

wista

VSA'S WINDOW ON THE WORLD OF DEVELOPMENT



Football cuts across gender in Vanuatu

YOUTH SPORT CHANGES LIVES IN SOUTH AFRICA

Sport for Development

ISSUE #1 / 2010

vsa
AOTEAROA
NEW ZEALAND
TE TŪAO TĀWĀHI VOLUNTEER SERVICE ABROAD



Tēnā koutou o Te Tūao Tāwāhi

Volunteer Service Abroad
works with people in
Africa, Asia and the Pacific,
adding the skills and energy
of New Zealanders to
strengthen communities
striving for change.

About VSA

VSA is a home-grown Kiwi volunteering
organisation and has placed over 3,000
volunteers in countries throughout
Africa, Asia and the Pacific.

Our volunteers have been
in demand for 50 years.

VSA only sends exceptional
New Zealanders as volunteers.

VSA is an independent charity – we are non
governmental, non religious and non political.

Become a VSA volunteer

Go to www.vsa.org.nz to find out about
application criteria, to register your skills, or to
see what assignments are being advertised.

Become a VSA supporter

VSA sends people not money, but we
need money to send people. Every dollar
of your money donated delivers VSA
programmes and volunteers in the field.

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Phone 0800 VSA TO GO (0800 872 8646)
for details of the branch nearest you.



Helping people take control of their future

Te Tūao Tāwāhi Volunteer Service Abroad Inc
is a registered charity (CC36739)
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kia ora



Deborah Snelson

World Cup fever is almost upon us as New Zealand gears up to cheer the All Whites' entry in the competition in South Africa. Sport is heralded as something that brings nations together and crosses boundaries – and some see it as a new tool for development. This VISTA looks at programmes where sport is an integral part of our partner organisations' development work and shares first-hand perspectives of this *'grassroots quiet revolution'*.

There are strong connections between involvement in sport, enhancing self-esteem, and being an effective team player. These connections can lead to sport playing a constructive role within the community. Our partners' and volunteers' voices are thoughtful about the less obvious aspects that match well with good development principles – looking at ways to involve girls and women, ensuring disabled people are not excluded, participation in the broadest sense, and being *'community-driven not just community-based'*. VSA volunteers bring skills and energy to their work and it is probably nowhere more clearly manifested than in the sports arena!

Budget constraints mean I have not been travelling to meet with our partners and volunteers this year. However it has made me appreciate all the more how important the voices of our partners and volunteers are in creating a real understanding of VSA's work. This was also brought home to me recently at a training workshop for returned volunteers aimed at storytelling and raising funds for VSA. Here they shared moments of revelation and insight, and instances of strong human connection. For me this was a powerful affirmation of the wellspring flowing from people-centred development.

To give further voice to our partners and volunteers, we have been working on developing a new website which will be launched mid-year. We've also developed a new, bolder cover design for VISTA and, in line with our ethics, chosen to go with environmentally responsible paper. It is chlorine free and manufactured using farmed eucalyptus trees.

Thank you to all of our supporters who responded to our recent funding appeal. All of us at VSA very much appreciate your generosity which allows us to go on recruiting exceptional New Zealanders to work with our partners – as they shape their futures.

Deborah Snelson, CEO

VSA values our strategic relationship and acknowledges
the significant support of Nga Hoe Tuputupu-mai-tawhiti:
NZAID – the New Zealand Government's international aid and development
programme in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade (MFAT).



Te Tūao Tāwāhi Volunteer Service Abroad

Patron: His Excellency The Honourable Anand Satyanand, GNZM QSO, Governor-General of New Zealand
President: Gavin Kerr, QSO | Kaumātua: Awi Riddell (Ngāti Porou), QSM
Council Chair: Farib Sos, MNZN | Chief Executive Officer: Deborah Snelson

National office address: Te Tūao Tāwāhi Volunteer Service Abroad, 32 Waring Taylor St, PO Box 12246, Wellington 6144,
Aotearoa/New Zealand. Tel: 64 4 472 5759. Fax: 64 4 472 5052. Email: vsa@vsa.org.nz.

Website: www.vsa.org.nz

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VSA'S TOP 10 SUPPORT CHART

There are so many ways you can support VSA. Choose from our top 10 and with your help our volunteers and the communities they work with can continue to provide a brighter, more promising future for those who need it most.

this week

Ways you can support VSA

1



YOU ARE A STAR

Give a regular donation

2



Donate today

3



Send an online donation

4



Come along on an Adventure trip

5



Encourage a friend to become a VSA supporter

6



Get your workplace to support VSA through payroll giving

7



Find out more about leaving a bequest to VSA

8



Volunteer your time and help us with some of our fundraising campaigns

9



Join as a member

10



Buy a friendship bracelet – or two!

You can be part of the change. Please support VSA today.

visit www.vsa.org.nz or call
0800 872 8646 for more information

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On the cover: Boys, many of whom are Aids orphans or infected by HIV, are offered sanctuary at the Rural Economic Development Association in Cambodia, and like all young people, they seek out sport. "In the limited space in our enclosure in Svay Chrum district, the volleyball court is a valuable corner for games," says VSA volunteer June Vincent who is working with REDA as a Strategic Management Adviser.
Photo by Esther Water

Young people as changemakers



Late last year, Students Partnership Worldwide's (SPW) Australia Coordinator, Thulsi Narayanasamy, ran the pre-departure briefing at VSA in Wellington for the next intake of young New Zealanders going to southern Africa. VISTA took the opportunity to find out more about her and SPW.

What excites you about SPW? My passion for SPW comes from first-hand experience. I was a SPW volunteer in India before I became a staff member. I guess I had been quite sceptical of development. What's the point

of us going over there? Is it possible to have a programme based on solidarity and mutual learning? The biggest thing that amazed me [on the programme] was that empowerment and capacity building really does exist if you have the right model for it which I feel SPW really has. SPW works through partnership so international volunteers are partnered with volunteers from the country, or the village where they are working.

What did you learn in India? Young people don't need to be seen as a target for resources, they can be seen as a resource themselves. In all the countries we work in young people make up the largest portion of the population and I think it is really important to harness that energy and enthusiasm. In the pre-departure briefing here, you pitch things at quite a high level and the young people jump and meet you there.

What about the argument that it is better to send skilled people if you want to create change? Our idea of change isn't based on the skills approach. I think there are placements which definitely require skilled people because they are building the capacity in the area of say marketing or finance or something like that. Whereas what we are trying to achieve is change in a very different sort of way. It is very organic and grassroots. This approach is not around particular skills but more around empowering people. Our international volunteers aren't there to provide people with skills, they're there to learn and to support and to work to shared goals and in solidarity. (Find out more about SPW on page 14 or go to www.vsa.org.nz/volunteer/spw.html)

Above: The 2010 SPW recruits are from left, Abigail Dawson, Paul Bedggood, Thulsi Narayanasamy (trainer), Karen Retter, Ashleigh Milne, and Shanti Niven.



Africa Forum

It's all about listening and learning from each other as VSA volunteers and partner organisations get together annually in Africa to nut out what is and is not working. Africa Programme Manager Thomas Banda says the latest forum in Tanzania, running under the title of "Capacity Building Through Taking Ownership", was aimed at having open conversations with partner organisations, volunteers, VSA staff and other key stakeholders in order to get their perspectives on VSA's work in Tanzania.

The forum provided an opportunity to learn and reflect on VSA's partnerships at the same time as reviewing what was working well, assessing any gaps, and looking at ways in which we could all improve our systems. "In line with VSA's monitoring and learning framework, a particular interest was to deepen our understanding of our partner organisation and volunteer needs and evaluate if we are meeting our obligations," he added.

In the front row, teachers from Kaloleni Secondary School (l-r) Mrs Lema, Science Teacher Adviser Andrea Schofield, Mrs Kigingi, and English Teacher Adviser Cecilia Johnson ... in the background, Father Aloyce, who is in charge of the health department of Moshi diocese (Huruma Hospital), and Sister Symphoriana.



Like Minds

Five UniVols (VSA University Volunteers) flew the VSA flag at the Parihaka International Peace Festival near New Plymouth in early January. It was a busy time as up to 30 people an hour streamed in, staying five minutes or more to investigate what VSA had to offer and what they had to offer VSA. "Of the 8000 people who went along to Parihaka, most would have a commitment to global peace and equality so they were interested in different ways they could be part of the change," says Torrey McDonnell, one of the UniVols at the festival. *Above, UniVol Josie Orr in conversation at Parihaka.*

Fairtrade Vsa

In line with the philosophy of VSA, the Wellington office is now a certificated Fair Trade workplace providing a choice of fair trade tea and coffee at meetings, briefings, and for staff. VSA Corporate Services Manager, Judy Mikoz, who is also on the board of the Wellington Trade Aid Trust, says fair trade is an obvious values match with VSA. "Staff preferred to use fair trade products and were right behind the move." Excitingly, VSA pre-empted Wellington City and Dunedin City who became New Zealand's first fair trade cities late last year. There are 49 Fair Trade workplaces in Wellington and a total of 137 across the country.



Quick bytes

www.reflect-action.org

This site claims to have “an innovative approach to adult learning and social change, which fuses the theories of Brazilian educator Paulo Freire with participatory methodologies”. It lives up to its own press, containing some excellent tools for participatory methods for use in development work and research.

www.gapminder.org

This is a wonderful site if you want to understand global inequalities. It presents and animates graphs showing changes in various development indices for countries of the world. Build your own maps and graphs. It doesn't take much time to get used to the site and there is a wealth of data available.

www.thehungersite.com/clickToGive/home.faces

The Hunger Site is a painless way to donate! Thanks to the sponsors of the site, each time you click on a button, sponsors cough up with a small amount to go towards food relief. There are links to various other campaigns and information about hunger. The site markets itself as “a leader in online activism”.

PROFESSOR JOHN OVERTON

THINGS TO DO TODAY

Prepare report on neonatal services

Write and post letter home

Remember to call round to neighbours for English lesson

Check on premature babies and new mums

Buy some mangoes

WHAT DO YOU NEED TO DO TODAY?

Read Anne's letter home on page 15 and find out more about what she's been doing in Viet Nam ...

Development as Freedom

by Amartya Sen

OXFORD UNIVERSITY PRESS 1999

Amartya Sen's *Development as Freedom* has been around for a decade, but his message is still relevant today.

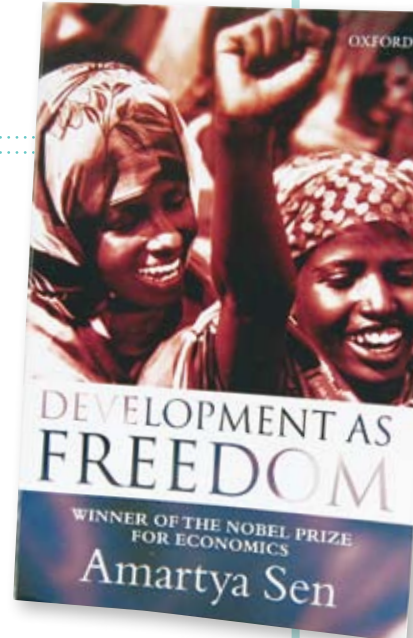
Sen has a five-fold definition of freedom as: political freedom and civil rights; economic freedom, including access to credit; access to social opportunities, health care, education and social services; transparency guarantees, or what can be expected from government and other agencies; and collective security, including welfare provisions and emergency relief. Sen is clear that these 'freedoms' must be implemented together.

Sen refutes Lee Kuan Yew's thesis that economic growth must be secured in a developing country before political and civil rights are granted. In his opinion, Singapore's success is not the model to follow. Sen says it is not clear that authoritarian regimes produce greater economic growth. He argues that people's welfare is better addressed through a more democratic system as it encourages people's participation, and democratic accountability encourages leaders to deal with natural and man-made problems. Sen provides evidence to support this position by noting that there has never been a famine under a democratic regime.

Sen, an Indian who has taught at Oxford, Cambridge, the LSE and Harvard as well as Calcutta and Delhi, has a deep respect for the individual and the wisdom of local communities to do the right thing. He challenges the view that aid goes to passive recipients and that increasing wealth is the key to development. It is reassuring to know a Nobel Prize winning economist supports a comprehensive and nuanced approach to development that has freedom as its goal.

Development as Freedom is essential reading for those seeking to understand current development theory, policies, and practice.

PETER SWAIN



Sport for change

Has sport become a recognised tool for development? Who's using it and how successfully? *Adele Broadbent* takes a look.

Seventeen-year-old Miranda spent every day after school drinking at the shebeens (informal taverns). For her, like a lot of her peers in a rural community on the East Cape of South Africa, there was not much more on offer to fill her time than drinking the local brew.

Miranda's not a made up figure. She is a success story. When VSA volunteer Rachel Hogg met up with her as part of Students Partnership Worldwide's (SPW) monitoring and evaluation, Miranda had turned a corner. "Miranda had come a long way," says Rachel, "and it was to do with SPW educators setting up a youth resource centre in her community and offering positive recreation activities."

For 21-year-old Nokwanda, it was joining a SPW-initiated sports team and helping the peer educators organise events that altered how she viewed her future.





SCHOOL SPORTS

All eyes are on the ball at a volleyball game

during the annual provincial competitions in Takeo province, Cambodia, where schools from the 10 districts in the area attempt to qualify for the finals. Michael Sheppard is a Primary Education Adviser for the Takeo Provincial Office of Education, Youth and Sport, focussing on the Child-Friendly Schools programme. He says the tournament (left) is one of the rare occasions when students get the opportunity to interact with their peers from other schools due to constraints on resources. It's a hugely popular event, as shown on the faces of the girls as their team heads off on a *remork* (transport) to their next match (middle). But sports also happen at a local level, like Takeo Krong School where Michael works with teachers and students one week a month. There, with some inventive thinking, board games come into play (below). The lack of sports fields, sealed courts or gyms creates restrictions in rural Cambodian schools, according to Michael. Unlike in rural New Zealand schools, 'sport' is confined to short periods of callisthenic drills once a week.



Nokwanda had been binge drinking and had multiple partners. Combined with her limited knowledge of HIV and AIDS, she was a walking timebomb.

"In the peer educators' final week of placement, Nokwanda told them that SPW had changed her life," says Rachel. "She was trying to quit smoking, had started using condoms, and understood the consequences of having many boyfriends. With the encouragement of the peer educators, she had gone for her first HIV test. And although she found school frustrating, she was determined to matriculate."

Development outcomes? SPW just about ticked every box for the Millennium Development Goals with the results of just these two young women. Bringing people together in positive activities to promote health, confidence, partnership, cooperation, fairness – the parallels between sport and good development outcomes are strong.

Those who champion the use of sport as a development tool point to its use in an even wider range of areas including gender equality, HIV and AIDS education, disability, trauma, and to promote peace and reconciliation. But if sport is to have real value in the context of international development, the test of its effectiveness needs to be tougher than that. The bar, to use a sporting analogy, has to be set higher.

For any development tool to be accepted as truly effective, it needs to achieve results in the biggest fight of all – that against poverty. Can sport really reduce poverty and inequality or is it just a 'feel-good' palliative?

Toolkit sport for development is a world-leading supporter of sports in development. It's an initiative of www.sportanddev.org, originally created by sports and development NGOs in the Netherlands, Norway and the UK, and now attracting NGO input from a wide range of countries, including Canada and Australia.

Toolkit's view of sport's development value is unequivocal. "It improves health and reduces the likelihood of disease. It is a significant economic force providing employment and contributing to local development. And it brings individuals and communities together, bridging cultural or ethnic divides. Sport offers a cost-effective tool to meet many development and peace challenges."

And it seems the UN itself agrees. In 2003 the General Assembly adopted a resolution describing sport "... as a means to promote education, health, development and peace".

But not everyone is convinced. As one critic put it: "This motion propelled sport into the realm of universal development strategies with assumed anecdotal powers to address the many ills of populations entrenched in conflict, chronic poverty and its multi-faceted manifestations." In a paper published last year on sport's role in social change, South African academic Cora Burnett outlines how after the UN resolution, new resources and "innovative schemes and initiatives" flooded the market, with investment not only from governments but also companies such as Nike.

LEARNING TO PLAY

For Policy Analyst Helen Ainsworth

and Teacher Trainer Margarette Cantwell, who are working as VSA volunteers with pre-school education in Vanuatu, the link between sport and development is clear. There is a growing awareness in Vanuatu of the importance of early childhood education and encouraging teachers to move out of their comfort zones in areas of play, health and sport is a logical progression. Encouraging teachers to engage in healthy activities with the children, but also to be confident about passing on such skills as ball handling, is all part of a well-rounded early childhood curricula. This is where another VSA volunteer, Sarah Flavall, and her counterpart Elsie Titus at the Vanuatu Football Federation came into the picture with a ball skills seminar at a Provincial Pre-school Coordinators Conference in Luganville.

Photo above left: Margarette Cantwell at a sport training workshop with early childhood teachers in Vanuatu.

THAT'S CRICKET

Sport is an alternative form of communication for some VSA volunteers, a way to break down barriers and gain trust. Getting alongside people was important for Policy and Planning Adviser Mark Wolfsbauer while he travelled around Bougainville and outlying islands and took part in public forums on the future of the Autonomous Region. At the end of the day, teaching a few rules around cricket and having a go with local people meant he could take off his bureaucrat's hat and get a feel for the community. "I was also trying to share something with them, given that they had taken the time to share something with me," says Mark.

Photo 1: Taking to batting with gusto on the Carteret Islands. Photo 2: Mark explains the basics of cricket to villagers ready to take to the pitch.



ACROSS LANGUAGE

For English language teacher Ken McIntyre, being part of a football team in Laos PDR means he has been able to take off his teacher's hat and get on a more equal footing with some of his students and colleagues. Ken teaches professionals from government departments and mentors Lao English Language teachers as well. "Getting on to the football field with my colleagues and students breaks down the barriers," says Ken.

Photo 3: Taking time out from the office Ken, at back fourth from left, and the football teams in Laos PDR.

Like other tools of development that become the darlings of the donor world – sport has its critics. In the past trends like the focus on Participation have been challenged for not representing all the people, and being a tool to do just what the donor wants. Sport is challenged on whether it is just for the able or those who can access equipment and funds and whether it encourages divisions and even violence. (Some of these issues are addressed in the story of VSA's partner organisation *Imvomvo* on pages 12 and 13 of VISTA.)

There are two levels to the sports story – the international stage and what's happening at grassroots. And the story at international level is the murkier of the two. It may not be grassroots success such as the young South African women, Miranda and Nokwanda, which drives the rhetoric of the big international players.

Another leading writer and lecturer in sport and development, Roger Levermore, says the growing number of initiatives in the area over the last 10 years is driven in part by the global political agenda. Levermore, who lectures in International Development, and is Research Manager for the Football Industry Group at the University of Liverpool Management School, in the UK, points to the 2008 Beijing Olympics, this year's football World Cup in South Africa and the 2012 European Football Championships in Eastern Europe as heralding a movement of international sports into the developing world.

Timeline of major developments in Sport & Development

The field of Sport & Development continues to evolve as a result of major international policy developments. Below is a chronological list of some of the key milestones that have occurred over the past few decades, putting sport as a tool for development on an international agenda.

1978

UNESCO (United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organisation) General Conference adopts the *International Charter of Physical Education and Sport*.

2001

UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan appoints Adolf Ogi (former President of the Swiss Confederation) as the first Special Adviser on Sport for Development and Peace to enhance the network of relations between UN organisations and the sports sector.

2003

First International Conference on Sport & Development, Magglingen, Switzerland. The conference was the first international, high-level event on Sport & Development, involving participants from sports federations, governments, UN agencies, the media, athletes, business and civil society.

1997

Heads of State and Government of the European Commission focus special attention on sport during the Amsterdam treaty negotiations, during which it was stated that "the Conference emphasises the social significance of sport, in particular its role in forging identity and bringing people together".

2002

The UN Secretary-General convenes the UN Inter-Agency Task Force on Sport for Development and Peace to review activities that involve sport within the UN system.

SPORT AND THERAPY

Sport is used as therapy for some girls and young women who have been the subject of abuse and exploitation in Cambodia. They are residents at the Svay Rieng branch of the Cambodian Centre for the Protection of the Children's Rights (CCPCR) where VSA volunteer Nicky Brown is working as a Shelter Services Management Adviser. Nicky sees sport as a chance for the girls to forget about their problems and she says that is evidenced by the laughter that accompanies activities. "I get to play sport with them and talk at the same time which is not threatening to them. They open up to me really well. Sport is such a positive activity at CCPCR, nearly all staff play most days with the girls and the male staff members play too, providing a positive male influence. We often play soccer with a basketball and the game is only finished when the ball gets punctured on the barbed wire fence and can't be fixed immediately."

"Sport is important to young women at CCPCR. It gives them power and decision making they may not have had before. It is confidence building and lets them just forget for one hour how tough their life may be."

Photo 4: Nicky, staff and residents at the shelter in Svay Rieng. Photo 5 & 6: Equipment can be a problem for CCPCR but recently another Kiwi lent a hand. Graham Vincent is in Cambodia while his wife June works on a VSA assignment as a Strategic Management Adviser. Graham has fashioned some stilts and quoits for the girls which have become hugely popular. He's also teaching some maths and English to a small group of girls at the shelter.



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The motives for throwing money into sport in development can include buying votes, currying favours or just PR for large multinationals.

International sporting events are usually a long way from the grassroots – and some academics urge caution and more research before whole-heartedly accepting their benefits. Richard Giulianott, in his article *Human Rights, Globalization and Sentimental Education: The Case of Sport*, highlights examples of large sporting events that have prompted a trampling of fundamental human rights.

"For example," he says, "it is estimated that over 500 demonstrators were murdered by Mexican 'security' forces in what became known as the Tlatelolco Massacre in Mexico City, 10 days before the city was permitted to host the Olympic Games ... Nor are the developed nations free from critical scrutiny. Prior to the 1982 Commonwealth Games in Brisbane, the Queensland legislature passed an Act that effectively cleared Aboriginals from the streets."

But there are other initiatives that claim a better record. The Homeless World Cup had its first tournament seven years ago with 18 national teams. Supporters onboard now include the UN, football's UEFA, Manchester United and Real Madrid – plus Nike. This year's event in Rio de Janeiro is expected to attract 64 nations.

2004

Roundtable forum: Harnessing the Power of Sport for Development and Peace, Athens. The roundtable forum was hosted during the 2004 Olympic Games in Athens. The forum laid the cornerstones for establishing the Sport for Development and Peace International Working Group (SDPIWG), creating a new policy framework for the use of sport for development and peace.

2005

The Sport for Development and Peace International Working Group (SDPIWG) is formed, with representatives from Ministers of Sport, Youth and Development from 15 countries, directors of UN agencies, and NGOs in the field of Sport for Development and Peace.

Jul 2007

European Commission publishes a White Paper on Sport stating it will promote the use of sport as a tool for development in international development policy.

2007

Third conference 'The Next Step', Windhoek, Namibia.

2008

UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-Moon appoints Wilfried Lemke as the new Special Adviser on Sport for Development and Peace, after Adolf Ogi steps down.

2003

First Next Step conference: 'International Expert Meeting on Development in and through Sport', Amsterdam. On a different level to the Magglingen conference series, the Next Step conference was established to target practitioners, mostly at the grassroots level, to share experiences and best practices in Sport & Development.

2005

International Year of Sport and Physical Education (IYSPE) 2005 is proclaimed by the General Assembly of the United Nations.

2005

Second Magglingen Conference on Sport & Development, Magglingen, Switzerland.

2005

Second Next Step conference, Livingstone, Zambia.

Jan 2008

IOC and the UN agree on an expanded framework for action to use sport to reach the goals of the UN.



SPORTING LINKS

Volunteers sometimes find our country's sporting prowess is an entrée into communities, as Stephen Knight-Lenihan discovered in South Africa.

At 9am on a sunny Saturday we are sitting in Heston Botha's large, black four-wheel-drive – tinted windows, surround sound system playing American soul, on-board video. A huge Silver Fern flutters out the window. As we drive, he gives a brief history of East London's Buffalo Flats and the All Black Supporters' Club. During apartheid, All Black support was political in coloured communities such as the Flats. But the AB's flair and panache kept many supporting. We watched a loss to the Boks, and the grimacing, arm waving, clapping hands to foreheads, and at one point sinking to the knees to pray for divine intervention, left us a little overwhelmed. Everyone wore AB shirts, one man sang our national anthem in Maori, and another had painted his fence black with silver ferns. Wanting to come to New Zealand for the 2011 World Cup, they've asked for us to help. They need a little sponsorship, some money-making ideas, and probably a billet or two. I think on passion alone these guys really should be there. We will see what we can do.

Stephen Knight-Lenihan is working as an Environmental Scientist with the Wildlife and Environment Society of South Africa (WESSA).

Photo above: Proud members of the All Black Supporters' Club in East London with VSA volunteers (left to right) Peggyann Colville, Stephen Knight-Lenihan and Annie Knight-Lenihan (holding flag), Shona Jennings above Annie, and beside her Pete Colville.

“ The continued support of the big donors, and a loosening up of funds in the area of sport and development, has meant smaller NGOs have been able to grow programmes to initiate sports in poorer communities. ”

The organisation's website boasts a huge impact: “73% of players change their lives for the better by coming off drugs and alcohol, moving into jobs, education, homes, training, reuniting with families and even going on to become players and coaches for pro or semi-pro football teams”.

Another initiative is Kicking AIDS Out (KAO), begun by a Zambian Sports NGO in 2001, supported by NORAD (the Norwegian Development Agency). The KAO initiative is now an international network of organisations rallying around the power of sport to effect positive change in communities. Its list of partner organisations gives us a taste of the sort of non government organisations that are working in the area of sport in (or for) development worldwide:

- C-HLP – The Caribbean Healthy Lifestyle Project is a multi-sport programme with emphasis on training the youth of the Caribbean to be more aware of their lifestyle choices, to improve their leadership skills, and to pass on their skills, knowledge and competencies to their peers.
- Coaching for Hope (part of Skillshare International) is an innovative programme which uses football to create better futures for young people in West and Southern Africa.
- EduSport Foundation seeks to use sport, recreation and other forms of physical activities as interventions for achieving empowerment, education, health and other development goals in socio-economically underserved communities in Zambia.
- EMIMA in Tanzania uses sport as a tool for development and youth engagement by conducting sport-based activity programmes that raise awareness for HIV and AIDS, gender equality, sexual health and other similar issues.

On an international level, there is some cynicism over the motivation of international sport in developing countries, but at a grassroots level there is a quiet revolution. The continued support of the big donors, and a loosening up of funds in the area of sport and development, has meant smaller NGOs have been able to grow programmes to initiate sports in poorer communities. And while the success of such programmes might be largely anecdotal, there are plenty of stories to suggest they are having a positive impact on development.

Perhaps the success of sport as a development tool can be seen in the bigger picture as part of a more holistic approach to development. VSA's Manager of the Pacific Programme, Peter Swain, says as a PE teacher turned development professional he can see the 'healthy body, healthy mind, healthy community' equation becoming a stronger driver for development initiatives now and in the future. ■



Sarah Flavall has spent the last couple of years as a Women's Football Development Adviser in northern Vanuatu and has seen first-hand the benefits of sport in a developing nation.



Many Levels of Learning – Women's Football Development in Vanuatu

The dust rises as 14 girls pit their skills and agility on a dry football field in Ambrym, dominated by the ever-present *ashes blong* volcano. The girls, ranging in age from 13 to 35, have congregated in the community of Lolibulo to participate in the first ever women's three-day football tournament, part of a grassroots programme I developed with my counterpart Elsie Titus for the Vanuatu Football Federation. Competition, laughter, friendships: the dynamics of team sport come together through months of preparation even before the referee's whistle blows to begin the first game.

This is just one aspect of a programme which has included coaching and refereeing courses. At the heart of it is the objective to provide increased opportunities for young women in a country where the status of women is low. Experiences outside the home can be few and far between for women in Vanuatu, with many either having never attended school or leaving school around year 6. Responsibilities in homes and gardens result in limited encounters beyond the village, whereas brothers travel for school, work, sport and cultural opportunities.

Through the women's football development programme, women have the chance to expand their horizons: travelling to other islands, meeting other women and enhancing their experiences, whether it be through the national championships in the capital, Port Vila, or competition and training workshops on neighbouring islands. These experiences will stay with the women for their lifetime.

Sport and education

Working with established youth organisations, particularly with Wan Smolbag's Northern Youth Centre, the women's football development programme has incorporated peer education activities for rural football events. This has given women the chance to learn about health issues including family planning, STIs – HIV and AIDS, and the effects of drugs and alcohol. For many this was the first time they had access to basic information from how babies are conceived and develop, through to the short- and long-term effects of alcohol and drugs. Because the youth centres are based in urban areas, rural communities don't get regular access to peer educators, so including this as part of rural training has been a huge bonus for participants. Being able to talk about issues in a more relaxed environment was particularly good for girls.

Instilling skills through sport

Leadership, team work and time management are all skills that grow and develop through team sport. A week-long tournament becomes the fruit of months of preparation, and the result, in places like Ambrym, is a major highlight in the year's calendar for the whole community.

In the urban areas of Luganville and Port Vila, the holding of championships, and the organisation of leagues, referees, and teams, is rewarded by increasing numbers of girls participating and a rise in the standard of play. The Fresh Cargo Challenge Shield was developed for representative teams from two urban areas to go head-to-head in a home-

and-away format competition. The Port Vila selection travelled to Luganville for a week of matches, with more than 1000 spectators paying 100VT (NZ\$1.50) to enjoy the finals match. The success of such a major tournament showed it was possible to arrange quality women's football on a small budget and in partnership with local business houses. It also confirmed people are interested in women's soccer.

I believe, and have seen proof, that female participation in sports, particularly in coaching and refereeing, helps break down barriers between the genders in a non-confrontational way, contributing to learning and understanding for men and women. In particular, women working as referees in urban areas have had a huge impact on the dynamics of the interactions between men and women in football and also pave the way for positive working relationships, support and cooperation.

While the benefits such as increased health and fitness are great for local women, unlocking opportunities through sport is an aspect of sport as a development mode with huge potentially positive impacts for rural and urban communities. With well-run programmes focusing on the needs of women in the communities, sports such as football can be used as a wider development tool to enhance women's lives and experiences on a day-to-day basis. ■

Photos above: Women have a chance to learn about health issues when they are together for football training initiatives. Sarah during a training session with early childhood teachers.

Sarah Flavall shares one of the many success stories from the Vanuatu women's football development programme.

Coaching Success

Thirty-five-year-old Anska Olul, from Pentecost, never anticipated that attending one workshop might change her life so dramatically.

Anska's initial contact was turning up at one of the first women's soccer grassroots programmes on the tiny volcanic island of Ambae. She has gone on to lead both men's and women's referees in her home of South Pentecost.

As a teachers' aide at Point Cross School, Anska was nominated to attend the Ambae workshop. Her enthusiasm and ability, particularly as a referee, was recognised and she was invited to officiate at the Fresh Cargo Challenge Shield tournament held between representative teams from Port Vila and Luganville. The week-long tournament allowed her to both develop her skills to a higher level and interact with men and women officiating in Vanuatu's second largest town.

On her return to Pentecost, Anska was recognised for the skills and experience she had acquired and was voted as the President of the South Pentecost Football Referee Committee. This recognition by her peers is a first for a woman in Vanuatu in a sport that is so strongly dominated by men. She continues to assist referees in South Pentecost with the application of the laws of the game, ensuring matches are played in the spirit of fairplay. By applying skills that she has been taught and she is continuing to develop in her local community, Anska provides a great example to men and women throughout Vanuatu. ■

Below left, Anska shows Sarah the moves, and right, directs the training as a confident trainer and referee.



SPORT LEADER



Thoko Mlonyeni founded and initiated the Active Community Clubs (ACC) in East London on the Eastern Cape of South Africa, with the aim that all children can participate in sports and lead healthy lifestyles. We asked her about her passion around Sport for Development.

Can sport be called a 'tool' for development? Oh. Yes!

How can you say it works? Where is the proof?

In addition to hard evidence and scientific proof, the real proof lies within the lives that we have changed and making the communities a better place to live in. Our pre-school is such a monument – it is actively run by community members and it is community-driven, not just community-based. We can change the lives and influence the minds, but can only trust that there will be a ripple effect beyond the boundaries of time and place.

When there is so much emphasis on economic development, where does sport fit into the picture?

We provide opportunities for volunteers to engage in managing and coaching, and gain valuable experience that will make them more employable. We have had several success stories of volunteers who, through our capacity building and training programmes, found formal employment.

Is it sport for health, sport for working together, sport to be used to get messages across such as HIV and AIDS education, sport for economic development – or can sport just be because it is a good activity?

In our work, sport is a catalyst for change. The outcomes of our programmes focus more on life skill development than on mere skill acquisition and fitness. It is about learning for life and how to treat people with respect, acquiring a knowledge base and a positive attitude toward yourself and others in the community.

How tied up in development-speak has it become? (Has the rhetoric overtaken the benefit?)

We do not believe in evangelical rhetoric and slogans. We cannot just provide great words and expressions – for us it is about seeing and believing only when it has been scientifically proven. Our strength lies in delivering and not boasting about it. The benefits might not be always as expected, but we are delivering and seeking to improve every day and touch the hearts and minds of our children and their loved ones.

You are now introducing these clubs outside of East London and even outside of South Africa. Can you tell us about the interest from elsewhere?

The ACC initiative is the brainchild of the Australian Sports Commission. They have implemented it in different continents and in Africa it has been implemented in three different countries, namely SA, Swaziland and Botswana. In each location the programme will take on a life of its own. There is also interest for the programme at the national level (SRSA) and we have started with a pilot in this regard.

What keeps you doing what you do?

Being a SA citizen who cares ... with changemakers around me that care equally about our communities and would like to make a difference through sport. ■

Above: VSA Volunteer Social Development Adviser Judy Moore and Thoko



As a Youth Rugby Programmes Adviser with Imvomvo, a community run NGO based in Mdantsane, on the Eastern Cape of South Africa, Greg Stevenson explored the minefield of issues that surround the concept of Sport for Development.

A sporting chance

On the face of it, sport would seem to be a win-win as a tool for development. But when you look a little bit closer, issues such as the inclusion of disabled people, gender equality, injuries and the impact of competition must be taken into account.

Sport for Development is a popular and effective development tool due to its ability to impact across all sectors and all levels of communities. Sport can increase school attendance rates through incentives, benefit health by promoting physical activity and a respect for the body, and create a focal point for the community that promotes inclusion, equality and opportunity. Unfortunately, Sport for Development can result in inequality and exclusion if it is limited to those who are talented, able-bodied, wealthy or male.

Imvomvo's focus is on its model club, the Winter Rose Active Community Club (ACC). The sports on offer for kids include rugby, soccer, cricket and junior sport and the emphasis is on participation and enjoyment. ACCs and Imvomvo strive to ensure that all children, irrespective of ability or gender, have the opportunity to play sport.

Despite government attempts at empowerment, disabled children in Mdantsane face marginalisation as they attend different schools to their able-bodied peers. Imvomvo

seeks to reintegrate disabled children into the mainstream by including them in junior sport, a programme designed to introduce children aged 6-11 to the basics of sport. Games such as 'Rounders', 'Chain Gang' and 'Fish and Fisherman' allow able-bodied and disabled children to play and compete together on a level playing field. This allows disabled children to feel normal and teaches able-bodied children that those with disabilities are no different to themselves.

Equal opportunities

Gender equality is another issue of concern as opportunities for women in South Africa have historically been severely limited and violence and prejudice against women is common in Mdantsane. Winter Rose ACC, a male-dominated rugby club, has worked hard to enable girls to participate equally. Girls and boys play junior sport and junior rugby together until they are 11. Then the ACC provides older girls with the opportunity to play rugby, soccer and netball with female coaches and the pathways offered are similar to those of boys.

In a community stricken with unemployment and poverty, parents worry about risk when considering after school sport for their children. The cost of treating an injury is debilitating for many families. To minimise injury, Imvomvo and the ACCs work tirelessly

to educate coaches on safe technique. During rugby training, the phrase 'safe technique is strong technique' is audible on the field. In ACC newsletters and parent meetings, safety guidelines are stressed to help allay parents' fears.

Violence is an everyday occurrence in South Africa and the physical confrontations and competitiveness witnessed in sports such as rugby are seen by some as legitimising and encouraging violence in the younger generation. In reality, Imvomvo harnesses contact sports to develop teamwork and respect and to break down barriers and foster equality. When team-mates place their bodies on the line for one another, it develops a deep understanding that is hard to match in non-contact sports. Competition is unlikely to lead to a permanent dislike of opposition teams because games are played with mixed teams and players from different clubs. The children learn that the emphasis is on team versus team competition rather than village versus village or black versus white.

Overall, sport cannot be taken at face value as always 'good' for development, but when managed correctly ... it can be a win-win for everyone. ■

Above from left: Girls have been given opportunities to play team sports at Imvomvo. Greg at various events where teams are mixed up to foster respect.

Dancing Dream Team

Lesley Smeardon from VSA gets in the groove with returning SPW volunteers.

“It’s all about the dance,” muses Steph Versteeg over a Wellington coffee with me and fellow SPW returning volunteer Emma Marlow. We are discussing the role of sport and dance during their assignments in Zambia. Both were recruited by VSA to work for a year as part of the youth-to-youth Students Partnership Worldwide programme*.

“I worked with trainee teachers and we ran all sorts of different health education-oriented programmes with student teachers and young people in the local area,” continues Steph. “Dancing is so key to Zambian culture. People just love to dance and, traditionally, cultural dance is also an important part of growing up.”

“The first time I saw the cultural dance – I was shocked,” adds Emma. “It’s a sexually-charged dance and the younger the kids, the better they seem to be at it. But the kids really enjoy dance in general which is why it’s so successful to use as part of our programme. You want and need the lessons to be enjoyable.”

As well as breaking down barriers, the use of dance was a great opportunity to discuss vital health information in more innovative ways, as both Emma and Steph found out.

**SPW teams up young New Zealanders with nationally-recruited volunteers. They work and live together to deliver health and environmental information to other young people using innovative interactive games.*

Photos from top: At Emma’s school, a limbo dance with accompanying songs was a fun and barrier-breaking way to discuss peer pressure in relation to sexual habits. “The higher the pole, the less pressure,” explains Emma. “The older you get the lower the pole and the harder it becomes not to give into peer-pressure.” Bottom photo: Steph and her peer educator partner from Zambia, Gift Siwalozzi.



Healing through dance

Joanne Lentfer is a VSA volunteer in Mthatha in South Africa. Most of her work as a Management Adviser is with Bethany Home for children from 0-6 years, but she also works with Thembelihle Home and Child Welfare where she discovered the power of dance.

Thembelihle Home in Mthatha is a place of safety. Children admitted to Thembelihle have been removed from abusive and neglectful situations. The abuse may be physical or emotional, but is most often sexual.

The home is a converted residential property with too little outdoor space to be able to engage the children in sports to any extent.

It has been found over the years that a huge contributor to the children’s healing is dance. Like sport, dance involves all the children and engages them in team activity while providing for their individualism through dance solos. Dance holds all the ingredients of a successful remedy for pain and trauma. The children’s emotional and psychological well-being is enhanced, they re-gain their self-esteem, a sense of stability and constancy and they get fit – as dance requires huge physical energy!

The children of Thembelihle come from all over the Transkei on the Eastern Cape and have varied levels of exposure to traditional dance. All tribes have different dances. Part of the growth and development of the children includes teaching them traditional dance and finding ways for the traditions of the various tribes represented to be incorporated and honoured.

The improvement in self-esteem is evidenced through the pride demonstrated by the children in being able to perform for visitors and show off their prowess.

Photos left top: Joanne Lentfer with girls from Thembelihle Home. Bottom: the boys are just as competitive in dance as the girls.



THINGS TO DO TODAY

Prepare report on neonatal services

✓ Write and post letter home

Remember to call round to neighbours for English lesson

✓ Check on premature babies and new mums

Buy some mangoes



Dear All

Here in Viet Nam I cannot live without my 'things to do' list. I would be lost without it! No one day is ever the same. It has been two years since I left my family, friends and life in Palmerston North to become a VSA volunteer in Binh Dinh Province, which is located in central Viet Nam.

I am a nurse educator working with the Binh Dinh Department of Health. One of the major projects I have been working on at the provincial hospital in Quy Nhon is assisting nurses to increase their knowledge and skills to provide care to sick and premature infants. The aim is to extend the training for nurses and doctors and establish basic neonatal services in 10 district hospitals. I know the next six months is going to be very busy, but I am excited to be part of a team of dedicated people involved in the establishment of a quality service and improved outcomes for infants in the Binh Dinh Province.

People often ask me if I get lonely and the answer is no. My Vietnamese neighbours make sure that I am included in all aspects of their daily lives. Most days we share some time together and children and adults seek me out to give them English lessons.

I am hoping you will join me in becoming a supporter of VSA this year. It costs money to send volunteers overseas and I hope this letter shows how every dollar you donate to VSA goes towards something that really does work and whatever VSA volunteers like me help put in place in the organisations they are working with will continue long after we leave. Just imagine how many lives are being touched through all the VSA partnerships.

Thank you for supporting VSA and volunteers like me.

Best wishes

Anne

P.S. Cam on – thank you from all of us in Viet Nam.



Imagine how many lives are being touched through all the VSA partnerships across Asia, Africa and the Pacific. You can be part of the change.

Please support VSA today by making a donation over the phone 0800 872 8646 or online www.vsa.org.nz. Thank you for supporting VSA.

VSA how can you be involved?



Become a volunteer ...

Share your skills in a developing country and get the experience of a lifetime back!



Become an *adventurer* ...

Travel with a purpose and get a taste of development work, and a window on the developing world.



Become a SPW peer educator ...

If you are aged 18 to 28, you could live for a year in Zambia or South Africa and work alongside young African educators.



Become a supporter ...

Make a donation! Help VSA send more volunteers to share skills and make a positive difference in the world.

Contact us on

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