

# Football with three 'halves': A qualitative exploratory study of the football3 model at the Football for Hope Festival 2010

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## Abstract

The football3 model refers to a restructuring of traditional football/soccer rules to bring social and developmental benefits to participating youth and their communities. The model incorporates three 'halves': pre-game discussion, football match, and post-game discussion. This study was carried out to shed light on experiences with the football3 model at the Football for Hope Festival 2010. As an official 2010 FIFA World Cup event, the festival assembled 32 mixed-sex delegations of youth for cultural activities and a football tournament. The study's aim was to inform the model's future design and implementation. Twenty interviews, two focus group discussions, and participant observation were conducted. Findings highlight positive experiences with the model regarding cultural exchange and relationship building, Fair Play and social values, and gender integration. Implementation challenges include the misunderstanding and abuse of football3, notable skill level differences across teams, and pressure on teams induced by the tournament atmosphere. Recommendations for Sport for Development scholars and practitioners centre on systematically formulating desired outcomes, formalizing a curriculum and training plan, prioritizing social outcomes over match results during implementation, piloting football3 in a range of settings over time, and emphasizing monitoring and evaluation. Future piloting and research should inform the potential scale-up of the model.

## Introduction

Around the world, youth participation in sport is increasingly being used to generate positive social outcomes for young people and their communities. At an individual level, sport-based programmes have been linked with the personal development of important abilities and values, including teamwork and social skills, (1) respect and fairness, (2) personal responsibility, (3) self-esteem, (4) a sense of community, (5) and acceptance of racial or cultural differences. (6, 7) These outcomes are considered life skills when applied more widely to daily life. (8) While a majority of studies exploring personal development through sport have been carried out in high-income settings, there is a widespread assumption that these findings are transferrable across different cultural and socio-economic settings. (9)

At the community level, sport-based programmes are thought to bring broader benefits. Studies have recognized the ability of sport to contribute to efforts aimed, for instance, at generating social capital, (10, 11) promoting peace and conflict resolution, (12, 13) encouraging social inclusion, (14, 15) and empowering women. (16, 17) These programmes are increasingly recognized to fall within the field of Sport for Development (SFD), referring to the intentional use of sport, physical activity and play to attain specific development objectives. (18)

Importantly, the success of SFD programmes in achieving positive individual and community outcomes depends on contextual factors and the nature of the sporting experience.

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(19, 20, 21) Involvement in SFD programmes is not sufficient to *guarantee* beneficial outcomes (22, 23, 24) and sport can indeed result in undesirable outcomes if it is improperly implemented. (25, 26) A variety of strategies have been adopted to achieve the goals of personal and community development through sport. Some seek to increase access to sporting opportunities among historically marginalized groups and/or build the self-confidence of participants. (e.g., Moving the Goalposts, 27) Others use sport to attract participants into educational programmes that directly teach life skills and values. (e.g., GOAL programme, 23) Coalter's (28) 'sport plus' and 'plus sport' continuum provides a useful means of distinguishing between the myriad of goals and activities of SFD programmes. 'Sport plus' programmes position sport as the core activity with development objectives comprising an additional component. 'Plus sport' programmes place social issues (e.g., health, peace, education, etc.) at the core, using sport as a *means* to achieve their goals.

In the last decade, organisations have sought to re-structure traditional football/soccer rules, aiming to bring social and developmental benefits to youth and their communities. One example includes what creators at streetfootballworld refer to as 'football3.' (Berlin, Germany: [www.streetfootballworld.org](http://www.streetfootballworld.org)) (29) The model is designed to address a range of social issues *directly within* a football match; hence, the football3 model can be seen as lying in the middle of the 'sport plus' and 'plus sport' continuum. Football3 derives its name from its incorporation of three 'halves': pre-game discussion, football match and post-game discussion. Pre-game discussions offer players a space to determine the match rules. Mediators replace referees in matches, interfering only when players cannot resolve their disagreements. Players evaluate their adherence to the rules during post-game discussions. In using football3, SFD organisations are also encouraged to facilitate communication between participants about the challenges facing their communities (e.g., ethnic conflict, gender discrimination, etc.) during pre- and post-game discussions.

The football3 model was implemented as part of the Football for Hope Festival 2010, co-hosted by streetfootballworld and the International Federation of Association Football (FIFA). As an official event of the 2010 FIFA World Cup, the festival brought together 32 mixed-sex delegations of adolescents from SFD organisations worldwide in Johannesburg, South Africa. Delegations participated in a week of cultural and educational activities, followed by a week of football3 tournament matches. All invited organisations formed part

of the streetfootballworld network based on their usage of sport to address social issues, ranging from social exclusion to ethnic conflict and health-related problems such as HIV/AIDS.

Given a lack of published research on football3 as well as a broader need for stronger evaluation of SFD programmes, (28, 30, 31) this qualitative exploratory study was carried out to investigate the experiences of youth and adults with the football3 model at the Football for Hope Festival 2010. It sought to explore positive experiences and implementation challenges encountered with the aim of offering recommendations on the model's future design and implementation for organisations worldwide.

## Method

### *Setting and Participants*

The football3 model was implemented in a tournament setting during the second week of the Football for Hope Festival (4-10 July 2010). Twelve-minute matches were hosted in Alexandra, a township of Johannesburg. Teams played 5-v-5 on one of two 20x40m turf fields. Every participating delegation was guaranteed seven matches in the first group stage and three matches in the second group stage. Based on match outcomes, teams progressed to the quarterfinals, semi-finals, and finals. Approximately 20,000 spectators and 400 media representatives attended. (32)

The 32 participating delegations included 8 from the Americas, 13 from Africa, 6 from Europe, 3 from Asia and the Middle East, and 2 from Oceania. In total, 56 SFD organisations and 35 countries were represented. Delegations were selected through an application process launched by streetfootballworld in December 2008. Application criteria centred on the organisations' mission, quality of work and potential to benefit from the festival. Each delegation was instructed to form a mixed-sex team of eight participants, four boys and four girls, between the ages of 15 and 18. The responsibility for selecting participants lay with the organisations. (32)

### *Intervention Overview*

According to streetfootballworld, 'football3' describes adaptations to the game of football to ensure that players transfer skills and Fair Play values that they gain in and around sport — including teamwork, physical fitness, fairness, respect, and responsibility — into their daily lives. (33) Streetfootballworld created regulations and guidelines

for the 2010 festival based on experience at previous streetfootballworld/FIFA events of similar structure. (29)<sup>1</sup>

During pre-game discussions, participants decided on key rules (e.g., throw-ins or kick-ins from the side-lines, etc.) and proposed their own rules that were implemented if agreed on by both teams. During matches, players were expected to adhere to these rules, play fairly, and call their own fouls. Both boys and girls were required to be represented on the field at all times.

During post-game discussions, participants voted to award their opponents with a 'Fair Play' point, based on their

opponents' adherence to the football3 rules and guidelines.<sup>2</sup> The time allocation for pre- and post-game discussions was not specified although most discussions ranged from 10 to 20 minutes long. Mediators facilitated and translated discussions, replacing referees as unbiased observers during matches. At the close of the tournament, trophies were given to the winning and runner-up teams. One team was awarded a Fair Play trophy based on a delegation-wide vote and tally of Fair Play points.

To increase familiarity with football3, streetfootballworld distributed regulations and guidelines six months prior to the tournament [see Table 1]. Delegation leaders were

**Table 1.**

Basic Rules	Fair Play Guidelines
Matches are 12 minutes long -- without a change of ends.	Fair Play is a must -- no fouls, no slide tackles, and no insults!
4 players, 1 goalkeeper, and 3 substitutes per team.	Respect your teammates, your opponents, the mediators, officials and spectators.
2 girls and 2 boys from each team must be on the pitch at all times.	In cases when a foul occurs, the fouled player should indicate that a foul has occurred by raising his or her hand. The players should help each other up and the team of the fouled player receives a free kick.
All free kicks are indirect and opponents must be at least 3 metres from the ball.	
Goalkeepers can use their hands in the penalty areas, are able to play until the halfway line but may not throw the ball beyond the halfway line.	There are no referees. Mediators are entitled to call a Fair Play time out and arbitrate if the players cannot agree among themselves. Time is stopped for these discussions.
If the ball goes out the teams must decide who has possession.	In addition, each team has one Fair Play time out per match. It can be used in cases when the players themselves feel that the game is not being played in a fair manner. Only the players can call the timeout and results in a discussion between the teams about how they can improve the level of Fair Play. Timeouts must not be used tactically and can only be called when the ball is out of play.
The off-side rule will not apply.	
Teams receive 3 points for a win, 1 point for a draw and no points for a defeat	
Following the match, the teams will come together and decide on an additional Fair Play point for each team. This can be granted to opposing teams if a team felt their opponents played according to the guidelines on Fair Play and the rules agreed to before the match.	Following intentional or dangerous fouls, the offending player must be substituted out for the rest of the match. Ideally the player's own team or coach would do this. If necessary, the mediator will direct the offending player to be substituted.
In the knock-out stage, drawn matches will proceed directly to a penalty shoot-out, which will include three penalties per team, followed by sudden death.	Teams, coaches, or individual players that consistently play unfairly can be reported to the tournament director by other teams, which can result in an official warning to the offending team or individual. If that team or individual repeatedly demonstrates a lack of Fair Play and respect, the tournament director, in consultation with the mediators and players' committee, can suspend them from the tournament.

Source: 33

<sup>1</sup> For a history of the Football for Hope movement, see FIFA's overview (34).

<sup>2</sup> The football3 model was referred to as 'Fair Play' during the 2010 festival.

encouraged to incorporate football3 into their programmes. During the festival's first week, all participants took part in a workshop to improve their understanding of the model. In addition, one youth member of every delegation was trained as a mediator.

#### *Data Collection and Analysis*

In-depth interviews (IDIs) and focus group discussions (FGDs) were employed to explore experiences with the football3 model as well as the festival as a whole. IDIs were intended to elicit individual experiences, opinions and feelings. FGDs complemented IDIs by facilitating conversation between study participants with the aim of gathering group-level perspectives and discovering the variety in views within the study population. (36) Individual interviews and focus groups have previously been used to evaluate SFD projects worldwide. (e.g. 10, 13, 37) In combination with programme observation, the interviews and focus groups promised to be the most comprehensive and pragmatic approach to our data collection. Discussion guides were created in consultation with streetfootballworld as the co-organisers of the event.

IDIs were hosted during the final three days of the festival. They were conducted by the primary author and lasted for approximately 30 to 60 minutes. IDIs were conducted with youth participants (n=15), coaches (n=2), streetfootballworld staff members (n=2), and a mediator (n=1). Thirteen IDIs were conducted in English, five in French, and two in Spanish. Four interviews were conducted with interpreters present given the limited language proficiency of the interviewees in any of these languages. Interviewees came from 16 countries: Cambodia, Ecuador, France, Germany, India, Israel, Mali, Nigeria, Rwanda, Senegal, Serbia, South Africa, Tahiti, Uganda, United Kingdom, and Uruguay.

Supplementing the interviews, two 90-minute FGDs were conducted by the primary author in English, one with 4 male participants and the other with 5 female participants. Participants were from four countries: Kenya, India, the United Kingdom, and the United States. Discussions were hosted immediately following the close of the festival before the delegations returned home.

IDIs and FGDs were audio-recorded and transcribed verbatim. Interview transcriptions in French and Spanish were translated and re-transcribed in English by the primary author. A set of codes was developed around two broad emerging categories: *positive experiences* and

*implementation challenges*. The primary author coded the data initially through a manual process and later using NVivo 10 qualitative software. The coding process was carried out twice to enhance its reliability. To facilitate a richer analysis, other members of the research team provided input on the codes and categories produced and double-checked for reliability.

Participant observation and informal discussions with festival attendees also formed part of the data collection process. The primary author observed and took extensive notes on the behaviour of participants during both weeks of the festival including their interaction on and off the field, adherence to football3 rules and general wellbeing. Where possible, unobtrusive observation was conducted with different teams and groups to gain a broader perspective of the festival activities. The resulting notes also served as a check against participants' subjective reporting of their perceptions during IDIs and FGDs. (36)

#### **Findings**

##### *Positive Experiences*

Three central themes emerged regarding positive experiences with football3: a) cultural exchange and relationship building; b) Fair Play and social values; and c) gender integration.

##### a. Cultural exchange and relationship building

IDIs and FGDs suggested that the football3 model facilitated opportunities for cultural exchange and relationship building particularly through implementation in an international setting. Exchange occurred both on and off the football pitch. In particular, study participants suggested that the three 'halves' — pre-game discussion, football match, and post-game discussion — helped to build a sense of trust and mutual understanding. For example:

*[The football3 model] gives the players a voice to say what they want and say how they feel...It shows an understanding between players on the pitch...You can trust each other. (Male interviewee, Australia)*

Off the pitch, the cultural and educational activities hosted during the first week in the form of discussions, workshops and fieldtrips were described as offering valuable opportunities for cultural exchange. By requiring international travel for most delegations, the festival setting was presented by some as affording a broader perspective of

the world.<sup>3</sup> For instance, an informal conversation with an adult attendee revealed that members of one delegation had been unable to locate their home country on a world map prior to festival preparations. One interviewee explained that he had never seen a city, paved roads or large buildings before his arrival in Johannesburg. Exchange was also cited as occurring between tournament matches and at the 'festival village,' a boarding school in Johannesburg where teams were accommodated.

Despite language differences, study participants highlighted friendships that were built often through visual gestures and hand signals or verbally through translators. Several discussed common interest in football as creating a sense of community. As explained by an interviewee from the United Kingdom, "We all became one family with football as our language." This friendship building occurred both within and across teams. In particular, this theme was highlighted with regard to the Peres Center for Peace delegation, comprised of four Israeli and four Palestinian youth. According to an Israeli interviewee, he and his teammates became "like brothers," reinforcing this interviewee's belief that "football can bring all people together." Participants often discussed plans to keep in touch after the festival using e-mail and social networking sites, to which a majority reported having access.

Several study participants further expressed pride in having experienced cultural exchange by attending an international festival on behalf of their organisations:

*When I arrive back at my home, my family will say, 'Congratulations for having lived your dream. You made many friends and exchanged many experiences.' It will be a very happy moment. My parents will be very proud of me. (Female interviewee, Ecuador)*

Some planned to encourage their friends to remain highly dedicated to the mission of their organisation, so as to be considered as a candidate for future international festivals.

#### b. Fair Play and social values

Study participants highlighted the importance of Fair Play and social values underlying the football3 model, which includes respect, responsibility, and fairness. On the theme of respect, one participant described another delegation as "role models" for coping with losses of significant goal differentials while maintaining respect for other teams. Participant observation revealed additional instances in

which delegations upheld the rules created during pre-game discussions: teams walking onto the pitch holding hands; teams huddling at the centre-circle for a cheer; and teams congratulating their opponents for scoring a memorable goal.

Turning to the themes of personal responsibility and fairness, some described the football3 model as useful in building a sense of accountability for one's actions in requiring teams to call their own fouls. For example:

*I think it's better playing with the Fair Play rules because the teams have to agree and say when they've done something wrong. They've got to own up [to] it. (Male interviewee, United Kingdom)*

Participants' responses further suggested awareness of the value of fairness. Some expressed concern for high scoring differentials while others created rules during pre-game discussions that sought to facilitate a fair match among potentially unequal teams. One interviewee, for example, explained his delegation's creation of a rule that would penalize anyone who played aggressively around his team member who possessed a prosthetic leg.

#### c. Gender integration

A vast majority of study participants supported and recognized value in using mixed-sex teams. However, a few female interviewees felt that males did not trust females with the ball. Some males were frustrated that females slowed down the game. Nevertheless, most discussed the benefits of gender integration. This theme was addressed at length during the FGDs:

*Usually we don't have a chance to play with girls [in India] because they have things to do for the family and afterwards the housework. So it was a good opportunity that we had a chance to play here. We come to know about the girls, as they are. If we give the chance to the girls, they can play the football... If the girls played well, you were happy. (Male FGD participant, India)*

*In my country of Kenya, girls' football is not taken as something nice because they think that we cannot play as boys play. So it was a nice idea to show not only my country but the other countries that what a boy can do a girl can do. (Female FGD participant, Kenya)*

Study participants were hopeful that in enabling girls to

<sup>2</sup> Sixty-one percent of participants reported that they had never travelled to another country before arriving at the Football for Hope Festival 2010 (38).

show their football abilities, mixed-sex teams might help to challenge gender norms in their home communities in the future.

### *Implementation Challenges*

Three central themes emerged regarding football3 implementation challenges at the 2010 festival: a) misunderstanding and abuse of the football3 model; b) notable differences in skill level across teams; and c) pressure on teams induced by the tournament atmosphere.

#### a. Misunderstanding and abuse of the football3 model

Despite support offered for football3, findings suggested widespread misunderstanding of the model's primary purpose: to instil Fair Play and social values transferrable into daily life directly within a soccer match. The misunderstandings hindered implementation of the model as planned.

An overwhelming majority of study participants suggested that not all teams followed the rules. Many participants' comments echoed the words of a male interviewee that "some teams...did not respect the rules and they thought just about winning, not Fair Play." Players reportedly used the rules strategically by exaggerating fouls to obtain the ball from their opponents, a point highlighted by FGD participants:

*Many teams take the Fair Play as an advantage...When the other team is going to score, one player will just fall down and raise his or her hand for Fair Play to get the ball. (Female FGD participant, Kenya)*

*It was a bit pathetic. If I touched someone, he would just go flying and if they raised their hands, they would get a free kick. (Male FGD participant, United Kingdom)*

Moreover, several teams attempted to create rules that would enhance their chances of winning. One team, for instance, always proposed that goals scored by girls should count double, which was motivated by the high skill level of their female players. Some teams resisted giving out Fair Play points when not receiving a point from their opponents, a practice viewed by one participant as "obnoxious" (female interviewee, United Kingdom).

In addition to widespread non-compliance with the rules, findings suggest that participants misunderstood the role of the mediator. For some, mediators empowered participants

to express their views and make their own decisions in matches. However, a majority raised concerns at times contesting decisions made by mediators. Several believed that mediators compromised the physical side of the game, which they viewed as an essential component of football although not a key element of football3. A few stated that they did not always trust mediators' translations during discussions: "mediators twist our words" (female interviewee, South Africa).

As further evidence of misunderstanding, several interviewees believed that the football3 rules could have been defined and communicated more clearly from the outset. A mediator interviewed described this challenge: "We tell [the participants] 10 rules one day and the next day 15...In the end, they are lost...As a result, there are arguments." In one example, confusion resulted from the addition of a rule mid-way through the tournament, allowing mediators to cut overly physical matches after giving a team three warnings. Teams were additionally uncertain about the number of girls required on the pitch: whereas the rulebook (see 35) stated that "2 girls and 2 boys from each team must be on the pitch at all times," the sex of the 5<sup>th</sup> player (the goal-keeper) was not specified. Although the festival organisers had encouraged delegation leaders to incorporate football3 into local programming prior to the festival, a number of study participants reported their first exposure to the programme at the festival.

Beyond evidence of confusion over rules on the field, views on the overall purpose of the festival ranged broadly. In discussing implementation of the football3 model, a festival organizer highlighted the importance of cultural exchange above match outcomes:

*We've wanted to ensure that the kids understand that football is not the focus and their interaction and engagement is what we want to achieve. So, the emphasis at the beginning is always to integrate the delegations—to take a little away from the drive to win in the football. During the first week, we play virtually no football at all. (streetfootballworld interviewee)*

In contrast with these views expressed, a few participants mistakenly arrived anticipating an opportunity to be recruited for professional football:

*Some people are here because they think that scouts are going to be here to see them and take them...All they want is to be picked [as professional football players] and to be famous. (Male interviewee, Nigeria)*

Several study participants further discussed what they perceived as an underlying discrepancy within the football3 model being implemented in a tournament setting. They found difficulty in balancing a simultaneous focus on Fair Play values with pursuit of the tournament trophy. An adult and participant articulated this challenge as follows:

*For me, there is a big problem. On the one hand, there is Fair Play and on the other there is football and the results. There are two types of teams: teams that are here to win and teams that are here to have fun...What is the goal of this event?...Should [the matches] only be about the exchanges or about producing a winning team?...What I always say is that this is not a traditional tournament. It involves Fair Play, which has to be put ahead of the game itself. (Male interviewee, Tahiti)*

*In my opinion, some of the teams are forgetting their values—the Fair Play values and everything they worked for to get here. To us—and I know it's happened to other teams—winning becomes more important than what the tournament stands for. That's the worst part because the tournament wouldn't be here if it wasn't for everything that these organisations have worked for. Forgetting everything for a trophy—I don't like it. (Male interviewee, Australia)*

Most agreed that the competition demonstrated by teams was extreme. They felt that promoting Fair Play values should be of equal or greater priority than match outcomes.

#### b. Notable differences in skill level across teams

Notable differences in skill level across teams caused further implementation challenges. Some teams were new to the game of football. For example, three delegations brought mentally disabled players. The weakest teams were most often deemed the victims of high scoring and unfair play. An adult interviewee discussed this tendency, calling into question the very premise of football3:

*When you lose 10 to 0, the first time, it doesn't matter; the second time, it's more frustrating; and the third time, you don't feel like playing anymore and you want to go home. Is this Fair Play?...It's a psychological disaster for the players...It's not right. (Male interviewee, Tahiti)*

On the other hand, some teams had extensive football experience and were set on winning. Higher-skilled teams were perceived to abuse the football3 rules and guidelines, heightening the level of intensity and competition. As highlighted by a participant:

*Certain teams here are part of football schools. They play football throughout most of the year... They are used to playing with competition. This is why, here, even if there is Fair Play, they still have the idea of competition in their heads. (Female interviewee, France)*

Informal discussions reinforced that the differences in skill level were a result of the participant selection process carried out by the organisations in attendance. Discussions suggested that while some delegations selected those participants most dedicated to their organisation's mission regardless of football skill, others recruited experienced football players to field a strong team.

#### c. Pressure on teams induced by the tournament atmosphere

Study participants suggested that the tournament atmosphere—including announcers, large television screens, and spectator seating—caused teams to feel pressure to perform. While several reported enjoying the heightened sense of pressure they felt on the main field, a majority felt that the pressure contributed towards instigating rough tackles and disregard for the football3 rules and guidelines.

The host delegation faced the greatest difficulty with pressure from the spectators and atmosphere. Both a male and female interviewee respectively described their team's challenge of coping with the pressure, caused primarily by spectators' lack of familiarity with football3:

*When the crowd are screaming, [my teammates] are getting so frustrated...Because we are the hosts, [the spectators] are expecting much from us...They have to understand that the Football for Hope is not all about winning. It is all about being fair and meeting other people from other countries. (Male interviewee, South Africa)*

*Our supporters here, they are swearing at us...It hurts at the end of the day...They call us cows, big cows [in the local dialect]. (Female interviewee, South Africa)*

Despite these challenges cited, a majority recognized the football3 rules as being new and believed that rule adherence improved over the course of the tournament—that teams were “learning more and more every day” (male interviewee, Uganda). For instance:

*This is the first time that this festival is an official [FIFA World Cup] event. The first time, you're always going to have ups and downs. But over time, [the model] will develop to be stronger, so I think they should keep using it. (Male interviewee, Australia)*

Study participants made several recommendations: ensure that only teams truly committed to Fair Play values take part; create separate divisions based on skill level; and ask teams to vote on awarding Fair Play points after matches in writing rather than verbally.

### Discussions and Implications

This study set out to investigate the experiences of youth and adults with the football3 model at the Football for Hope Festival 2010, with the aim of offering recommendations on the model's future design and implementation for organisations worldwide. Based on our findings, we offer five recommendations:

- 1) Systematically formulate desired outcomes;
- 2) Formalize a curriculum and training plan;
- 3) Prioritize social values over match outcomes during implementation;
- 4) Pilot in a range of settings, over an extended period of time;
- 5) Emphasize monitoring and evaluation to assess effectiveness and impact.

We proceed to discuss the study findings in the context of these five recommendations, considering the potential for future implementation in both tournament and non-tournament settings.

#### *Systematically formulating desired outcomes*

Based on widespread misunderstanding of football3 at the 2010 festival, we recommend that future implementers systematically formulate desired outcomes of the model, tailored to the delivery setting. Specifically, we suggest advancing the creation of a football3 programme theory (also referred to as a 'theory of change'), detailing the sequence of causes and effects that are presumed to lead to the desired outcomes. The need for greater clarity of desired outcomes of sport-based programmes has been consistently noted in the literature. (31, 39) Indeed, sound theoretical frameworks are often missing in SFD programmes, due to a focus of many SFD organisations in the early stages on programme implementation and fulfilling funding requirements. (39)

The Football4Peace programme in Israel offers one example of a sound philosophy for pursuing social integration through football that has been tested and refined over time. (12) The sustained growth of the programme and its increased impact over the past decade provides evidence of

its successful 'teaching philosophy.' We are confident that similar milestones can be achieved with football3's 'theory of change.'

Ultimately, we view the football3 model's adaptability to address a range of social development issues at the community level as its greatest asset. However, the very adaptability of the model reinforces the importance that its desired outcomes be established at the outset and customized to fit the delivery context.

#### *Formalizing a football3 curriculum and training plan*

After formulating desired outcomes, we recommend formalizing a curriculum and training plan to address some of the challenges that the participants faced (e.g., confusion over rules and the role of the mediator, etc.). Other SFD organisations have developed curriculum and training plans that could serve as a resource (see Football4Peace, 45, and Grassroot Soccer, 46, as examples). A football3 curriculum should clarify key learning objectives while providing step-by-step delivery guidelines and tips for implementation.

Alongside a guiding curriculum, a training plan should be developed to detail when and how stakeholders (e.g., participants, adults, the community, etc.) will become familiar with the model. If implementation occurs in a tournament setting, teams should be trained on the rules in advance. Moreover, given issues with overly critical spectators, we recommend incorporating a plan for educating influential stakeholders and the broader community. This plan could involve delivering information on the primary purpose of the tournament and importance of social values to spectators upon their arrival at the sporting grounds.

#### *Prioritizing social outcomes over match results during implementation*

During the delivery of football3, implementers should prioritize social outcomes over match results. According to our findings, study participants described the "desire to win" as excessive appears to have instigated a majority of challenges faced, including the abuse of rules, lopsided game results and pressure to perform. Existing literature has noted the difficulty of balancing the pursuit of sporting and non-sporting outcomes. (25, 41, 42, 43) According to Sugden (12) in his research on the Football4Peace programme in Israel:

*Sport is inherently competitive and this can be one of its most enjoyable qualities. Of course, if sport becomes 'too...*

*...competitive'—when the quest for victory at all costs overrides the desire to take part in a balanced and equitable struggle for achievement—then any attempt to use sport to enhance positive social goals can be undone.*

Sugden does not suggest that competition should be eliminated to achieve social outcomes. A guiding philosophy of Football4Peace centres on inciting conflict during matches to provide a “teachable moment,” which is an opportunity to teach about resolving conflict and in turn instil positive values. In the case of football3, balancing the emphasis on match and social outcomes appears complicated by the model’s positioning on the ‘sport plus’ and ‘plus sport’ continuum. Arguably the most innovative feature of the model—addressing social development directly within a sporting match—gives rise to its greatest challenge: maintaining a focus on social outcomes without diminishing competition as an indispensable component of the game of football.

Several modifications during implementation could help reduce the tendency of teams to become “too competitive.” Organisations should work to pair teams of similar skill level, as some study participants suggested. Research posits that contestants should be evenly matched in order to create a “level playing field” (10) and achieve positive outcomes in a sporting contest that emphasizes Fair Play. (44) In a tournament setting, such pairing could occur either through a pre-selection process or the creation of separate divisions. Participants should feel emotionally safe during matches, a feature recognized as important for fostering positive outcomes in youth sport. (21) This recommendation comes in light of the pressure felt by teams to perform, which was induced by the announcers, large television screens and spectators. Finally, football3 implementation in a non-tournament setting could assist in mitigating an excessive drive to win; matches could be positioned as “friendly” rather than having teams form part of a tournament bracket leading to the championship.

*Piloting in a range of settings, over an extended period of time*

Upon formulating desired outcomes and formalizing a curriculum and training plan, we propose that the football3 model be piloted in a range of settings over an extended period of time. In our analysis, additional piloting is justified by the positive experiences of study participants regarding cultural exchange and learning, Fair Play and social values, and gender integration. Although at this point in time, we cannot draw conclusions on the model’s

effectiveness, we consider our findings in relation to future football3 implementation.

First, study participants appreciated the opportunity to interact with and learn from diverse individuals in an international setting. Relationship building has been noted as a necessary component of a successful sport-based programme. (20) In other sport-based programmes, cultural exchange has been shown to assist in building friendships and generating a feeling of togetherness, for instance, among racially diverse South African youth (6) and ethnically divided communities in Sri Lanka (37) and Cyprus. (13) Experiences at the Homeless World Cup support the ability of a sport-based international event to generate social capital among disadvantaged youth. (15) Together, these findings suggest that the football3 model could be well positioned as a tool for building social cohesion in a community, especially in conflict settings. The inclusion of cultural and educational activities was viewed positively at the 2010 festival and could be of particular benefit towards this end. Existing literature suggests value in incorporating such activities (e.g., arts, dance, etc.) into sport-based programmes aimed at addressing peace and conflict resolution (6, 13). Future implementers should ensure that such “off-pitch” activities are led by highly trained and capable facilitators, particularly in discussions about sensitive issues such as conflict. (12)

Second, findings show positive experiences surrounding the model’s Fair Play and social tenets including respect, responsibility, and fairness. While findings on mediators were divided, study participants appear to have valued the opportunity to demonstrate personal responsibility and ownership of football3—important qualities for a sport-based programme that promotes personal growth and development. (3, 14, 43) Existing literature, though primarily conducted in physical education classes in first-world settings, provides evidence that sport-based programmes can promote social and moral development. (22, 48, 49) These findings together suggest potential value in tailoring football3 to address the social and moral development of youth. The literature emphasizes the importance that such initiatives be based in sound theoretical principles. (50) Implementers should look to existing theory (e.g., Bandura’s social learning theory, 51) in developing the basis for their programmes.

Third, findings on the whole show positive experiences regarding usage of mixed-sex teams, although comments of certain participants suggest a need for the further exploration of this area. Study participants generally

supported integrating boys and girls, suggesting the potential to challenge prevailing gender norms in their communities by demonstrating the athletic abilities of females. The importance of providing girls with sporting opportunities has been well documented. (16, 52) Nevertheless, the suggestion from some participants that female players were viewed as valuable only if they played well reinforces the importance of future piloting of the model to explore its potential to address complex issues of gender and power dynamics. Future implementers should be mindful to carefully plan and tailor usage of sport for female empowerment to the local context, given the sensitive nature of the topic and potential for a negative community response. (53)

In piloting football3 across different settings, implementers should aim to deliver football3 programming over an extended time period. Existing literature has noted that the effects of sport-based programmes are determined by their frequency, intensity of participation and the degree of participants' adherence over time (54). Research highlights limitations of short-term sporting initiatives on long-term impact, for instance, regarding peace processes (10, 12). The streetfootballworld team (33) itself recognizes the importance of sustained football3 implementation to achieve desired outcomes:

*This way of using football for social development will not succeed overnight. The best football3 programmes work with players and communities over a long period of time to build the essence of the idea and to ease players into using the principles of the dialogue sessions in their lives off the pitch.*

We perceive value in delivering the football3 model through a once-off event based on positive experiences at the 2010 festival. Nevertheless, we suggest that the programme's long-term implementation would assist organisations in achieving individual outcomes and tailoring the model towards addressing local social challenges. Organisations might alternatively integrate on-going programmes with once-off events, the synchronization of which has been advanced as adding potential value to SFD programmes. (55)

#### *Emphasizing monitoring and evaluation*

In our final recommendation, we highlight the importance of monitoring and evaluation (M&E) to future piloting. A need for stronger M&E of SFD programmes has been consistently noted in the literature. (19, 28, 30, 31) At the

2010 festival, streetfootballworld carried out an M&E plan, incorporating surveys and interviews and publishing findings internally to capture lessons learned. (38) Beyond the festival, streetfootballworld reports that organisations are using versions of football3 in their communities, (29) but the programme's successes and challenges in this extended context remain unclear. Through M&E, SFD organisations will be positioned to set benchmarks and targets, celebrate their achievements, incorporate learning into future implementation and share findings broadly.

Future studies may benefit from including control groups that compare the outcomes of football3 with SFD interventions incorporating traditional football matches or no intervention at all. Quantitative and qualitative methods should be integrated in light of widespread recognition that mixing different types of methods can strengthen a study—particularly when examining complex social phenomena. (e.g., 56, 57) Research should explore football3 programmes that address a range of desired outcomes while comparing implementation in tournament and non-tournament settings. In particular, research should investigate the degree to which the benefits of the model transcend the football3 setting: whether and, if so, in what ways values are gained and incorporated into participants' daily lives. If future investigations demonstrate that the football3 model is effective and has a positive impact, scale-up may be justified.

#### *Study Limitations*

A number of methodological limitations of this study must be noted. The primary author both collected and analysed the data, which may have caused bias in data interpretation. However, in accordance with the recommendations in the literature, (36, 58) peer examination was used as a check on the data interpreted. Five delegations were excluded from the study due to insufficient resources for language translation, hindering our ability to generalize perspectives across festival attendees. Some interviewees used a second language to participate in the study, which may have limited their ability to speak honestly. FGDs contained fewer than expected participants due to the travel schedules of delegations, which had a likely impact on the richness of the discussions. Finally, the observational component of this research was undertaken in a largely unstructured way. To use the full benefits of the observation technique, it deserves greater planning and perhaps a more structured approach in the future. Overall, we again note the nature of this study as exploratory and recommend rigorous future research to test the effectiveness of the football3 model and to cautiously

consider its impact both during the football match and over the long term. (37)

### Conclusion

By providing insight into the experiences of youth and adults with the football3 model at the Football for Hope Festival 2010, this qualitative exploratory study contributes to the broader field of SFD. We conclude that the football3 model merits future use as a tool for addressing social development issues through the game of football. Our findings suggest that football3 offers numerous positive experiences for festival participants that pertain to cultural exchange and relationship building, promotion of Fair Play and social values, and gender integration. Through its adaptability to address a range of social challenges within a football match, the football3 model could be tailored to a variety of local settings.

However, challenges faced during implementation at the 2010 festival reinforce the need for specific modifications to the football3 model. Our findings highlight widespread misunderstanding and abuse of the football3 model, which were issues that resulted from notable differences in skill level across teams and the pressure on teams induced by the overall tournament atmosphere. We recommend that future implementers systematically formulate the desired outcomes of the model, formalize a curriculum and training plan, prioritize social outcomes over match results, pilot football3 in a range of settings over an extended period of time, and emphasize monitoring and evaluation to assess the model's effectiveness and impact. Future piloting and research should inform the potential scale-up of the model for organisations worldwide.

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