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Sport and Conflict: Is Football an Appropriate Tool to Utilise in Conflict Resolution, Reconciliation or Reconstruction?

Summary

This dissertation surveys the contribution of team-sports to peacebuilding, conceived here as conflict resolution, reconciliation and reconstruction. It advocates team-sports as a tool to address cultural violence, engender reconciliation and aid rehabilitation primarily by building social networks and educating participants. Team-sports are transcultural and can provide an apolitical environment in which Others can learn to trust, respect and work together under conditions of equality, as well as a framework for the delivery of other 'services'. Sport is no panacea for conflict, but can play a key part in a holistic peacebuilding strategy.

Contents

Abbreviations

BUSA	Bosco United Sports Association
BDYP	Don Bosco Youth Project
FA	The English Football Association (Being the oldest football association in the world, it is conventional to drop the 'E' for English)
FIFA	Fédération Internationale de Football Association
F4P	Football 4 Peace
INGO	International Non-Governmental Organisation
ISA	Israeli Sports Authority
IOC	International Olympic Committee
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
OFFS	Open Fun Football Schools
PSC	Protracted Social Conflict
PTSD	Post Traumatic Stress Disorder
UN	United Nations
UEFA	Union of European Football Associations
WVI	World Vision International
YTREP	Youth Training, Reintegration and Education for Peace (a WVI Programme)

<u>Preface</u>

This dissertation evaluates the role of team-sports in peacebuilding. Through case studies based on interviews with the organizers of football-based grassroots peacebuilding projects in Sierra Leone and Israel, as well as case studies in Liberia and Bosnia-Herzegovina based on secondary sources, the contribution to peacebuilding of both professional football and grassroots football projects will be considered against a theoretical framework based on John Paul Lederach's (2002. 2005) ideas about peacebuilding through building social networks and Johan Galtung's (1998) theories of peace, violence and the '3Rs' of Resolution, Reconciliation and Reconstruction. Though both authors see building relationships as key to pursuing peace, neither offer any practical ways in which this difficult task may be pursued; this dissertation will attempt to explain how team-sports can help build relationships and deliver other key facets of a holistic peacebuilding programme such as training/education by providing a framework structured around the same values as non-violent peacebuilding. The case studies will be critically examined and lessons will be suggested to those who wish to develop peacebuilding projects based on team-sports.

Whilst recognizing that governments, militias and armies continue to play the dominant role in determining conditions of war or peace, this dissertation argues that grassroots projects have an important part to play in a holistic peacebuilding strategy.

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Introduction

Traditional approaches to ending violent conflict have tended to focus on state-level solutions, at the exclusion of the very people on behalf of whom peace is supposedly being made. This ignores the power that populations have to make or break peace processes by their acceptance or rejection of the peace. Therefore, many contemporary conflict specialists, such as John Paul Lederach (2002. 2005), have advocated a holistic approach to peacebuilding, one which focuses attention from the grassroots right up to the highest levels of power, and at all points in between.

In Boutros Boutros-Ghali's 'Agenda for Peace' (1995) the UN defines peacebuilding as the long-term process that begins only when a violent conflict has slowed or stopped. This process is aimed at creating a positive transformation of society as well as preventing a reoccurrence of war. Many NGOs use a wider definition which includes activities that take place while violent conflict persists, such as early warning and response efforts, military intervention, civilian and military peacekeeping, humanitarian assistance and cease-fire agreements (Maiese, 2003). This dissertation investigates a variety of projects which utilise sport as a tool for peacebuilding, some of which take place while violent conflict persists, and therefore will use the wider definition of peacebuilding. Indeed, it not only seems proper to begin peacebuilding activities before violent conflict *ends*, but also before it *starts*, in an attempt to avert war. Paris (1997) criticises typical peacebuilding efforts for their short-term intervention and suggested they should last about ten years rather than 2-3 as is typical, however the truth is that peacebuilding is a process which has no end (Galtung, 1998), thus ways must be found to build peace *sustainably* once international funding has gone.

In 2001 Kofi Annan appointed Adolf Ogi to the new role of UN Special Adviser on Sport, Development and Peace. In 2003 the UN adopted a resolution designating 2005 as the International Year of Physical Education and Sport, and called upon member states to consider a role for sport and physical education when devising development programmes and policies (weblink UN1). The belief that sport can help nations to achieve the UN Millennium Goals, whilst also contributing to peace, has led the UN to join forces with various national and international sporting authorities, such as the FA, IOC, and FIFA. The Council of Europe has also resolved to promote among member states the power of sport to engender social cohesion (weblink CoE-2/2000).

This high-level political endorsement of a role for sport in development and peace complements various independent grassroots development and aid projects. These include sport-based programmes, aimed at adults and particularly children, with a wide variety of aims, such as education (about racism, drugs, the rights of the child, immunisation, HIV / AIDS, etc), promoting citizenship, combating anti-social behaviour, tackling homelessness and truancy, peacebuilding, and so on.

Lederach's (2002. 2005) general holistic theory of peacebuilding is centred on building social networks that cut across the conflict divide. It suggests these relationships can be nurtured by watching 'for hubs where the cross linking relational spaces connect the not like-minded and the not like-situated' people. (Lederach, 2005, p85). However, he does not offer any clear examples of *how* relationships may be built between antagonistic groups in practice, though he does suggest the potential hubs of 'markets, hospitals, schools, street corners, cattle dips, transportation service centers[sic], youth soccer clubs' (Lederach, 2005, p86). Despite some suggestions that further research is needed (Armstrong 2004, Armstrong 2006, Giulianotti, 2005, Richards, 1997), team-sport's contribution to peacebuilding seems not to have been covered in academic literature on conflict. This dissertation will address this knowledge gap by incorporating Lederach's (2002, 2005) theory of peacebuilding through building relationships into Galtung's (1998) concept of conflict resolution, reconciliation and reconstruction as being key to building a positive peace, and uses this framework to try and explain why team-sports, particularly football, are useful in peacebuilding, which peacebuilding functions sport can serve and which it cannot, and how best to use it to fulfill the aims of peacebuilding. This dissertation will argue that the values of 'Fair Play' embodied by team-sports have a high level of synergy with the values required for peacebuilding, and therefore the former is well suited to pursuing the latter. Furthermore, sport is transcultural; therefore projects based around it are less open to charges of cultural imperialism. Sport actively rather than passively involves participants. It provides a rule-governed, neutral and fun platform for Others to work together to break down barriers and build up trust and mutual respect. It also provides a framework for teaching participants conflict resolution.

Sport lends itself to a variety of settings and tasks; for example, recent INGO programmes to marry sport and peace (elaborated upon in case studies 6.1-6.4) include using sport; to help resolve conflict by bringing people closer together; to provide an ice-breaker to initiate the complex process of reconciliation between divided communities; as a neutral platform to sustain the reconciliation past the initial stages; as rehabilitation; and as a 'hook' to keep traumatised youth coming back to non-sport based education, rehabilitation or reintegration projects. Furthermore, amateur leagues and clubs in conflict zones can form a social network providing emotional support and physical protection for its members. In projects such as these football dominates due to its immense global popularity and simplicity to organise - one ball is theoretically enough to run an entire project with. Furthermore, football is a multi-billion dollar industry; NGOs working in conflict zones have recently been receiving support from football's governing bodies and clubs and there is potential for this to grow. But if we are to advocate football as an agent of peace, then we should also understand how it can be an agent of conflict amongst fans, players and nations, for example the 1969 'Football War'.

Whilst it is tempting to get carried away with the rhetoric of those who advocate sport as tool for peacebuilding, it is just one cog in the machine. Furthermore, whilst there is anecdotal evidence to support sports' success in peacebuilding, there is a lack of empirical research to support (or disprove) this.

Due to space limitations the role of team-sports in refuges camps will not be analysed, though many of the matters discussed in this dissertation are quite applicable and useful in such a unique community. There is also not enough data to comprehensively compare the costs of sports-based peacebuilding projects with alternatives, and it is simply assumed here that the price of running football projects is relatively low due to the lack of equipment needed.

Chapter 1: Contemporary Conflict Studies: Team-Sport as a Tool to Tackle Cultural Violence

Conflict is not preventable (Kriesberg, 2003). Peacebuilding is therefore based on the search for (ideally) non-violent ways to *transform* conflicts so that all parties are satisfied with the results. Galtung (1998) has distinguished between direct violence[1], structural violence[2] and cultural violence[3]. People involved in violent conflict, and those trying to transform it, often focus more on preventing direct violence (i.e. protecting life and limb, or ending the war respectively), and less on structural and cultural violence. However, structural and cultural violence can eventually lead to direct violence, and therefore to reduce the chances of relapse into war one should pay sufficient attention to all three. In practice, this means striving for a more equitable society where people feel safe, respected and represented. Though high-level approaches to conflict resolution, such as mediation or arbitration, are important in this holistic process, one should also be innovative to discover new tools which can help build peace at the grassroots, right up to the highest levels of power, and at all points in between. (Azar, 1990. Galtung, 1998. Lederach, 2002). Team-sports, as shall be demonstrated, is one such innovative tool which can actively engage large numbers of grassroots participants.

The absence of war (direct violence) used to be called peace, but this is now often called 'negative peace'. The ultimate aim of peacebuilding, known as 'positive peace', is the eradication of direct, structural and cultural violence. Not only is positive peace an idealised and possibly unattainable state, it is also a dynamic concept which changes according to the norms of the day (Galtung, 1998). The key point is that we should strive to get as close to a positive peace as possible (even if we can not make society 100 percent perfect), thus it is facile to suggest that individual sports-based projects that do not deliver a positive peace are flawed – they should be merely one part of a holistic peacebuilding programme which makes a contribution to the quest for a positive peace.

Contemporary wars, which Azar (1990) termed protracted social conflict (PSC), are predominantly internal wars primarily fought over identity or secession and are fuelled mostly by psychological or cultural factors (Toft, 2003. Miall, 2001).

> 'Long-standing distrust, fear and paranoia… are reinforced by the immediate experience of violence, division and atrocities. This experience, in turn, further exacerbates the hatred and fear that are fuelling the conflict' (Lederach, 2002, p13).

This process is similar to that which can drive international conflict, but is typically experienced on a

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[1] E.g. people are murdered.
[2] E.g. people die of poverty.
[3] E.g. Whatever tries to justify the violence or prevents us from seeing it as wrong eg patriotism, heroism, racism, sexism, religion

more immediate level, due to the close proximity of conflicting groups and their shared common histories of 'animosity, perception of enmity, and deep-rooted fear' (Lederach, 2002, p14); one could argue that many Muslim communities across the globe are currently experiencing such relationships with other communities in close proximity. Scheper-Hughes and Bourgios (2003) have outlined the importance of addressing demonisation and stereotyping by arguing that such 'small violences' can lead to 'big violences' such as genocide. The question is, how can the downward spiral into violence be reversed?

Lederach (2002) has advocated an approach to transforming PSCs which is primarily aimed at improving relationships between conflicting groups, principally because 'relationship is the basis of both the conflict and its long-term solution' (Lederach, 2002, p26). Playing culturally relevant team-sports such as football is one way in which adults, and particularly children, can be given an opportunity to form positive relationships based on trust and respect rather than fear and hatred. But is this shift from demonisation to friendship enough to transform conflict so that violence is avoided? Sports certainly cannot solve the problem of poverty in a society, and it cannot disarm militias or armies bent on destruction. Thus, this dissertation argues that sport is a tool for tackling cultural violence, but can do nothing significant to alleviate structural violence or direct violence, all three of which should be addressed if a society is to pursue positive peace; sport cannot create a positive peace, but can *contribute* to its pursuit.

Processes that try to reduce structural violence (e.g. by democratisation, institution building, infrastructure development, equality before the law, independent judiciaries, and economic development via neo-liberal free market policies[4]) and direct violence (e.g. cease-fires and arms decommissioning) are much better understood, and much easier to measure success in, than programmes that tackle cultural violence (Assefa, 1995), which is based in the abstract of people's minds rather than readily quantifiable factors such as GDP, voting statistics, or weapons decommissioned. Therefore we should develop our understanding of ways to transform cultural violence into cultural harmony, such as sports seem to provide, so that we may be better equipped to deal with violent conflict in a holistic sense.

It is important to make sure that peacebuilding activities take advantage of existing cultural resources and pay attention to the context in which they are operating. Alien concepts, or those that offend cultural sensitivities, are likely to be rejected or may simply not work (Lederach, 2002). Played in the Amazon since 1500bc and China since 200bc (Giulianotti, 1999), football in its current form was formalised in England in the 1860s and promoted due to its Durkheimian 'capacity for nurturing social order' (Giulianotti, 1999, p3).

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etc.

[4] This is not to say that democratisation and neo-liberal free market policies *do* reduce structural violence, merely that western governments, the UN, the IMF, the World Bank etc believe that they do. Paris (1997, p.57) believes that "efforts to transform war-shattered states into market democracies can serve to exacerbate rather than moderate social tensions".

Subsequently exported by British, French, and Italian colonialists to Africa (Armstrong, 2004) in order to 'civilise the savage' and by traders, railway workers and sailors to the Americas for recreation (Giulianotti, 1999), football became a means for the colonised to symbolically challenge the hegemony of the colonials (Armstrong and Giulianotti, 2004). Today, football has transcended British hegemony to become the world's game and is played in more countries by more people than any other sport on the planet, that is, it is transcultural (Giulianotti, 1999). However, it is not ubiquitous; if another team-sport is a better culture-fit, such as cricket in Kashmir, then this should be preferred.

So far this dissertation has advanced culturally appropriate team-sports as a tool for tackling cultural violence by building relationships across the conflict divide. To get a sense of how significant this is in transforming PSCs it is helpful to take a brief look at the main peacebuilding functions of conflict resolution, reconciliation and reconstruction, and ask where sport plays a part.

Chapter 2: Football and the 3Rs of Peacebuilding

   This dissertation adopts Galtung's (1998) framework for understanding the holistic process of peacebuilding, in which there are three key processes called 'the 3Rs' ; 'The problem of **reconstruction** after the direct violence; The problem of **reconciliation** of the conflict parties; The problem of **resolution** of the underlying, root conflict; If you do only one of these three without the other two you will not even get that one' (Galtung, 1998, p8). Peacebuilding is a relatively new concept thus different authors use different definitions and paradigms to explain the many and varied tasks, aims and roles within peacebuilding (Miall, 2001). For example, some would object that conflict *resolution* should be termed conflict *transformation* (Tidwell, 1998). The purpose of using Galtung's 3R's is to provide a simple and convenient framework to illuminate those peacebuilding functions football can help with and those it cannot; the 3Rs should not be taken as a comprehensive and universally agreed account of peacebuilding.

   Firstly, resolution, as the name suggests, is aimed at solving problems and immediate issues in the short-term, for example disarmament or power sharing. Secondly, reconciliation is a long-term process aimed at (re)building positive relationships between antagonistic groups. Finally, reconstruction is aimed at rebuilding the political, economic, ecological, physical, cultural and social infrastructure and includes rehabilitation of people affected by war. Though each 'R' shall be elaborated upon separately, many of the functions overlap, and in practice it is not always possible to tell where one 'R' ends and another 'R' begins, as they are all firmly wound up in the holistic peacebuilding process (Galtung, 1998).

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1.   Resolution

   What we shall call 'traditional conflict resolution' (including forced settlement / military victory, direct negotiated settlement between conflicting groups, third party intervention (e.g. mediation, arbitration, litigation) and bilateral agreements between conflicting groups) was developed to deal with international war and is focused on short-term solutions to conflict at the level of states or leaders (Miall, 2001, Lederach 2002). Lederach (2002, p.25) believes that 'statist diplomacy and realpolitik have not demonstrated a capacity to control protracted social conflicts, much less transform them toward constructive, peaceful outcomes' therefore what is also required is a flexible, sustainable infrastructure, to which 'relationship building and reconciliation are the key' (Lederach, 2002, p.93). In other words we should look at 'subjective issues', such as entrenched hatred and fear, as well as 'substantive interests and issues', such as the distribution of power or disarmament (Lederach, 2002, p.25). The next chapter will elaborate on how team-sports can provide a framework for combating such hatred and fear by building positive relationships.

   Maire Dugan's (1996) nested theory of conflict provides a useful lens through which to discern the

different levels of analysis and intervention one might apply.
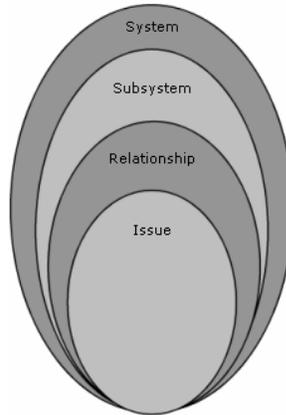
Figure 1: The Nested Paradigm of Conflict (Dugan, 1996)

Dugan suggests that addressing the problem at the sub-system level (the immediate system that the parties are located in, i.e. a school or work place) provides the best point to make positive change in the whole. The sub-system allows a framework for manipulating relationships, solving issues and contributing to wider systemic changes. In a sporting context, we would find the sub-system at the level of a club or league. For example, a football club can impose conditions on its members, such as adhering to an equalities policy, receiving classroom training on subjects such as conflict resolution techniques or prejudice reduction. The club can even control the specific way in which people are forced to interact via the training sessions and matches it runs, where the rules can be made up to fit the situation. For example, in the Football 4 Peace (F4P. Case study 6.1) project, the coaches often try to *cause* a conflict between the children, so that they can use it as a 'teachable moment' to help the children learn about resolving conflict in a positive way, whilst playing in a safe environment.

Organisers of a tournament or league can also impose conditions on the clubs which enter the competition. For example, Open Fun Football Schools (OFFS. Case study 6.2) in the Balkans insist that municipalities who join their reconciliation scheme must be twinned with another from across the ethnic divide with whom they will work to organise the event. In many cases, OFFS events were 'the first significant, post war contacts established between municipalities experiencing serious ethnic tensions and antagonisms' (Kvalsund, 2004), the importance of which should be self-evident.

A weakness of traditional conflict resolution is a tendency to only begin (re)building relationships

between conflicting communities after armed conflict has ceased, if at all[5]. Whilst it may not be possible to run a peacebuilding project whilst fighting persists (F4P had to cancel its 2006 trip to Israel because of the war with Hezbollah) the peace process should have more chance of success if conflicting communities have begun to re-establish positive contact before violent conflict ends (Miall, 2001). The hope is that by bringing conflicting communities closer together it should be harder for war-hungry political leaders to maintain levels of hostility between communities of Others[6] required to sustain a conflict, or easier for peace-hungry leaders to make a negotiated settlement which the people will accept. Hence, projects operating in the midst of violent conflict, such as F4P in Israel, could be just as valuable as reconciliation projects that happen in the post-conflict phase, such as OFFS in the Balkans. This does of course assume that normal people's wishes have some bearing on the combatants; Realists may challenge Lederach on the grounds that national interest, not the will of the people, dictates government actions, and might even suggest that people's emotions and attitudes were easier for governments to manipulate in a negative way (due to its large influence in the media, and ability to manufacture threats to national security), than they were for peacebuilding projects to manipulate in a good way by building social networks.

Tidwell (1998) provides three further problems for advocates of conflict resolution through building relationships to consider. Firstly, governments, not constituents, still have the greatest overall power to make war and peace (as F4P's cancelled 2006 trip to Israel suggests). Secondly, governments and elites may prefer to remain in a state of conflict, which typically unifies the nation and justifies the state's existence[7]. Thirdly, enmity and conflict may represent a natural urge to seek enemies in order to define ourselves (as individuals, or states). Wrangham and Peterson (1996) argue that the 'nature versus nurture' debate represents a false dichotomy; that both impulses act. So while we may be born naturally violent, we can be conditioned to either embrace or reject violence as a means to an end, leading us back to the importance of programmes which promote positive relationships, but forcing us to accept that if governments really do desire war to order society, then there is little hope for peacebuilding.

Galtung (1998, p86) advises that peacebuilding programmes should be culturally appropriate, seek to include as many people as possible, and should engage the people as active participants rather than 'as the objects of somebody else's decisions and deeds'. Team-sports fulfil these requirements when played with a

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[5] In the UN's lexicon peacebuilding is a process which begins only after violent conflict has ceased or slowed.
[6] Edward Said (1978) is arguably the most famous author to speak of the Other. He explained how the Orient is described in terms of how it is inferior and alien (or other) to the West. More generally the term conveniently describes in negative terms any group whom is seen as distinct from one's own group, such as perceived enemies.
[7] Hardt and Negri (2004) believe a global decentralised 'Empire' of capital and global institutions such as the IMF, rather than states and armies, has the same ultimate desire to keep war as a perpetual state of exception that delivers the power for Empire to rule.

large number of people, and as football is the most popular sport on the planet it is most likely to be culturally appropriate.

In sum, football clubs/leagues can provide a sub-systemic hub around which grassroots social networks can be formed between 'enemies', and where participants can be taught about resolving conflict even whilst conflict persists. However, sports-based peacebuilding programmes should be just one part of a holistic approach to conflict resolution that includes solving political/economic issues (i.e. addressing direct and structural violence) and provides other means to build relationships for those who dislike sport.

2.   Reconciliation

Truth and justice are central to reconciliation, which is primarily aimed at (re)building positive relationships between former enemies, both of whom may have committed atrocities against the other, and both of who may see themselves as the victim (Kriesberg, 2003). Our knowledge of reconciliation processes is less developed than those such as the use of force, adjudication, or arbitration (Assefa 1995), therefore an important task for conflict specialists is to further study the effects of known reconciliation processes and to be imaginative in developing new methods (Lederach, 2005). The recent emergence of reconciliation through sport is one such creative development in this field which merits attention.

Common Western methods of seeking reconciliation include; war crimes tribunals; traditional/community courts; truth and reconciliation commissions; unbiased education about the war; scholars initiatives to set the historical record straight (Miall, 2001). Truth and justice are central to these processes, but alone are insufficient for reconciliation. What is also required is to (re)build 'a more liveable, and psychologically healthy environment between former enemies where the vicious cycle of hate, deep suspicion, resentment, and revenge does not continue to fester' (Assefa, 1995, no page number). Reconciliation therefore refers to the new *relationship* created, which is based on the healing of deep emotional scars.

As in conflict resolution, relationships and the building of social networks are conceived as central to the reconciliation process. The difference is that resolution through building social networks is an attempt to avert or end violent conflict, and is aimed at making the conditions favourable for a peaceful solution to the issue(s) causing the conflict. On the other hand, reconciliation through building social networks is aimed at helping people restore relationships and mentally heal after the violence has ended. This dissertation will elaborate on why team-sports are an ideal way to build social networks in chapter three, however it should be obvious from the above that sport alone is not enough for reconciliation, as it cannot explore truth and justice.

3.   Reconstruction

As we have seen, sports, and particularly football can play a positive part in conflict resolution and reconciliation by helping to build social networks and providing a gateway for conflict resolution training. The last of the 3Rs – reconstruction - also provides an opportunity for us to utilise sport in some of its processes. According to Galtung (1998, p.53-61) reconstruction has no limit and includes :

1.   Rehabilitation.

2.   Rebuilding

3.   Restructuration.

4.   Reculturation

Reconstruction does not entail restoring the society *exactly* back to its pre-war state since these are the conditions which led to the conflict. Instead, conditions should be improved. **Rebuilding** (e.g. infrastructure, buildings, networks, institutions, ecosystem) corresponds to the recreation of pre-war entities which are seen as desirable to keep, whereas **restructuration** corresponds to the modification or elimination of pre-war structures which have been determined to undermine the search for positive peace and the creation of new entities that will contribute to building positive peace.

FIFA can, and does, help rebuild the infrastructure of football (e.g. national football associations, stadiums etc) via its *GOAL* programme. After Israel bombed the pitch in Gaza funds were promised to rebuild. After the American invasion of Afghanistan the national stadium, which had been the scene of half-time executions during the Taliban's rule, was repaired and reopened (weblink FIFA1). Whilst FIFA assistance should be welcomed and encouraged, it is unlikely that rebuilding a stadium or professional football league/administration would provide much more than a temporary escape from people's worries (see chapter five). Furthermore, if local football clubs are associated with the identity group of any of the conflicting parties then their matches could end up serving as a rallying point for expressions of hostility towards the Other (Tuastad, 1997).

Rehabilitation is another subsection of reconstruction in which sports can play a valuable role. Western methods of rehabilitation have been accused by Mimica and Stubbs (1996) of focussing too much on diagnosing and treating Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD). They point out that PTSD may be inapplicable to non-western cultures, or to populations who have experienced a collective trauma rather than an individual trauma. Furthermore, western aid agencies focus PTSD diagnosis/treatment on women and children whilst relatively excluding men. They think an inclusive approach to rehabilitation which included skills retraining and 'psycho-social projects [that attempted] to build peace and trust in terms of relationships across ethnic lines' would be preferable (Mimica and Stubbs, 1996, p.288); Relationships,

once again, are key.

Sports-based psycho-social projects include those aimed at emotionally scarred as well as disabled victims of war. One such example is the Sierra Leone Single Leg Amputee Sports Club (SLASC), which comprises of 3 teams with a total of 90 members, and provides rehabilitation and social reintegration for its members. One amputee, Obai Sesia, explained its value to him:

> *'The happiness when I get the ball is more than I used to get when I played on two legs. I feel joyful. It's a way of showing people...[SLASC] lessens the pain. I feel I'm among others who have the same pain' (Dixon, 2006).*

If newly disabled people can be shown that they can still do things they think should be impossible, such as playing football with one leg, then they can begin to see how they might mentally cope with other, less physically demanding aspects of everyday life, whilst forming friendship networks with people who share the same difficulties and getting much needed physical and mental recreation. Jareg (2005, p1) outlines

> *six essential programmatic provisions that need to be included in plans for the recovery and social integration of children associated with armed forces. The relate to restoring family relationships; relationships with the community; children's physical and psycho-social health; organised learning opportunities and vocational training and income generation.*

Sport-based projects can fulfill Jareg's six requirements, as case study 6.4 will demonstrate.

Reculturation is the transformation of a culture of violence into a culture of peace. One way in which reculturation can be pursued is by training people at all levels of society in subjects such as human rights and conflict resolution (Galtung, 1998). This dissertation agues that if there is no way for conflict resolution training to be enforced as compulsory (e.g. as part of the terms of a decommissioning programme) then popular sports, such as football, might be useful as a 'hook' to encourage participants to attend training, which they may not see the value of, or may consider a low priority compared to obtaining items such as food, shelter and employment. For example, in Liberia INGOs used a network of football clubs to deliver training on the Rights of the Child in an attempt to change the perception that it was acceptable to abuse children in certain ways (e.g. labour exploitation, physical abuse) (See case study 6.4).

Case study 6.3.2 is another example of attempted reculturation. In Sierra Leone enmity was drawn across tribal lines. The INGOs tasked with reconstruction sought to foster a sense of regional and national identity, at the expense of tribal identity, by the establishment of a football league. Regional teams were composed of a mix of different tribes, and therefore could not serve as symbols of tribal identity. Without further long-term research it is not clear what effect the football leagues are having on perceptions of tribal identity. It does, however, demonstrate that the INGOs attempting reculturation had an intuitive belief in the

power of football shape identities.

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For Galtung (1998) peacebuilding entails a pursuit of the '3Rs', that is; reconstruction of people and places; reconciliation of relationships; and resolution of issues and animosities. Building positive social networks is central to many of the processes underpinning each of the '3Rs' (especially that of reconciliation), as are the parties' emotions and attitudes.

The peacebuilding approach requires an array of tools to transform situations that have developed into violent conflict, or have the potential to. Positive change should be made at the relational-community level as well as the structural-constitutional level. No single tool can bring positive peace to a society, and therefore it is fallacious to ask whether truth and reconciliation commissions bring peace, or if sport can bring peace. Instead, we should ask questions such as: Is this a useful tool to use in situations of conflict? Is this a tool that can adapt to be utilised effectively and sustainably in many conflict scenarios as part of a holistic peacebuilding approach? Can this tool deliver multiple objectives such as rehabilitation and reconciliation? How much funding and specialised equipment does this tool require compared to the alternatives?

Sport, and by virtue of its popularity football, is one such tool which can be applied in a variety of settings for a variety of purposes, including major components of the 3Rs. Team-sports can make a significant impact in conflict **reconciliation**, where building relationships is absolutely fundamental, however team-sports cannot address its other core components of truth and justice. In the case of conflict resolution and reconstruction the benefits of building relationships, and hence team-sports, become less significant overall. In **resolution** we should also solve issues and tackle direct and structural violence, and whilst governments may hold the most power to shape events, sport is an ideal sub-systemic 'hub' to address cultural violence and teach people to deal with conflict non-violently. Within **reconstruction** sport seems useful in mental and physical rehabilitation and possibly reculturation (by transforming old rivalries into new, or providing a framework for the delivery of training).

One of the key qualities of team-sports is their ability to provide a catalyst for building social networks, therefore a closer look at this function should be useful.

Chapter 3: Building Social Networks Through Team-Sports: The Value of Structures and the Structure of Values

'*All that I know most surely about morality and obligations, I owe to football*'

Albert Camus (1913-1960). Author and philosopher.

As we have seen, PSC is a vicious circle of long-standing feelings of mistrust, fear, hatred and enmity, reinforced by stereotypes and demonisation of the Other. Azar (1990), Miall (2001) and Lederach (2002) have identified building social networks between conflicting parties' as important in overcoming this. 'A fundamental question is how to create a catalyst for reconciliation and then sustain it in divided societies' (Lederach, 2002, p.25).

One catalyst is to give conflicting groups the chance to have a *shared experience* with the Other. For example, grassroots reconciliation projects where enemies work together to rebuild houses damaged in the war[8]. The shared experience of sweating together to build something, whilst reflecting on what caused the building to be destroyed in the first place, can have a cathartic effect on the participants (McMorran, 2003).

Ideally, the shared experience should take place in setting that is safe and neutral, and will allow for the chance of developing sustainable interdependent relationships with the Other. The development of a positive relationship starts with a willingness to try and co-operate and proceeds with the realisation that a common interest is shared with the Other, be that a love of football, or the desire to see your village rebuilt (Lederach, 2002, 2005).

Sport can play a key function in building social networks by providing a shared experience aimed at countering stereotypes and building relationships. For example, football leagues can be run year after year, and provide a sustainable 'hub' for mixed-identity teams[9] to regularly meet in a safe, rule-governed and neutral setting, where people can have fun and are treated equally. When official matches are not being played each team can continue to meet, train and have fun. Open Fun Football Schools (OFFS) in the Balkans runs just such a programme aimed at bringing children from deeply-divided communities together to play football. This dissertation argues that it is logical that friendships are easier to develop if the experience you are sharing is enjoyable, rather than awkward (for example a problem solving workshop), or just plain hard work, as in the house rebuilding example. Lederach (2005, p160) hints at this when he writes

'[r]econciliation is dealing with the worst of the human condition, the effort to repair brokenness of relationships and life itself. It appears as a very serious business. Ironically, the

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[8] The term 'joint project' is often used, however 'shared experience' better reflects sports-based programmes, which may not involved a tangible end-product, such as a rebuilt house.

[9] One football team is ideally comprised of equal proportions of each conflicting group, e.g. 50% Serb and 50% Croat.

pathway to healing may not lie with becoming more serious.'

However, simply playing sports on the same team as the Other may not be enough to break down barriers.

> *Although one study (McClendon & Eitzen, 1975) has found some support for [the suggestion that exposure to other racial groups through sporting interaction reduces prejudice] in limited situations (when both races on a team contribute to winning and the team is successful), most research does not find that interracial contact in sport reduces racial prejudice (Chu & Griffey 1989, Lapchick 1989, McPherson et al 1989).* (Frey and Eitzen, 1991)

Frey and Eitzen are describing professional sport, however grassroots participation sports need not be so focussed on winning. If the playing of the sport is structured to focus on personal development, teaching values congruent to peacebuilding, having fun and building relationships then it may be that sport *can* reduce prejudice. This begs the question; what values do peacebuilding and team-sport share, and how might games be structured to help build social networks?

Mistrust contributes to conflict and therefore building <u>trust</u> is a core component of peacebuilding (Lederach, 2002, 2005), a process to which team-sports are ideally suited. Training exercises can involve trust-based games and in team-sports it is a requirement of success that you trust you team-mates, for example by passing to them.

With trust comes <u>responsibility</u>. Awareness of the positive or negative influence and impact your behaviour can have on others is an important lesson in both peacebuilding (Galtung, 1998) and sport.

By their very nature, <u>teamwork</u> is another quality which team-sports are ideally suited to develop. Teamwork between conflicting identities is also an important peacebuilding capacity to develop, for to build a lasting positive peace requires the promotion of forms of common identification towards achieving collective goals (Galtung, 1998).

Sports are founded on the <u>obedience of rules</u> that regulate play. Getting used to the enforcement of these rules may help participants to begin behaving in a rule-governed way after living an existence where the rules of civilised society were absent (see case study 6.4). As well as encouraging obedience of rules, sport has a built in method of conflict resolution to enforce those rules - a neutral referee.

<u>Respect for the Other</u> is another quality which peacebuilding should encourage, and which sport can facilitate via an appreciation of your opponents' and team-mates' skills. If you respect your adversary, then more effort may be made to find peaceful solutions to disputes (Miall, 2001). This was indeed the experience of many of the participants of the Sierra Leone reconciliation/reintegration process (case study 6.4), where skill with a football seems to have been interpreted as evidence that former rebels could bring

something positive to the community.

Many PSCs are borne out of one side's sense of superiority or unjustness and unfairness of treatment compared to the Other (Miall, 2001). Therefore promoting equity is an essential component of any peacebuilding strategy if we are to avoid perpetuating the conflict. Social status, class, age, gender, religion and other differentiating factors are immaterial during team-sports. Rewards and success are entirely dependent on individual skill and teamwork. Giving individuals a platform for success can also allow them to develop their sense of self-worth.

If one side feels the other is benefiting more from the project it may contribute towards further hostility, therefore a strict policy of neutrality and equality is central to any project designed to encourage shared experiences (McMorran, 2003). Sport is a neutral arena because it is not inherently political[10], and even bitter enemies can often agree on sharing a love of football.

Peacebuilding processes should be as inclusive as possible, and should engage as many of the parties involved in the conflict (whether they are combatants or victims) as *active* participants (Galtung, 1998. Lederach, 2002). Team-sports can involve large numbers of active participants, for example, Open Fun Football Schools (OFFS) reached 25,628 children in 2005 (OFFS Completion Report, 2005. See case study 6.2).Furthermore they are inclusive, in that anyone who wishes to play, can play. Sport is a particularly effective way of engaging children and youths, who are considered a challenging group to interest (Sharry and Owens, 2000), and are often a marginalised constituency within peacebuilding (Aning and McIntyre, 2004). The importance of peacebuilding projects aimed at this constituency is brought home when one considers 'young people [i.e. up to 35 years old] are the major participants in most wars' in Africa (Aning and McIntyre, 2004, p73), and over 50 percent of the population in Africa is under eighteen (Richards, 1997, p146).

Whilst shared experiences such as playing sport may lead to direct confirmation of negative stereotypes (McMorran, 2003), it is also likely that lack of 'human contact, engagement and bonding' contribute to enmity and hatred between different ethnic groups(Tidwell, 1998, p134). Stereotypes are unlikely to be overcome by keeping 'enemies' separated, therefore this dissertation suggests that it is the *type* of contact the 'enemies' have that is important in building good relationships. To minimise the risk of a negative, or ineffective, encounter shared experiences should have a well thought out structure that exemplifies the above shared values of peacebuilding and sport. This should be facilitated by those skilled in conflict resolution and reconciliation, who have a good understanding of the conflict in question and the cultural space in which they are operating. As Eitzen (1991) has suggested, simply placing participants

together and expecting them to get on as if there were no shared history of animosity probably does not work; instead they should be led along this difficult path by skilled guides who provide the structure for the shared experience.

Lederach (202, p.96-97) suggests that '*Trust, Networking and Timing*' are key qualities for peacebuilding projects (and practitioners) to possess; the project owners must gain the participants' *Trust* and the project should form a *Network* to interconnect the conflicting parties. Finally, *Timing* means the resources on offer should be 'present and available on an ongoing basis'. A grassroots football club can fulfil this criteria. As we have seen, it provides a social space where trust can be built, not just between conflicting parties, but between the project owners and the participants. The idea of building a football club is that it is maintained and continues from one year to the next, rather than having a finite project lifecycle, therefore it is ongoing and ever present. The club is a network, which is connected to other networks (clubs) through a grand network (the league). The network formed by the league can impose conditions aimed at peacebuilding on participating clubs, such forcing them to twin with another club from across the divide (see case study 6.2). The network formed by the club can be used as a gateway to deliver 'services' (e.g. training, rehabilitation, etc) and/or as a social support network by its members and the wider community (see case study 6.4).

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This dissertation argues that team-sports provide a flexible, sustainable, fun, apolitical peacebuilding 'hub' that can play a part in each of the '3Rs', notably as way to teach people how to deal with conflict and as a shared experience to help build relationships across the conflict divide. It seems sensible to take advantage of the mutually shared values of peacebuilding and team-sport (trust, responsibility, respect, teamwork, obedience of rules, equity and inclusion) when devising the exact structure of the game and not simply to assume that playing on the same team will break down barriers. Though there is anecdotal evidence to support team-sport's ability to teach values and build relationships (see case studies 6.1 and 6.2) there is no empirical evidence to support the claims made for it, and therefore further research is needed into its effects on individuals and society.

In all cases, team-sports can engage many people as active participants, and can work in any setting due to sport's transcultural nature. Furthermore, relationships built, values taught and services offered can be provided on an ongoing and ever-present (*Timing*) basis via a club/league structure.

As football enjoys such passionate support from all sections of global society, and is cheap and simple to organise, it is particularly suited to peacebuilding, as reflected by football's predominance in sports-based

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[10] Which is not to say that sport cannot be politicised.

peacebuilding projects. Consequentially a closer look at some of the more negative aspects of football, such as hooliganism, should be addressed if we are to promote its use in peacebuilding.

Chapter 4: Football as War: How Identity Alignment with Football Clubs Can Fuel Conflict

'Football is merely a continuation of war by other means'

Franjo Tudman, President of Croatia, 1990-1999. (Gasser and Levinsen, 2006, p165)

On the surface it might seem strange that professional football, a sport notorious for fan violence (hooliganism) and narrow dogmatic opinions, should be endorsed so heavily to promote peace and open-mindedness. Indeed, the negative ways in which football and conflict are connected are not limited to a shared vocabulary. If football is to be advanced as a bringer of peace and a builder of social networks, then it is important to ask how football can contribute to social divisions, conflict and ultimately violence.

Research by Armstrong (1998) into hooliganism has shown that 'there is no fixed and determinate relationship between violence and football' (Richards, 1997, p141). Hooliganism is a peripheral phenomenon in the game, a sub-culture that bears similarities to the pursuit of extreme sports (e.g. bungee jumping) designed to give an adrenaline buzz (Giulianotti, 1999) and is primarily rooted in the changing nature of post-industrial society, rather than being specifically caused by the game itself (Armstrong, 1998, Giulianotti, 1999). In other words, watching or playing football does not make one violent.

Football has been accused of *starting* wars, such as the 1969 'Football War' between Honduras and El Salvador (Kuper, 1995), which started as a riot as a qualifier for the 1970 World Cup and ended six-days later after about 2000 lives were lost (weblink ONWAR/EsvH, 2000). Vrcan and Lalic, (1999) claim the Yugoslavian civil war started on 13th May 1990 at a football match where thousands of Dynamo Zagreb fans fought against police and Red Star Belgrade hooligans (known as *Delije*) led by 'Arkan the Tiger' (see figure 5), and document how both sets of fans went on to form core parts of the voluntary militia in the subsequent war. Whilst it is true that football provided the backdrop for the start of open hostilities in both these cases, it is also true that both wars had complicated social, political, geographic, economic, historical and cultural causes and would have happened regardless of the part football played; the conflict predated the actual fighting. Despite this, the fact that football can be a flashpoint for latent violent conflict to explode should be of concern to those interested in using football as a peacebuilding tool in locations where social tensions are at breaking point.

It is well known that football is an arena in which racist, nationalist and sectarian hatred is occasionally played out, for example in Spain (Barcelona vs. Real Madrid) and Britain (Rangers vs. Celtic) (Giulianotti, 1997). The Ukraine national football coach recently complained that the influx of foreign players into the Ukrainian leagues deprived his countrymen of role models:

'Let them learn from [our players] and not some Zumba-Bumba whom they took off a tree, gave two bananas and now he plays in the Ukrainian League' (Karon, 9/7/2006, no page number).

This is long way from the values of equity and respect that this dissertation maintains are central to peacebuilding and sport.

The football club you support can be an important part of your identity, similarly football clubs can often become bound up with their fans identity group, for historical or geographical reasons (Giulianotti, 1999). It does not seem unreasonable to suggest these examples of racist, nationalist and sectarian hatred, and war 'caused' by professional football have a common thread; that of identities being aligned with football teams, for example white people (Ukraine), Protestants (Rangers), Catholics (Celtic), Catalans (Barcelona) and obviously national identities in the case of Hondurans, El Salvadorians, Croats and Serbs. If teams are split along the same lines as an *existing* identity conflict then we should expect existing hostilities to be played out via rival supporters, a process which may act as a safety valve for hostilities (Tuastad, 1997) but may also lead to political violence. How are grassroots sports projects to avoid this recreation of existing hostilities on the sports field? Mixed-identity teams can easily be created; ideally, having enemies on the same team should create a new 'them-versus-us' based not on identity groupings which can lead to wider social conflict, but on more superficial factors such as all being on the 'red' team.

The professional game of football is also quite notorious for players cheating and disrespecting each other, sometimes the disrespect even results in violent behaviour which would be illegal off the football pitch. A perfect example of this is was seen in the 2006 World Cup Final when Italy's Marco Materazzi allegedly insulted France's Zinedine Zidane's mother. Zidane promptly headbutted Materazzi and was sent off – exactly the type of response and conclusion Materazzi was no doubt hoping for when he insulted the best player on the pitch. The win-at-all-costs mentality of the players and fans, the latter of whom will do anything to put off the opposition and the former of whom will cheat and disrespect their opponent on the field is an ugly side of the 'beautiful game' which grassroots football can avoid. The professional game's rules are quite rigid and play revolves around win-lose situations and win-at-all-costs mentalities, in grassroots football win-win situations can be created[11] and the win-at-all-costs mentality de-emphasised over the manner in which the game is played. The rules are flexible and hence training and matches can involve credit for fair play and showing respect for one's opponent (See case study 6.1).

However, the passion with which most people play football could even cause conflict when two friends play the game. Football's ability to generate conflict on the pitch can provide 'teachable moments' that those

skilled in peacebuilding can use to educate the participants. With professional football it is not practical to harness these natural moments of conflict (See case study 6.1).

Projects such as OFFS and F4P (see case studies 6.1 and 6.2 respectively) hope that some 'enemies' can bond sufficiently over the shared experience of playing football as team mates that they will be humanised and henceforth should question the stereotypes that would previously have been applied to the Other. This is based on the assumption that a lack of information of the Other is what causes conflict, however Tidwell (1998) warns that 'conflict does not appear to be so rational or intellectual'. Whilst stereotypes may be destroyed by shared experiences with the Other, this dissertation accepts that it is also possible that 'non-conforming acts that clash with expectations are likely to be "rationalised" away' (Mitchell, 2000, p189). More research is required, not only into the *effects* that shared experiences have on the beliefs of the participants, but also on the *longevity* of any changed perceptions. For if identities and beliefs can be manipulated so easily, then they could be fluid enough to change back to hostility with a similar amount of effort.

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[11] Peacebuilding is a search for win-win situation (Miall, 2001).

<u>Chapter 5: Peace Through Professional Football?</u>

'We can clearly see that the game of the people truly makes a positive impact on the world: let us make goals, not war!' - FIFA President Joseph S. Blatter. 2004. (Weblink FIFA3)

So far, this dissertation has explored the use of *grassroots* participation team-sports in peacebuilding processes, and has focused on football due to its simplicity and global popularity. The problematic role of football as a bringer of identity conflict has been addressed by insisting that grassroots peacebuilding activities place conflicting parties on the same teams, de-emphasise the win-at-all-costs mentality and that the sports activities take place in a safe, neutral and inclusive environment that actively engages its audience and is formally structured towards delivering conflict resolution training and reconciliation via building social networks and humanising the Other. But could the *professional* game of football have a positive effect in bringing peace by **unifying supporters** and by providing positive **symbols** of peace as is often claimed[12]?

Nelson Mandela said in 1992 "soccer is one of the most unifying activities amongst us (Kuper, 1995, p138). Football matches can indeed unify people, but seemingly only temporarily. For example, during the Liberian civil war, thousands of fighters would put down their guns and go to the stadium together to watch international fixtures and, despite recognising the enemy in their midst, peace was maintained for the duration of the matches. But once the football stopped, the fighting started (Armstrong, 2004).

'Ping-Pong diplomacy' between the USA and China during the Cold War was seen as a small, but important symbolic step towards more peaceful relations (Mitchell 2000). Whilst friendly football 'peace matches', such as the game in 2002 between North and South Korea, can have a positive symbolic effect, if it ends in rioting as the France-Algeria 'peace match' did in 2001 this would seem to be a negative symbol, which may even magnify the conflict in people's perceptions. This dissertation argues that, as a sport which excites such huge passions, football is problematic to use as a symbol of peace if that symbol involves a recreation of previous hostilities; a game with mixed-identity teams would provide a potentially better symbol of peace, respect and co-operation.

Another example of the professional game trying to help build positive peace is Truce International. Inspired by the football matches played in the trenches of WW1 during Christmas 1914, Truce would like

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[12] For example, Alfred Jaovi, an Ivory Coast fan, though that '[T]he further [the Ivory Coast] go in [World Cup 2006], the better chance we have of maintaining peace here in the short term. It could really change things.' (see weblink WC2006FANBLOG). The President of the Ivorian Football Federation, Jacques Anouma, even 'hoped that each victory for the *Elephants* would bring Ivorians back together for good' (weblink AnoumaIFF)

combatants to swap guns for footballs for 24 hours (on September 21st, the UN's International Cease-fire Day). Truce also aims to deliver an annual 24-hour money-spinner called 'Kick A Ball For Peace', which would be along the lines of Live8 and would use football stars and high-profile friendly football matches to send positive symbolic messages to a target audience of 3 billion people to raise the largest amount of money in history for peace-driven charities and projects. It is well connected into the power structures of football[13] and as such is therefore well placed to pull off a major charity fundraiser (weblink TRUCE).

This dissertation has just argued that sporting spectacles are unreliable deliverers of symbolic positive messages. We have also seen how in the case of Liberia, opponents were able to stop fighting for a day to watch the national team play together, with little effect on the overall conflict. Even if Truce could convince fighters to stop fighting for one day and play football, whilst providing a welcome respite to all involved, and the chance for humanitarian aid to be delivered (but also the chance for fighters to restock their armories), a single-day cease-fire seems unlikely to make much difference to conflicts which require wide variety of interventions to address cultural, structural and direct violence holistically. Truce International, FIFA and other bodies representative of the high profile world of sport seem likely to make more impact in the money and support they can give to others to build peace, than in their own direct effects to promote the unifying effect supporting football teams, arranging symbolic matches and promoting truces. Indeed, FIFA, UEFA the FA and many football clubs do support charities in many areas of conflict. However, whilst FIFA claims that it 'works from the premise that it has a moral obligation to come to the aid of the world's children' (weblink FIFA2) its 'humanitarian support fund' is a fraction of what FIFA's inner circle spend on hospitality and gifts such as expensive watches (Giulianotti, 2006, p67).

In sum, professional football's contribution to peacebuilding is currently small, but has the potential to increase by sharing more of its multi-billion pound budget. At the moment the people making a significant difference to people's lives are working at grassroots level. It is here that this dissertation will next focus attention by examining grassroots projects in four war-torn countries which provide examples of exactly how football is useful in the '3Rs' of peacebuilding.

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[13] Truce is headed by Ex-England football managers Bobby Robson, Glen Hoddle Graham Taylor and Sven Goran Eriksson and is Chaired by Nancy Dell'Olio.

Chapter 6: Case studies:

6.1 Resolution – Football 4 Peace (F4P). Israel

F4P was started in the UK in 2001 with the intention of providing a platform for Jewish Israeli and Arab Israeli[14] children to meet and form friendships across the social divide. It was hoped that this contact would help promote understanding and respect, overcome distrust, encourage an appreciation of the Others' culture, break down physical and mental barriers and engender a desire for and commitment to peace between the Jewish and Arab Israeli communities, who rarely mix (Lambert, 2006a). In 2005 almost 1000 children and several hundred adults met at F4P training camps in Northern Israel for a structured programme of team building, problem solving, trust games and football coaching.

Lambert (2006) explains that F4P, a project he helps run, is based on five core-values of **trust, respect, neutrality** (i.e. F4P is a politics-free zone), **responsibility** and **equity/inclusion**[15], which are collectively called 'Fair Play' and are continually reinforced. F4P also believe that simply placing Others together to play football is not enough on its own to engender peace and may even amplify conflict if the shared experience is not structured with a focus on values related to peace. By showing children how the five abstract core-values relate to their behaviour in practice it is hoped that the children can be empowered to modify their own everyday behaviour in the quest for a positive peace (Lambert, 2006a).

In 2001 and 2002 F4P used football coaching as a 'hook' to attract football mad Israeli children, whom they then hoped to teach the five core-values in the classroom in-between the footballing activities. By 2003 the project organisers realised that the method of splitting the football and group activities was actually *creating* social divisions rather than diffusing them. Disruptive classroom behaviour was undermining the core-values promoted by F4P and the children were there primarily for the football coaching; often they could not see the benefit of the classroom activities about values, or were simply not interested in them. A training manual was developed (attached as Appendix A) which explicitly structured the football activities around the five core-values, and provided Israeli coaches with a sustainable framework which they could utilise beyond the 10-day training camp, so that the lessons could be continually repeated and reinforced (Lambert, 2006a).

'Fair Play' is present in all the projects activities, however each day one of its five core-values is focussed on in detail through a five-step process. First, the day begins with an introduction to the particular core-value and a few exercises to illustrate it; for example, 'trust' can be demonstrated by a two-person

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[14] Many Israeli Arabs consider themselves Palestinians (Lambert, 2006a).
[15] The five core-values have been influenced by UK curriculum for Citizenship and the Promotion of Spiritual, Moral, Social, and Cultural Development (DfEE and QCA 1999 referenced in Lambert, 2006a).

activity: Roll a ball towards a partner, who faces away from you. The roller has to be trusted to call 'sit' when the ball is directly under their partner's backside. If they get it wrong they help their partner up, if they get it right they high-five and continue. High-fives and other physical and verbal contact, including group huddles, team or individual handshakes, team cheers, and buddy systems are encouraged and demanded frequently to help the children bond (Lambert, 2006a).

Second, coaching is given on a particular football skill, which subtly, or even subliminally, reinforces the core-value. Evidence suggests that activities which explicitly aim at 'team building' or social bonding are less successful than games which thrust people together in a natural way as part of their structure and work subliminally (Keim, 2003, referenced in Lambert, 2006a).Third, a football match is played with mixed-identity teams and is specifically structured so the core-value being promoted is represented in some way. For example, allowing the children to manage the substitutions, but insisting that all participants are given an equal amount of playing time to demonstrate the core-value of equity. Throughout the day coaches closely observe the children, so that any behaviour which violates or exemplifies the core-values can be discussed later in what are known as 'teachable moments' (Beedy, 1997, referenced in Lambert, 2006a), in this case for example, one child not getting enough playing time.

Fourth, the core-value is revisited and the teachable moments are delivered by the coach who asks 'What happened? So what? Now what?'. Lambert (2006) gives an example of one team at a coaching camp over-zealously celebrating winning, which brought their opponents close to tears. The coach used this as a teachable moment to emphasis the core-value of respect, and suggested a positive alternative ending would be each team shaking hands with the Other, allowing both sides to retain their self-esteem. If the teachable moment is an example of the children *obeying* the core principle then praise and applause is given as a reward. Fifthly, a closing physical activity is undertaken to consolidate the day's learning (Lambert, 2006a). In this way the children are subtly trained in conflict resolution.

Parents and coaches from across the divide are also beneficiaries of the F4P project to build mutual trust and respect. Coaches work in teams of three, with one Israeli Jew, one Israeli Arab and one European coach. Mohammed, an Israeli Arab coach, explained that having the chance to work closely with Jews for the first time was a positive experience that had changed him and 'made a switch in his head'[16]. The Head of the Israeli Sports Authority (ISA) voiced the belief that the children in the program could educate their parents and thus extend the reach of the F4P program beyond the 10-day coaching project (interview with David Malka, Head of the ISA), furthermore parents have found themselves sitting next to the Other and

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[16] This author witnessed Mohammed make this declaration during a feedback and evaluation session at the end of F4P's four day train-the-trainer session in Eastbourne on 2/4/2006.

making friendships as they support sons and daughters who are team-mates. It should also be noted that fights have occasionally been caused by parents shouting from the stands.

The project organisers believe *football* to be important in several respects. Football is widely popular, and is the main reason that the children come to the camps. Football is also easy to organise and facilitate and at its best embodies 'Fair Play'. Finally, and most importantly, football has an ability to *cause* conflict due to the passion with which it is played and watched. It is this capacity to generate conflict which allows the teachable moments to emerge from the football training, and sometimes the coaches even deliberately engineer a confrontation. For example, one coach ran a football match with no referee and asked the children to resolve any disputes themselves. Chaos and arguments inevitably broke out, however, the children were forced to move from a state of confrontation to one of Cupertino in fairly administering the rules when they realised that the game could not reasonably continue otherwise. Later on, the coach praised both sides for 'realising responsibility and respect are still important in the most competitive of scenarios.'(Lambert, 2006a, p12). F4P's approach fits in well with Galtung's (1998) suggestion that all people should learn about conflict resolution. By giving the children and coaches the tools and awareness to deal with everyday situations of conflict in a positive manner, society's overall resources to deal positively with conflict are enhanced.

It seems logical to suggest however, that simply giving people the knowledge to become conflict resolution specialists is not enough. Whilst anecdotal evidence points to success in breaking down barriers between the children whilst the camp takes place[17], long-term research is needed to determine whether friendships endure, and if the lessons taught about conflict resolution via 'Fair Play' are understood, remembered *and* incorporated by the children. Also, assuming the F4P project does rehumanise the Other and destroy stereotypes then how easy is it for this good work to be undone by events of the enduring conflict, such as direct exposure to Israeli state terror or Palestinian terrorism? However, even the most cynical observer should accept that the F4P project has no negative value, and quite likely has very positive effects on many of its participants (including coaches and parents). On that basis F4P should be encouraged and expanded as part of a holistic peacebuilding process in the Middle East, and more research should be done into its long-term effects on individuals and communities, such as whether the friendships and values endure once the 10-day camp is over.

'Fair Play' synchronises well with Lederach's (2002) theory of bringing groups closer to positive peace via building interdependent sustainable relationships, based on trust, equity and respect, however it does

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[17] Initially the children usually split into their identity groups whenever given the chance (e.g. during water breaks) but by the tenth day are happily intermingling with new friends from across the divide (interview with John Lambert, F4P).

not fulfil the '*Timing*' requirement that Lederach suggests a successful peacebuilding project should have – that is, it is not ever present and available. What would be a logical step to correct this is the establishment of a children's football league where every club was coached according to 'Fair Play', and where such behaviour, along with winning/drawing was rewarded with league points, thus continually reinforcing 'Fair Play' and providing a neutral place for others to meet regularly.

Despite the wide variety of other projects which use sport in grassroots peacebuilding, the F4P organisers claim that their value-based approach is unique; other projects focus on skills and simply hope putting people together is enough to engender results (Lambert, 2006a). The F4P coaching manual is currently being looked at by UK Sport as being able to provide a framework for peacebuilding activities in many contexts, for example African civil wars (Interview with Pippa Lloyd, UK Sport). The fact that 'Fair Play' and teamwork resonate so well with the values of peacebuilding suggest that this is a wise move by UK Sport. Though F4P is primarily aimed at children its methods could be applied to adults, and in different contexts, for example post-conflict reconciliation or assisting the integration of refugees into host communities (as F4P do in Eastbourne, UK), who may not understand each other but may share a common love of football.

The recent war along the Israeli/Lebanon border meant F4P was unable to operate in 2006, showing the inherent difficulty of mounting peacebuilding operations while violent conflict persists, and the limits of peacebuilding processes which are aimed at long-term systemic change. Tidwell (1998) has pointed out that governments (and to that we might add militias and armies) still enjoy the greatest power to chose between war and peace. However the organisers of F4P recognise that

> '*simply playing the game in the midst of conflict is unlikely to have a long lasting impact on peace. Meaningful sport-based peace projects need to be seen as part of a long game, a series of carefully structured sporting experiences that, alongside a wide variety of cultural, educational, economic and political interventions can make an important contribution to the peace process* (Lambert, 2006b).

In other words, Arab and Israeli direct violence and Israeli structural violence, should also be addressed to transform this conflict towards creating a positive peace. What F4P provide is a simple, cheap and effective tool for combating cultural violence, and teaching people ways to avoid recourse to direct violence in their own lives. They have also found a way to engage one of the hardest constituencies of all to work with: Children.

6.2 Long-Term Reconciliation: Rebuilding Relationships - Open Fun Football Schools (OFFS). Eastern

Europe and the Middle East.

'When OFFS brought Muslim children into Srebrenica, UN forces considered that the risks justified not just vehicle escorts, but helicopters; while emotions on all sides ran high, the event was a success' (Gasser and Levinsen, 2006, p176).

OFFS began in 1998 in Bosnia and Herzegovina and has since expanded into Macedonia, Serbia and Montenegro, Croatia, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia, Lebanon, Jordan and Syria. OFFS is organised and run differently in each country; the following discussion is based on the original school in Bosnia and Herzegovina (weblink OFFS2).

OFFS aims to promote reconciliation and has brought approximately 125,000[18] children aged 8-14 together from across ethnic divides, to play football and have fun. The importance of targeting children is enhanced by the realisation that as time advances fewer 'are old enough to remember living in a peaceful multiethnic Bosnia' (Gasser and Levinsen, 2006, p171).

One of the core principles of OFFS is the 'twin-city' approach, which stipulates that any municipal authority who wishes to take part in OFFS must partner with another municipality from across the ethnic divide, with each municipality organising two teams and working together to organise football based events[19]. The four ethnic teams are then brought together for a five-day football school and new mixed-ethnicity teams are created to play football and hopefully promote 'confidence, skills and teamwork' (Gasser and Levinsen, 2006, p171) and build social networks. This allows conflicting communities to cooperage on a football project which is relatively trivial, rather than critical (such as rebuilding a village). The 'twin city' model also relieves the implementing agency of much of the burden of planning and organising the football event.

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[18] Between 1998 and 2005 96,856 children have taken part in OFFS (returnees are counted once for each year they attend, thus children who have taken part every year are accounted for eight times). 25,628 children were participants in 2005 (OFFS Completion Report, 2005). 30,000 are expected in 2006 (See Weblink OFFS1).

[19] 252 municipalities took part in 2005.

As well as touching the lives of so many children, the twin-city approach means OFFS can benefit adult volunteers who get involved in the schools' organisation[20]. For example, many of the volunteer football trainers 'participated actively in the fighting' (Gasser and Levinsen, 2006, p172) and have used OFFS to re-establish contact with old friends and associates 1from across the ethnic divide. OFFS has also organised street events for the wider community, which have sometimes been the first significant post-war contact between communities which were formerly close but are now deeply hostile to one another (Gasser and Levinsen, 2006). Parents are also a target of OFFS, and as at F4P it is hoped that cheering on the children with the Other who has a child on the same team can build bridges between the adults.

Truth, justice, and the forming of relationships should be central to any process of reconciliation (Lederach, 2002); OFFS fulfils the latter criteria, however (as with F4P) it is not clear how durable these relationships (or any values taught) are. It is likely that the parents who allow their children to take part in such events are the ones that want to try and reconcile. How to reach out to the people who are the most hostile to each other is a problem which deserves further though.

OFFS was developed from 'Danish public sports culture that is characterised by a strong local focus, democratic principles, volunteerism, parent support and the basic principle of "sports for all"' (Gasser and Levinsen, 2006, p170) and focuses on teaching skilful techniques (e.g. overhead kicks) and having fun. However, it is not clear why these values were chosen to be an appropriate framework for the promotion of reconciliation. There seems little synergy between the actual footballing activities which OFFS provides and the core-values central to peacebuilding such as equity, trust and respect, and 'currently little or no materials and specialised expertise on reconciliation have been consciously developed in the [OFFS] project. Most of the approach is instinctive'(see weblink OFFS2, no page numbers). The experiences of F4P suggest it may be insufficient to simply provide an excuse for deeply divided communities to meet and have fun (Lambert, 2006a). OFFS could benefit from an incorporation of 'Fair Play' into its activities, and hopefully will heed the warning delivered in the OFFS Project Evaluation 2005 that without a structure formalised around peacebuilding 'the core theme of reconciliation may fall through the cracks' (see weblink OFFS2, no page numbers) That said, the twin-city approach is a good idea to include in reconciliation projects and the large network of people engaged by the project mean that OFFS could play a big part in building relationships and promoting positive peace in the Balkans.

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[20] 3,465 adult volunteers were involved in 2005.

6.3.1 Short-Term Reconciliation: An Ice-Breaker – World Vision International's (WVI) Youth Reintegration Training and Education for Peace (YRTEP) Project, Sierra Leone.

(Unless otherwise stated, all information in the two Sierra Leonean case studies are from an interview with Samuel 'Konkofa' Koroma - henceforth known as Konkofa – Program Co-ordinator, for the YRTEP, a Sierra Leonean and a key figure in the facilitation and development of the post-war rehabilitation and reconciliation processes to be described.)

After a civil war characterised by atrocities and the use of child soldiers on all sides, several INGOs[21] were charged with reintegrating former rebel fighters from disarmament camps back into their home communities. In some cases people had been forced to participate in atrocities against family members or 'key figures in village society, thus blocking a return to social acceptance' (Richards, 1997, p143). Angry, frightened and bitter villagers were often reluctant to allow the return of the ex-combatants, who in turn were often reluctant to return to their families and communities out of shame or fear of retribution.

Many of the child soldiers had no recollection of life before the conflict, and as such traditional Sierra Leonean methods of reconciliation meant nothing to them; however, the children did share a love of 'global' cultures such as music and football (Richards, 1997). On that basis, WVI developed the YTREP, which involved education, truth and reconciliation commissions, discos and football matches involving female and (mostly) male villagers and ex-combatants. By this method 79,960 youths[22] were returned to their home community, during 2002-2004.

The programme began after disarmament, with ex-combatants being marched into town in front of the entire village. On the first day the villagers would play a football match and the former rebels would watch, in the evening a disco was arranged where both villagers and ex-combatants would intermingle and hopefully have some fun and forget about the awful situation they were confronting. On the second day WVI gathered the village for a large meeting where it was explained that WVI would hand over responsibility for the ex-combatants to the village, and the former rebels would confess one-by-one what they had done and what led them to do it. Many people shed tears during the process. Once they had explained their actions the ex-combatants shook hands with the villagers and a football match was played, with former rebels and villagers playing each other.

On the third day another football match was arranged, but this time the villagers and ex-combatants played on the same teams. As in F4P and OFFS, football was chosen because of its simplicity, low cost and

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[21] Action Aid, Action Farm, Care, Caritas, and World Vision International.
[22] In West Africa a youth is anyone unmarried up to the age of about 40. A married 12 year old is an adult not a youth.

immense popularity. Every village already played football recreationally, so spaces were always available to play on (Richards, 1997).

Figure 2. Youths play football whilst villagers look on

In many cases the villagers were initially sceptical about playing the ex-combatants at football. They reasoned that there was no way that people who had been living in the jungle for so many years could be any good at football. However they were pleasantly surprised when it transpired that not only could the ex-combatants play football, but in many cases they were better than the villagers. It seems proficiency at football was interpreted as a sign that they were not so savage as the villagers suspected, furthermore, because of the skills displayed on the football field the village elders told Konkofa that the ex-combatants could indeed bring something positive to the community.

After the three-day ice-breaker approximately 40 ex-combatants and a few villagers completed a three-month training program consisting of trauma healing of the body and mind and education on health (e.g. HIV/AIDS and malaria), democracy, good governance, environmental awareness and self awareness. After this, the three-day process of football and discos was repeated once more.

The YTREP was used by WVI throughout the whole of Sierra Leone, in a total of 149 chiefdoms. It was not effective everywhere however; fights broke out in 9 chiefdoms. In the Chiefdom of Kailahun where the rebels were based, the enmity was so great that the process had to be abandoned entirely. In the other chiefdoms where fighting broke out traditional tribal methods of conflict resolution were practised in conjunction with the three-day programme to achieve a successful result. In one chiefdom the YTREP appeared to have been accepted by the villagers, but once WVI departed they heard on the news that certain notorious former rebels who had committed atrocities had been killed after WVI left by what Konkofa

called 'secret societies'. This does not mean the YTREP was flawed, just that people should be willing to *try* and reconcile – it cannot be forced upon them. The task for outsiders therefore is to provide a framework and a set of tools for allowing people to achieve the reconciliation that they desire, but may not know how to pursue. Team-sports are one such tool.

The success of WVI's three-day programme can probably be attributed to its format, which contained the three key factors that Lederach (2002) believes are central to the reconciliation process, namely truth, justice and the forming of a new, positive relationship. In this process, football could do nothing for truth and justice, but was an ice-breaker for the developing of new relationships formed on mutual respect rather than fear and was a means to relax both the ex-combatants and the villagers whilst they went through a very difficult few days about which all sides were anxious and fearful. It also reminded both groups of a shared love of football, something that was uncorrupted by the war.

Because the ex-combatants usually displayed better skills at football than the villagers, it is also possible this may have led to resentment rather than respect in some cases. Furthermore, playing matches of rebels-versus-villagers (which the ex-combatants normally won) had potential to magnify the conflict; as has already been argued, using mixed-identity teams is important if a re-enactment of previous hostilities is to be avoided.

Without detailed fieldwork and interviews with the villagers and ex-combatants, it is impossible to isolate the effect that football had on the reconciliation process, and it could just as likely be the disco, or the truth and reconciliation meetings which had the greatest effect, it is also clear that in certain cases the YTREP process was less than successful, possibly because the enmity was too great to overcome. What *is* certain is that Konkofa declared the overall reconciliation process a success in 94 percent of cases, and remains convinced that football played a significant role in this.

6.3.1 Reconstruction (Reculturation) - World Vision International (WVI), Sierra Leone.

After the ex-combatants had been accepted back to their villages one long-term goal of WVI was to reduce tribal loyalties[23] by promoting loyalty to multi-tribal Chiefdom's (similar to English Counties), and therefore blur the boundaries of the previous conflict. The hope was that by fostering inter-chiefdom football tournaments constructive competition between multi-tribal teams would replace destructive competition between tribal identities.

Most towns were divided into zones, with each zone having many mixed tribal identity football teams (sometimes one football team per street) all of which played each other regularly. From these local clubs one team for each chiefdom was picked to play in a national league, which would supposedly encourage new inter-chiefdom rivalries to replace tribal rivalries. Although not a stated objective the shared experience of playing together every week may have also led to relationships being formed that cut across tribal lines. Long-term research into how these football teams have altered perceptions of identity and what sort of durable relationships have been built because of the football leagues is required to find out how significant football is in Sierra Leone's reculturation and long-term reconciliation.

Whilst it may be argued that the leagues could produce future violent conflict between chiefdoms if too successful, there is no precedent for football leading to war without a pre-existing and significant conflict along the same lines of identity. Therefore, it is presumed the league will remain a 'healthy rivalry' between chiefdoms, though it is acknowledged that the notion of replacing one form of hostility with another may send a problematic message.

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[23] Though not caused by tribal issues the civil war had been delineated along tribal lines.

6.4 Reconstruction (Rehabilitation and Reculturation) – Don Bosco Youth Project (DBYP), Liberia

The Liberian civil war has left behind a situation in which tens of thousands of children are in desperate need of protection from the dangers of a destroyed society. Child exploitation (sexual or economic) is common and difficult to detect or prevent (Armstrong, 2006). In the midst of this chaos Don Bosco (a group of Salesian monks) began a football-based project 'by accident' (Armstrong, 2006, p194), which due to the popularity of football in Liberia has organically grown to provide a surrogate family and social support network for thousands of vulnerable children, and employment for over one hundred Liberians (Armstrong, 2006).
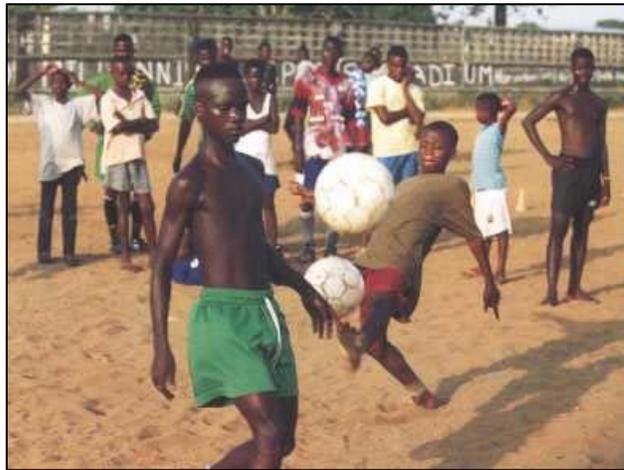
Figure 3. Children practice ball skills at DBYP

Don Bosco originally entered Liberia in 1979 to build educational institutions, but after civil war began in 1989 their mission changed to rescuing children from the fighting and reuniting them with their families where possible.[24] This included child soldiers fighting for a variety of reasons, and child victims of the war some who had been abandoned by parents (Armstrong, 2006). In 2001 several children approached Reverend Joe Glackin and requested a ball and some football shirts so that they might play football to pass the time. 'From such a small acorn grew a football club that took the name Bosco United Sports Association (BUSA)' (Armstrong, 2004, p203). Such was its popularity that today 116 feeder teams (so far) in and around Monrovia, comprising of about 4,500 children, have developed to provide players for BUSA, which now competes in the Liberian Second Division (Armstrong, 2006, p194).

All teams have weekly contact with a Don Bosco worker who preaches the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (weblink CRC), and encourages the children to report abuses to Don Bosco (requiring the

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[24] Many families were reluctant to take back children whom they saw as perpetuating the war, others simply could not be found

development of trust between Don Bosco and the child), who can then provide social, legal and/or health assistance to stop the abuse and help the child. Abuse of children is a common and accepted occurrence in Liberia (Armstrong, 2004) therefore changing children's mindsets to realise there are certain ways in which they should not be treated is a form of reculturation. As of 2004 '13 instances of abuse [were] reported through the teams and resolved usually within the community itself' (weblink DBYP1), for example, the detection and conviction of a child rapist and medical care for the three-year-old girl he raped (Armstrong, 2006, p202). As well as providing emergency child protection services, the football project also acts as a gateway for children to access other long-term rehabilitation projects provided by Don Bosco, such as skills training, night shelters, family tracing and reunification, reconciliation projects, bible reading, and theatre/dance/music workshops. 'Football fixtures were arranged and the sprawling neighbourhoods of Monrovia became personalised and manageable' (Armstrong, 2006, p200).

Thus, a love of football has caused all these children to voluntarily congregate within the easy to manage, sustainable 'hub' of a league, which can now be used to provide a variety of rehabilitation and protection services to its members. DBYP fulfils all of Jareg's (2005, p1) requirements[25] for 'recovery and social integration' of children from armed forces except income generation. It also provides the children with an escape from the pressures of poverty and a collapsed civil society. As with OFFS and F4P, football is the 'hook' which draws participants in.

Youths who fought in the many wars in West Africa were often relatively wealthy whilst fighting continued, so the poverty they experienced in the post-war society made it tempting to revert to old ways of looting and killing. Getting them to adjust to a mindset where they could not simply take whatever they wanted and kill who ever they wanted was a serious challenge (Aning and McIntyre, 2004. Richards, 1997). DBYP sets tough standards and will exclude any members found to be taking drugs or committing serious crimes, and as such is not the most inclusive program one might devise (Armstrong, 2004), but the desire to play football provides an incentive for unruly children to behave themselves. Furthermore, children are heavily involved in the organisation of the teams and the protection of the younger members and thus football is providing a means to empower disenfranchised youths on the margins of society and providing them with a source of pride and a sense of community, whilst teaching them organisational skills, teamwork, trust and responsibility, which will hopefully act as a brake on these children (re)joining the militias in the future.

(Armstrong, 2006).
[25] Restoring family relationships; relationships with the community; children's physical and psycho-social health; organised learning opportunities and vocational training and income generation.

To put the value of reaching out to children in perspective, it was estimated that 15,000-20,000 children rejoined Liberian militias between the 'end' of the civil war in 1997 and 2003 (Armstrong, 2006, p190). In 2003 three major battles broke out in which around 40% of the fighters were children (Armstrong, 2006, p204). The sluggish response to demobilising combatants and providing relief and meaningful change in Liberia from 1997 onwards contributed to this (Armstrong, 2006, p190). Furthermore, thousands of child mercenaries have been crossing borders to fight in neighbouring wars (Aning and McIntyre, 2004).

It should also be noted that, though not an explicit project aim, mixed-identity teams were common, and thus DBYP is likely to have assisted the cause of reconciliation.

> *'players on the team had come from five different warring factions. In the war some had been winners some losers, but the only thing they discussed were the tactics for their next game… There have been no reconciliation workshops, no formal handshakes, no signing of any treaties but for this group of young people the war is definitely over.* (Reverend Joe Glackin. Weblink DBYP2)

Don Bosco's inspiring programme is limited in certain respects. Firstly, like OFFS and F4P, it can only provide assistance to a tiny fraction of those who need it (Armstrong, 2006). Secondly, travel around Liberia takes too long for Don Bosco to be able to effectively run teams based away from Monrovia. Thirdly, and most importantly, as Armstrong has pointed out (2004, 2006), football cannot solve the myriad of social, economic, structural and political problems faced by Liberia, nor stop it slipping back into war. Notwithstanding these practical difficulties, the idea is still an excellent way of providing a sustainable hook which can draw vulnerable children into projects providing valuable rehabilitation services.

Chapter 7: Conclusion

Whilst the distances and separation of the people involved in interstate war make peacebuilding through team-sports impractical, this is no longer the dominant form of warfare. In PSCs, which are characterised by dehumanisation, stereotyping and a deep mistrust and fear of the Other, team sports can play a valuable role in addressing the 3Rs, particularly reconciliation and rehabilitation and combating cultural violence.

Team-sports can provide a politically neutral, sub-systemic 'hub' for Others to build positive relationships and can engage large quantities of willing participants actively as players or organisers. However, not *everybody* likes sport, therefore it cannot be solely relied upon. Football in particular is cheap and simple to organise and most likely to be culturally appropriate , whilst the professional game of football is a global multi-billion dollar industry, which has future potential to provide increased funding streams to peacebuilding projects. In some cases (e.g. Sierra Leone) football may represent one of the few cultural reference points shared by Others. This gives football great potential to be utilised in peacebuilding, as reflected by its dominance in current sport-based peacebuilding projects.

Whilst building relationships at the grassroots is important, events such as the heavy fighting in Liberia in 2003 and Israel's war with Hezbollah in 2006 suggest Tidwell (1998) was correct that governments, militias and armies retain the greatest ability to decide between conditions of war and peace. If war does erupt, sports projects may find it impossible to operate under such conditions, and much of their good work in terms of building relationships may be lost as people experience fresh atrocities. But whilst grassroots peacebuilding projects aimed at building relationships in the long term may have no control over short-term events, Lederach's (2002) insistence that they should be a fundamental part of a comprehensive holistic peacebuilding strategy and are currently relatively neglected seems fair. For example, in Iraq most of the Coalition's efforts seem aimed at tackling structural (nation building) and direct violence (bringing security). Cultural violence appears neglected and this may account for the seeming futility of Coalition efforts as the formerly amicable Shia and Sunni become entrenched in mutual hostility.

Though aimed at different peacebuilding functions, all our case studies share some commonalties. Football was chosen because it is cheap, simple and above all popular. Youths were the main target group, but similar projects can also work on adults. Building networks was perceived as important to the peacebuilding process by the relevant NGOs. Projects using sport were always just one part of a holistic peacebuilding strategy rather than the answer to all problems. Whilst all projects have anecdotal evidence for success, no empirical research has been undertaken. All projects aimed at breaking down barriers used mixed-identity teams (with DBYP this was unintentional), which this dissertation advocates as central to sport-based peacebuilding projects. All projects included females, though in a minority. Furthermore, all the

projects based on voluntary participation (F4P, OFFS, DBYP) saw football as a 'hook' to attract service users.

Some lessons that might be drawn from this dissertation for those who wish to utilise sports in peacebuilding are:

- Use team-sports, which by their nature force Others to interact.

- Find the most culturally appropriate team-sport.

- Use mixed-identity teams.

- When using sport as a hook, be aware that participants may lose interest in peripheral activities; if possible incorporate the project's aims into the fabric of the sport.

- Promote 'Fair Play' rather than winning at all costs.

- Building relationships, teaching values and having fun should be the focus, rather than the sport itself.

- Sports which can cause conflict amongst participants, such as football, have the potential, if used wisely, to be used as a tool to teach participants about resolving conflict.

- Projects should ideally be present and available on an ongoing basis if the lessons are to be ingrained in the participants, therefore a league format has an advantage to short training camps, although the latter may be cheaper and easier to organise.

- Empower participants by giving them some responsibility in organising the projects.

- Look for ways to get Others (individuals, governments etc) working together to organise the events themselves, such as OFFS's Twin City Scheme.

An important quality of peacebuilding projects that use sports are their ability to interest 'difficult to engage' youths, a constituency whom are usually peripheral to peacebuilding, despite their power to drastically shape events both now, as in the case of unsuccessfully demobilised child soldiers, and in the future as they grow into the leaders and fighters of tomorrow.

There are some problems to consider in relation to peacebuilding through sport. Firstly, some participants may simply use the programme to have fun and not really buy into the wider remit. Secondly, if participation is voluntary the participants might be the people who want to reconcile (or their children), rather than those who are the most hostile to each other and would not want to associate with the enemy – how to reach out to these most difficult targets deserves further thought. The third problem, albeit one easy to correct with interdisciplinary training, is that peacebuilders generally know nothing about sport coaching, and coaches know little about peacebuilding. Fourthly, red-card sanctions and match-bans can have a

beneficial effect, encouraging rule-based behaviour and respect for authority, however total exclusion (as practised at DBYP) might be counter-productive if it results in alienating the most unruly participants; projects must remain inclusive where possible.

To conclude, whilst team-sports may be able to address a significant portion of the '3Rs' they cannot encompass the many tasks required by a holistic peacebuilding strategy. However, the wide variety of peacebuilding tasks to which they can be applied mean they should be a core part of conflict specialists' toolboxes, to be used with imagination, and above all a sense of fun.

Figure 4. Children play in Southern Africa as the sun sets

Areas for further Research

- Are friendship networks and values taught by OFFS and F4P sustained over time? Do they affect the choices and behaviour of the participants?

- What effect have inter-chiefdom football leagues started by WVI in Sierra Leone had on perceptions of tribal identity?

- How much funding and specialised equipment do football-based peacebuilding projects require compared to the alternatives?

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