

STREET KIDS AMONG THE URBAN POOR: COMMUNITIES IN THE CITY OF GWERU IN ZIMBABWE

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Context

The impact of poverty and HIV/AIDS has increased the number of orphans significantly and consequently the number of school drop outs in Zimbabwe. In response to this disaster the Sports and Recreation Commission initiated the YES (Youth Education & Sport) programme in the city of Gweru. The main objective of the project were to:

- reunite street kids with their families/guardians
- place the street kids back in school, and to
- keep street kids off the streets.

Partners

All Government Departments, NGOs, local authority structure and other stakeholders work in the programme as stakeholders.

YES

The approach in starting the development through sport programme was a results-based multi-sectoral partnership approach. The activities included:

- Raising awareness on their situation and on values and importance of sport and physical activity through a participatory partnership approach
- Forming soccer teams among the targeted youth
- Training identified youth team leaders and youth coaches through peer education and adult facilitation
- Training parents, guardians in parent to child communication, and
- Organizing a league managed by the assistance of the local football association structure.

The programme focused on life skills training, awareness raising on HIV/AIDS, football league and community/development projects.

Results

- 5% of the street kids have been reunited with their families
- 15% have been placed in schools to continue education programmes
- 50% have now been off the streets, and
- 5% are carrying out income generation projects.

Discussion

The YES programme has adopted the multi-sectoral approach where NGOs, churches and major stakeholders involved in youth related issues. This has assisted in utilizing synergies for the successful implementation of this ongoing programme. Programming in the multi-sectoral approach is results based.

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discrimination; on the other hand, the *Sport Strategy* does not concern such basic questions as , e.g., multi-culturalism. The Sport Strategy is characterized by sport competitions, while the EU deals with social aspects and effects of sport.

Implications

From the above, some might think that the EU's regulation and the Hungarian *Sport Strategy* do not have much in common, but this is definitely not true. The short *Strategy* has been concluded in accordance with the EU's regulations, and for good functioning it has to be harmonised with the Union's special policies. Otherwise, any regulation becomes disputable at the European Court of Justice and no European financial funds can be used for programmes, any of which would mean the failure of the *Strategy*.

This work is quite new and special for Hungarian politicians and legal actors. In addition the Harmonising laws present many difficulties even for old member states, as can be proved by several cases; most striking was the 'Gentleman's agreement' concluded in 1990 between the Commission of the EU and UEFA. Later the European Court of Justice declared the Commission had no authority to conclude an agreement that contradicts a major treaty.

Politicians make political decisions. The Hungarian *Sport Strategy* is based on a so-called 'White Paper' made by sport specialists before the 2002 elections with reference to the government party's electoral program. It was elaborated by GYISM (Ministry for Children, Youth and Sport that was wound up meanwhile, so now the competent authority is the NSH, National Sport Office), so it is a political document. Such a strong political motivation also means that the draft will be supported or rejected for not only professional but also political reasons.

If my research promotes awareness that a member state's inner political decisions cannot be inconsistent with EU treaties, I already feel like having accomplished a socially useful study.

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