012,

¹⁸¹ *ibid.*

¹⁸² Dennis Bergkamp is a former Dutch International who played for both Ajax and Arsenal and twice finished third in the FIFA World Footballer of the Year.

¹⁸³ New Philanthropy Capital, 2012.

¹⁸⁴ *ibid.*

Despite coming up against difficulties, economic findings alongside anecdotal evidence and other statistics (police ones in this case) can help. There is no excuse for FIFA and UN to neglect such analysis. Secondly, while the projects seem to be working, as NPC argue, “hard evidence is lacking, and it is difficult to make a convincing case for investment in sports projects.”¹⁸⁵ It is not possible to say why – and whether or not successes are due to relationships being built rather than any other factor. It becomes harder to say especially when Kickz are running other workshops aiming to achieve similar ends beyond that of relationship transformation as to which one is the casual factor.

8.2.2 In Conflict: Mifalot Education and Society Enterprise

Mifalot, is an Israeli based organisation that conducts projects both within and outside of Israel, using football to build relationships in conflict settings. Mifalot, was set up in 1997 as the professional football club Hapoel Tel Aviv’s social responsibility branch. It was designed to use sport, and particularly football as a platform and tool to encourage social change.¹⁸⁶ Focusing on those areas of society which are usually underrepresented, Mifalot run many of their projects and give support to local partners in the Palestinian Authorities,¹⁸⁷ inviting individuals from Palestine, Jordan and Israel to partake and learn as a centre of best practice.

This section will focus on the work done by Mifalot in Israel where, according to their website they have ‘touche[d] the lives of over 30,000 children, adolescents and (young) adults... [with] some 250,000 participants having graduated our [projects].’¹⁸⁸

The conflict in Israel/Palestine was selected because while the tensions between Israel and its neighbours, including Palestine, constitute an ongoing conflict with multiple temporary ceasefires interspersed by violence, it is consistently violent. Evaluation conducted by football projects in extremely and consistently violent conflict settings conclude that little real impact can be made regarding the transformation of relationships and the subsequent good which is meant to follow. If the evaluation suggests a positive impact from football projects in these settings then, this would show that, in the right circumstances, football can indeed contribute to the peace transformation process through relationship transformation at a grass roots level.

¹⁸⁵ New Philanthropy Capital, 2012.

¹⁸⁶ Mifalot, *About Us*, accessed 25 April 2015, <http://www.mifalot.com/Info.aspx?PageID=164>

¹⁸⁷ Mifalot, *Mifalot international partnerships*, accessed 25 April 2015, <http://www.mifalot.com/Info.aspx?PageID=188>

¹⁸⁸ *ibid.*

‘Through the Field’ and ‘Get To Know Your Neighbor’ are two of the projects Mifalot runs to enhance social integration. The purposes of these projects are to “brings Israel’s wide variety of social groups closer together... to inspire a multi-faceted and multicultural society,”¹⁸⁹ and “to provide both conflict resolution instruction and general life skills”¹⁹⁰ respectively. The aim at a general level of both these projects is the thought which is prevalent in much of the rhetoric of international and grassroots organisations whereby, both on and off the field, “through playing soccer in mixed teams, Israeli and Palestinian children learn that “the other” is quite similar: breaking down prejudice and fear.”¹⁹¹ Aside from projects to break down stereotypes, building trust and forming relationships, Mifalot also run football-based projects involving “female empowerment, special needs, employability, ... and healthy living.”¹⁹²

Evaluations

The available evidence analysed here represents data from the organisation itself who provide and briefly discuss the number of individuals taking part in the project. This data is complemented with an external evaluation conducted and analysed by Galily, Leitner and Shimon in 2013 which focuses on the Mifalot soccer programs’ impact on the “attitudes of Palestinian, Jordanian, and Israeli youth towards one another.”¹⁹³ These two data sets will be presented and discussed in this section.

Mifalot, in their publicity brochures try to prove their impact by showing the “annual number of beneficiaries since their beginning.”¹⁹⁴ By referring to the individuals as beneficiaries there is an implicit understanding that these young people have gained from the projects’ existence – but of course numbers on the scheme tell us nothing about impact. Figure 2, included in Mifalot’s 2015 brochure and seen below, shows the increase in the number of individuals taking part in the projects. With the exception of a dip in 2009, there has generally been a steady increase with the annual figure passing 25,000 in 2014.



¹⁸⁹ Mifalot, *Social coexistence & integration*, accessed 25 April 2015, <http://www.mifalot.com/Info.aspx?PageID=296>

¹⁹⁰ InterAgency Task Force on Israeli Arab Issues, *Mifalot: Know Your Neighbor*, accessed 25 April 2015 <http://www.iataskforce.org/entities/view/1182>

¹⁹¹ Mifalot, *Programs*, accessed 25 April 2015 <http://www.mifalot.com/Info.aspx?PageID=170>.

¹⁹² *ibid.*

¹⁹³ Y. Galily, M. Leitner, P. Shimon, Coexistence and sport: the Israeli case, *Journal of Comparative research in Anthropology and Sociology*, Volume 4, Number 2, Winter 2013, <http://compaso.eu/wpd/wp-content/uploads/2014/02/Compaso2013-42-Galily.pdf>

¹⁹⁴ Mifalot, *Mifaalot brochure 2015*, accessed 1 March 2015, http://issuu.com/mifalot/docs/mifaalot_brochure_2015

Table 2: Annual Number of beneficiaries since 1997, 1997-2015¹⁹⁵

The reasons for the two dips in 2006 and 2009 can be tentatively attributed to increasing violence in the region involving the Lebanon War and the Gaza War respectively. This is yet another reason to suggest that, in keeping with the rationale for choosing Israel as ‘in conflict’, outside influences concerning oppressively violent conflicts may impact more on the football projects than the other way around. Three possible explanations for this dip in the number of beneficiaries are 1) increased violence making it more dangerous for children to attend 2) the children’s parents being less inclined to let them attend with ‘the enemy’, and 3) the organisation Mifalot itself may not put on as many projects due to the violence or funding being directed to immediate disaster relief.

There are concerted efforts to ensure that the individuals who benefit are from those communities, such as Holon, Hadera and the Western Galilee, where different sides are less likely to have contact with one another. The argument presented is in line with the contact theory that if interaction leads to more positive attitudes, then those with less interaction are more likely to hold negative attitudes towards one another. Targeting such communities will thus help to positively change such relationships. The areas of Israel discussed above are fairly disparate and formal attempts at connecting individuals and communities has not happened. Mifalot consider (and have shown by the actual carrying out of projects in these tricky areas) that football, due to its position or people’s perception of it as apolitical, is able to work in these places where other projects, both formal but also grassroots (using drama etc.), cannot.

The report and information from Mifalot only proves that the number of individuals taking part has increased, and that the projects are able to take place in places where other attempts at bridging the divide have proved difficult or impossible. Yet, as discussed previously, it does not answer the main research question, does this grassroots football aid peacebuilding

¹⁹⁵ *ibid.*

attempts by contributing to the formation of relationships between antagonistic (or potentially antagonistic) parties?

The study, conducted by Galily, Leitner and Shimon, attempt to delve into a deeper evaluation involving pre and post project questionnaires of the participants before and after the joint activities of the 'Get to Know Your Neighbour' project. The questions were chosen from a myriad of previous nationwide studies of general attitudes (from 1998 and 1999).

The Palestinians' and Jordanians' responses changed dramatically with less than 2% saying yes to 'Trusting all or most Jewish Israelis,' before the project, but to 37% saying so afterwards.¹⁹⁶ Change on the Israeli side was less pronounced although still showed a 20% increase from 6% to 26% on the trust question. These results, while only conducted on a small sample size, still suggest that attitudes towards the 'other' were significantly improved through partaking in the project. In a fairly unique evaluation of projects by grassroots organisations using participatory football, this evaluation also sought to examine how the perceptions of one side regarding how the other side viewed them changed. Post-project, "36% of the Palestinians think that all or most Israeli Jews hate Palestinians, and 36% of Israeli Jews think that all or most Palestinians hate Israeli Jews."¹⁹⁷ This was a dramatic reduction from pre-project figures of around 60% on both sides. These two findings suggest that relationship transformation does occur through the football project and that not only do the participants feel more positive towards the other side, but they also feel that the other side's attitude towards them is more positive.¹⁹⁸

The authors of this piece of research claim that their "study provides concrete evidence of the value of joint sports programs in conflict mitigation and coexistence efforts with Israelis, Palestinians, and Jordanians."¹⁹⁹ This conclusion is not based on any evidence nor is the link between individuals and conflict mitigation explained. The study actually demonstrates that joint sports programs can change the attitudes of the individuals taking part in them as in line with the ToC. Whether conflict mitigation and coexistence beyond those individuals and beyond the football project occurs in any way has not been supported.

There is often a notion presented in articles and discussions with members of Mifalot that concurs with the view that "program evaluations and feedback have shown that teachers, parents and civic leaders believe the projects have made a real difference in their communities."²⁰⁰ Despite this assertion, such evaluations were not possible to find as was

¹⁹⁶ Y. Galily, M. Leitner, P. Shimon, 187

¹⁹⁷ *ibid.*, 189

¹⁹⁸ Of course, this does not tell us about the sustainability of such attitude changes or if they actually change behaviour.

¹⁹⁹ *ibid.*

²⁰⁰ InterAgency Task Force on Israeli Arab Issues, *Mifalot Education and Society Enterprises*, accessed 26 April 2015, <http://www.iataskforce.org/entities/view/119>

discussed in the methodology section and indeed, until the 2013 study, there had been no evaluation of the success or failure of the Mifalot program, “because there wasn’t money for research and because the kids were supposed to be coming together to play soccer, not to answer questions.”²⁰¹ This meant, that for almost 15 years, Mifalot were running programs, and being funded to do so, with no actual evidence (beyond theory) that it was having any impact. Even more astonishing was that, in 2010, and therefore prior to the research, Mifalot won (on behalf of Hapoel Tel Aviv) the *Best Social & Community Programme at the newly created ‘European Club Association Internal Awards’*.

8.2.3 Post Conflict: CCPA Bosnia and Herzegovina

The Cross Cultures Project Association (CCPA) was set up in 1999 as an administrative overseeing organisation to run the Open Fun Football School (OFFS) programme – a peace-building intervention in Bosnia and Herzegovina.²⁰² CCPA “are considered among the world leading organisations specialised in using children’s grassroots football as a tool to stimulate peaceful co-existence... between people living in divided communities.”²⁰³ The Union of European Football Associations (UEFA) is one of the major funders of CCPA who are an official UEFA Football and Social Responsibility Partner meaning they receive political, financial and expert assistance.²⁰⁴

The formal peace agreement following the tensions and conflicts in the former Yugoslavia were not enough for genuine sustainable peace, with local communities continuing “to be separated, hampering simple communication and interaction.”²⁰⁵ The aim of OFFS was to create a safe space where children from Serb, Croat and Bosnian communities could cross the invisible but very real boundaries and former frontlines to play with one another.²⁰⁶ These safe spaces, combined with the activities which force physical contact between different groups, aim to create positive relations.²⁰⁷ It is clear that the intentions of the organisation fit within the boundaries set out by Lederach. What is unclear however is whether and/or how they achieve such reconciliation, with CCPA and its donors acknowledging “that

²⁰¹ K.McPartland, *Playing for Peace in the Middle East: Research Shows Positive Changes*, accessed 26 April 2015, <http://www.csuchico.edu/inside/2012-10-25/playing-for-peace.shtml>

²⁰² Cross Cultures Project Association, *About Us*, accessed 14 February 2014, <http://ccpa.eu/about-us/history/>

²⁰³ *ibid.*

²⁰⁴ *ibid.*

²⁰⁵ L. Udsholt and B. Nicolajsen, *Evaluation Study: CCPA’s Open Fun Football Schools Programme*, April 2011, accessed 3 April 2015, <http://www.oecd.org/countries/serbia/48610831.pdf>

²⁰⁶ P. Gasser & A. Levinsen, ‘Breaking Post-War Ice: Open Fun Football Schools in Bosniaand Herzegovina’, *Sport in Society: Cultures, Commerce, Media, Politics*, 7:3, 2004, 457-472

²⁰⁷ Cross Cultures Project Association, *CCPA’s Conflict Management Approach - a conceptual point of departure*, accessed 3 April 2015, <http://ccpa.eu/home/conflict-management-approach/conflict-management-approach/>

reconciliation may be a rather elusive goal where progress and achievements can be hard to assess.”²⁰⁸

In 2000, OFFS adopted the ‘twin city’ approach whereby neighbouring municipalities with different ethnic makeups had to work together to organise each OFFS event. This took the relationship building from the level of the children partaking in the project, to the contact and transformation of relationships between “adult trainers, schools, clubs and municipalities that are involved in organizing the school.”²⁰⁹ Through this means, and others such as having team leaders from different ethnic backgrounds, OFFS aims to “demystify ‘enemy territory’ by bringing both children and adults over the ghosts of the old frontlines.”²¹⁰ The stated aims of OFFS are twofold, 1) a political one to integrate and reconcile communities and 2) a sporting one to promote and contribute to the growth of grassroots football.

Evaluations

The whole organisational and pedagogical set-up has the stated aim of nurturing the community spirit and the social relations in contrary to the more traditional conflict resolution techniques that start with the problems to be solved. To what extent does it achieve its aims?

Despite the “stated aim to promote reconciliation and normalisation of everyday life”,²¹¹ a 2011 evaluation study on behalf of the Swedish International Development Agency (SIDA) and the Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, finds it hard to substantiate whether this broad aim has indeed been achieved as a result of the football schools. Beyond the twin cities approach, it was hard to find further evidence of a more systematic CCPA effort to work with issues relating to reconciliation. One of the main critiques in the evaluation was that while having enthusiastic coaches, staffing tended to lack “substantive experience working with conflict resolution and reconciliation.”²¹² This seems to suggest that the local organisation “prioritise competencies and experience relating to football and other sports activities,”²¹³ over questions of conflict transformation.

One solution to these problems suggested in a 2004 evaluation, was that non-football expertise was needed to reach the first stated aim above. However, even with that report’s main concern calling “for CCPA to undertake reconciliation efforts using ‘custom-designed,

²⁰⁸ *ibid.*

²⁰⁹ P. Gasser & A. Levinsen, 2004, p.463

²¹⁰ *ibid.*

²¹¹ L. Udsholt and B. Nicolajsen, 2011 p.27

²¹² *ibid.*

²¹³ *ibid.*

professional guidance and training to be based on careful, thoughtful reflection,”²¹⁴ it seems that only minor progress was made in this regard.

In spite of the criticism regarding the project, there do seem to have been great strides made particularly in the immediate aftermath of the conflict in Bosnia. Successful multi-ethnic OFFS events were able to be held in areas where tensions remained high and interaction was extremely limited. A prime example was a project run in Srebrenica, when even though, “UN forces considered that the risks [of bringing Muslim children] into the city justified not just vehicle escorts, but helicopters,”²¹⁵ the project received a great response from the majority of participants.

In a joint paper Gasser and Levinsen, (the founder of CCPA and OFFS), do acknowledge that even if it is fantastic that children come together to play football, bringing with them the spectators and organisers who also work together, seeing whether or not this has had any lasting impact on the general conflict is unclear and “its longer-term impact and sustainability have yet to be seen.”²¹⁶ The authors further discuss the paradox that, while supporting the theory of change that “having fun playing and watching sports together may help rekindle relationships and influence visions of group identity, ... if it were enough to keep people from fighting each other, then this [Bosnian] war would have never happened.”²¹⁷ This is because, as they discuss, Tito himself had sought to use both participatory and spectator sport to “bury ethnic animosity, encourage contact between groups and develop interdependence as a means of reinforcing the Yugoslav identity that was the basis for the country’s unity.”²¹⁸

The overall findings from the CCPA evaluations are that, despite good efforts and intentions, the role of OFFS in promoting conflict transformation in Bosnia and Herzegovina “is a rather elusive aim and local stakeholders may have little influence on overall societal trends determining whether conflicts are resolved and societal upheavals reversed or stabilised.”²¹⁹ Gasser and Levinsen concur with this idea and state the rhetorical question as to how we can ever determine whether a ‘peace-building through sport’ programme achieves its aims beyond looking at participation levels.²²⁰ They also point to the idea that, despite the theoretical discourse of sport and politics intersection growing, there remains a lack of “information at a practical level on the successes and failures of programmes designed to help

²¹⁴ P. KVALSUND, D. NYHEIM, J.TELFORD CCPA Open Fun Football Schools: An Evaluation, 8 November 2004, accessed 1 April 2015,

http://assets.sportanddev.org/downloads/31__ccpa_open_fun_football_schools___an_evaluation.pdf

²¹⁵ P. Gasser & A. Levinsen, 2004, p.468

²¹⁶ *ibid.*, p.471

²¹⁷ *ibid.*, p. 470

²¹⁸ *ibid.*, p. 458

²¹⁹ L. Udsholt and B. Nicolajsen, 2011, p.9

²²⁰ P. Gasser & A. Levinsen, 2004.

reintegrate divided communities.”²²¹ A greater and more rounded field may throw up innovative ways to assess the outcomes of projects beyond subjective evaluation.

8.2.4 Discussion of Evaluations

All three organisations analysed in this section seem to assert that they are effective in building relationships between individuals and back this up with some limited evidence. They also have similar Theories of Change which seems very much in keeping with Lederach’s understanding that sport can be a useful tool to provide a safe space for individuals to form such relationships. However, beyond this, and much in keeping with the policy documents from the UN and FIFA, there is a leap which is neither explained nor defended, as to how and whether football helps beyond contributing to the transformation of positive relationships between individuals. All of the projects do show that, when a safe space exists (shown through the projects being able to take place in highly tense communities and areas) which attracts lots of young people (see the increase in participants) the participants are able to form relationships with the antagonistic side (anecdotal examples) at least for a period. The next step though is entirely absent: how do the projects contribute to conflict transformation and peacebuilding attempts?

It seems, by inference, that, certainly in the case of Mifalot and the CCPA, there is some kind of understanding whereby civil society is created as a result of these individuals’ new relationships. The Kickz projects by contrast seem to not try to take this a step further and instead focus solely on changing individuals’ lives and their relationships one at a time. Admittedly, a large part of this difference may be that the Kickz project is not dealing with a conflict between two homogenous antagonistic groups but instead more abstract ideas of ‘authority’.

Additionally, the only organisation which seeks to show some evidence that the project actually has a wider social impact is Kickz. By showing a reduction in crime figures in the local area, and taking a conservative estimate that a small proportion of this is due to the projects work in bringing the young people and society/authority figures into less of a clash with one another, it demonstrates some social value to their projects and thus perhaps that relationship building can contribute, if not directly lead, to conflict transformation.

Different evaluation methods are used, with internal ones and external ones commissioned (or done totally independently of the organisation). While it could be argued that the external ones are more holistic and critical with the internal ones focusing on a more limited and self-

²²¹ *ibid.*, p. 458

congratulatory idea, and there does seem evidence for this, there are certainly instances in all of the evaluations (as opposed to just general discussions or press conferences) to suggest that all of the organisations are aware of their shortcomings. The founder and head of CCPA for example is critical of his own project thus showing and demonstrating that being involved does not necessarily dictate a naivety or an unwillingness to accept that the project may only be having limited impact. The main benefit of the external evaluations discussed above is that they go further in discussion of what could be done to achieve a better outcome.

Additionally, the different age groups that the organisations choose to focus on is interesting and in line with Lederach, with all of the projects participants able to be included in the concept of ‘youth soccer clubs’. None of the organisations though, question why, even assuming that it is beneficial to focus on ‘young people’, the optimum age bracket should be 12-18 rather than say 5-9.

8.3 Interviews

Using interviews acts as a complement to the textual analysis conducted regarding the UN and FIFA and their policy documents, and the evaluation carried out by the organisations running grassroots projects. Interviewing coaches allowed for a broad picture of their perceptions to be drawn and more generalizable conclusions and insights to develop due to the coaches having the opportunity to critically analyse many different participating individuals. As discussed before, interviews were collected from Mifalot, CCPA Bosnia and Herzegovina and one in depth interview with a coach from F4P working in Northern Ireland.

The 11 respondents questioned as part of this research agreed in general that sport can change and build relationships. The 11 respondents had been working with their respective organisation from between 18 years and 4 months.

Those two individuals working in the field for more than 15 years seemed to be more optimistic about the potential of football projects to aid peace attempts, than those who had spent less time. This is surprising as, due to the continued tensions between antagonistic groups, and arguments that Bosnia is more divided now than it was just prior to the war, one might have imagined these coaches would become disheartened.²²² Srđan Hadžijusufović for example, a project assistant with OFFS, believes that through “sport, everything is possible, sport breaks all barriers.” Not only was sport viewed as beneficial in breaking down barriers, but sport is presented as the only way to bring people and communities together in Bosnia

²²² J. Borger, ‘Bosnian war 20 years on: peace holds but conflict continues to haunt’, *The Guardian*, 4 April 2012, accessed 30 April 2015, <http://www.theguardian.com/world/2012/apr/04/bosnian-war-20-years-on>

and Herzegovina: “sport was the only way for people to get back together and to build new foundations of our country with children.” These ideas show that those continuing to work in the field must believe that, at least to some extent, football projects are having a positive impact on the participants.

Similarly, an instructor, who had only been working with Mifalot for a short time, agreed that football is one of the best ways to get people to work together but that this is just one method and “in order to build peace there should be as many cooperations between sides, Football is one of the best ways to collaborate in whole world”. Another coach with Mifalot agreed, writing that “football is a good tool to mediate between people without difference in religion race and nationality.”

All of the coaches felt that sport is able to break down barriers and contribute effectively to the conflict transformation process with Claire Rea of F4P even observing that it crosses language barriers due to the limited equipment necessary to play and that most know how to play the game. However, she was also the only interviewee to recognise that “football can produce an environment of contention, hate, racism, sectarianism and violence.” That only one of 11 individuals working with football and peace actually recognised the potential dangers of football in producing increasingly fraught relationships is even more surprising considering all coaches are said to have some (if only limited) coaching regarding peace and conflict methodologies.²²³

To determine how and why football in particular was able to bring about positive relationships, increasingly specific questions were asked to try and understand how these individuals viewed causality within the field.

Some respondents discussed the key role of their respective football project along the themes of “putting a child in the centre of all what is happening,” although, when further prompted as to whether or not football works to build relationships, all of the respondents agreed, to varying degrees that it “can be a good tool to find things in common between people “and that “it has the potential to.” Once prompted, only one coach expressed their surprise at “the relationships that grew inside the team.” This coach had gone into the project with a greater interest in individual, personal development but, despite only having worked there for 4 months at the time of being interviewed, had already seen signs of relationship transformation as a direct consequence of the ‘Know Your Neighbour’ project.

While the rest of the respondents had given thought to the idea of relationship building prior to joining their organisation, with many giving this as the single most important reason for

²²³ Whether this is because such negative consequences of football are more prevalent in Northern Ireland or other reasons is open to further research. What is clear from the background section is that violence as a result of football certainly seems to be a universal phenomenon.

joining, the rationale given for how this occurred varied quite a lot. One wrote that football allows individuals to go “back to his/her own childhood,” where we are “uncorrupted beings, which society can't influence,” with its prejudices. In this understanding, children, and young people are not influenced by outside influences and are therefore able to enter relationships and meet individuals without a negative perception to begin with. This seems to marry with Lederach's focus on youth soccer clubs and the implicit and unexplained focus of the football project organisations such as the UN focusing on the holistic development of young people in improving social development.²²⁴ Although neither Lederach nor the interviewee actually provide justification for the clubs being youth centred rather than just any soccer club. This idea though fails to recognise that football is, as discussed, a construct of society and therefore by playing it we are participating and contributing to a part, and a creation of society.

In agreement with Allport's contact hypothesis, other respondents felt that the cause of the relationship transformations that occurred was that football was able to be “a first contact between war opposed sides”. Indeed, “just the fact the sides are meeting on the field builds a relationship that can lead to positive impact.” All of these answers are consistent with Lederach's theory of relationship building given earlier and the discussions and policy documents presented by the UNOSDP and FIFA.

While this is in many ways because of the vagueness of these theoretical and discursive papers, it may also be that the way relationships are transformed differs from project to project and even from individual to individual. Thus, while Lederach is criticised by other academics for being unsuitable for academic analysis, his theory allows for a sustained impact in the practical world of Peace and Conflict. Not only is his theory, due to the lack of real detail regarding operationalisation, able to be complemented with additional findings, but this means that in attempts to encourage the transformation of relationships, local contexts can be taken into account.

There were two key findings which were not explored either in the literature from the organisations nor in Lederach's theory. The first was a main concern highlighted by the majority of the respondents while the second was a form of relationship transformation involving different actors.

The main concern of the coaches was that there wasn't enough money to fund their projects to a sufficient degree. This meant, according to them, that the impact of their projects was severely diminished. The arguments that “resource limitations ... [mean] it is not possible to reach out to all kids and youth that are in need and would like to have the program,” relies on a premise that more contact leads to more positive outcomes. Furthermore, projects, which

²²⁴ United Nations Inter-Agency Task Force on Sport for Development and Peace, 2003.

only run during the summer time or one hour a week after school, are thought to achieve only limited success, with the extension of the project to a whole year viewed as vital for sustained success. Claire Rea wrote that, such a spread is necessary not only of football projects but also that these projects should be linked with “other conflict transformation or peace-building work.” to achieve maximum success. While not seeking to question the relative merits of participatory football projects against other grassroots projects, one of the respondents, wrote that one of the greatest weaknesses of the football project was that “ organizations that are driven by other motives (like political) can have stronger effects.”

An interesting notion was raised concerning the relationship or “socialization among coaches”, and between coaches and participants which led to a “family atmosphere” in which everyone “appreciate[s] and respect[s] each other”. These ideas of relationships was an area largely ignored in the literature on the subject and from the relevant international organisations and the grassroots organisations themselves. It suggests that there are multiple different types of relationship which can or could be built by the different sides/different actors. For example, both Mifalot and CCPA employ coaches from both the antagonistic sides. In both cases, they have often actively fought against the other side but, under the guise of football, they are brought together and can form relationships between themselves. The participants, will also be able to not only create bonds with those their own age from the ‘other side’ but also engage and build relationships with adults who must engage in a neutral mind-set to gain the trust of those in their care.²²⁵

Only three respondents delved further than the project itself in any kind of detail to try and explain how the individual participants’ relationship transformation may lead to conflict transformation as a whole. In keeping with the Theory of Change outlined earlier in this paper, one of the Israeli coaches wrote that, having formed relationships and discussed conflict transformation methods, “all of conversations on field go with the kids back home after practice to their family conversations.” Claire Rea outlines the necessity of ensuring all “participants are living out the F4P values beyond the programme and football itself,” to gain real change. Finally, one of the Palestinian Coaches with Mifalot wrote that “participants will be peace ambassadors”. These three ideas all suggest that the young person, having developed positive relationships or at least removed some of their earlier prejudices, will spread their learnings informally, but also perhaps formally to the wider community.

There does not seem to be a discernible difference between the answers to the questions from those engaged in football projects in-conflict or in post-conflict contexts. While the sample size is not big enough to make strong conclusions, it seems that tentative conclusions can be

²²⁵ J. Lambert, A Values-Based Approach to Coaching Sport in Divided Societies. *Coaching Football for Peace: Teaching and Playing Sport for Conflict Resolution in the Middle East. Manual* eds. J. Sugden, J. Wallis, Meyer & Meyer, Aachen, 2007, p. 13-34.

drawn suggesting that, at least as far as the coaches are concerned (and this reflects the similarities between the organisations they work for) participatory football projects can help to transform relationships in both of these conflict settings. For example, all of the respondents, while not explicitly stating it, suggested that one of football's main draws is that it provides "space that allows for... conversations to happen." This space can be seen to link with Lederach's theory and the necessity of the creation of a 'safe space'. These findings indicate that Lederach's theory, while perhaps not being typically operational, does manage to act as a general understanding of how relationships can be built at a grassroots level irrespective of the context of the conflict.

9. Conclusion

This research has sought to see, not only how international organisations discuss the power of football conflict transformation through relationship building, but also how the organisations running said programmes and the coaches, and activists, tasked with delivering the projects view the likelihood that such projects can indeed achieve real, sustainable conflict transformation through the formation of relationships between antagonistic (or potentially antagonistic) parties.

This thesis ties in, not only to the position of football, but moreover to the integral nature of analysis and measurement of grassroots organisations in general. It has sought to show some of the difficulties in assessing a project which only outlines vague aims. While grassroots bottom up projects seem necessary for peace to ever stand a chance, the more effectively and efficiently it can be done, the greater likelihood that projects which strive to support such projects, will have in succeeding.

Those coaches who were interviewed had fairly similar perceptions and reactions to questions concerning the importance of football. While some had observed changes of individual relationships, others based their views more on their own experiences as young people playing sports. For these individual coaches, perhaps it is necessary to believe that what they are doing will have more than a marginal impact on the conflict. Thus, while overstating the impact of football projects, this faith (defined as such due to limited evidence of it actually working or the causality existing) may be necessary for a continuation of these people to contribute their time and energy.

The findings from this research show that, despite the insistence that participatory football projects can build relationships, in pre, in-conflict and post-conflict settings, and this in turn can contribute to conflict transformation, evidence is lacking. Attempts to correct this trend are hindered by both the UN and FIFA feeding into (and in turn being fed into by) the organisations running the projects with a clear and, generally non-negotiable stance on the importance of football and sport in general in enforcing and maintaining peace. One key finding however was that, despite the assertions from the organisations and interviewees irrevocably declaring causality between the projects and individual relationship transformation, of coaches and participants, they all fail to provide evidence or causal justification demonstrating the rest of the chain towards conflict transformation (as shown in the ToC and Lederach's theory).

Lederach's theory, is generally supported (certainly in the earlier stages) by the rhetoric from the UNOSDP and FIFA as well as the evaluation documents conducted internally by the three organisations directly running programmes and the interviewees. However, while these actors all concur that the relationships between coaches and participants are transformed positively,

this does not fit with the evaluations done externally by the likes of SIDA which are more critical and suggests that too much may be being asked of sport. Perhaps then it is necessary for external experts, with training in peace and conflict fields rather than football coaching, to evaluate and expand the positive effects that football does have.

Furthermore, Lederach fails to recognise any dangers or perils of trying to use football within the SROP. This seems unsurprising as he is trying to develop a theory concerning whether youth soccer clubs are capable of transforming relationships. If however, we take the ToC and assume that a secondary role of the young people playing football is that their parents will come and watch, then it is necessary to develop a theory which explains why these parents, as 'spectators', would develop positive, rather than, in keeping with the background study of SROP, negative and antagonistic relationships. Furthermore, FIFA and UNOSDP who, by failing to acknowledge differences between SROP and POP and evaluate them separately, do not successfully and critically analyse football in the detail it requires.

The interviews gave rise to some new ideas which were not discussed at any prior level: neither Lederach, the international organisations nor the grassroots organisations discussed the role of socialisation between coaches or the idea that people are brought to a childlike state by playing football which allows for them to be innocent in their new relationships. These ideas, with no basis in research about the relation between children and society regarding the move towards conflict transformation, are also underexplored by the actors administering the projects and not mentioned in any attempts at ToCs.

From a more practical perspective, which is, after all, one of the purposes of using Lederach, greater in-depth interviews with individuals may make those engaged in the football projects evaluate them a bit more critically themselves and question the long term impact of the football projects. Furthermore, those organisations evaluated in this research are largely representative regarding the types of evidence sought to 'prove' their impact. While advanced levels of analysis involving control groups and control trials are complicated and costly, greater thought beyond anecdotes and quotes needs to be considered and utilised. Further academic research could assist in this pursuit.

As it stands, this research has presented a tentative conclusion that, according to the evaluations and assertions presented, in the short term, peacebuilding can occur as a result of carefully managed and context specific participatory football projects. Whether this relationship building then contributes to long lasting sustainable peace is suggested by theoretical discussions by Lederach but it would require increased studies to draw more secure conclusions as to the impact on participatory football on building relationships and long term sustainable peacebuilding at pre, during and post conflict settings.

10. Further Research

Due to the conceptual difficulties and challenges in proving causality, a study of this nature would always benefit from both more and increasingly deep interviews with the individuals conducting the projects. In addition, involving more grassroots organisations with different evaluation techniques and methodologies of their projects would also contribute to an increased understanding and thus advance this underexplored discipline.

Greater time with interview subjects which would have included and been expanded to semi structured and even unstructured interviews would have allowed me to discover more information about the reasons why and how football contributed to relationships and potentially peacebuilding. One proposal for a future piece of research would be a longitudinal study which would be developed to focus on both individuals and communities. CAC have already informed me that they are in the process of engaging with “an extremely large ... multi-year research project through Loughboro[ugh] University.”

The study would follow those individuals who took part in the football participatory projects to see if the relationships that they formed have been maintained and made them less likely to take up arms or enter into conflict with the opposing group (with whom they had formed links with during the project), or even become advocates of finding a peaceful solution to the conflict. This could be investigated through interviews with these individuals. Of course, to determine the effectiveness of the different projects, other variables and the environments must be looked at and explored.

The second part of the project would be designed to look at the role participatory football projects take in encouraging communities to pursue peace, maintain an even keel or even actively advocate a continuation or starting of the conflict. This would be more relevant in countries where there are two clearly opposed sides rather than the example of the Kickz project. However, it would show the sustainability of the football projects and whether the ideas of building relationships can be passed on at a conceptual level irrespective of, or in addition, to personal, physical contact.

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12. Appendix

Interview questions in English

What is your role in [*insert organisation name*]?

How long have you worked with [*insert organisation name*]?

When and why did you start thinking that you would like to work with sport as a means to bring social change?

What do you like about working with football in the [*insert organisation name*]?

What have been the greatest surprises you have found with working with football in the programme?

To what extent do you agree with the statement ‘football works in helping to bring peace’?

Why do you believe this?

Do you think that football works to build relationships between individuals previously on opposing sides? (if yes why and if no why not?)

What is the greatest strength of the [*insert organisation name*] project?

What is the greatest weakness of the [*insert organisation name*] project?

How would you change the project to ensure greater chances for relationships to be built?

How do you ensure that the competitive edge of football does not detract from the developing of relationships?

What long term impact do you think the [*insert organisation name*] project has in building relationships between the opposing sides?