

FINAL REPORT

EXTERNAL EVALUATION OF THE PROJECT: "SPORT IN THE
COMMUNITY: TOWARDS IMPROVING QUALITY OF LIFE"

February 2006-February 2008

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March 2008

EXTERNAL EVALUATION OF THE PROJECT, "SPORT IN THE COMMUNITY: TOWARDS IMPROVING QUALITY OF LIFE". (2006 - 2008)

Introduction

This report includes the results of the external evaluation of the joint project: "Sport in the community: towards improving quality of life", developed in cooperation with Swiss NGO Zunzún, the Cuban Centre for Psychological and Sociological Research (CIPS), and the Governing Council of Administration and Municipal Education Board of Plaza de la Revolución, a Municipal area in Havana City, Cuba.

This evaluation took place after two years of project implementation. This assessment analyses the lessons learned (including both strengths and shortcomings) of the processes implemented in order to reach the set objectives and to obtain the expected outcomes. It rates the impact that occurred among the beneficiaries of the project and identifies educational and didactical changes that took place among the sport coaches with the implementation of the project.

Furthermore, this report also includes an account of the unexpected outcomes that are associated with the project. Finally, this report provides recommendations with the view of improving future work on both conceptual and strategic levels in the project.

The evaluation used an interpretative approach to obtaining and analysing data. The participatory method involved the team workers and most of the stakeholders who were directly associated with the project.

The evaluation process involved the following stakeholders:

- 38 boys and girls selected from fourth to sixth elementary school classes, representing 38.7% out of 93 children classified as being 'at risk' or subject to social disadvantages, who constitute the priority beneficiaries of the project. Gender and level of education (class or grade) were the main selection criteria used to select the participants in the evaluation. A more in-depth study was made with 14 children.
- Almost all the direct beneficiaries of the project were observed in the natural setting of the project.
- 11 of the 12 sport coaches taking part in the project (91.6%), currently working in the school where the project took place, were included in the case study. In addition, as part of the sample, 10 relatives of the children were involved in the evaluation – three members of the community group management and six members of the research team from CIPS.

Tools and techniques:

The applied techniques allowed us to obtain, analyse, articulate and cross-check information during the evaluation process. The techniques applied included:

- **The Impacts Tree:** This technique was used to evaluate the coaches' perception regarding the results of the project and its impact on the beneficiaries, as well as on themselves. It was also used to obtain information on unforeseen changes within the family and community that the project was seen to have stimulated. Suggestions on the ways in which to continue the project in the future were obtained through this method. The coaches were given a drawn image of a tree and were asked to write the difficulties and shortcomings of the project at the 'root' of the tree. Similarly, they were asked to list the changes that they had observed in themselves in the 'trunk'; changes and impacts on children in the 'fruits' on the right side of the tree, and other changes and results, which could have impacted the family or community in the 'fruits' on the left.
- **Timeline:** A timeline was prepared with the purpose of gaining clarity on the processes within the project and the ways in which it carried out. The CIPS team was asked to try to indicate, on a timeline, the various stages of the project, which marked the transition from one stage to another and the most significant events that occurred at each stage.
- **The Photo History:** This method was used to isolate the factors that might: (i) encourage or hinder the educational outputs of the project; (ii) the beneficiaries' satisfaction or dissatisfaction with the project, and (iii) the children's opinions of the activities in which they took part. Three subgroups were formed. A different photo was given to each subgroup. The photos showed the participants in a sports training field in the community. The children were then asked to develop up a story, taking the picture as the present and imagining the past and the future, based on the information obtained from the photo.
- **Interview:** Interviews were conducted with individuals and groups of parents and coaches, with the objective of obtaining meaningful information about: moral and social behaviours, provision of free time, in addition to uncovering the achievements and weaknesses of the project.
- **Focus Group:** Focus groups discussions were used to obtain information from parents, community leaders and coaches regarding quality of life and use of free time; behavioural changes in the children since the implementation of the project, in addition to gaining a general understanding of the achievements, challenges and the perceptions of the fundamental impacts of the project. It was also used to uncover the perceptions of the project participants regarding: quality of life, healthy behaviours and behaviours with social and moral orientation.

- **'Fill in the Blank' Test:** This technique included sentences with content inducers to obtain information about motivations, personal achievements, satisfaction, dissatisfaction and difficulties related to the project. The technique was applied to direct beneficiaries of the project and to the CIPS team researcher.
- **The 'Five Wishes' Technique (Make a wish):** This tool was (developed by the Cuban psychologist Diego González Serra) was used to ascertain the motivations of the children to participate in the project. The five wishes were presented in order of preference.
- **Survey:** Surveys with open and closed questions were used to obtain the coaches' and participants' views on the categories of analysis proposed in this evaluation. The children were given some guidance by the evaluators.
- **Observation:** According to the purposes of the evaluation, direct observations were carried out during sports practice in the school and in the community. Pictures were taken and the evaluating team participated in a methodological workshop for coaches.

The objectives set for the evaluation, as well as the definition of categories and analysis units (see Appendix 1), guided the evaluation process:

- Joint definition of the objectives and the evaluation process with the team of researchers from CIPS and with Zunzún.
- Review and analysis of the documentation of the project: design, coaches' manual, instructions for games, video and the report of the partial internal evaluation, among others.
- Designing the project's evaluation, consultations with stakeholders to determine selection criteria and to make final adjustments.
- Defining investigative techniques and timetable for data collection, analysis, and processing.
- Preparation of a draft report, as the starting point for discussions with the project team.
- Exchange with the partners on the preliminary report to make further necessary changes.
- Delivery of the final evaluation report

The Context of the Project

The project was implemented in the Municipality of Plaza de la Revolución, Havana City, in the community of La Timba. La Timba is where the elementary school "Gustavo Pozo" is located. The project took place in the community in which the direct beneficiaries of the project live. La Timba was originally, a poor and marginalised community, which was subsequently favoured by the Cuban revolutionary process, as was the case with many poor communities in the rest of the country. Despite these changes, various psychosocial problems such as family and social violence, alcoholism and few options for recreational activities, among others¹ persist in the community.

The project has as its major focus, the use of sports activities as a tool to reach education objectives. The sports activities are specially designed to encourage positive changes among the participants (in school and coaches). The project started by identifying behaviours that affect the normal development of children 'at risk' or subject to social disadvantages – these children were the primary beneficiaries of the project – and by assessing the potential of sport to benefit the children as well as the community at large.

Therefore, the primary purpose of the project is to use sport activities to address the problems that children have who are 'at risk' and subject to social disadvantages in the Gustavo Pozo School located in the community of La Timba.

This objective was further defined and was finally phrased as follows:

To encourage positive change in moral and social orientation behaviours, healthy behaviours, use of free time and quality of life among children aged between 8 to 12 years of age, by their involvement in team sports.

Project implementation

The key interventions developed since the project's inception are:

1. Initial Diagnosis
2. Design and implementation of the educational programme through collective sports.
3. Monitoring and evaluation.

At the same time, the overall strategy of psychosocial intervention on the project included the following stages:

¹ Source: Report of preliminary results of the Transformation Program centre on the Collective Sport Practices for children. CIPS. February 2007. pp. 6

1. The process of insertion of the programme in school, the community and within the group of sport coaches.
2. Implementation of the educational programme among the project beneficiaries.
3. Implementation of the communication strategy during project implementation and raising awareness about the project's progress and outcomes.

There was equally an overall integration process of the various actors and groups involved in the project that involved:

1. A process of identifying and approaching the involvement and commitment of major stakeholders.
2. Organising the intervention – establishing the general framework of the intervention process, defining participants' roles, besides the functions and tasks to be accomplished by everyone.

The education programme was implemented among a target group of 110 boys and girls as direct beneficiaries of the project between 8 and 12 years of age of whom 93 are classified as 'at risk' (74) or exhibit deviant behaviour (19). The remaining 17 were diagnosed as not belonging to either group (i.e. are not at risk of or have social problems).

These children were grouped into six collective sports teams:

- 1) male and female volleyball;
- 2) male and female basketball;
- 3) male and female baseball;
- 4) male football;
- 5) gymnastics (female only); and
- 6) aerobics (female only).

14 coaches were distributed across the aforementioned sports. The training sessions were conducted at the school twice a week and in the community on Sundays, once a month.

Training for coaches in the form of workshops were developed to implement the education programme: theoretical, methodological, and practical approaches were used to train the coaches.

The theoretical workshops were given by experts and guest scholars, and included topics on the challenges the project sought to address, such as: alcoholism, violence, use of leisure time. Training was provided in the form of

workshops (theoretical inputs & discussion); also, support materials were provided.

The CIPS research team facilitated learning in the group, helped to find potential solutions to the problems they came across, and designed the methodological workshops for the coaches. They incorporated techniques and resources of collective sports and games to achieve the objectives of the project with children involved in the sports teams. The theoretical and methodological workshops were held on a monthly basis.

There were two intensive courses for coaches. The objectives for these courses were: (i) to improve understanding of work principles for sports coaches and their specific teams consisting of children, and (ii) to increase their 'hands-on' experience of various sports games that impart social values. Professor Christoph Schwager of the Swiss Academy for Development provided this course.

Two important manuals were developed as outcomes of the courses:

- 1) "The Coaches Manual", which summarises the major theoretical content offered by the teacher, as revised and amended by the coaches and the CIPS research team;
- 2) "Techniques of the Game" which is a compendium of 25 sports games, taught during the course and practiced by the coaches in the field.

The communication strategy included the following actions:

- A. Design Contest for the project logo.
- B. Design of the project logo.
- C. Manual of Project identity.
- D. Creation of the project website on CIPS portal. (<http://www.cips.cu>)
- E. Developing project promotional material: stickers, banners, paintings, posters, diplomas, awards, invitations.
- F. Developing didactical material for coaches: Manual for coaches and Game Technical procedures (Techniques of the game).
- G. Video recording the project results: creation of a promotional video.

ASSESSMENT RESULTS PRESENTATION

The results of the evaluation that follow will be presented according to the analytical categories identified. The objectives of the evaluation are to determine:

- 1) The impacts of the project on direct beneficiaries: a) changes in behaviour in relation to moral and social orientation; b) changes towards healthy behaviour: drugs, alcohol and tobacco rejection; c) sport and the use of free time, and d) quality of life;
- 2) The academic and sport behaviour changes in school;
- 3) Other unexpected changes brought about by the project.
- 4) Recommendations for future development of the project.

1.) THE INFLUENCE OF THE PROJECT ON DIRECT BENEFICIARIES

a) Moral and social orientation behaviours

The family, teachers, and coaches interviewed recognised that conflict and violent behaviour were typical of children inside and outside school. In light of this, it was found that the coaches in the applied survey reported that they joined the project because:

- "I was asked to help ensure that children have greater participation [in team sports] in their spare time and thus avoid the use of that time on violent behaviour and substance abuse, etc.. "

- "I got involved because the students of the school and community were in need of recreational and healthy physical activities far from the harmful habits in which they are regularly involved in the community, and to try to decrease aggression among the children."

The project leader at the school ("*profe* Tello", as she is known by the students), said that the people working with the children "were selected coaches who not only knew about sport, but knew how to work with children from neighbourhoods like these".

It is was found that to achieve the values that embody a truly ethical approach, the appropriate people needed to be involved in the educational processes, which would facilitate communicating these values.

During the evaluation, teachers and coaches stated in interviews that at the beginning they had to cope with difficult situations such as, "misbehaviour", "brawls among children." A teacher recalled: "sometimes, conflicts and discussions stopped the development of the teaching process."

Coaches and teachers claimed that the project led to positive changes in the moral and social behaviour of children in comparison with the past. "There is

more motivation toward sports"; "since the beginning of the project both the school and the community see the positive development among the beneficiaries. They also produce better results in their studies", "I think that the fundamental result of the project is that children are more united, more honest and have learned to work as a team", "are better prepared to fight against alcohol, tobacco and drugs, they get along much better in the group", "they embraced the rules set by the group, which were developed in sport training inside and outside the school."

Coaches and teachers, using the "tree impacts" technique, confirmed positive changes in boys and girls in moral and social behaviour from the initial stages of the project:

Table 1: Positive changes in boys and girls in moral and social behaviour

POSITIVE CHANGES	Freq.	%
They are better people.	1	5, 8
They are more concerned with their studies, they like school more since enrolling in the project.	3	17, 6
Love for sport activities.	1	5, 8
Better educated for life	1	5, 8
Violent behaviour among children has decreased and there is an increase in dialogue among them.	3	17, 6
They have learned to value themselves more.	1	5, 8
They have learned to work as a team. They are more united. They feel like a family.	4	23, 5
They are more motivated and more affectionate towards each other.	3	17, 6

Total answers: 17

Coaches perceived the reduction in violent behaviour, the increased motivation and concern for academic pursuits, as well as affection in interpersonal relationships.

In the group interview conducted with parents and community leaders, it was found that behavioural changes had occurred among the participants, such as:

- "Improving discipline in school and at home,"
- "Greater interest in school, improved learning outcomes"
- "Cordial relations among children"
- "Aggressiveness has decreased with their involvement in sport"
- "Sport has helped their physical and psychological development."
- "They have improved their behaviour at home, and are more organised. They begin to be tidier and more organised. Sport has positively transformed them. "

According to the parents, the fundamental behavioural changes of the children perceived to be resulting from the project have been in: their discipline, motivation at school and for their studies, improving interpersonal relationships and decreased aggressiveness both at school and at home.

In the survey applied to the children, the related results in this category were:

Table 2: Children learning appropriate moral and social behaviour

LEARNINGS	Freq.	%
Friendship with my peers and being a better friend. Better understanding towards my peers. Working together as one big family.	6	42,8
Playing games and having fun with all the school children.	3	21,4
Like each other.	1	7,1
Improve discipline. Behave well with the teachers.	2	14,2
Be a better student.	1	7,1
Sincerity	1	7,1
Total answers = 14		

As shown in the table, children perceive that they have gained new knowledge associated with the project, changes in interpersonal relationships and in the group, followed by the opportunity to play, have fun and become more disciplined at school.

The participants in one of the subgroups of the “photo history” technique, emphasised that they like the project because “we learn to behave like a family that is always united” which confirms the value that the children give to the new human relations which have emerged as a result of the project.

In the focus group the children highlighted "the value of honesty and respect", "friendship", "sharing with others", "be united", "tolerating others", “learning to deal with social indiscipline, inside and outside the school”, "not to discriminate against others for their shortcomings, taking into account their values, their hearts" and "to be aware about drugs" among the knowledge they gained from the project.

Table 3: The project results identified by the children.

KEY RESULTS	Freq.	%
Being united forever as a family	4	28,4
Friendship, companionship	4	28,4
Be a better person.	3	21,4
Being more respectful.	2	14,2

Behave well with teachers.	1	7,1
Total answers = 14		

As these tables show, the results of the project are mainly associated with changes in interpersonal relationships and group relationship (unity, friendship, companionship).

Table 4: What the children would not like to be reminded of in their participation in the project.

Events that the children would not like to remember	Freq.	%
When children fought each other in the project. The fight between Rachel and Eimi.	7	50
My fights with my peers during the baseball game.	2	14,2
The day when I fought with my peers during the project.	2	14,2
The day when the teacher scolded me.	3	21,4
Total 14		

It is interesting that most of the children do not wish to recall previous situations involving fights among some of the children in the school and when the teacher reprimanded them. This was reiterated in the focal group conducted with children who say that among the situations they do not like are those when the children: "fight", "push each other", "trip each other up", "are undisciplined", "hurt each other's feelings", "have no respect for values and not paying attention to the teachers." It is believed that although these views should not be interpreted to mean that these behaviours have been removed entirely, it does show a major change in the way the children understand and perceive this kind of behaviour – behaviour which was previously considered almost 'natural'.

The CIPS research team believes that the key outcomes of the project are the changes in behaviour. In their opinion, these changes have been encouraged by the team sports and games, the creative possibilities, the variety of activities and the shared use of sports equipment, among other factors.

The experts say they are impressed with: "the children's capacity to change in such a short time", "the transformation in their lifestyle", "the acceptance of the project in the school" and "the significant improvements in some of the coaches educational and sport techniques while executing the project".

Another notable result in this category is referred to as "motivational", which were obtained through the "five wishes" technique.

Table 5: The FIVE WISHES TECHNIQUE motivational aspects, according to category.

CATEGORIES	Answers Frequencies	%
AC (activity)	27	23.07%
DV (diversion)	25	21.36%
ES (studies)	18	15.38%
OP (job-profession)	14	11.96%
PS (possession)	12	10.25%
DH (duty-community spirit)	6	5.12%
RL (self-fulfilment)	4	3.41%
C2 (familiar contact)	3	2.56%
F1 (family duty first)	2	1.70%
CM (eat)	2	1.70%
VJ (travel)	1	0.85%
PR (presence)	1	0.85%
SL (health)	1	0.85%
AF (affect)	1	0.85%
Total answers	117	.

It is significant, that among the social categories considered individually meaningful, the wishes concerning current studies, the future (job-profession), and duty or community spirit, appear at the top of the list, which demonstrates the influence of the project in producing such “motivational” aspects, for example:

"I wish to be baseball player", "be a good volleyball player"
 "I want *industriales* to win the World Series"
 "I want to be a good athlete"
 "I wish to be on the Cuba’s basketball team"
 "I want to improve all my grades in all the disciplines in the school," "I will study hard"

Among the individual categories: activity, diversion and possession, the aspects expressed as “wishes” are linked primarily to the project as follows:

"I want to play baseball"
 "I wish to have sport every day"
 "I want to play with my friends"
 "Seeing friends during the project"
 "Have more resources to provide sports equipment in the community"
 "Participate in the project"

The results of the children's focal group stress the importance of the categories: activity, diversion and study for children.

b) Conditional healthy behaviours: refusing alcohol, drugs and tobacco

Children have acquired information about the harmful effects of alcohol, drugs and tobacco use, and the health consequences associated with this. Through the focal group with children, the effects of providing this information was examined, by presenting a situation in which they would have to try to convince or to advise heavy drinkers, drug addicts or smokers about the negative effects of these substances. In this regard, they expressed:

To those who are heavy drinkers:

- That they hurt only themselves and others around them who want to help.
- That can get sick and die.
- That they are suffering for nothing, without reason.

To those who smoke:

- That they will damage their lungs
- That smoking is detrimental to his/her family and children.
- That those close to them become passive smokers
- That smoking affects the heart.

To a person who consumes drugs:

- Drugs damage the health and may lead to death.
- An individual who uses drugs may have to be hospitalised because of the use of harmful substances.
- It leads to other problems such as fights with others.
- An individual who uses drugs stops being healthy. He/she is not free anymore because of the dependency on drugs. He/she cannot go out and do whatever he/she wants.

It is considered a major change that the children were aware of the physical and psychological harm caused by substance abuse and the consequences for their family life and their social relationships.

One unexpected result highlighted by these children is the increasing number of parents; father (2), mother (2), grandparents (2) who have stopped smoking or taking alcohol due to the intervention of the children in their homes. Similarly, information obtained from the coaches who used the "tree impact" technique identified that the project contributed to: "achieving the elimination of unhealthy habits at home and also that some teachers have stopped smoking."

In addition, interviews with family and community members highlighted, "educating the next generation about healthy habits and to raise awareness about substance abuse as problems at the family level and in the community"

as among the significant aspects of the project.

Analysis of the results in this category, (in which evidence beyond the knowledge acquired of the harmful effects of substance abuse) show that there have been indications of further behaviour change in some cases, leading to more direct action against smoking, alcohol and drug use.

c) Sport and the use of free time

During the evaluation, it was interesting to compare the preferences of the children to the activities children actually do in their spare time.

Table 6: Preferences of and activities completed during free time

PREFERENCES OF FREE TIME ACTIVITIES	Freq.	%	ACTIVITIES COMPLETED DURING FREE TIME	Freq.	%
Play	14	20	Play	9	12,7
Sport activities	19	27,1	Sport activities	8	11,4
Study	11	15,7	Study	12	17,1
Go to the beach	2	2,8	Go to the beach	5	7,1
Watch TV	2	2,8	Watch TV	9	12,7
Go for a walk	6	8,5	Go for a walk	8	11,4
Read	1	1,4	Read	6	8,5
Listen to music	6	8,5	Listen to music	7	10
Ride bicycle	6	8,5	Ride bicycle	4	5,7
Helping out at home	3	4,2	Helping out at home	3	4,2
Total answers	70		Total answers	70	

It is apparent that playing and practicing sport, are not only preferred activities but they are also currently the ways in which the children actually spend their free time as well, which should logically imply satisfaction with the current situation. Studying appears among the activities they most prefer and of how they spend their free time. This corresponds to the meaning ascribed to free time by the children in the survey:

Table 7: The meaning of free time.

THE MEANING OF FREE TIME	FREQUENCY	%
Resting	2	8,3
Playing	9	37,5
Recreation	3	12,5
Go for a walk	-	-
Studying	10	41,6
Other	-	
Total answers	24	

This result relates to the social significance of the study in Cuba and with increased motivation toward school and toward studying, largely due to the project. The focus group conducted with parents of the beneficiaries confirmed the following:

"After the start of the project there have been changes in the children, they feel more motivated to study, and to spend more time studying".

"My son rejected school before the project started and after the project he stopped asking me to pick him up after lunch, he began to enjoy the school"

"My youngest son didn't want to come to school, but through his brother he learned about the project and got motivated to participate in sports and overcame his dislike for school".

When the children were asked the reason for which they became involved in the project, they said:

Table 8: Reasons for participating in the project

REASONS	Frequency	%
I like to be part of the games.	3	21,4
I like friendship, my peers; we love each other like a family.	4	28,5
It is a lot of fun, pleasant; to get to play a little bit more.	3	21,4
It is healthy.	1	7,1
The discipline, for not fighting each other	2	14,2
I would like to learn even more	1	7,1

Total answers: 14

There is a correlation between the reasons children gave to get involved in the project, their preferred activities and those that they perform in their spare time.

The table above shows that the participants also refer to other influences that sports activities have on them, such as: the formation or consolidation of friendship and emotional relationships, diversion and certain standards and rules for being in the group.

The drawing technique revealed that *all* of the children are satisfied with the sports in which they are involved. According to the content reflected in the drawings, it was observed that most males show affinity for baseball (the national sport) and soccer. Girls prefer gymnastics and aerobics.

In addition, children expressed in the interviews that they have a lot of fun with the games the coaches propose to them. One of the most preferred games is the "pole"².

² Note from the evaluators: both the children and the trainers greatly enjoy this game. Everyone taking part on the game gets together in a circle, each one with one stick (pole) held at one end. Following the

The benefits of collective sports for the children were revealed in the interviews with the coaches. These included: increased communication, greater self respect and respect towards others, and adjusting one's own behaviour according to the standards and requirements of the game. In this regard, a trainer said, "skill development and creativity have served to bring together those children that previously didn't get along."³ Community leaders stated:

"The sports activities in the area have given other children and those from the community a chance to participate. People are now getting along better. Unity was needed here among neighbours and families. Families that did not get along well previously have now improved their relationships. Children who quarrelled among themselves play together now..." These views were expressed by various community stakeholders including: member of the municipal Assembly, leaders of the CDR and FMC⁴, and the Asociación de Combatientes, reflecting the wider achievements of the project.

The focus group discussion with relatives of the beneficiaries reported:

"Sport activities support the psychological development of the children. The activities discipline and protect them."

"The most aggressive children have become less aggressive through participating in sport."

"They put their free time into something useful, which prepares and trains them."

"My daughter who is hyperactive arrives at home tired, but that fatigue is a product of a useful thing. It has been very positive"

"The project has been positive for all the children involved because they are entertained, they are not hanging around on the street; and their energy is put into something good. I have an epileptic child and he is given appropriate attention in the project according to his illness".

d) Quality of life

'Quality of life' was analysed in this category through the subjective perceptions of the children of their life. The following sub-components have been studied: general well-being, personal fulfilment and communication, among others.

Through the focus group discussions, children expressed that among the elements producing satisfaction, well-being and happiness are: playing, practicing sports, sustaining good marks on the tests and passing school exams,

sound of a clap, everybody has to let go of their stick and quickly get hold of the stick (pole) of the person on his/her left.

³ Statement made by one of the school trainers.

⁴ CDR: Committees for the Defence of the Revolution; FMC: Cuban Women's Federation.

having a bicycle, going to parties, being with his/her parents, 'nothing bad happening to the country', participating in games, going out with friends, reading, dancing, sleeping, joking, going to the zoo, going to the beach, going swimming at the swimming pool.

In addition, they recognised that they are satisfied with the friendships they now have formed with classmates and with members of their sports team with whom they practice. They reported that being unable to practice due to bad weather was disappointing. The results from the drawing technique confirmed that the various sports activities in which children are involved produced happiness and a greater sense of well-being.

Another result in this category was obtained through the 'fill in the blank' technique, in which the children commented that the most influential aspects of the project were:

Table 9: The most influential aspects of the project on the children

THE MOST INFLUENTIAL ASPECTS	FREQUENCY	%
Playing baseball	4	28,5
Gymnastics	3	21,4
Friendship	1	7,1
Being a better person	2	14,2
To have uniforms and sport equipment	4	28,5

Total answers 14

This result confirms the importance of interpersonal relationships on the quality of life and the added value of the material benefits that the project brings.

In the focus group, the children reported what they considered to be key sources of dissatisfaction in their quality of life: "prohibitions on playing or going to parties", "punishments", " nicknames ", "making fun of others, " "death", "disease", "when someone is hospitalized," "not passing a test", "war", "that people do not get along well ", "differences between people".

The children provided interesting answers when using the Inquiry technique; they recalled the more pleasant aspects about their participation in the project.

Table 10: The more pleasant aspects the children recall about their participation on the project.

MORE PLEASANT ASPECTS THE CHILDREN REMEMBER	Freq.	%
When I am with my coach	2	14,2
When we compete with another school because we work together	2	14,2

The sport competition	3	21,4
Some Sundays in the community when sport activities take place	2	14,2
To play with the Swiss teacher during the week ⁵	4	28,5
The day when, on vacation, we went to play with Nik ⁶	1	7,1
Total answers 14		

It was noted that the participants were eager to compete with other institutions as part of sports activities, which has an impact on personal relations and in the sense of teamwork. It reaffirmed that sports and play activities are sources of subjective well-being for these children and that have a positive effect on them.

On the other hand, information obtained using the inquiry technique among coaches showed that more than 50% of them believed that among the skills that the children acquire through sport are: "learning new sports", "respect for rules", "cooperation, teamwork", "respect for others", "improved self-knowledge", "preparing for the future with a better quality of life and physical development."

Parents in the focus group expressed the following views concerning project impact on a better quality of life among the participants:

- "The project had an impact on greater motivation of children towards school"
- "The project provides useful and healthy ways of using free time"
- "It helps to orient them professionally and to discover which participants have the chance of becoming good athletes in the future"
- "It has fostered better relations among children"

The perception of the motives and reasons of satisfaction and dissatisfaction can be categorised according to significant areas or dimensions for quality of life, including: school, recreation, family, interpersonal relationships, relations between members of the group and friendly relationships; corresponding to psychological development in these age groups.

The project is considered to have been an important source of satisfaction for children, for families and for the school.

⁵ The children refer here to Christoph Schwager, Swiss trainer from the Swiss Academy for Development who, through two intensive courses prepared the teachers and trainers for the project, in July 2006 and 2007.

⁶ Children are referring to Dr. Niklaus Eggenberger-Argote, project manager of the Swiss NGO Zunzún.

2. CHANGES IN THE SPORT AND EDUCATIONAL PRACTICES IN THE SCHOOL

The coaches feel satisfied with the project. The survey shows the fundamental learning they perceive:

Table 11: Fundamental learning perceived by the coaches.

LEARNINGS	Freq.	%
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To know new games like those Christoph taught us. 	1	9,0
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To better evaluate the children's problems, learn to listen to them and to help them with their problems. 	1	9,0
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To use games to help children with their problems. 	1	9,0
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To use different easy-to-do-games that require a minimum of infrastructure. 	1	9,0
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Having a deeper understanding of the psychological development of children, through the seminars given by the psychologists⁷. The courses that addressed issues of substance abuse were useful. 	2	18,1
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Learning to be patient with the participants and, towards those outside the project, and in other courses in which I have been involved. 	1	9,0
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> That through the physical activities positive changes can occur 	1	9,0
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Learn how to relate with other people in a group 	2	18,1
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To know how the children feel and think, what they worry about, their needs, and knowing how to help them 	1	9,0

Total answers = 11

The coaches feel better prepared and more confident about working with children and in finding ways to help them face their problems. They reported that they have improved communication with the children and that they are more confident with them.

The CIPS specialists confirm that the project provided the coaches with psycho-pedagogical knowledge that enabled them to improve the quality of their educational outputs and allowed them to use such learning beyond the project, because changes in the conception of sport practice have been promoted.

As part of the new knowledge and resources they now have, the coaches

⁷ They refer to the methodological and theoretical workshop already outlined in the introduction.

mention in the interviews: being a role model (no smoking, no violent reactions), preventing addictions, promoting correct social behaviours, stimulating teamwork, companionship, mutual encouragement, enjoying sport.

Through the tree impact technique, coaches highlighted the impacts the project had on them:

Table 12: The project influences on the coaches.

IMPACTS	Freq.	%
More knowledgeable and professional	2	18,1
The project has educated us while strengthening our values	1	9,0
To educate our own family	1	9,0
Prepare us for life	1	9,0
We are more conscious and familiar with the children's problems	2	18,1
To know new games and increase our own resources when working with children	1	9,0
We applied our knowledge in a practical way working with children under difficult circumstances, with significant social disadvantages, and see that we can help to integrate them back into wider society	2	18,1
We improve our own character since we feel capable of doing a good and educational job with children and their families	1	9,0
Total answers: 11		

Besides the impact on individual sense of achievement, we see the highest motivation associated with what the coaches accomplish while working with children. In an interview, the lead coach reported: "The coaches work on a voluntary basis. The project allowed them to work with more initiative and enthusiasm..."

In the same way, the project had created conditions for thinking about themselves and individual improvement in some of them. A teacher reported through a survey, that the project was very useful to her. She found that the information she received through the project concerning alcoholism was particularly constructive, since she had had various challenges with an alcoholic father when she was a child. This helped her to not only think about her own past circumstances but also, to understand and improve her work with the children in the project.

As part of the capacity-building aspect of the project that was targeted towards the coaches, they have produced the following manuals and proceedings for support of the educational practices:

1. The coaches Manual.
2. Games Manual.
3. Methodological programme to improve moral behaviours.

These materials are valuable for the 'training of trainers' (coaches), and could be highly useful when replicating or expanding this project in other schools in the country.

By observing the methodological workshop (in which 11 coaches and teachers participated), the creativity of the coaches was revealed in their way of addressing issues of moral and social behaviour and harmful habits. Among the resources used to trigger reflection were:

- a) Posters containing negative behaviours such as aggressiveness, taking into account the age of children (e.g. a man fighting a lion),
- b) Cards with dichotomous messages, one depicting the negative behaviour that should be altered and the other depicting the outcome of the desired behaviour (with the aim that the children relate to them)
- c) Miniature models representing a game, for example the zipper
- d) The insertion of national symbols while addressing moral and social values, among others. However, the need arose to use various educational resources such as drama and performance, role-playing activities and others enabling to integrate the cognitive, experiential and practical in this type of training.

In this workshop, participants showed their own resourcefulness in managing behaviours and individual situations to be addressed in the sport teams. Therefore, starting from the CIPS specialist questions, the coaches emphasised the need to know the psychological, physical and social situation of the participants. This allows for specific responses to each individual, realising that e.g. children prone to violent behaviour should avoid playing with younger children because they might inflict harm, and that an aggressive child should rather interact with a more passive peer for the latter to demonstrate self-control in an everyday setting. They also reported that the activities should be adapted to the age group. For example, younger children like certain games (e.g. the dice game), while the older children enjoy other games such as running, baseball, etc.

With regards to the necessary conditions for the project to take place, the coaches noted that sport equipment is essential. They also cited that an appropriate environment in which to carry out activities is crucial. In addition, they reported that baseline information or a diagnosis of the group of the participants with whom they are going to work must be provided in the initial stages of the project. They said that creativity and spontaneity among the children are skills that the teacher should be aware of from a diagnosis of the group and that they should be aware of these characteristics from the beginning.

Professor Tello referred to another unexpected result in an interview conducted during the evaluation process. She noted that after the implementation of the project, the school has obtained scientific results such as:

- Research Annual Award with the "Technical Game Manual"
- The project was selected among the top five scientific papers in Havana.
- The project coordinator and a trainer are pursuing a master's degree in Community Physical Activity at the University of Physical Culture, in Plaza de la Revolución, Havana and are developing two other research projects from the current project: "Sport Houses in the neighbourhood" and "Transforming games in preschool".

3. OTHER UNEXPECTED RESULTS OF THE PROJECT IN THE SURROUNDING AREA.

The project is seen to have had indirect impact on the area where the project was implemented. The information provided by parents, members of the manager group, CIPS specialists, coaches, teachers and the interviews and focus groups, was analysed together and produced the following findings:

Changes in the family:

- Better communication within the children's families
- The families supported the project and are more integrated into activities at the school.
- There is an increase in parental concern for children.
- The family is more aware and has learned about harmful behaviours

Changes in the relations between "home" and school:

- They see the coaches as family members.
- Parents trust the coaches; they discussed their own problems with them.
- Particularly motivated parents became more involved in activities at school.

Changes in school:

- Children are incorporated from preschool to 3rd grade to the Project⁸. The preschool teacher said that after including these children into the project, they are more motivated towards the school; they play traditional games in which children from "non-formal channels⁹" are involved too.
- The sports team's systematisation of collective sports in the school
- Methodology changes for the educational practices.
- Before moving into sports, educational games are conducted. For example, during the "the stick" game, children were asked to make a wish, and it allows the coach to consider them (the wishes) in their

⁸ The preschool teacher refers to the use of "playing games" to develop skills in reading and arithmetic very as positive. "With dices, they learn the numbers". "We have made cubes with letters and the children learn the vowels and some consonants."

⁹ Non-formal channels: children of preschool age, who do not go attend pre-school are taken care of by the community. The day the project was visited, these children were taking part in the project activities.

educational work. The coach acts as a member of the group and this has led to better communication and trust.

- Children opt for the sport they want, even those who do not meet the physical characteristics established for the practice of some of the sports, e.g. some girls who are over a certain weight limit to participate in gymnastics still take part in this activity. Respect for the children's views and preferences indicate the positive approach towards child participation in the project.
- Encourage positive behaviour during sports. At the end of the sport activity, the children with the most achievements during the training session are encouraged and collectively rewarded. Each sport group selects children with improved behaviour.
- It has improved the understanding of the teachers in the school.
- Awareness of the need, "for the teachers who are not taking part on the project to have the possibility to receive training through seminars and workshops", after learning that practices applied to sports can be used in classroom educational activities too.

Changes in the community

- Better communication between people in the community.
- The acceptance of the project within the community.
- Activities in the community with the participation of children who are not part of the project
- In visits to the community and interviews with parents, it was identified that such encounters strengthen ties between families in the community.
- Different actors involved in the community: delegates, leaders of the CDR, FMC and the Association of combatants.

Another unexpected result that was highly significant was the design by the CIPS team of the communication strategy to bring the project to the community, which included: a video, a poster of the project and the Identity Manual. These materials contributed to giving greater visibility to the project in the community and the continuous awareness about the project from people not directly linked to its activities, aspects of great importance for its sustainability. In this regard, family members and some members of the community group reported in an interview that: "The project was born in the community because children were playing in the street. Then, as the children began going to school and there was more space, the project expanded to the schools too, but this is primarily a community project."

4. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

CONCLUSIONS

Major achievements and impacts:

1) The major impacts of the project on the children, as direct beneficiaries are:

a) With respect to moral and social behaviour: improved communication and interpersonal relationships (unity and friendship), the reduction in violent behaviour, improving discipline (inside and outside of school), the motivation to study and sense of ownership towards school.

b) Children prefer and participate in activities during their spare time that are closely linked to the project. The activities are related to sport, playing games and recreation and are sources of overall well-being. The project has strengthened the children's self-confidence, promoted its potential and improved their quality of life.

c) Children have acquired information on the use of addictive substances and their implications for human health. They know the physical and psychological damage caused by addiction and its effects on family and social life.

2) With regard to the continuity of the project:

a) It is a great opportunity to have the support of the school and community leaders. Continuing the project also has the advice and support from the CIPS specialists and the well-trained team of teachers and coaches not only in sports aspects but educational elements as well. The team of teachers and coaches have increased their knowledge; they know more regarding the psychosocial aspects of working with children and thanks to the project, have more resources and expertise for handling their problems.

b) There is a training programme for coaches and teachers that have shown results in sports and teaching. To have access to this programme could allow for replication of the experience in other schools in the country.

3) There have been other positive unexpected results within the scope of the project, such as:

a) Sports activities in the neighbourhood have given the opportunity to other children and actors from the community to participate. Participation in the project has resulted in a number of psychosocial benefits, such as: the creation and strengthening of social relations, the improvement of communication among families and individuals in the community.

b) The systematic nature of the sport activities and the impact on school has motivated other children and teachers to join the project. The project has students from preschool to 3rd grade, who have increased their motivation to do well in school and who have learned new games. The teachers learned to use the games and sport activities to promote certain values, in teaching and educational practices in general.

Major difficulties and obstacles

a) The renovation of the sports facilities in the school has not been completed. Delays with the completion of the volleyball and baseball areas have also been a major setback. The baseball field where the sport is practiced does not meet the needs of the participants as the area is too small and the ground is uneven.

b) There are bureaucratic obstacles that complicate the acquisition of sports equipment.

c) The construction of the facilities, including a Department of Physical Education and a meeting room for teachers and coaches is still missing.

d) The sport-training hours are in the afternoon. As such, the provision of snacks and refreshments for the participants would be required.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendations from the evaluators:

1) It is recommended that the project be continued, considering that the set objectives have largely been met. Positive impacts on the school and the community, direct and indirect beneficiaries, have been significant.

2) Recommendations for future project development include:

a) Increase the participation of the children in deciding on the sport & games they would like to play. Motivate the children to put forth their own suggestions for games, taking into account the educational objectives of the project.

b) Increase the sport and play activities in the community. It is suggested that simple cooperative games are further incorporated into the project and that there is greater emphasis placed on including other traditional games.

c) Design a programme to incorporate more families of the children and direct beneficiaries of the project as well. Assess the possibility of training family members as sports and recreational promoters, providing

healthy alternatives to using free time by participating in collective sport and games activities.

- d) Encourage older children who were part of the project and are now in junior high school, to become facilitators of the sport and games activities as the project expands to the community.
- e) Keep generating creative ways to link sport with the prevention of harmful behaviour.
- f) Use more active methodological techniques in workshops, such as: drama, experiential learning modules, role-playing, educational activities
- g) Try to achieve a more organic process towards integrating the project into the educational objectives of the school.

Recommendations that were expressed by those involved in the evaluation process:

On improving the material conditions in which the project was developed:

- a) Construct and/or renovate the appropriate facilities and sport areas to ensure higher quality in sports practice and to provide greater security for those participating.
- b) It is suggested that a snack be provided before training in the afternoon, as the activities finish late.
- c) To complete the development of the Sport Houses in the community to connect adolescents and youth of the community to the project. The Sport Houses require basic sport equipment to avoid having to borrow equipment from the school. This would allow a further "getting closer" of the family, the community and the school.
- d) To finish the construction of the Physical Education Department and the meeting room for teachers and coaches.
- e) To complete the renovation of the Community Center for project activities.
- f) Motivate children who do not have much skills and motivation for sport through sports games on the computer, related to the games and sport they may practice later in the project.

Regarding the incorporation of new knowledge:

- a) Informing the coaches about other community projects in Cuba and the world.
- b) Providing Internet Access.
- c) Providing other courses to enable teachers to expand their pedagogical and educational knowledge of working with children.
- d) Taking the children to the Sport City in Havana, sport events and to introduce them to the outstanding athletes inside or outside the community to motivate them as well as increase their knowledge about sport in their context.

APPENDIX 1

OBJECTIVES

Objective 1. To analyse the contributions and shortcomings of the project regarding its set objectives and expected results.

Objective 2. To identify the project's impacts on direct beneficiaries:

On children:

1. Changes on moral and social behaviour
2. Changes on the use of free time
3. Changes on their quality of life
4. Changes regarding the substances abuse

On teachers:

5. Changes in educational practices of the sport coaches
6. To identify which unexpected results occurred as a result of the project

CATEGORIES AND UNITS OF ANALISYS

Categories	Units of analysis	
1. Project impact on direct beneficiaries		
a) Changes in moral and social behaviour	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "Motivational" aspects • Behaviours and perceptions of different areas of life linked to moral and social development. • Children's perception and self-perception of behavioural changes and the views of adults close to the children. • Rejection of negative behaviour (mainly violence) by both boys and girls 	
b) Changes in behaviours related to alcohol, drugs and tobacco.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development of attitudes and social skills compared with the harmful habits among people in the neighbourhood. • Retention of information about the reasons for which people start and maintain harmful habits. • Knowledge of the consequences that harmful habits produce • Identification of patterns of rejection of behavioural additions by children. • The potential and preference these children have for sport activities has been encouraged by the project. 	

<p>c) Changes in the use of free time.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Preference for sports activities during free time • Material, social and individual conditions for sports practices in spare time • Organisation of the sport activities in the Community 	
<p>d) Changes in the quality of life</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Subjective assessment that children performed themselves or evidence of their satisfaction with quality of life in general • Conditions created for sports practice in schools, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Organisation of regular practice of different activities ➤ Acquisition of sports equipment for the school ➤ Creating suitable spaces to practice sport in school ➤ Perception of sport as a tool for promoting the improvement of the quality of life ➤ Changes at the school and within the family about sport ➤ Improved interpersonal relationships (within the school and community) ➤ Recreation ➤ Performance of children in school (self-perception and perception of parents, teachers and coaches (increased attention in the classroom, interest in studies, etc) ➤ Implementation of regular practice of team sports 	
<p>2. Changes in sports and educational practices at school</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Types of interventions that occur before the identified behaviours • Ability to handle personal situations presented to them in the children's sports team • Content that encourages educational teaching • Educational content designed, worked out and incorporated as part of the new knowledge and resources that those coaches can take into account for their activities: 	

	<p>a. Preventing addiction to harmful substances</p> <p>b. Promotion of appropriate social behaviour: cooperation, discipline, teamwork, respect for others, solidarity, zero tolerance of cheating, and the use of free time.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Satisfaction expressed for sports • Satisfaction with their relationships with teachers • Establishment of friendly relationships with coaches and their peers • Implementation of sport activities • Improvement of the sports grounds • Sports training • Conducting workshops that involve children 	
<p>3. Other unplanned changes</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Changes in the family • Changes in school • Changes in the community 	
<p>4. Suggested next steps for improving the project</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Most important achievements and impacts • Difficulties and obstacles • Recommendations (from the evaluators and from the persons participating on the evaluation) 	