

Impact case study (REF3)

Institution: University of Central Lancashire		
Unit of Assessment: UoA 24 Sport and Exercise Sciences, Leisure and Tourism		
Title of case study: <i>Mega sports volunteerism and transforming lives through student peer leadership and mentoring</i>		
Period when the underpinning research was undertaken: 2013-2019		
Details of staff conducting the underpinning research from the submitting unit:		
Name(s):	Role(s) (e.g. job title):	Period(s) employed by submitting HEI:
Alethea Melling	Professor	1998 - present
Wajid Khan	Senior Lecturer	2003 – present
Clifford Olsson	Senior Lecturer	2003 – present
Ridwanah Gurjee	Principal Lecturer	2000 – present
Yasmeen Ali	Senior Lecturer	2004 – present
Robert Whalley	Lecturer	2017 - 2020
Period when the claimed impact occurred: 2014-2020		
Is this case study continued from a case study submitted in 2014? N		
1. Summary of the impact (indicative maximum 100 words)		
<p>This Impact Case Study demonstrates how our student volunteerism methods have addressed UN objectives and the interlinking priorities of governing bodies within sport. We co-created the blueprint for the University Olympic Volunteer Centres within 26 Russian Universities, which engaged 27,000 volunteers for the Sochi 2014 Winter Olympic Games. Volunteer Centres within Universities in the Russian Federation was a new concept and there was little knowledge around the recruitment, management and support of volunteers. A thriving volunteer movement developed in Russia after the games that used the Sochi model we developed. Using the same model, 17,040 volunteers were recruited for the 2018 FIFA World Cup. Our innovative student mentoring and peer leadership programmes based on our research have developed influential peer leaders and educated and transformed the lives of thousands of children and young people in Pakistan, Oman and Zambia, as well as 900 orphans in Morocco. These innovations in peer leadership programmes have also improved the life chances and world perspectives of 400 unaccompanied refugee children in Lesvos.</p>		
2. Underpinning research (indicative maximum 500 words)		
<p>The Centre for Volunteering and Community Leadership (CVCL) was developed in 1999 at the University of Central Lancashire. The CVCL exists to develop compassionate socially responsible graduates through the delivery of research-informed social action and student knowledge exchange for development, in ways which address the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) 3 Good Health and Wellbeing, 4 Quality Education, 5 Gender Equality, 10 Reduced Inequalities and 16 Strategic Partnerships for Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions. The CVCL also aims to address the priorities of international sporting organisations such as the International Olympic Committee (IOC) to encourage and support the promotion of women in sport at all levels and in all structures, to encourage and support initiatives blending sport with culture and education and to cooperate with competent public or private organisations and authorities to place sport at the service of humanity and promote peace. As well as addressing the Social Legacy, FIFA priorities concerning diversity, health, access for all and human resources. The underpinning research for this case study was developed by a multidisciplinary academic team working within some of the most deprived communities, locally, nationally, and internationally. Their research processes are influenced by Freirean critical pedagogy based on equal dialogical relationships. Their concepts of mentoring, influenced by their research findings [1], are based on positive change, not production.</p>		
<u>Development of an 'action learning tool kit'</u>		
<p>Emancipatory Action Research (EAR) is often employed as an appropriate methodology, which is applied in different situations and contexts. In 2007, the CVCL used EAR to successfully</p>		

deliver a community education programme to a group of 26 South Asian women from a deprived area of Burnley [2]. The challenges identified through the EAR process, in order to provide an inclusive programme for these women, were significant and initial interventions were needed to engage the women on the programme. These pioneering women graduated and now act as role models and mediators. Through experiential learning the CVCL team created an 'action learning tool kit' using the successes and reflections from this inclusive programme to develop the toolkit and create new programmes for use with other groups.

Further research projects have adapted the toolkit. Transformational leadership training techniques combined with Paulo Freire pedagogy were used to develop and deliver a peer leadership programme for young people in Pakistan [3]. The overall aim of the project was to create regional and provincial contingents of young peer educators, supported by undergraduate volunteers, who would then deliver training in leadership and key skills. Using an EAR methodology, student volunteer peer researchers, or 'animateurs', delivered a five-day workshop through the Global Youth Leaders (GYL) Programme. GYL is an unaffiliated body of like-minded individuals and organisations, sharing the common goal of empowering young people for positive change through peer education and leadership. This workshop opened up a much wider range of possibilities than youth leadership training alone. In partnership with University of Gujrat students, Melling and Khan produced a development framework that was the foundation of the universities 'tool kit' for developing leadership skills and Freire-influenced social action. The toolkit was implemented through CVCL educational and peer leadership programmes. Further studies were used to evaluate the methods, implementation and impact [4] and to explore their effectiveness in a wider social context beyond the classroom.

Student Mentoring in the Community

CVCL promotes an ethos that mentoring interventions are a means of allowing young people to enhance their social and personal skills. This enables them to reflect on and learn from the process and accumulate social capital. This research led to the development of innovative youth-led projects, including student mentoring within the community. Having adopted this approach to mentoring, Melling and Gurjee [1] assessed the benefits of student mentoring for the students and the mentees engaged in a 12-month project. Their results highlighted that a mentee-centred-approach provided '**invisible gifts**' of key skills for lifelong learning and employability for the mentors and positive personal development outcomes for the mentees. The mentor-mentee relationship was central to Olsson's research [5], that focused on coach mentoring systems, which have become more widespread in sport. This led to the CVCL developing new approaches and tools to support coach mentoring and development. Most recently, Gurjee [6] has explored the interaction that takes place between student mentor and mentee, developing a conceptual framework of the key components of the mentoring interface.

3. References to the research (indicative maximum of six references)

1. Melling, A. and Gurjee, R. (2013) 'Researching the Impact of Student Mentoring in the Community'. *International Journal of Social Work and Human Services Practice*, 1.1. pp.1-8.*
2. Melling, A. and Khan, W. (2013) "Crossing the Road": The value of inclusive pedagogical practice for South Asian women in Burnley, East Lancashire'. *Widening Participation and Lifelong Learning*, 14.3. pp.190-201.*
3. Khan, W. and Melling, A. (2015) Pakistan in Praxis: The Development of a Peer Education Programme as a Tool Kit in Developing Young People for Critical Consciousness. In: *Paulo Freire: The Global Legacy. Counterpoints*. Peter Lang, New York. ISBN 9781454196501
4. Ali, Yasmeen (2018) Using a Freirean approach within the Global Youth Solutions programme. In: *Paulo Freire and Transformative Education: Changing Lives and Transforming Communities*. Palgrave Macmillan UK, London, pp. 203-214. ISBN 9781137542496
5. Olsson, C., Cruickshank, A., and Collins, D. (2017) 'Making mentoring work: The need for rewiring epistemology'. *Quest*, 69.1. pp. 50-64. ISSN 0033-629*
6. Gurjee, R. (2020). An Investigation into Mentoring Relationships of HE Students in Community Settings, *Journal of Peer Learning*, 13. pp. 48-60. *

*indicates peer-reviewed articles

All outputs can be supplied by the HEI on request

4. Details of the impact (indicative maximum 750 words)**Development of a volunteer programme for sports mega-events**

In 2010, Melling was contracted by the 2014 Winter Olympic Committee to create the blueprint and preparation training programme for Olympic Volunteer Centres within 26 Russian universities [A]. Volunteer Centres within universities was a new concept for the Russian Federation and there was little knowledge around the recruitment, management and support of volunteers. Melling worked with Sochi Organising committee for the Olympic Games to identify appropriate institutions and using the 'action learning toolkit' [2, 3] and peer leadership programme model [4] they co-created a training programme to ensure standards of excellence in volunteer management. For the first time in the history of the Olympic movement, selecting and training Games volunteers was carried out through Volunteer Centres based at educational institutions throughout the country. The programme formalised volunteering within the Russian Federation through the engagement of 27,000 volunteers and was one of the most important outcomes of the 2014 Winter Olympics. The Official International Olympic Committee (IOC) Report on Sochi 2014 Vol two stated:

"The Sochi 2014 Games helped revive volunteerism in Russia and brought it to a completely new level of development. The Sochi 2014 Volunteer Programme could be called one of the most important elements of the Games legacy." [B]

The benefits of the programme also had far reaching impact on the lives of Russian people beyond the Games: **"When Sochi began the bidding process in 2005, the concept of volunteering simply did not exist in Russia,"** explains Dmitry Chernyshenko, President and CEO of the Sochi 2014 Organising Committee. **"Now, the volunteer movement is thriving, with a quarter of a million Russians regularly participating in volunteer activity."** [C]

Further to Melling's contribution to the Sochi 2014 Volunteer Centre concept, the CVCL was also consulted on the development of a volunteer legacy programme for the FIFA 2018 World Cup in Moscow. The University of Central Lancashire signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Moscow State Social University and Melling collaborated with former Head of the Sochi 2014 Volunteer Programme, Anton Lopukhin, Acting Vice Rector of the Moscow State Social University, on the development of an inclusive legacy programme, which would create benefits for community projects around disability and social justice. Representatives from Moscow City Government then visited the University of Central Lancashire on a fact-finding mission to explore best practice in relation to mega-sports volunteering [D]. Using the Sochi model, 17,040 volunteers were recruited for the 2018 FIFA World Cup.

The media predicted that the FIFA 2018 World Cup in Moscow would be tarnished by racism and hooliganism. This did not happen. The World Cup was a success, where all visitors were made welcome and the game was characterised by friendliness. This was due in part to the culture of volunteerism built on an ethos of social inclusion. As Patrick Jennings from BBC Sport stated in 2018:

"In many ways, Russia was the perfect World Cup host. A vast country where there is so much to uncover. The organisation was superb, thanks in no small part to the thousands of volunteers who helped visitors get by." [E]

Transforming lives through peer leadership

From 2014 to 2020 the work of the CVCL has created a network of student volunteer peer researchers and leaders delivering research-informed knowledge exchange within the UK, the Russian federation, Pakistan, Oman, and Zambia. Participants in this network have strong connections with international agencies and policymakers: Anaisa Baig from the University of Gujrat Centre for Civil Society was invited to represent Pakistan at the G(irls)8 Summit: Zuleikha Chikh, CVCL University of Central Lancashire, became Muslim Sports Leader of the Year, 2019 in the Muslim Women in Sports Powerlist: and Wajid Khan, University of Central Lancashire CVCL, became MEP for Northwest England and sits on the committee for Human Rights within

the European Parliament. Chikh's postgraduate research on women and leadership in sport is directly addressing IOC and UN SDG priorities regarding gender equality.

The Global Youth Solutions (GYS) peer leadership model developed by CVCL [4] has had an impact which has transcended Sochi 2014. In 2013 the GYS programme engaged with the University of Gujrat in Pakistan, resulting in an international student led conference in 2014, where students at the University of Gujrat co-created a conceptual university volunteer centre based on the Sochi model, with the mission of delivering peer research and leadership education addressing structural inequalities highlighted by the SDGs, including 10 Reduced Inequalities. This work led to the development of a new research Centre, the Centre for Civil Society within the University of Gujrat [F], which was ratified in 2014 by the Vice Chancellor, Professor Mohammad Nizamuddin, now the Head of the Pakistan Higher Education Commission. This resulted in a culture shift around formalised student volunteer knowledge exchange and peer-led research in the Gujrat Region of Pakistan. The GYS model was applied in Oman between 2014 and 2017, engaging 260 Omani Students as peer-research leaders. The programme resulted in a culture shift in volunteerism within Omani HEI's and the development of a learning community of active volunteers. On the strength of this, Nizwa University forged a MoU with the University of Central Lancashire [G1, G2]. Closer to home, in 2014 the CVCL was approached by the Traveller Education Service to develop an educational inclusion project with the Traveller community in Preston. The GYS programme facilitators worked on the site with young people to deliver a story-telling project about Traveller sports, experience, culture, and how the young people saw their place in the world. In the spirit of Freirean pedagogy, representatives from the Traveller community have formed an ongoing dialogue with undergraduates, engaging on Traveller culture, rights, and social justice [H]. Collaborating with Traveller communities has richly informed research and pedagogical approaches, thus influencing emerging work with local communities high on the multiple deprivation index, such as Shadsworth, Blackburn with Darwen, East Lancashire, and Allerdale and Copeland District, West Cumbria.

Another recent example includes the GYS 2019 project 'Letters from Lesvos', where CVCL student peer researchers contributed to addressing the six United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) priorities for reform. Many unaccompanied refugee children had undertaken perilous journeys across the sea and experienced significant trauma before their arrival at Lesvos. This experience impacted on the children's confidence and trust in humanity. The aim of the project was to co-create new knowledge with the children, thus supporting a positive change in the children's world view and development of both self-advocacy and peer-advocacy. To operationalise the project, the GYS team developed strategic partnerships with UNHCR, related NGOs, and the University of the Aegean, whose staff and students collaborated on a FIFA initiated football skills programme for refugees with Barcelona FC. The real impacts, however, transcend the formal structures of policy and practice. The children benefited from the project in several ways, but the greatest change was in their world view through the knowledge that the University of Central Lancashire staff and students cared enough to share their skills. In 2019, one child said:

“Despite the war, we can see that good people exist in the world”; “You make us very happy.”. [I]

Sport as a mechanism for international dialogue

Since 2014, over 100 University of Central Lancashire student volunteers collaborated with Sport in Action, a Zambian sports non-governmental organization. This collaboration enabled peer leaders from Sport in Action to deliver life skills programmes in Kabwe and Lusaka, directly impacting the lives of over 3,500 young people [J]. Local schools have reported further impacts in terms of increased classroom attendance and educational engagement post intervention. Students with specialist skills in Media and Film production, Journalism and Publishing have helped to enhance the profile and consequently the impact of Sport in Action, nationally and internationally, by producing high quality marketing literature, YouTube trailers, video documentaries and publications. Furthermore, using a student mentoring approach [1, 5] Sports

Coaching and Sport Studies students co-delivered the development and delivery of community activity and health programmes in Kabwe and Lusaka addressing HIV and Hepatitis B, impacting on the lives of approximately 1,000 individuals. Student volunteer Physiotherapists have maintained the development and delivery of short first aid and basic injury prevention workshops in partnership with Sport in Action Peer Leaders in Kabwe and worked on placements at the IOC Regional Development Centre in Lusaka. The impact of this has been the co creation of new health education programmes. Latterly, Sexual Health students have been based in Lusaka supporting the delivery of key sexual health education messages to young people and supporting the education of teachers and sports leaders. This activity impacted on 5000 individuals and its success has been demonstrated through increased dissemination of key messages. Sport in Action are now working with the University of Central Lancashire volunteer students on programmes on Gender Equality and combating violence towards young women.

The Centre Sauvegarde de l'Enfance d'Agadir is a Boys' and Girls' orphanage in Morocco whose purpose is to care for and support young people who have no family or have either been abandoned by their parents or referred to the Centre by the juridical court system. The Centre positively impacts the lives of hundreds of children throughout Agadir, currently caring for 96 boys and 80 girls. Utilizing peer mentoring methodologies [1, 5] student volunteer peer mentors and CVCL staff work with approximately 180 young people per year and support over 25 staff members to help deliver key life-skills and health messages [K]. Stakeholders such as the CVCL play a crucial role in supporting organizational development and sustainability. The Centre has worked closely with CVCL to create a strong partnership and to use sport as a tool to engage with the children. Since 2014, CVCL has added significant capacity to the Centre in terms of knowledge exchange and in the development of a sustainable structure.

Nawal Rais, the CEO, has stated that children displaying behavioural issues and not attending has significantly reduced from 50% to 13%, with many now regularly attending school and demonstrating a positive attitude to learning.

Further change in terms of increased extra-curricular interventions including football and basketball have also been reported on national TV in Morocco. Finally, to ensure a lasting and sustained impact the University of Central Lancashire have supported the Centre in making physical activity a core element of the curriculum.

5. Sources to corroborate the impact (indicative maximum of 10 references)

- A. Sochi 2014 Consultancy Contract
- B. IOC Report Vol:2, 2014
- C. <https://www.olympic.org/news/intangible-legacies-of-sochi-2014-already-being-felt>
- D. https://www.uclan.ac.uk/news/uclan_experts_aid_russian_world_cup_preparations.php
- E. <https://www.bbc.co.uk/sport/football/44787166>
- F. Report on the Impacts of the 2nd Youth Leadership Training Workshop at UoG
- G. GYS Oman Feedback
 - G.1. Day 1 Feedback
 - G.2. Day 2 Feedback
- H. Gypsy Roma Traveller Collaboration email 4/19
- I. Times Higher Awards 2020, Shortlist.
- J. Sport in Action Annual Report (2018) Zambia
- K. Football as an International Dialogue: Centre Sauvegarde de l'enfance d'Agadir