



Playing to win or playing for empowerment?

An analysis of a Namibian team participating in the Norway Cup-project



By

Hanne Bjertnæs

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UNIVERSITY OF TROMSØ**

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Abstract

In recent years, the value of sport as an important and useful tool in peace and development work has been increasingly recognized. The notion of it being a ‘universal language’ with including abilities has been emphasized in this regard. The Norway Cup-project is one of Norway’s largest sport for development projects, and is a cooperation between the Norwegian Olympic Committee and Confederation of Sport (NIF), Norad, and Norway Cup. This project uses the Norway Cup-tournament as an arena for teams from developing countries to strengthen projects in their home communities through empowerment of the participants.

This thesis is a case study that seeks to discover what effect participating in this project has had on a boys-team (U-16) from Khorixas, Namibia. This team participated through the organization SCORE Namibia, in 2006. Through a qualitative research design, I have examined whether there was accordance between the goals of the Norwegian organizers, and the three different levels on the Namibian side; the organization, the community, and the team. Another significant aspect examined is to what extent sport can, in fact, be seen as a ‘universal language’. Related issues addressed are whether children’s sport is understood in the same way in both countries, and to what extent such a project has uniting or dividing effects. Furthermore, it is discussed if the project is designed in such a way that a prospective mutual gain is addressed, or whether bringing the teams to Norway Cup as part of a development project enhances the differences between ‘us’ and ‘them’. An essential factor to address when it comes to this project, is that it deals with young participants. This thesis attends to the question of whether this can have empowering effects on the youth in question, or if it can result in feelings of learnt helplessness upon their return. Additionally, it is discussed whether their prospective empowerment has benefited the community at large.

Based on a discussion of empirical findings, I conclude that the objectives for participation vary more from the official goal the further towards the ‘grassroots’ you go. The initial aims and the way in which the team was selected, is argued to have a significant influence on what is emphasized in later stages of the project. Football turns out to be a ‘universal language’ with different dialects, as ‘competition’ and ‘play’ are emphasized to different degrees by the two parties. The participation is argued to have had certain empowering effects on an individual level, and no signs of learnt helplessness were discovered. Based on empirical findings, the empowering effects do not seem to have been transferred from individual to community level to a great degree.

List of abbreviations

AIDS – Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome

Ekebergsletta – The main arena for Norway Cup in Oslo

FIFA – Fédération Internationale de Football Association

GDP – Gross Domestic Product

HDI – Human Development Index

HIV – Human Immunodeficiency Virus

KAO – Kicking Aids Out!

MYSA – Mathare Youth Sport Association

NAMAS – Namibiaforeningen (Namibia Association of Norway)

NFF – Norges Fotballforbund (The Football Association of Norway)

NGO – Non Governmental Organization

NIF - Norges Idrettsforbund (The Norwegian Olympic Committee and Confederation of Sport)

NORAD - Direktoratet for Utviklingssamarbeid (The Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation)

OPO - Owambo Peoples Organization

PLAN - People's Liberation Army of Namibia

SCORE – Sports Coaches' OutReach

SWAPO - South West African People's Organization

UD – Utenriksdepartementet (Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs)

UN – United Nations

UNADIS – Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS

UNDP – United Nations Development Programme

UNICEF – United Nations Children's Fund

YES – Youth Education through Sport

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CHAPTER 1 - INTRODUCTION

After approximately a five hour drive through scorched landscape northwest of the capital Windhoek, you finally reach Khorixas – a little, sandy town in the semi desert and home to some 15,000 people¹. It is a relatively small town that is roughly divided into three parts. As you drive through there will be the centre of town on your right. The centre consists of a few shops, including a petrol station, a grocery store, a bank, a hardware store, and a small clothing store. There are also several recreation facilities and restaurants/nightclubs, whose loud music is often heard from a long distance. On this side of the main road, you will also find some relatively large houses, in what was once the white area of town. Today there are no longer many white families in Khorixas, but the ones that are there own most of the businesses in town. On the other side of the main road, you will find what is known as ‘the location.’ The location is where most of the inhabitants live, in colorful brick houses that vary in size from one to four rooms, and there are also a few schools, bottle (alcohol) stores, office buildings, and the hospital. Behind the hill at the back of the location is Donkerhoek, which from Afrikaans translates into ‘the dark corner’. Donkerhoek is a squatter area where the poorest families in Khorixas live in sheds of corrugated plates, mostly without electricity and water. According to the mayor, there are approximately 420-450 households in Donkerhoek.

If you drive a few hundred meters further through town, to where the paved road ends and turns into a gravel road that will take you further into the sparsely populated farm areas, you find the sports stadium on your left. Khorixas has a nice sports stadium, with one smaller paved court on which to play netball, volleyball, and basketball, next to the green football field. On the side there is a big area of changing rooms and bleachers.

This is the home town of a football team that traveled to Norway in 2006, to take part in the Norway Cup-project. This project, and the mentioned team in particular, is the case study of this thesis. Hence, Khorixas is where a substantial part of the research has taken place. Before returning to the specific project and research questions for my thesis, however, a contextualization of the project and its relevance for peace studies is in order.

Sport has always been a great interest of mine, and through the work on my thesis I wanted to explore if and how it could be used not just for competition and entertainment, but also for the

¹ The last official consensus from 2001 states the population to be 11 000 people, but both the mayor and town clerk underlines in separate interviews that 15 000 is a more accurate number today.

benefit of society at large. However, sport has throughout history been used to divide and rule, it has been connected to doping, cheating and competition, and football matches have on rare occasions, some argue, even triggered wars between countries. How then, can sport now be seen as a tool for development and peace, and hence relevant for peace studies?

In order to address these issues, we first need to briefly explore the concept of 'peace'. For sport to be connected to peace, we have to understand 'peace' as something that entails more than just the absence of 'war' and 'conflict'. Galtung (2003) and Barash (2000) (among others) distinguish between 'negative' and 'positive' peace. The former refers to what we might call the traditional notion of peace as the absence of war, whereas the latter takes the concept further, into meaning establishment of life-affirming and life-enhancing values and structures (Barash 2000:2) in a society. It is in this wider definition of the concept that sport can be connected to peace, and understood as a tool to obtain positive peace and development.

Sport has become an increasingly important aspect of development and peace work in recent years. Even the United Nations (UN) has recognized the positive effects sport can have - both with the potential to effectively convey messages and influence behavior on the one hand, while improving the quality of people's lives and promoting peace on the other. In 2005, the UN therefore put a special focus on sport as a means for development with the International Year of Sport and Physical Education.

As there have become several projects using sport as a means for development lately, it is also important to do research to find if these projects have the desired effects, and alternatively what could be improved. Sport for development is a large concept with many different angles, and hence it is impossible to address the whole concept in the scope of a master thesis.

The focus of this thesis will consequently be on one project, namely the Norway Cup-project, which is one of Norway's most important sports for development projects. Annually, ten teams participate in this project, five Norwegian and five from countries in the south. For the teams that get to come to Norway, the participation is meant to be used as part of a larger development focus in their respective countries and communities. The stated main goal of the project is to "strengthen projects in the south through empowerment of the participants"².

² Norges Idrettsforbund, 2007, <http://www.idrett.no/t2.aspx?p=35574>

1.1 Research questions

The Norway Cup-project itself, would still be too wide to address in this thesis. I have consequently decided to focus on one team that participated in 2006 – namely the team from SCORE Namibia. Since I am also interested in working for children and children's rights, I wanted to focus on the fact that this is a project that deals with children/youth. Therefore, I wanted to see how traveling to Norway and participating in Norway Cup affected the participants and if it could in fact empower the youth and make an impact in their lives and on their home communities. I also wanted to see if there were similarities between the goals on the Norwegian and Namibian sides, and from an organizational, down to the grassroots level. Furthermore, I wanted to reflect upon whether the goals at the beginning of the project could have influenced the results. Hence, my research questions have been the following:

Does the Norway Cup-project have the desired results for both parties?

In addition to finding out if the goals and ambitions of the Norwegian and Namibian sides match, the sub-goals of my project will focus on two levels:

Individual level: Does the project have the desired effects in the form of “empowerment” of the participating youth? Can it have any unintended effects on the youth, for example, allowing them to recognize their own poverty in a new way?

Community level: Does the project have any effects on the community where the team is from? Have activities been started in the community as a result of the team's participation in the project? Have the young people participating in the project become important, active participants and role models in their own local community?

Since the research questions are originally based on the official objective for the project, it may be seen as an evaluation of certain aspects of the Norway Cup-project between the Norwegian Olympic Committee and Confederation of Sports (NIF) and their Namibian partner. However, as partner organizations and countries are different, it is important to emphasize that it cannot be generalized across country borders. On the Norwegian side I have focused on the organizers (NIF, Norad, and Norway Cup). One could argue that there is one more level on the Norwegian side that should be considered, namely the Norwegian friendship team from Elverum. I have, however, chosen not to include this team when considering the objectives of participation since the main goal of the project is to strengthen

projects and participants *in the south*. Some of the thoughts and objectives from the Elverum side are included later in the paper, when addressing the cultural exchange and the development cooperation in Norway. ‘Both parties’ consequently refers to the organizers on the Norwegian side, and the Namibian participants.

1.2 The structure of this thesis

To present my findings I have chosen to divide my thesis into six different chapters, including this introduction. In the following chapter I give some *background* information about organizations and projects that will be central to the subsequent presentation and discussion. Towards the end of the chapter I will provide some information about Namibian society and history, in order to contextualize the project and develop an understanding of the participant’s situation. This is included in chapter 2 because the information is also significant for methodological challenges discussed in the subsequent chapter.

Chapter 3 focuses on the *methodology and methods* I have used in order to collect the data that constitute the basis for later reflections and discussion. In addition to account for a more general approach to qualitative research, I will introduce my fieldwork and discuss specific challenges that I encountered in the field.

The following chapter, chapter 4, will deal with *definitions and theoretical framework* that are important to my thesis. I will discuss the concepts of ‘sport’ and ‘development’ – and see how they are used together. I will also give an account for foreign aid and development cooperation, and theories related to empowerment, which will be a significant concept in this thesis. In addition, the notion of culture will be discussed briefly for later discussion.

Chapter 5 – *empirical data and discussion* – constitutes the basis of my thesis. In this chapter I will introduce the team more thoroughly, present findings from my fieldwork and interviews done in Namibia and Norway, and discuss these in the framework of the theories used and research questions stated.

Towards the end of the thesis I will provide some *concluding comments* based on the previous material presented, and highlight particular aspects that I find most important in regard to this. I will also give suggestions of what I think is most significant to focus on in the further development of the Norway Cup-project, as well as suggestions for additional research.

CHAPTER 2 - BACKGROUND

This chapter will be used to give an introduction to some background information about organizations, projects, and places that are important in my study. I believe this to be vital for the reader to develop a more thorough understanding of the theories and empirical data discussed throughout this report. Firstly, I will focus on Norway Cup, the Norway Cup-project, and key concepts and organizations related to this. Subsequently a social and historical contextualization of Namibia is in order to provide a clearer picture of the situation and livelihood of the participants, who are the focal points of this research.

2.1 Norway Cup

Every year in late July and early August, around 30,000 children and youth from different parts of the world come together on the green fields of Ekeberg, Oslo, to play football. They are participating in Norway Cup, which is one of the biggest football tournaments in the world. The tournament, hosted by Bækkelaget Sportsklub, has been an annual event since 1972 (with the exception of 1976).

At first, only teams from Norway and other European countries took part in the event. In the debut-year, 126 out of the 430 participating teams were from other European countries. Since then the cup has grown considerably, and has evolved from being a European event to become a global tournament with teams from all over the world. In 2006, 30,000 players and 1530 teams from 45 countries participated³.

2.1.1 *The Colorful Unity*

Norway Cup is much more than football. It is also a chance to focus on current societal issues in a fun environment. The participation of youth from so many different countries also provides a meeting place for different cultures and an opportunity to make friends from all over the world. The so-called ‘Colorful Unity’ has become one of the most important ideologies of Norway Cup, and this is also emphasized in their strategy document:

Every year Bækkelaget Sports Club will organize a football tournament for children and youth that will contribute to the encouragement of sports, friendship and cooperation on a global level. It will additionally emphasize positive values for the club. (...) The tournament presents itself as the world's biggest arena for coexistence - independent of skill level in sport, religion, skin color, language, culture, tradition, and conditions during childhood. This will be developed through a concept described as a ‘Colorful Unity’ and will have a clear connection to both national and international societies that are currently experiencing rapid development (Strategy Document for Norway Cup: 4, my translation).

³ Norway Cup, 2007 - <http://www.norwaycup.no/t2.aspx?p=55619>

1979 is a memorable year for Norway Cup in this respect. It was the first time a team from outside Europe took part in the cup. The Brazilian team, Pequeninos do Jockey, consisted of street children from the slum areas of Sao Paulo. According to Norway Cup's own internet pages "for them the trip to Norway Cup was an encouragement and a relief to the misery back home"⁴.

From this point forward, Norway Cup can look back at a series of significant events regarding a Colorful Unity. During the 1980's, Norway Cup started aid projects in Tanzania in cooperation with the Norwegian Football Association (NFF). This was one of the first sports projects from Norway in the south, and was directed at physically disabled youth⁵. In 1989, after an initiative from Gro Harlem Brundtland, Norway's prime minister at the time, Norway Cup got involved in the MYSA-project in Kenya. MYSA, Mathare Youth Sports Association, is a self help youth program that started in the Mathare slum area in Nairobi in 1987 and links sport with environmental clean-ups, AIDS prevention, leadership training and other community service activities. In 2000, over 14,000 boys and girls from over 60 slum villages participated in MYSA programs⁶, and teams from the organization have attended Norway Cup annually for many years. One of the highlights in Norway Cup's Colorful Unity history came in 1995, when a team from Palestine and a team from Israel played against each other on a sports field for the first time⁷.

Every year Norway Cup invites between 20 and 30 teams from developing countries to take part in the tournament. These teams get their expenses regarding the participation covered; something the Norway Cup institution cooperates with different organizations to achieve⁸.

Secretary General of Norway Cup, Frode Kyvåg, points out that bringing teams from the south to participate in the tournament aims to provide inspiration and motivation in their home lives. It aspires to show that football can create relations across country borders, and the basic philosophy behind it is to empower them to develop independently. From a Norwegian viewpoint it is important in order to address the new global society and prevent

⁴ Norway Cup, 2007 - <http://www.norwaycup.no/uk/t2.asp?p=26711>

⁵ ibid

⁶ MYSA Kenya, 2007 - <http://www.mysakenya.org/content.php?id=1>

⁷ Norway Cup, 2007- <http://www.norwaycup.no/uk/t2.asp?p=26711>

⁸ ibid

racism and xenophobia⁹. These ideological aspects are discussed further in relation to Norwegian sport development cooperation in Chapter 4.

Norway Cup has received honor and awards for their work towards a Colorful Unity. Also, they have received peace prizes for this work; namely The Youth's Peace Prize in 1993, and UNICEF's Honorable Prize in 1995. However, critical opinions have also been voiced. Some claim that it can have unfortunate consequences for the participants, whose everyday lives are normally characterized by poverty, but for a short time are exposed to the materialistic abundance of Norway Cup. This dilemma will be one of the central questions of this thesis.

2.2 The Norway Cup-project

One of the projects through which teams from countries in the south can participate in Norway Cup, is the Norway Cup-project, which is a cooperation between Norway Cup, Norad, and NIF. It is a development project aiming at strengthening projects in the south through empowerment of the participants. The Norway Cup-project starts in the beginning of February when the team is approved, and ends on October 1st. During these months, the project is divided into three phases; before, during, and after the stay in Norway¹⁰.

In the first phase of the project, the team - existing of 16 players and 4 leaders - is recruited, and a preparation course is organized in the team's home town in cooperation with NIF. The second phase of the project takes place while the team is in Norway. They stay in the country for approximately two weeks, and are paired up with a Norwegian friendship team. The first week is spent in the friendship team's local community, before the two teams travel together to Oslo and Norway Cup. Towards the end of the cup, the participants of the Norway Cup-project will attend an 'Evening for the Future', which is a planning process that results in a specific work plan for what activities should be implemented upon their return home. The final phase of the project runs from the time they return home until October 1st. During this period, the team is committed to implement the work plan they designed in Norway, and all the projects should be started before this date¹¹.

To be considered for participation in the Norway Cup-project, the team must come from a 'Least Developed Country', one of Norad's partner countries, or must be connected to an

⁹ Secretary General of Norway Cup, Frode Kyvåg, interview, Oslo 29.03.04

¹⁰ Norges Idrettsforbund og Olympiske Komité 2007, <http://www.idrett.no/t2.aspx?p=35574>

¹¹ *ibid*

organization supported by NIF¹². The Namibian participant falls under the final category. Another set of criteria is also put forward. The objective of the participation should be to strengthen activities in the south, and Norad emphasizes that it is important that the team receiving support should have a long-term, developmental perspective for their participation¹³. Participants must be no younger than 13 years of age, due to Norwegian regulations for children or youth competing internationally. Another requirement is that it must be a club team. Money to cover the return trip, preparation course, evening for the future, transportation, food and accommodation in Norway, pocket money, some equipment and clothing, and a friendship team will be financed by NIF through Norad/UD¹⁴. The team is therefore committed to participate in the activities in auspices of the partners during Norway Cup, and also to promote sport as a tool for development (Memorandum of Understanding, 2006). During the preparation course and the stay in Norway they are supposed to learn about being good ambassadors and role models, gain self confidence, and learn about HIV/Aids prevention through games and sports (the so-called Kicking Aids Out! project) and gain knowledge and skills required for use in their own community upon returning home. In this way one can say that football is meant used as a tool to create change, both on an individual and community level.

2.2.1 Kicking Aids Out!

The HIV/Aids pandemic is strongly affecting people and communities in sub-Saharan Africa. The Kicking Aids Out! program mentioned above is a network that consists of several organizations from South and East Africa, Norway, Great Britain, and Canada, and it uses sport and physical activity to raise awareness and change behavior concerning HIV/Aids¹⁵. Kicking Aids Out! uses activities that are meant to teach the participants life skills as well as sport skills. By using sport, they meet the youth in a fun environment where sport has the potential to deliver HIV/Aids education and awareness activities. The majority of the people who participate in sport activities belong to groups at highest risk of becoming infected with the virus. These groups are children, youth, and especially girls (Mwaanga, not dated:5). Sport hopes to create self confidence and respect for others through physical activity, and is a

¹² Norges Idrettsforbund og Olympiske Komité, 2007, <http://www.idrett.no/t2.aspx?p=35574>

¹³ ibid

¹⁴ ibid

¹⁵ Kicking AIDS Out!, 2007, <http://www.kickingaidsout.net/>

positive arena for educating the youth¹⁶. The self esteem and self respect gained can be crucial in setting boundaries for oneself and others.

Also people who are infected with the virus participate in Kicking Aids Out!. It can give them much-needed physical activity and exercise, and sport can also provide an arena for social inclusion and support, which is extremely important for HIV positive people (Mwaanga, not dated:5). An important slogan for the network is consequently: “Fight AIDS, not people with AIDS!”

2.2.2 Sport Coaches’ OutReach (SCORE)

SCORE is NIF’s partner in Namibia through which Namibian teams have been participating in the Norway Cup-project. The U-16 team from Khorixas that participated in 2006 (the case study of this thesis), was the second team from Namibia to take part in the project. It is therefore worth noting that the Norway Cup-project is relatively new in a Namibian setting, compared to other countries that have participated for many years.

SCORE is a South African, non-governmental, non-profit, community organization that uses sport and physical activity as a means for development. The organization was founded in Cape Town, South Africa, in 1991, by a former American Olympic athlete. Her idea was to start an organization where volunteers would come to South Africa to assist in providing sports opportunities for disadvantaged school children. The first year SCORE had 5 volunteers, but has throughout the years grown considerably, and in 2003 over 60 volunteers from different countries were working in South Africa, Zambia, and Namibia. SCORE’s vision is to be an international leader in the field of community development and voluntary activity, utilizing sport as a powerful medium to bring about sustainable development and empowerment, and to build international and intercultural understanding and relationships¹⁷.

In 2000, the organization moved across country borders for the first time, and started a project in neighboring Namibia. SCORE Namibia was started as an initiative from SCORE, The Namibia Association of Norway (NAMAS), and the Ministry of Youth and Sport (now Ministry of Sport and Basic Education). It began with a pilot project that followed a needs assessment study and a lengthy consultation process (Development Plan for SCORE Namibia, 2001). The programs have been implemented in the northern part of the country, and the

¹⁶ Norges Idrettsforbund og Olympiske Komité, 2007, <http://www.idrett.no/t2.aspx?p=22002>

¹⁷ Sports Coaches’ OutReach, 2007, <http://www.score.org.za/>

decision of which communities they start programs in, is made in cooperation with the government. SCORE Namibia works both with sport development and development through sports. The latter is achieved by giving life skills workshops, for example, to strengthen the human resources in the community, both on a personal development level and by giving something back to the community¹⁸.

2.3 Namibia – society and history

It is important to discuss the country in which this organization is operating. Although facts about Namibian society and history are not directly related to my research questions, it is important to address these aspects as they are significant in understanding the background and situation for sport development projects in the country.

Namibia is a country large in area, but yet one of the most sparsely populated countries in Africa. It is located on the Atlantic coast of South-Western Africa, bordering South Africa in the south, Angola in the north, and Zambia, Zimbabwe, and Botswana in the east. The country has a population of 1.83 million people (2001) populating an area of 823,680 square kilometers, which means just over two people per square kilometer (Mendelsohn et al 2003:159). Although Namibia has a small population, it is ethnically and culturally diverse, comprising of 11 major language groups. Owambo is the biggest group, and makes up about half of the population. An important characteristic of the Namibian population is that it is relatively young; 53% of the population was under 20 years of age in 2000 (ibid:159). This demographic fact will represent a challenge for the labor market and economy of the country in the future. Only 43% of the working age population was employed in 2000 (Suzman 2002:5).

Being one of the driest countries on Earth, Namibia's population is unequally distributed throughout its land area. Almost half the population lives in the comparatively fertile northernmost areas (ibid:6). According to the Human Development Index from 2006, Namibia ranks 125th of the 177 countries listed¹⁹. About 35 % of Namibia's population lives in extreme poverty, for less than one dollar a day²⁰.

¹⁸ SCORE country coordinator, interview, Windhoek 07.07.06

¹⁹ UNDP, 2007, http://hdr.undp.org/hdr2006/statistics/countries/country_fact_sheets/cty_fs_NAM.html

²⁰ UNICEF, 2007, http://www.unicef.org/infobycountry/namibia_statistics.html

2.3.1 Colonialization, Apartheid, and Independence

Like most African countries, Namibia did not escape European colonization during the 19th and 20th century. Unlike most African countries, it did not gain its independence until 17 years ago. It was previously known by the name (German) South-West Africa. The country became a German colony in 1890. German colonial rule and practices introduced a very different way of life than the original settlers were used to. Several tribal groups rioted against the Germans, but the riots were met with violence and a system of forced labor was formalized in the legal system. In addition, all tribal groups had to carry a passport, and were not allowed to travel outside a certain area designated by the Germans. During this time European immigration grew considerably (Linné Eriksen 1982).

The German rule came to a sudden end because of World War I. South Africa allied with Great Britain, and sent troops to occupy Namibia in 1915. The German forces capitulated fast, and after that Namibia was ruled as a military occupied area by South Africa. After the war, the League of Nations was established, and with it came a mandate system for the earlier German colonies. From 1920, South Africa was given full mandate of administration and legislation over the territory. In some ways one can say that the country was ruled more as an integrated province, rather than a colony in the traditional sense (Linné Eriksen 1982:29). South African laws were implemented in Namibia (also their apartheid laws), and during the 1920's two new laws were implemented that gave South Africa even greater power. One of these laws allowed only white people to vote, whereas the other gave South African administrators in Namibia the power to dismiss or appoint local leaders, to decide the borders for the different tribes' 'reservations', and to deport groups or individuals. The designated areas for the different ethnic groups (40% of the land area) were not adequate for farming, and in order to make a living many were 'forced' to work for the white population (ibid).

Gross Domestic Product (GDP) shows the country as a middle income country. However, these numbers cannot be taken at face value. Behind them, a skewed distribution of wealth is hidden, which by and large follows the racial borders. According to one statistic, the national income per European was Rand²¹ 3200 in 1979, whereas the rate for (black) Africans was 1/20 (Rand 160) (Linné Eriksen 1982:42). Also after independence, the government has failed

²¹ Rand is the South African currency, which was also used in Namibia at the time. Today the Namibian Dollar has the same exchange rate as the South African Rand

to neutralize inequalities in wealth. A decade after independence Namibia's gini²² coefficient was 0.7, which means that they had the least equitable wealth distribution of all countries in the UN system, with the richest 1 % earning more than the poorest 50 % together (Suzman 2002:5).

Namibia only gained independence in 1990, following a military struggle that lasted more than 15 years. This was led by the People's Liberation Army of Namibia (PLAN), which is the military wing of South West African People's Organization (SWAPO). SWAPO was formed in place of the Owambo Peoples Organization (OPO) in 1960, with the aim of liberating Namibia from South Africa (ibid:9). Even though the UN passed several resolutions throughout the 60's and 70's that declared South Africa's mandate over Namibia invalid, South Africa clung to its dominion, and the military struggle intensified. In 1978, the UN Security Council passed resolution 435, which called for free elections and the withdrawal of all foreign troops in Namibia. This resolution was finally implemented in 1989, after intense diplomatic efforts. In April 1989, SWAPO formed the first government of an independent Namibia. The Constituent Assembly adopted a Constitution in February 1990, and a month later Namibia formally gained its independence from South Africa. One of the biggest challenges for the government of the independent Namibia has been to build a nation from the ethnically divided state (ibid:9pp)

2.3.2 HIV/Aids in Namibia²³

The HIV/Aids pandemic has hit Namibia hard. It is estimated that 18.2 – 24.7% of the adult population (15- 49 years) are infected²⁴. However, the percentage varies greatly from region to region. The population growth rate is 1.4%²⁵, but the rate is expected to drop steadily, mainly due to the effects of the HIV/Aids pandemic (Mendelsohn et al 2003:167). This pandemic will consequently also affect life expectancy, which UNICEF rates to be 46 years in 2005; a severe decline from 62 years in 1990, and even lower than it was in 1970 with 53 years²⁶. About 120, 000 children under the age of 17 have lost one or both parents, and about 57, 000 of these children have been orphaned by HIV/Aids²⁷.

²² The gini coefficient is a universal measure of wealth inequality. A coefficient of 0 suggests an ideal wealth distribution whereas 1 suggests absolute inequality (Suzman 2002:33).

²³ The numbers and percentages are estimates, because they vary greatly also within different UN web pages

²⁴ World Health Organization, 2007, http://www.who.int/hiv/HIVCP_NAM.pdf

²⁵ UNAIDS, 2007, http://www.unaids.org/en/Regions_Countries/Countries/namibia.asp

²⁶ UNICEF, 2007, http://www.unicef.org/infobycountry/namibia_statistics.html

²⁷ UNICEF, 2007, http://www.unicef.org/infobycountry/namibia_2202.html

CHAPTER 3 – METHODOLOGY AND METHODS

This thesis is based on a qualitative methodological approach, where fieldwork and qualitative interviews have been the main methods of data collection. In this chapter I will discuss the methodologies and methods used and why they were chosen. I will also give an account of my field research, and reflect upon the challenges encountered in the field.

A methodology cannot be considered true or false, only more or less useful in the particular situation (Silverman 2005:99). Qualitative research is a naturalistic, interpretative approach that is concerned with understanding the meanings which people attach to phenomena within their social worlds (Ritchie and Lewis 2003:3). In order to answer the research questions for my thesis, a qualitative study was found to be the most useful methodological approach. However, this approach is only a broad base, and requires more specific decisions as far as methods, or specific research techniques, are concerned. To collect the data used for discussion and analysis, fieldwork was used as an approach, with qualitative interviews as a main method. The interviews were complemented by observations and informal conversations. By conducting qualitative interviews with the players, leaders, and people around them, more in-depth information is obtained about their experiences and reactions than would have been possible through a questionnaire. Also, since cultural exchange is one of the main goals of the Norway Cup-project itself, it is important for me as a researcher to experience both cultures, in order to relate and analyze the data better.

In addition, I have used study of relevant literature as the basis for my discussion. The amount of earlier research about the Norway Cup-project is, however, limited. I have found two research reports that have been written; Hans Hognestad's "Football is survival here" (2005), a pilot study about a Zambian team that participated in 2004, and Håvard Ellingsen's Master Thesis "The Norway Cup-Project – an equal and effective development cooperation project?" about two teams from Zimbabwe that participated in 2003 and 2005. I will also make use of more general literature about sport, development cooperation projects, and different theories.

3.1 In the field

Data collection through fieldwork is, however, the most important source for my analysis. I met with the team on three different occasions; first during a 7 week visit to Namibia prior to Norway Cup, then in Elverum and Oslo during the second phase of the project, and finally during a two week visit to Khorixas in November, 2006. This gave me a chance to talk to my

informants at several stages of their participation in the Norway Cup-project, to hear both their expectations and experiences.

I left Norway on May 25th 2006, and after a long journey finally set foot in Namibia the next day. I went with a representative from NIF, who was going there to do the preparation course for the team. Traveling with her gave me an opportunity to learn more about the project, and a chance to be introduced to people working for SCORE upon arrival. I was also allowed to join the course, which was a great opportunity for me to meet the team right away, and also experience the course which is an important part of the project.

A Norwegian girl was working as a volunteer for SCORE through Idrettens Fredskorps (The Sports Peace Corps) in Khorixas. She had organized so that I could live with a local family during my stay in town. Staying with a host family provided me with a great opportunity to get to know more local people, and the culture from more of an inside perspective. Also, both my host family and the sports officer in town helped me get in touch with key informants in the local community.

I stayed in Khorixas for a little over four weeks. During this time I did interviews with the players of the team, the coach, and a female leader. I also interviewed the principals of different schools, and the mayor and town clerk in order to understand more about the situation in this particular town. Then, for the last couple of weeks, I went back to the capital, Windhoek, where I talked to the SCORE coordinator, and to a representative from the Ministry of Sport and Basic Education. During my time in Windhoek I also did interviews with people who were running different projects that were using sports as a tool for development, in order to get a better understanding of the concept in a Namibian setting.

A couple of weeks after I left Namibia, the team and leaders came to Norway to participate in Norway Cup and the Norway Cup-project. Their stay in Norway was divided into one week with their friendship team in Elverum, and the second week in Oslo participating in the cup itself. During this time I spent one day with them in Elverum, and then I spent the whole Norway Cup-week in Oslo. I did not do any interviews with the Namibian players or leaders during their time in Norway, because I wanted them to have a 'normal' experience of Norway Cup and not be overly reminded that they were also subjects for my study. However, through spending time with the team in their everyday activities and talking to them regularly, I

observed some of their reactions during their stay in Norway. I also used the opportunity to do interviews with leaders from the friendship team from Elverum.

On November 13th 2006, approximately 3 months after the team's visit, I went back to Khorixas to meet with them again. I wanted to ask what they thought about the trip to Norway and the participation in the project now that they had had time to reflect on their experience. Due to exams I could only stay for two weeks this time. Although it was a relatively short visit, I felt that I obtained significant findings for my research. I had the opportunity to meet again with the players, principals, coach, female leader, some of the parents, and the SCORE coordinator.

3.2 Qualitative interviews

Rubin and Rubin (2005), as well as Kvale (2006), stress the similarity between a qualitative interview and a normal conversation between two or more people. The questions asked depend on the previous answers; hence the informant structures the interview by his or her answers. Therefore, it is important for the interviewer to listen carefully for key words, ideas, and themes to elaborate on throughout the conversation (Rubin and Rubin 2005:12pp). In this case I have used qualitative interviews for what Rubin and Rubin (2005:9) call *evaluation research*; research that is done to discover if programs and policies are working, for whom they are working, and what could be improved. Projects using qualitative interviews build on a naturalistic, interpretive philosophy. In an interpretive constructionist theory, the most important thing for the researcher is to find out how people view an object or an event, and the meaning they attribute to it. Constructionists expect people to see somewhat different things, examine them through different lenses, and come to different conclusions. This means that multiple versions of the same event can be true at the same time. Opposed to positivists, who look for statistics and patterns, constructionist researchers are not interested in finding averages, but rather look for the cultural lenses through which the informants see the world. They also recognize the fact that researchers have their own lenses and construction of truth, which can influence both what they ask and how they interpret the answers (ibid:12, 27pp).

Finding the right informants is crucial in order to get a good, balanced result and give credibility to the study. It is important that the informants are experienced and knowledgeable on the topic, and that their views offer a balanced perspective (ibid:64). In some cases, though, the choice of informants is clearer than in others. To answer the research questions for

my thesis, it is evident that the players of the team will be important sources of information. That means my main informants are young boys, aged 14 to 16 years of age.

When looking at the interview as an interaction between researcher and informant(s), it is important to bear in mind that the interview builds on a *relationship*, and that different aspects of that relationship can influence the result²⁸. Kvale (2006:21) recognizes that an interview is not a conversation between two *equal* partners, because it is the researcher that defines and controls the situation. It is therefore of great importance to reassure your informant that you chose him or her because you know that they have better knowledge than you on the topic concerned, and that they hold information that will be of importance to your research. In interviews with young people, this is of even greater significance. Young people might wonder what they can possibly have to say that would help you, and they might be insecure about how you want them to answer. It is consequently essential to repeatedly let them know that they are in fact the experts of the situation and that anything they would like to share with you will be of great value²⁹.

3.2.1 The interviews

During the first fieldwork I did 20 interviews. They were all semi-structured, as I had sets of preliminary questions that guided me throughout the interview. Minor alternations were made for each interview in order to fit the informants and situations as well as possible. Usually only my informant and I were present, in a place where we could talk without much disturbance. Whether I only took notes or used a voice recorder during the interview, it depended on the circumstances. Most of the longer interviews with the leaders were recorded.

However, the interviews with the players were conducted in a slightly different way. They were done as group interviews with two or three players at the same time – as I initially thought that it would make the situation less formal. For the same reason I also decided to take notes instead of using my voice recorder. The language situation required an interpreter, so the sports officer in town was also present at the interviews³⁰. The interviews were all done at the boys' different schools during lunch break, an arrangement made for practical reasons. After school the boys went directly to soccer practice that lasted until sunset, and for safety reasons I could not stay out after dark.

²⁸ Specific examples of this will be explored in paragraph 3.2.2 "Challenges in the Field" below.

²⁹ Associate professor NTNU, Vebjørng Tingstad, phone conversation, 09.10.06

³⁰ The pros and cons of using an interpreter will be discussed in depth in paragraph 3.2.2.3 below.

I always explained to the informant why I asked to interview them and how the information would be used, and in this way obtained their informed consent. Written informed consent forms might be problematic for qualitative research. For example, if the interview is seen as more of an extended conversation, suddenly producing a written informed consent statement might signal legal implications and a sense of formality that is puzzling to the participants and disruptive to research (Rubin and Rubin 2005:104pp). In my situation, I found it to be adequate and better to get their oral consent.

3.2.2 Challenges in the field

All interview situations have challenges, and when your informants are young, there are additional things to consider. Some interviews did not run as smoothly as hoped, and reflecting upon this helped me to change my approach slightly before my next visit.

3.2.2.1 The white³¹ girl

In an article in which he questions if Africa needs a cultural adjustment³², Daniel Etounga-Manuelle points out that “African civil society will not emerge without qualitative changes in behavior (...) then with respect to behavior towards foreigners, *to whom we generally feel inferior*” (2000:77, my emphasis). If this is the case, then it also means a substantial challenge for foreigners doing qualitative interviews. If one person feels inferior in a conversation, it can have grave consequences for the outcome.

I am in no position to say if Etounga-Manuelle’s observation holds true for Namibia and for my individual informants in particular. However, considering the country’s history with colonialization and apartheid, I think it is important to at least consider that the fact that I am white and foreign could have had a stronger impact than I originally believed. The young people I interviewed were born immediately after independence and apartheid’s fall, in a country trying to form a new national identity. The feelings, however, caused by a repressive system like this, are not easily changed over a couple of decades.

³¹ I do not like the labels ‘black’ and ‘white’, and I recognize that these terms are often interpreted negatively. However, I do not know which terms to use that would not be subjects for interpretation. These terms are used by my Namibian informants, and hence, I feel that they will be the most appropriate terms to use in this paper.

³² It can be discussed whether we can talk about a common ‘African Culture’. Etounga-Manuelle also points this out in his article, but still argues that a generalization is possible. According to him, within the diversity that undeniably exists, there is a foundation of shared values, attitudes, and institutions that at least binds together the nations south of the Sahara (2000:67)

It was, however, pointed out several times that there was a significant difference between being a 'white Namibian' and a 'foreign white'. Being the latter puts one in a considerably better position, and generally people would not 'judge' anyone for being white as long as they are foreign white. In a social setting, people were quite friendly and curious about my background. In formal settings I think some may have felt more insecure.

In Khorixas, there are no longer many white families. Nevertheless, the town still shows infrastructural signs of the apartheid system that once ruled the country. One side of town has houses that are bigger and better equipped, and this was the side that was once the 'white part of town'. Today, there are also four white, foreign people living in town working as volunteers for different NGO's. An observation from Khorixas is that the white foreigners mix a lot with the local, black population, whereas the native, white people do not. This shows signs that the distinction between 'Namibian white' and 'foreign white' might be an important one.

This also means that the boys have seen white people before. Still, because of limited mixing in a social setting, the stereotypes and division can remain, and even grow larger. From my conversations with locals, this seemed to be the case. Such a situation can influence people's behavior and openness in an interaction.

3.2.2.2 The time aspect

This brings me to my next point of important methodological challenges encountered in my fieldwork. Interaction is important for feeling free enough to act openly, but such a relationship and feeling are built over time. Hence, the time aspect of my interaction with my respondents might have been too short to establish just that.

It is desirable that the researcher stays in the local community for such an amount of time that his or her presence eventually becomes almost natural for the residents (Hylland Eriksen 1998:31). One obvious positive effect of this is that the natives will be accustomed to you, feel more comfortable around you, and act more in the way they normally do. The fact that I am female and a little older than my informants, meant that I could not easily blend into the group by participating in their practices, for example. Nevertheless, I started doing interviews quite early on. Clearly, doing interviews at a later stage would have been preferable, but because of a limited time frame that was not an option.

The reason why it is important to stay over time, however, goes both ways. It also takes time for the researcher to get ‘acclimatized’ to a new place and culture. So far, most of my reflections have considered their possible feelings and reactions of the situation. It is important to consider ‘both sides of the coin,’ so to speak, and acknowledge that the researcher’s feelings also clearly influence the outcome. When the wheels of the plane touched Namibian ground, it was my first ever visit to Africa. Not only was it the first time in a completely new culture, but it was also the first time doing fieldwork and research interviews. It is important to remember that in qualitative research interviews the researcher is also a subject in the situation. Even if we have the best intentions of reporting exactly what has been observed in a situation, we have to remember that we all have some ‘cultural baggage’ that in some ways will influence how we interpret things that happen. In this way complete objectivity is an illusion.

Geertz’ (1973) concept of thick description proves useful when explaining qualitative research and culture. The researchers must, in order to obtain an understanding and draw meaning from the things going on around them, interpret all possible meanings of an action. In his well-known example, Geertz shows how the twitch of an eye simply can be interpreted as that, but it can also be seen as a wink – in which case it would be an act of communication. The longer I stayed in Namibia, the more I learnt about the differences in the culture, which I did not see at first. These differences can be tacit in the way that you eventually understand them through compliments, comments etc. Due to the fact that they are so tacit, it is also easy to unintentionally break some cultural ‘taboos’ in the beginning. Consequently, I tried to spend as much time as possible wandering around in the local community, meeting and talking to people. As the analyzing of the interviews and situations in qualitative interviewing to a great extent depends on the researcher’s interpretation, knowing the culture as well as possible would be a great asset for the research. If not, one can easily overlook the twitch of an eye that was really meant as a wink.

3.2.2.3 Interpreter or no interpreter?

“Don’t be ashamed if you make mistakes when you speak English. It is a foreign language”. When you look up Namibia in most encyclopedias, you will find “Official language: English”. Sometimes you will find a footnote referring to all the native languages that are also spoken. However, after experiencing the situation in rural Namibia, English is probably the one that should be listed as a footnote. The quote above is taken from a poster on the wall in

Welwitschia Junior Secondary School in Khorixas, and illustrates the language situation in town pretty well. The local language spoken is mainly Damara. English, which is no- one's actual mother tongue, is reserved for school or work purposes. A language barrier could definitely represent a challenge to interviewing. In this particular case, the English we spoke was very different. Although we usually managed to work this out in 'everyday-conversations', it represented a bigger challenge in an interview situation. Consequently, an interpreter was present at the interviews with the boys.

Bringing an interpreter into the scene raises many dilemmas. Were the informants influenced by his presence? If so, was this influence positive or negative? One challenge when using an interpreter is that the information goes through one extra level of interpretation. To avoid this as best as possible, the questions were asked in English. In this sense he could be called a facilitator rather than an interpreter. Sometimes the informants did not understand a question, in which case it was translated into Damara. On some occasions the informants preferred to answer a question, or elaborate on an answer, in their mother tongue, before it was explained to me in English. Some spoke more when they were able to use their own language, but this varied from person to person. In some cases the interpreter did not have to step in at all. A couple only answered questions asked in Damara.

Bringing an interpreter into an interview evidently changes the relationships in the situation. The big question is ultimately: Will the interpreter's presence hinder the informant's answer because of their relationship to one another, or will it enable the informant to elaborate more freely because he can use the language he feels most comfortable with? Whether the effect of having an interpreter present is positive or negative is often too tacit to observe by anything but coincidence. All conversations are ultimately interactions set on a social stage, where we act according to circumstances or participants. We do not behave similarly in a conversation with our best friend, compared to in a conversation with our boss. The setting is the stage, and what performance we put on is to a certain degree dependent on the audience. Sociologist Erving Goffman (1959) points out that individuals often have certain ways they ordinarily present themselves and their activities to others, and thereby guide and control the impression other people form of them; "The part one individual plays is tailored to the parts played by others present (...)" (ibid:9). Some conversations and things you put forward are open, what we can call front stage, whereas other things are things you would only reveal to people close to you, people you know well. These are what we can call back stage conversation. In an

interview, when using an interpreter, there may be many aspects in the relationship an outsider is not aware of. This is not necessarily associated with personal relationships, but can be related to issues like ethnicity, religion, caste, and age. In hindsight, I should probably have known the culture and relationship between age groups a little better before I decided to bring an interpreter along. In this particular experience, I speculate if the presence of a local person who was older than them, could have influenced the openness of the boys in an unfortunate way. The hierarchical system is strong, and young people behave with great respect for their elders.

Initially, I was also concerned with the question of whether using an interpreter would put my respondents in any kind of danger. Eventually, having reviewed my questions carefully, I did not find them to be of such a sensitive character that the answers could be used against anyone. I also thought that since the respondents knew that the interpreter was present, they would not say anything that they did not want him to know. In that case, I decided that possibly losing the information they might hold back was a small sacrifice I was willing to make, in order for them to be able to elaborate freely in their own language.

3.3 Learning from experience

These reflections, and the gained experience, proved useful when I went back to Namibia to do follow-up interviews. Interviews with leaders and other adults were conducted like before. When it came to talking to the players, however, I tried a somewhat different approach. Instead of ‘formal’ interviews I asked the boys to meet me in groups. They attend three different schools, so I asked the players from the same school to meet me as a group. The number of players in each group was uneven (6, 3 and 4 players), but for practical reasons it worked best that way. I asked the first group to meet me at the sports stadium after school one day. I met the other two groups at their schools, where we used an empty classroom so we could talk undisturbed. This time I decided not to bring an interpreter along. I also brought crayons, pens, and drawing pads, and asked them if they wanted to draw cards for the former SCORE volunteer, who had also been their guide at Norway Cup. They were excited about the idea, and I asked if they could draw some of their memories from the trip. While they were drawing we talked about their experiences and feelings. The boys were considerably more talkative than last time. This caused the situation to be more like a relaxed conversation in a fun environment than an interview. It is hard to say whether this worked better because it was a less formal setting, there was no third party present, they had gained more confidence

or if it simply was because they knew me better. Probably a mix of the above resulted in this being a far better approach.

3.4 Registration and validity

When I only took notes during the interviews, I would go back to my room and write them out on my computer as soon as possible afterwards. Also, when I used a digital recorder I tried to transcribe the interviews as soon as possible. However, it was very time consuming, so I did not get many done while I was still in Namibia. When the informant said something I immediately thought was very relevant for my research questions, I marked it with bold letters in the transcript. The interviews were transcribed word for word in the language they were conducted. I do not have any names of informants on tape. People under 18 years of age will be treated anonymously in my thesis, as will their parents or anyone that could reveal the children's identity. Other informants over 18 years of age are treated anonymously if they wished to be so. When analyzing the interviews, I read through them carefully, and divided the responses into different categories relevant for my research questions. This made it easier to go back to the correct material when writing out the data.

As established above, qualitative research is an interpretative approach that focuses on the meanings people attach to phenomena in their social world. The researcher's position as a subject in the situation makes his or her interpretations of the informant's answers of great importance for the result of the study. This makes it interesting and necessary to discuss the question of validity of the research findings. Validity (in social research) can be defined as a truth; interpreted as the extent to which an account accurately represents the social phenomena to which it refers (Hammersley in Silverman 2005:210).

Donna Haraway has argued that knowledge is always situated and that there is "no view from nowhere" (Tatou-Métangmo 2005:125). Therefore, it is also important for the researcher to identify his or her own background when presenting the work, and in this way making the results more verifiable. "The production of scientific knowledge is not separate from the social and cultural contexts in which that knowledge is produced" (Engelstad and Gerrard eds 2005:2). From this we can understand that a foreigner going to Africa for the first time will take a different approach and ask different questions than a local researcher would, and consequently get different answers. The findings will be interpreted differently, and the focus will be on different aspects. There are obviously pros and cons to both approaches. Haraway would say that both offer partial knowledge about the truth of a situation, and together they

offer a better and more balanced understanding of the complexity that reality is (based on Oware, 05.10.06).

A common critique of qualitative interviews is that the findings are not valid because the informants' information might be false (Kvale 2006:169). Fieldworkers doing interviews must be aware of the phenomenon of *ethnographic seduction* (Robben 1995), that your informants, often unconsciously, present the side of the story they want you to hear, and in that way try to influence the researcher's interpretation of the situation. However, this is a bigger challenge in areas of conflict, where informants have a lot at stake. Nevertheless, when interpreting data, it is important to bear in mind *who* is telling the story, and for *what reason*. A technique for getting as correct answers as possible is triangulation, which means to use different methods to get answers to the same questions (Silverman 2005:212). In this case, I have used both qualitative interviews, observation, and informal conversations as methods of data collection, and the more these three different methods show the same result, the more likely it is that the findings are correct. However, sometimes it was difficult to explain my role in the field, that I was just a master student working on a thesis and not in any way connected to NIF or to the Norway Cup-project, as such. This might have led to some of the informants not wanting to emphasize any unfortunate aspects, either out of politeness or because they were afraid of consequences for the project. However, I do not believe that influenced them very much.

My research can be characterized as a case-study, because it focuses on one team from one town in Namibia. One must be careful when generalizing these findings to other teams and across country borders, because the project and the situation vary from country to country. To a certain extent the findings might be generalized to other teams within the same country, since they are participating through the same organization. However, since they come from different places and backgrounds, we must be careful in generalizing here also. Some of the more general findings about development cooperation projects might be more generalizable.

CHAPTER 4 – DEFINITIONS AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Concepts like sport, development, development cooperation, culture, and empowerment are familiar to most of us. They are also important concepts in this thesis. But precisely because they are fairly common terms that are used in different contexts and disciplines, it is also important to have a clear understanding of their definitions. Consequently, this chapter will be used to elaborate on them and explain the way in which they are understood in this work. I will also account for some theoretical framework that provides a base for the discussion of my findings in the following chapter. These are predominantly theories about development cooperation and empowerment, which are significant concepts for my research questions. First, however, I will take a closer look at the idea of ‘sport for development’.

4.1 Sport for Development

Sport for development. A short sentence, but a complex concept. Sport for development has steadily become more important in recent years, but to understand what is meant by the phenomenon, we need to take a closer look at it. Here I will discuss the understanding of ‘sport’ and that of ‘development’ to provide a base for comprehending the concept as a whole.

4.1.1 Sport

A bunch of kids who are chasing a ball on a football field; a group of people running 3000 meters on a track all determined to cross the finish line first. They are doing very different activities, but we would all agree that they are engaged in sport. Giving an exact definition of sport often proves to be a challenge, but some characteristics are widely agreed upon.

In the olden days, sport simply meant strong and impressive actions, and a good athlete was someone who was versatile and had skills in everything from poetry to games to battle. Today, the term is used in a more narrow fashion (Loland 1998:12). Sport can be said to be physical contests pursued for the goals and challenges they entail, but within a definition of sports it is also important to clarify its relationship to play, games, and contests³³. The UN’s report on sport as a tool for development and peace (2003) defines sport as “all forms of physical activity that contribute to physical fitness, mental well-being and social interaction”. This is a broad definition that includes play, recreation, exercise and competitive sports, in addition to indigenous sports and games (Sport for Development and Peace 2003:v). However, it also shows that it is important that a definition of sport includes the social aspect.

³³ Encyclopædia Britannica Online, 2007, <http://search.eb.com/eb/article-9108486>

Norwegian sociologist Jan Ove Tangen (1997) argues that sport has to be understood and analyzed as something that is socially generated. For instance, one can run to catch the bus, or to win Olympic gold. The physical concept of running is the same, yet trying to catch the bus has nothing to do with sport. Hence, looking at the physical concept is not adequate, but as soon as the social qualities such as rules, competition, and voluntary participation are considered, we can talk about the concept of 'sport'. Consequently, we can say that sport is first and foremost a social system characterized by certain forms of meaningful human interaction (Tangen 1997:35).

4.1.1.1 'A universal language'

What is often emphasized when it comes to sport for development, is the notion of sport as a 'universal language':

“Sport is a universal language. At its best it can bring people together, no matter what their origin, background, religious beliefs or economic status. And when young people participate in sports or have access to physical education, they can experience real exhilaration even as they learn the ideals of teamwork and tolerance. That is why the United Nations is turning more and more to the world of sport for help in our work for peace and our efforts to achieve the Millennium Development Goals”³⁴.

What is meant, though, by a 'universal language'? And can we really say that sport is one? If we take a further look at the definition of 'sports' in Britannica online it states that: “Sports are part of every culture, past and present, *but each culture has its own definition of sports*³⁵”. Also Tangen (1997:31pp) discusses whether sport is in fact a universal phenomenon, or if it is relative to historical and cultural background. Looking at sport as a social system then, makes it problematic to simply state that it is a universal language. What some researchers interpret as sports when they enter a different culture may sometimes turn out to be parts of religious ceremonies, hunting, upbringing of children etc (Tangen 1989 in Straume 2005:17). On the basis of his research, Tangen argues for the fact that sport is *universal in the meaning of a social system*, but that this social system can have differences in different times and in different cultures (Tangen 1997:35, my emphasis). I agree with this distinction and believe it is important to keep it in mind when analyzing sport and sport projects that operate across country borders. Sport can be a universal language, but just like how any language consists of different dialects, sport can have different emphasis and meaning in different cultures.

³⁴ Former UN Secretary General Kofi Annan at the launch of the UN International Year of Sport and Physical Education http://www.un.org/sport2005/resources/statements/kofi_annan.pdf

³⁵ Encyclopædia Britannica Online, <http://search.eb.com/eb/article-9108486>, my emphasis

In this way it is also interesting to bear in mind that there might be two different starting points for sport in the West and in Africa, and hence different emphasis on it. In many western societies people can afford to join sport or physical exercise for fun or for their own personal interest. Having jobs that involve little manual work might also lead to people requiring and having the capacity to join sport activities in their spare time (Ellingsen 2006:26). The situation may be different in other parts of the world, for example in Africa. Especially in places where people live in poverty, sport might not be prioritized, or it can be viewed as a means to get out of the difficult situation, for instance, by becoming professional football players abroad. Hognestad (2005: 8, 17pp) observed that the players on a Zambian team that participated in Norway Cup and some of their families viewed this participation as a possibility to be 'discovered', and find a way out of poverty. Such a situation may lead to a different focus on sport, and give a stronger emphasis on competition and results than someone who is just attending sport activities to keep fit and have fun.

4.1.1.2 Intrinsic and utility value of sport

For a further analysis of the concept of sport, we can emphasize different aspects of its value and look at it from two different perspectives – its intrinsic and utility values. By intrinsic value of sport we talk about the experiences one can get by participating in sport activities, such as excitement, challenges, joy and satisfaction, fellowship, disappointment, and rivalry. In other words, participation in sport has a value in itself. Another aspect of sport can also be emphasized, namely its utility value. The utility value of sport refers to sport as a means to reach goals apart from the activity itself. There are many examples of sport being used in this way. Historically, in Norway, sports clubs were established in order to make men suitable to defend the country, develop morals, and obtain political goals. Also today, the utility value of sport is emphasized. Statutes and regulations for sport for children emphasize a comprehensive development, and sport is seen as an important environment for upbringing. Health values of partaking in sport also fall under the utility category (Loland 1998:18pp). We can see that the utility perspective focuses both on the utility for the individual and for the society at large. Hence, we can argue that sport is utilized in society through the individual.

Inspired by Matti Goksøyr's work, Arvid Tollisen has also divided the value of sport into two categories that are more focused on the individual and community values of sport. The categories are made to show different rationales for sport, and are divided into internal and external rationality. The former refers to striving for competition and achievement orientation,

whereas the latter refers to sport's utility value for society at large and puts participation in sport in to a wider context (Tollisen 2003:24).

These concepts will be useful for further analysis in this thesis. If we look at the distinctions between the intrinsic value and the utility value in light of the background information given in Chapter 1, we can argue that this project first and foremost aims at making use of the utility value that sport has. Also a project like Kicking Aids Out! clearly focuses on the utility value because it uses the sports arena to educate children about the disease and teach them life skills as well as sport skills. The emphasis on the team's contribution in their home community in the aftermath of the project also serves as a good example of the external rationality of sport.

What, then, is the relationship between intrinsic and utility value? Loland (1998:23) argues that the intrinsic value is the primary aspect, and the utility value is secondary. I agree with his argument because you would not get anyone to participate in sport based on its utility aspects exclusively. People join sports because they want to have fun, not because they think it is a great way to learn life-skills or better morals. Nevertheless, the two perspectives are closely interlinked. Norway's Strategy Plan for culture and sports co-operation with countries in the South (2005:37) also recognizes that there needs to be a balance between development policy goals and the intrinsic value of sport. This is also identified by sport being used as a *means* for development.

4.1.2 Development

Development is another one of those concepts that are difficult to define, because it means different things to different people. However, it is important to know what the term implies, since using it in the wrong way may lead to unfortunate and unintended outcomes.

Many people view development as 'good change' or 'positive progress' (Chambers 1997 in Thomas 2000:23). The problem with defining development in such a way is that the words 'good', 'positive', and 'progress' are all value laden words that can have very different meanings for different people and in different cultures. Thomas points out that in whichever sense it is used, the term 'development' represents competing political aims, social values, and contrasting theories of social change, especially when it comes to development's relationship to capitalism (ibid). It is also of great importance to distinguish between development and modernization, as this has especially grave implications for the designing of

development projects. Deborah Eade argues that the concept of development throughout history has often been perceived exactly as *synonymous with Western-style modernization* (Eade (ed.) 2002:ix, my emphasis). Thus, in many respects, one can state that much of development planning has been carried out under the influence of looking at history as a linear process with different stages. In this regard development would be a way to try to get everyone to catch up with modernity (Verhelst and Tyndale 2002:1). Some important aspects of development are that it normally implies changes on all areas of life, and it is an ongoing process that builds on itself. It can be seen as a process of change that happens on the individual and societal level simultaneously, and it can have both ‘losers’ and ‘winners’. If development implies changing from previous ways of life, some of the ‘positive’ elements might be swept away along with the ‘negative’ ones (Thomas 2000:23).

Some scholars, however, have a slightly different approach to development than the one described above. They turn the focus more on social factors and human needs. In this way of looking at the concept, called people centered development, the focus is not towards a situation where everyone’s needs are met, but a state where conditions exist for all to ‘develop’ themselves to their full potential (ibid:30). This makes people agents of their own development. I would argue that this way of thinking about development is closely linked with empowerment of people (see 4.2 below), and hence, an important aspect of this thesis.

4.1.2.1 Foreign aid and development cooperation

Norway started giving foreign aid to developing countries at the end of the 1940’s, following a UN decision to establish an extended technical aid program to assist these countries³⁶. Since then, recipient countries and the focus of the projects have varied throughout the years. A thorough account of the history of Norwegian foreign aid is not relevant for this thesis, yet some general views on the way foreign aid and development projects should be administered are significant for the subsequent discussion. This will also highlight aspects that are argued to be special assets of using sport in such work.

One of the most substantial criticisms of foreign aid has been that the relationship between donor and recipient country has been too asymmetric. In other words, the power relationship between the two parties is unequal, and the party with the money has the most influence, resulting in a patron-client relationship. There are many examples throughout history where

³⁶ Norad, 2007, http://www.norad.no/default.asp?V_ITEM_ID=1218

the donor has used this power to influence politics or projects in a way that the recipient did not want (see for example Garbo 1993, Eade 2002).

This implies that many projects in the past have turned out to be ‘White Elephants’ – big, expensive, and totally malfunctioning projects (Hylland Eriksen (red.) 1989:7). Especially when working on development projects in countries where culture and social organization is far from our own, avoiding White Elephants is proving difficult (ibid). It has been argued that many development projects fail because they fail to take local knowledge and culture into consideration at the planning and implementation stages (see for example Eade ed. 2002). In many ways, one can argue that a significant reason for why this happens, is the way development planners often understand the mere concept of development (see 4.1.2). Tvedt (2007) criticizes Norway for applying the same development strategies in all countries. It is, however, important not to overlook local knowledge. There are certain ways of knowing and certain ways of doing things that are specific for each community. Knowledge is not merely knowledge, because it is obtained in situation specific ways and for different purposes. This has been recognized, and in an attempt to avoid more White Elephants, the focus has in recent years shifted into paying more attention to local culture, and to what the grassroots really need help with. The new focus, therefore, involves partnership thinking; an emphasis on *cooperation* for development and recipient involvement, more than the developing country being dependent on the terms given by the aid-donor, which was more often the case before.

This distinction also proves to be important in Norwegian development politics. Former Norwegian Minister of International Development, Hilde Frafjord Johnson, stated that the term ‘development cooperation’ should be used instead of ‘foreign aid’ in all contexts (Straume 2005:21). By ‘foreign aid’ many people understand a gift given from one country to another, whereas emphasizing development *cooperation* instead of aid is meant to illustrate that it takes cooperation between governments, organizations, and people all over the world for development to have an effective outcome. Hence, the new focus on development cooperation is determined to use the best of expertise from both the grassroots and the ‘experts’ on both sides of the project. Thus, one can hope that a stronger focus on the recipient local communities’ knowledge will be emphasized. The significant difference from an aid project to development cooperation is thus that the relationship between the parties should be symmetrical; that they will be interdependent; and that the concepts of ‘donor’ and ‘recipient’ will in practice be absent. But does this change of term really mean a difference in practice?

4.1.3 Sport for development

Now that we have a better understanding of both the concept of ‘sport’ and of ‘development’, we can take a closer look at how the two concepts can be interlinked, and how sport can be used in development projects. Throughout the years there are many examples of how sport has been used to separate and divide. In Africa during colonial times, sport was used to separate the colonialists from the natives, giving the colonialists a more ‘superior’ status. Taking these historical elements into consideration, how can sport be used for development?

As early as 1966 the Council of Europe launched the idea of ‘sport for all.’ The idea was to use physical activity as a means to handle the growth of illnesses occurring in relation to a lack of activity due to urbanization, industrialization, etc. The new aspect that made it distinct from the earlier sports for development work was the focus on sports *for all*, not just elite sport (Straume 2005:22). Norway’s first sport for development project was a ‘sport for all’-project that started in Tanzania in 1983 (ibid:63). However, it has not been until recent years that sport as a means of development work has flourished. In 2005, the UN launched their International Year of Sport and Physical Education. The aims of this focus were to raise awareness in the general public, as well as to encourage communities, organizations, and individuals to share their knowledge about the value of sport, and to create the right conditions for more sport-based development programs and projects³⁷. Several governments and NGO’s have recognized the positive effects sport can have in achieving the Millennium Development Goals in the areas of personal development, social integration and peaceful coexistence, health work (especially HIV/Aids), gender equality, and several other issues.

In August 2005, the Norwegian government introduced their first strategy plan ever to be focused exclusively on Norway’s culture and sport cooperation with countries in the South – a strategy that is supposed to run for a 10 year period. In a speech at the launch of this strategy plan, previously mentioned Frafjord Johnson emphasized equality and partnership as the greatest assets for these kinds of development cooperation projects:

“The fantastic thing about culture – compared to other areas of cooperation – is equality. Here it is not Norwegians who are the ‘culture experts’ who are going to educate. We have at least equally much to learn from culture workers in poor countries as they have to learn from us”³⁸.

The strategy document also emphasizes that if sport programs are used effectively they promote social integration, dialogue and tolerance, and are especially good and cost effective

³⁷ UN, 2007, <http://www.un.org/sport2005/>

³⁸ Frafjord Johnson, speech, 17.08.05, my translation http://www.regjeringen.no/nb/dokumentarkiv/Regjeringen-Bondevik-II/Utenriksdepartementet/265100/269185/lansering_av_strategi_for_kultur-og.html?id=269379

for public awareness and information campaigns (Strategy for Norway's culture and Sports co-operation with countries in the South 2005:37pp).

Although it is emphasized that the focus is on sport 'for all', it is important to bear in mind that most people participating in these activities are children and youth. Consequently, sport for development projects often refer to the UN Convention of the Rights of the Child³⁹:

1. States Parties recognize the right of the child to rest and leisure, to engage in play and recreational activities appropriate to the age of the child and to participate freely in cultural rights and the arts
2. States Parties shall respect and promote the right of the child to participate fully in cultural and artistic life and shall encourage the provision of appropriate and equal opportunities for cultural, artistic, recreational and leisure activity⁴⁰.

As far as definitions of sport are concerned, this again shows us that the UN and instances involving sport for development, focus on a strong link between play, leisure, and sport. The Norwegian Strategy Plan (2005:37) also focuses on these rights, which shows that it has a rights-based approach to the allocation of funds for sports-related measures under the development assistance budget.

4.2 Empowerment

Anacleiti (2002:168) recognizes that people in Africa are rarely asked what kind of development they want. Consequently, he claims that in development projects the poor in Africa have rarely been considered to be humans in their own right, but have always been treated as objects for different models. In the same way, Verhelst and Tyndale (2002:17, 19) recognize that people are not problems, but a capacity that need to be treated as subjects that are asked what they would like help with and how they are already doing things. This knowledge then needs to be built on in development projects. One way of dealing with this is to develop projects that will empower the participants to make a change in their own lives. Thinking in this way, there is not one helper and one that is helped, rather people are *subjects* of their own development. Hopefully this will lead them to develop a feeling of ownership of the project, which leads to it being sustainable in the future.

In a seminar about sport for development, leader of the international department in NIF, Bjørn Omar Evju, stated that "our mission is to empower youth to positively influence their lives and the lives of others, by actively enhancing life skills through sport. (...) 'to

³⁹ The UN Convention of the Rights of the Child is signed by all countries except Somalia and the US, hence all countries that Norway have sport development cooperation with have accepted the articles in this convention.

⁴⁰ UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, Article 31, <http://www.ohchr.org/english/law/pdf/crc.pdf>

empower' means a process that entails utilizing the resources within self⁴¹". From this statement and also from NIF's expressed goals for the Norway Cup-project, we can assume that they look at empowerment as a process that can influence both on the individual and societal level. Below we will take a closer look at how this can happen, and how the levels are interlinked.

Most scholars working on empowerment point out that the concept is multi dimensional, often loosely defined, and can have slightly different meanings within different fields (Zimmerman 2000, Page and Czuba 1999, Laverack and Wallerstein 2001). Rappaport (1984, in Page and Czuba 1999) thus noted that it is easy to define empowerment by its absence, but difficult to define it in action because it takes different forms in different people and contexts. Empowerment is a central concept in fields like health, community psychology, community organizing, nursing, social work, education, and economics.

Because the concept of empowerment is so dependent on the context in which it is studied, it is almost impossible to come up with a single definition of the term. Zimmerman also recognizes that limiting empowerment to one definition would be contradicting the very concept (Page and Czuba 1999). The exact complexity of the phenomenon can be seen both as its strongest asset and its biggest weakness when it comes to using it in research (Pensgaard and Sorensen 2002:62). Some features, however, are included in most definitions. These suggest an agreement that empowerment might refer both to a process and an outcome, and can occur at individual, organizational, and community levels (Harris and Veinot 2004:3). Page and Czuba (1999) provide a broad definition of the concept that I find useful for this thesis. They state that empowerment is a process that challenges our assumptions about the ways things are and can be, and that it challenges our basic assumptions about power, helping, achieving, and succeeding. It can be seen as a process that fosters power in people, for the use in their own lives, and in their society, by acting on issues that they find important. I find this definition particularly useful because, as the authors themselves point out, it highlights that the individual and the community are fundamentally connected, and that individual change consequently can lead to a change in the community. This is also consistent with the objective expressed for the Norway Cup-project (see 1.3), and the relationship will be investigated at a later stage of this thesis.

⁴¹ Bjørn Omar Eyju, "Sport in Development Cooperation – magic bullet or new white elephant?", Seminar, University of Oslo, 30.01.07

4.2.1 Empowerment and power

What is the connection between empowerment and power? Page and Czuba (1999) argue that power is the core concept of empowerment, and hence the possibility of empowerment rests on two important things. Firstly, it requires that power can change, and secondly, it requires that power can expand. Weber's (1946) classic definition of power is that it is related to our ability to make others do what we want, regardless of their own wishes or interests. He also points out that power exists not in isolation but in a social context between people. Subsequently, it does not exist in isolation and hence is not inherent in people. Hence, power and its relationships can change, which in this context implies that empowerment as a process of change is possible. Empowerment, however, also depends upon power being something that can expand. This is not possible if we think of it as a zero sum concept – something I can have only at your expense. In later years, however, significant research has been done that sees power in a different light; as something shared and characterized by collaboration, sharing and mutuality (Page and Czuba 1999). Empowerment is linked with social power, and the application of resources to hinder or facilitate community decision making, not with power that refers to authority (Zimmerman 2000:57). This entails that gaining power actually strengthens the power of others rather than diminishing it. It is this definition of power, as a process that occurs in relationships, that gives us the possibility of empowerment (ibid). I would argue that this highlights the way in which power and empowerment is used in sport for development work, because it understands power as something shared. This implies that when one person is empowered, others will benefit, which means there is a link between empowerment at individual and community level. With this discussion in mind, we turn to the concepts of individual and community empowerment.

4.2.2 Individual empowerment

Individual empowerment can also be labeled psychological empowerment (Zimmerman 2000), because it refers to personal beliefs about one's competence, efforts to exert control, and understanding of the socio-political environment. Individual empowerment is strongly linked to high self-esteem and high levels of self-efficacy. Self-esteem is concerned with cognitive judgments of situation-specific aspects of personal capability, whereas self-efficacy refers to feelings (Pensgaard and Sorensen 2002:55). The specific actions an individual takes to achieve goals are not as important as simply being involved and attempting to exert control (ibid). This implies that empowerment might take different forms in different people,

and that individual empowerment might not always result in the actions a development planner hoped or expected.

Zimmerman (1995) categorizes individual empowerment into three components. The *intrapersonal component* refers to personality and locus of control. The second component is called *interactional*, and deals with how people use analytic skills and solve problems. Finally, the *behavioral component* is associated with if and how people take actions to exert control by participating in activities in the community. Another important component of psychological empowerment is perceived control. This refers to the belief one has of one's own possibility to influence an outcome, whether that is achieving a goal or avoid an undesirable outcome. Hence, it refers mostly to the cognitive domain and self efficacy. This might determine what activities people engage in, and how much effort they put into them. This suggests that psychological empowerment is also a dynamic concept that might vary over time and in different contexts (Zimmerman 1995).

4.2.2.1 Individual empowerment through sport

There is not an extensive amount of research done on empowerment through the sport context. However, I have studied two research projects on empowerment through sport that have been useful in my analysis; the work of Pensgaard and Sorensen (2002) and that of Oscar Mwaanga (2003).

Pensgaard and Sorensen refer to assumptions made by Hutzler when it comes to individual empowerment through the sport context⁴². The main points of Hutzler's model is that physical performance leads to functional efficiency; mastery experiences improve self-efficacy; elevated confidence in the body improves physical self-concept and self-esteem; personal disorders, such as affective mood states, are made less severe; and a rise in activity levels lead to increased social acceptance (Pensgaard and Sorensen 2002:51). Participation in recreational sport has also in recent studies been shown to expand the social realm and experience in individuals, and encourage them to initiate activity in other social domains (Blinde and Mc Clung 1997 in Pensgaard and Sorensen 2002:51).

I would argue that this model also captures the important empowerment aspects that is hoped to arise from participation in sport for development projects in general, and the Norway Cup-

⁴² Pensgaard and Sorensen, as well as Hutzler, have been specifically looking at empowerment of individuals with disabilities in their work. However, I find these two models that I am using here to be of general character and hence something that can hold true both for individuals with and without disabilities in the sport context

project in particular. First of all, the project is meant to promote a higher level of participation in sport, and through sport the feeling of achieving something and a belief in own possibility to accomplish one's goals. The next point refers to self-efficacy and self-confidence, which the boys in the Norway Cup-project can gain through mastery of soccer skills, as well as mastery of traveling and staying in another country, making new friends, and through different activities at the preparation course. In addition to learning from experiences, elevated confidence in the body is supposed to improve physical self-concept and self-esteem. I would argue that we can draw a parallel to the goal of Kicking Aids Out! activities that suppose that through learning life skills, higher self esteem, and knowledge about one's body, one will not indulge in behaviors that pose as a risk of contracting HIV/Aids. In Hutzler's model, the rise in activity level is supposed to lead to increased social acceptance. In terms of this project we could assume that by being recognized for their soccer skills and traveling, the 'Norway-boys' will be important and recognized citizens in their home community upon their return. This social acceptance is supposed to be used in a positive way, by empowering the community with the new skills and ideas obtained.

4.2.3 Community empowerment

At the community level of analysis, empowerment may refer to collective action to improve the quality of life and to the connections among community organizations and agencies (Zimmerman 2000:44). But is community empowerment a process or an outcome?

As an outcome, community empowerment is an interplay between individual and community change within a long time frame, typically 7 years or longer (Raeburn 1993 in Laverack and Wallerstein 2001). The feeling of being empowered might therefore not be evident for a long time, and consequently, empowerment as an outcome of a program is hard to measure. At an individual level, people may experience a more immediate psychological empowerment, such as an increase in self esteem or confidence which evolved from collective action. The measurement of outcome might not take into account the processes involved in community empowerment, such as capacity building and developing competencies, skills and critical awareness. The outcome might also mean different things to different people involved (ibid).

However, community empowerment is mostly viewed as a *process* in the form of a dynamic continuum, involving: (i) personal empowerment; (ii) the development of small mutual groups; (iii) community organizations; (iv) partnerships; and (v) social and political action. The potential of community empowerment is gradually maximized as people progress from

individual to collective action along this continuum (Laverack and Wallerstein 2001). It is this view on community empowerment that offers most insight into the ways in which people are enabled through a program to maximize their potential and to progress from individual action to collective social and political change (ibid).

4.2.3.1 Community empowerment through sport

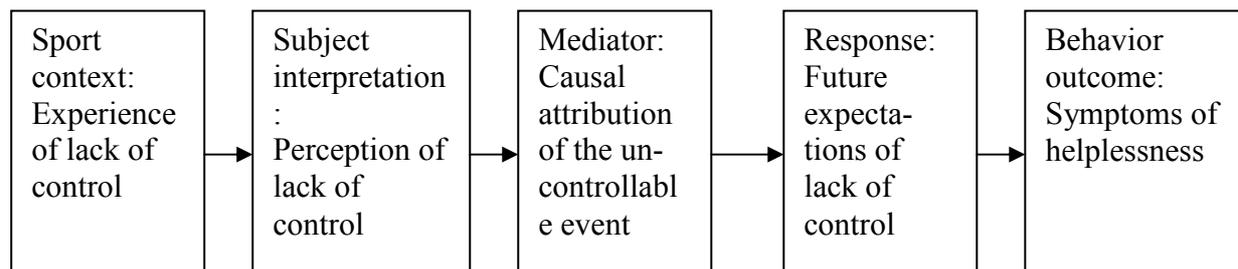
On the community level of empowerment, then, many scholars identify political participation to be the strongest measure. I would argue that viewing community empowerment in this respect when it comes to the Norway Cup-project would not work, because we are dealing with a group of youths that are in an age where political involvement is neither an interest nor a goal. However, I do not believe we can disregard the possibility of influencing and empowering their community due to their lack of political involvement. In the case of the Norway Cup-project, I would argue that the empowerment that can occur from an individual to community level, takes the form of peer education both when it comes to sport skills and life skills (e.g. HIV/Aids information), and also prospective new ideas that could come from the experience of traveling and cultural exchange. If the participation in the project leads to increased visibility and recognition in their society, they may be able to use this recognition in a fortunate way. I would argue that this could also be seen as empowerment as a process that goes through the different steps mentioned above, and it also highlights the interconnectedness of individual and community empowerment. However, as Mwaanga (2003:40) points out, it is important to carefully examine the cultural context, environmental conditions, and the power structures of the society in question.

4.2.4 Learned helplessness

Not all new experiences, however, result in people feeling empowered. Sometimes experiences can lead to negative feelings instead of positive. Learned helplessness is a concept that refers to the development of a person's feelings of his or her inability to have influence (Abramson et al 1978 in Mwaanga 2003:28). According to this theory, learned helplessness refers to individuals who experience events as uncontrollable and then show performance deficits on later tasks. According to Zimmerman, a person experiencing an event can feel mastery and successful control of the situation, but also in some instances feel that the situation cannot be controlled. The way the individual perceives that situation leads to causal attributions and expectations about future events. If future events seem

uncontrollable (perceived or real lack of control), the person can show symptoms of learned helplessness which include withdrawal, alienation, and depression (Mwaanga 2003:29).

Mwaanga (2003:42) adapts the learned helplessness theory to the sport context, noting that in sport there will occasionally be times where one does not feel on the top of a situation. In circumstances where this leads to the perception of future sport events as uncontrollable, learned helplessness symptoms can occur. On the basis of this Mwaanga (2003:43) has made a learned helplessness model adapted from Zimmerman:



In this context, I find it interesting to look at this learned helplessness model not only in the sport context, but also when it comes to project participation and traveling. By traveling for the first time to a different country and experiencing a material abundance for two weeks and then to go back; can this be perceived as an uncontrollable event resulting in not knowing how to cope with the new experiences upon returning to an everyday life marked by poverty? Can this result in symptoms of learned helplessness? These are reflections I will come back to in the subsequent chapter.

4.3 Culture – an introduction to the concept

Another important dimension of the Norway Cup-project is the cultural exchange between Norwegian and foreign teams. As stated above, culture is also a significant aspect to recognize and consider when designing development cooperation projects. Hence, I will take a closer look at this concept and some of its implications.

There are thousands of different suggestions for a definition of culture, and they emphasize different aspects of the concept. A thorough discussion about the definition of culture is not relevant for the research question of this thesis. Therefore, I will refer to a number of understandings of culture that I find to be most descriptive in matching my informants understanding of the concept, and hence find most relevant for further analysis.

“Believing, that man is an animal suspended in webs of significance he himself has spun, I take culture to be those webs, and the analysis of it to be therefore not an experimental science in search of law but an interpretative one in search of meaning” (Geertz 1973). This definition focuses on culture as something individual – a person relates to ways of life that he or she finds meaningful. This is important because it refers to someone’s *identification* with a group or way of life. A slightly different angle to the concept is also of importance in this context, namely Giddens' statement that: “Culture refers to the ways of life of the members of a society, or of groups within a society. It includes how they dress, their marriage customs and family life, their patterns of work, religious ceremonies and leisure pursuits” (Giddens 1997:18). This definition, referring to customs and a group’s specific ways of life, seemed to be the way my informants comprehended the concept. Traditional customs like dances and “the way they do things on the other side,” were things that were emphasized when talking about culture and cultural exchange.

Going back to Geertz’ definition and the importance of *identification* with a group, to which one feels some kind of similarity, this also has implications for our understanding of others. Identification with a certain group means differentiation from another. In other words, a common ‘we’ always creates a different ‘them.’ In terms of cultural exchange, can we find a common ‘us’, or will it enhance the differences?

The images of self and others are also emphasized in the launch of the new focus on sport and culture in Norwegian development cooperation:

“When we now wish to strengthen the field of culture in Norwegian development cooperation work, it is because we want to contribute to better national self images for countries in the south, as well as establishing more balanced and positive images of developing countries”⁴³.

An important question is, nevertheless, whether taking a team to Norway as people who are perceived to need to be helped, can, in fact, lead to a stronger feeling of equality. Another central question turns out to be whether a ‘cultural exchange’ over a period of two weeks brings out the differences between the parties rather than the similarities. Also, can it actually be called a cultural ‘exchange’ when one team is in their home environment whereas the other is in a totally new and unfamiliar environment?

⁴³ Frafjord Johnson, speech, 17.08.05, my translation http://www.regjeringen.no/nb/dokumentarkiv/Regjeringen-Bondevik-II/Utenriksdepartementet/265100/269185/lansering_av_strategi_for_kultur-og.html?id=269379

CHAPTER 5 – EMPIRICAL DATA AND DISCUSSION

The theories and concepts presented in the previous chapter will now be discussed in relation to my empirical findings, obtained through fieldwork in Namibia and Norway. The structure of this chapter follows the three phases of the project, and relevant data and topics will be discussed in this chronology.

5.1 Khorixas – Hometown of Namibian Super Stars

Khorixas was for a long time the administrative centre of what used to be known as Damaraland – the area of land appointed to the Damara ethnic group by the colonial powers. Today, Damaras still constitute 99% of the population. Most of the administrative tasks have now been moved north to Opuwo, leaving people in Khorixas with even fewer job opportunities in a community already marked by extensive unemployment. The mayor estimates an unemployment rate of about 70%; hence the majority of households live without a steady income. At the same time the population growth rate is calculated to approximately 2.5 – 3.1%, and the average household has no less than six people. The high unemployment rate and poverty among the inhabitants results in not many companies wanting to establish any businesses in town⁴⁴.

Namibia is divided into 13 political regions. Khorixas is located in the Kunene region, in the north-westernmost corner of the country. Kunene has a relatively small population of 68,224 (Mendelsohn et al 2003:161pp). The region also has a lower HDI⁴⁵ than the national average, although not the lowest (ibid:189). The levels of literacy, school attendance, and grades are lower in the Kunene region than most other regions in the country (ibid:178pp). It is difficult to estimate the crime rate and the HIV/Aids situation in Khorixas, because the answers vary greatly depending on who you talk to.

5.2 Namibian Super Stars

The team which gets to participate in the Norway Cup-project is decided through the annual SCORE Cup in March/April. Participating in this cup is one football team from each of the communities in which SCORE has placed a volunteer, and the team that wins this tournament gets to go to Norway. In other words the Namibian selection process focuses exclusively on

⁴⁴ Figures and estimates in this paragraph are based on information obtained in an interview with the Mayor of Khorixas, Matheas Tsaeb, 20.06.06.

⁴⁵ Human Development Index measures the average achievements in a country in three basic dimensions of human development: a long and healthy life, knowledge and decent standard of living UNDP, 2007, <http://hdr.undp.org/hdr2006/statistics/indices/default.cfm>

football skills. The teams are recruited from SCORE communities only in order for the organization to be able to follow up on them, and use them in their further work⁴⁶. The team participating in Norway Cup 2006 was the winner of the SCORE Cup held at the Herbert Conradie stadium in Khorixas. Teams from the five projects communities Rundu, Opuwo, Oshivelo, Tsumkwe, and Khorixas participated, and in the end the home team ‘came out on top’ of the competition, and was awarded with participation in the Norway Cup-project.

5.2.1 The Namibian Super Stars are born

The boys that brought the trophy home to Khorixas had not been a team for long. They were a team selected before the tournament from the boys in town who were in the right age group. The boys were selected from three different schools in the area, two in the centre of town, and one 30 km outside. When asked about how the players were selected for the Norway Cup team, representatives at the various schools all said that there had been try-outs in the schools in one form or another. The players who usually play for the first team in school were too old to participate, so they tried to identify the best of the younger boys. These went to the community try-out in order to impress the coaches and be picked for the team that would represent Khorixas in the SCORE Cup. In some ways one can argue that it is questionable whether this meets Norad’s requirement that the participants should be an already existing team, and that the team should not be ‘topped’⁴⁷. However, there are both pros and cons when it comes to this way of organizing the team, and the effects it can have for the community.

There is no youth league structure for football in Khorixas like the one that exists in Norway. Sport, at least for the age group in question, is organized through school teams and not through athletic clubs like we are used to here. Trying to implement the same system that we have here would not be preferable, since every country or community organizes things in the way that meets local challenges best. Trying to impose a different way of organizing something would be close to cultural imperialism, and changing an existing sport structure would also be contradicting the point of the Norway Cup-project. The Norway Cup-project does not set out to develop sport, but to seek development in a bigger picture by using sports as a tool. Nevertheless, according to the SCORE coordinator, the ideal situation for selecting the team would be that there were community leagues that would lead up to one big tournament, and this is something that SCORE is still working on⁴⁸.

⁴⁶ SCORE country coordinator, interview, Windhoek 07.07.06

⁴⁷ A direct translation from Norwegian. The term refers to a team that only consists of the best players available.

⁴⁸ SCORE country coordinator, interview, Windhoek 07.07.06

If we look back at the goal for the Norway Cup-project which also emphasizes the empowerment of communities, we can certainly see advantages of including youth from different schools and different parts of town. In this way there is not just one school that gets to draw on prospective new ideas and knowledge the boys gain through participation. By letting all the boys of the age group try out for the team, you get more of the community involved also in the preparation phase of the project. The SCORE country coordinator also highlights the benefits this system has on the community as a whole:

“Some communities have managed to set up leagues, and this is one approach in trying to do that. But in the past it has been more about trying to integrate the community as well. Some communities have used this experience to try and create integration and a reaction in the community (...)There is a challenge to that [recruiting from different schools] yes, but there are also benefits, and I’d like to highlight the benefits because they are the important ones. And it is just general interaction in the community and it brings the community together”⁴⁹.

Norad’s guidelines for the Norway Cup-project point out that one of the reasons that the team should be an already existing one is because they should not be ‘topped’ teams, national teams and the like. This rule is made in order for the competition to be fair and for the teams to compete on equal terms. Even though this team is ‘topped’ in the sense that the best soccer players that age were selected, it is not ‘topped’ in the way that Norad explains the term. It is actually not very different from a common Norwegian club team, which also consists of players from all around the community and not just one school.

However, there are also cons to selecting a team for Norway Cup in this way. One of these is that the emphasis is put exclusively on football. This is different from how it is done in Zimbabwe, for example, where the teams must compete in three different components; football, peer education, and community services, and the successful team has to perform well on all three aspects (Ellingsen 2006:39). The team must therefore be a team throughout the whole year in order to participate in the different components. As for Namibia, however, one must only have special skills in sport, whereas the bigger picture with community involvement and development is not taken into consideration. Consequently, one might suspect that these aspects will not be stressed to a great extent in later stages of the project either.

Also another con to the way in which the team is selected can be identified. From the definition of sport and the idea of sport for development discussed in the previous chapter, we can note an emphasis on the *including* aspects of sport and play. From the Norwegian side it is also a focus on the legal Rights of the Child to be able to enjoy play and leisure.

⁴⁹ SCORE country coordinator, interview, Windhoek 07.07.06

Consequently, sport is supposed to be something that can reach all the youth in an area, provided that they are interested in participating, not necessarily that they are the biggest talents. In this case, one can argue that the focus is on competition rather than play. Since hardly anyone has been out of the country before, there is also a lot at stake, since the prize is a trip to Norway. In this respect, it is necessary to reflect upon whether this is uniting or if it is actually dividing. When only the best soccer players are awarded with a very big prize, in a worst case scenario, it can create ‘winners’ and ‘losers’ among the youth in the community, and thereby lead to some kind of ‘hero-status’ or jealousy among peers. On the other hand, we must be careful to argue in such a way because the view on ‘children’s sport’ may be different in Namibia than in Norway. Norwegian regulations about sport for the younger age groups are fairly strict when it comes to competition. These views seem to be very different in the Namibian society, where competition and ‘topping’ of teams are a lot more usual from an early age. Both the players and the coach of the team emphasized ‘winning the cup’ as their goal for participating in the Norway Cup. When asked whether all the players would get the same amount of time on the field or if the best players would get to play all the time the coach replied that the best players would benefit the most, and play as much as possible. It can be discussed whether we can even expect the views about children and youth sport to be the same in two totally different countries. If sport is seen as a way out of poverty, competition is bound to be valued higher than in a society where recreational sport as a leisure activity has a high priority. Consequently, it is important that the different parties have a mutual understanding of each others’ views on the meanings of different concepts. If these understandings differ considerably, it can be argued against the notion that sport is in itself a universal language. One must also be careful and take the right precautions in order for sport to be a uniting tool rather than making ‘winners’ and ‘losers’ within a community.

5.3 Before Norway Cup – The goals of participation

As previously mentioned, I came to Khorixas in time for the preparation course arranged by NIF. Apart from the selection tournament, this was the team’s first encounter with the project, and the first time to get extensive information about Norway and what was awaiting them in a couple of months. This was also the first time that they were informed of what was expected of them personally in the project, and they took part in exercises that would make them better equipped for meeting these expectations. The interviews with the players were conducted a couple of weeks after this course.

In order to find out whether the project has had the desired effects for the parties involved, it is important to address what their objectives actually were to begin with. It is not enough to look at the official goals, we must also observe the goals at a grassroots level, and subsequently discuss to what degree they correlate, and whether they are all met.

5.3.1 Norwegian objectives – Participation as part of a bigger picture

The Norwegian partners in the project are NIF, Norad, and Norway Cup itself. As previously discussed, the main objective stated on NIF's home pages is that the Norway Cup-project should strengthen projects in the south through empowerment of the participants. The focus on the external rationality of sport and its utility value for the larger society is emphasized. As discussed in Chapter 4, however, the importance of maintaining a balance of focus between the intrinsic and utility values is recognized.

The Norway Cup-project is described as a development cooperation project, which per definition means that there should be equality and interdependence between the parties, and that there should be a mutual gain. An interesting note in this respect is that NIF only mentions strengthening of projects and participants from the South in their main objective for the project. The mutual gain perspective is, however, in line with what Secretary General of Norway Cup, Frode Kyvåg, emphasizes as an important value of the cup's Colorful Unity (see Chapter 1). Nevertheless, it is important not to forget that the teams come mainly to play football and have fun, and that the utility value of this must not be over used:

“We must always be careful so that we do it in a genuine, humble, and honest way, so that people don't feel that we drown them in these kinds of things and forget to let them play football and have fun. It is important to keep that balance all along”⁵⁰.

It is then, a merge and a balance between the utility and intrinsic values of football in Norway Cup as an institution as well as in the Norway Cup-project and sport for development projects in general. If you forget the fun part, people will start doing other things that they think are more fun, and there will no longer be a base for development projects to be built on.

Another, but related, aspect of this project is that it can make Norwegian people aware of the situation in other countries in a different fashion. The youth from different countries mingle at Norway Cup. Certain teams are also friendship teams and thus participate and learn from cultural exchange with the foreign teams. It can also be seen as a chance for people not even present at Ekebergsletta to get a glimpse of Norwegian development cooperation :

⁵⁰ Secretary General of Norway Cup, Frode Kyvåg, interview, Oslo 29.03.04

"(...) it is also very important the message the teams are bringing from the South in terms of stories in the news and that these teams will be featured in the press in Norway and in that way inform the Norwegian people about development cooperation. They show an important part of the picture. Norad believes it is important that Norwegians know something about development cooperation and what the tax money are used for. It is also positive if the public sees this work as important, useful and producing results"⁵¹.

What is emphasized, especially in Norad's guidelines, is that the trip to Norway Cup should not only be a trip to Norway, but that participation should be a part of a bigger picture, and be part of a project started in the south that would somehow benefit from it. Henceforth, it is an important aspect from the organizer's perspective that the participants should go home and contribute in their home community after Norway Cup. There is also an information campaign at Norway Cup, with a focus on the UN's Millennium Development Goals. An extra emphasis has traditionally been put on goal number 6, which addresses combating the spreading of the HIV/Aids pandemic. The Kicking Aids Out! program (see 2.2.1) is one of the methods used to address this topic. The idea is that:

"the players who come to Norway Cup should function as 'ambassadors' both during Norway Cup and after homecoming. Every team has to make a plan for how they will promote the annual theme of the information campaign in their local communities"⁵².

Also former director general of Norad, Tove Strand, emphasized this aspect in a feature article in Dagbladet:

"Those who are chosen to participate in Norway Cup get a special task when they return home. They are taught to be peer educators so that they can appear as good role models for other children and youth. When we know that crime, drugs, and violence are often the alternatives for many children and youth growing up in the slums, it shows us even clearer how important this effort is"⁵³.

Focusing on participation as part of a bigger picture is not only to secure that the larger community can benefit, but also to make sure that there are structures for the follow-up of the team after returning from Norway⁵⁴. It is also emphasized that it is the organization in the south that decides how the project is carried out in the respective countries:

"What is most important to us is the recipient principal. That our partners, both in the Norway Cup-project, but also in our other development cooperation work, is that the recipient defines the projects that they want to work with, ways in which they want to work with it and how they want to do it, and then we take a look at it and see if it is within the areas we want to focus on"⁵⁵.

The application for the Norway Cup-project, then, is relatively open – something that results in that the teams that are chosen to participate are fairly different as far as organization and focus

⁵¹ Programme Officer Norad, interview, Oslo 26.03.07

⁵² International Adviser, Development Cooperation, NIF, Marthe Hotvedt, e-mail, 11.04.07

⁵³ Tove Strand 'Problematisk Fotballfest?', 24.07.03, Dagbladet, <http://www.dagbladet.no/kultur/2003/07/24/374305.html>, my translation

⁵⁴ Programme Officer Norad, interview, Oslo 26.03.07

⁵⁵ International Adviser, Development Cooperation NIF, Marthe Hotvedt, interview, Oslo 22.03.07

are concerned. The condition is that they meet the specific terms set by NIF and Norad for the team, and that the project meets NIF's values and areas of focus, part of which means they must see participation in Norway Cup as a beneficial part of a bigger project.

5.3.2 Objectives on the Namibian part

When it comes to identifying the objectives on the Namibian part, I will consider three different levels separately to highlight the differences as well as similarities.

5.3.2.1 The organization – four goals for participating

As mentioned, teams from Namibia that participate in the Norway Cup-project participate through the organization SCORE. In an interview the country coordinator for SCORE Namibia gives four reasons for applying for participation in the project. One of the objectives is to strengthen the partnerships they have, that is the partnership with Norway and NIF, and the partnership between SCORE itself, SCORE Namibia, and the Namibian government. Through the Norway Cup-project they can show the work that is being done in the communities and their results, and in this way strengthen and create confidence in the partnerships. The second reason he states is that this can help create a platform for programs in the communities. He points out that in many cases programs fail because people do not have an end goal. In that way, having an end goal such as participation in Norway Cup could be an inspiration that helps getting the communities to participate in a more structured manner and create sustainability for the programs. It is also pointed out that it gives the youth themselves an opportunity to be able to run the activities and get experience on different levels. Thirdly, the goal is to empower the youth by giving them an opportunity to experience a world beyond their own and open up their minds as to what the world can offer:

“We are all allowed to dream. But if our dreams are limited, then your thinking and your vision is limited as well. There is a hope that this experience, this opportunity, will open up their vision and their opportunity to dream, because part of development is also developing a person themselves. And the hope is that these guys will be very important people in their society (...) it gives them a platform to be able to say “I know something as well”, so it helps their self confidence”.

Important parts of empowerment is the educational aspects of cultural exchange and Kicking Aids Out!, education which is important to bring back to the communities. The participants can go back to their communities and act as ambassadors to attract people's attention to important issues. A fourth goal is to promote sport in the community and make people see the importance of it, and the impact that it can have on the youth and on the community.⁵⁶

⁵⁶ Information and quote from SCORE country coordinator, interview, Windhoek 07.07.06

5.3.2.2 *The community – the utility value of football*

Khorixas is a nice and lively place, but it is also a community facing many challenges. With an unemployment rate of 70%, poverty is putting its mark on the community. One problem that is drawn to attention is the school system, where the students have to pass an external exam from Cambridge, England, to be allowed to go past 10th grade. The failure rate on this exam is enormous (around 50%), and leave many of the children without anything to do during the day, as job opportunities are already scarce. The mayor points out that unemployment is a problem, and says that there is a youth centre in town where the youth can come together and participate in different activities, which helps to keep them busy. Although the youth themselves play soccer because they think it is fun and it makes them happy, the adults interviewed also allude to important utility values gained from the youth's love for soccer.

“Especially during the week ends, the boys are at the soccer field all the time (...) I think it is good for us that they do, because it keeps them from doing no good things”⁵⁷.

“Because sport is having certain rules and regulations, and there is a certain discipline within sports. So while you are involved in sports it is also influencing your overall behavior as a person, because of those rules you have to follow in the sport codes you also become a better person later on. Obviously, because those things such as alcohol, drug abuse and doping is prohibited, and it is helping the individual as a person”⁵⁸.

Although the challenges faced are very different, these arguments can be likened to those in local communities here in Norway, where there have been debates of whether lack of leisure activities for the youth have caused them to partake in more unfortunate activities such as drugs and alcohol abuse. Thus the external rationality of getting people involved in sports can be seen as a goal and an argument both in Norwegian and Namibian society. It is emphasized by most people I talk to in Khorixas that they hope that because these boys got the opportunity to go to Norway, it will inspire their peers to take part in sports activities when they see what opportunities that may bring. It is also brought to attention that opportunities like these do not come often to people in Khorixas, as the financial situation does not put people in a position to travel, and because projects like this are rare in these areas.

“When something positive like this project happens, it is usually the children and communities in Windhoek that benefit from it, because the projects are always carried out there (...) The transport cost is usually too much for the NGOs and projects to focus on the rural areas. Therefore it is a very good thing that this possibility was given to the children from a community such as Khorixas”⁵⁹.

When Norway Cup is arranged, the Norwegian kids are on their summer vacation. The southern hemisphere, however, is in the middle of winter season, and schools are still in

⁵⁷ Principal, School 1, interview, Khorixas 08.06.06

⁵⁸ Principal, School 2, interview, Khorixas 08.06.06

⁵⁹ Mayor of Khorixas, Matheas Tsaeb, interview, Khorixas 20.06.06

session. In other words, the kids have to be taken out of school for two weeks, and they come home in the middle of their exams. However, all the principals emphasize that traveling to Norway is educational in itself, and far outweighs missing exams.

“They must go. It is a must that they go. This is the *opportunity of a lifetime* for them. You know, there is something called *life long learning* as well. This is one of those moments. They learn so much that they wouldn’t have done if they spent the same two weeks in school (...) there is a mutual gain in cultural exchange. You know there is so much talk these days about the world being a global village (...) And it could also have a good effect on their behavior, they will see how other people other places are doing the same things or doing them differently. An experience like this will *definitely widen their view*. You know many of these kids have never seen an ocean in their lives. Now they will go on an airplane! And they will see how other people do things, even the smallest things, like eating, going to restaurants, for example how people use knives and forks”⁶⁰.

Thus the emphasis on picking up skills and experiences are important objectives for the community. The idea is that they will share these new experiences with their peers and with their schools, so that they can all grow in the experience.

“The idea is that they must share what they have learned and experienced with the other learners. In this way it will benefit both the school and our home soccer league, and the other learners who didn’t get to go to Norway this time. They will be role models for the others. Anybody who knows that they could have an opportunity to go and experience the same as these boys will put in an extra effort so that their dream can come true, and in that way they can be rewarded by getting the opportunity they otherwise wouldn’t get”⁶¹.

Although the coach also emphasizes that winning the cup is very important, the utility value of the participation is what is mostly in focus on the community level.

5.3.2.3 *The players - “We want to win the cup!”*

As explained earlier, I conducted group interviews with the players during my first fieldwork in Khorixas. When we came there for the preparation course, I met a bunch of excited young boys who all shared a great enthusiasm for playing football, and came to the course with football magazines covered with international stars; discussing the upcoming World Cup. When meeting with the players I was curious to hear about their relationship to football, expectations for the trip to Norway, and their thoughts about the future.

None of the players had ever crossed Namibia’s borders, and only traveled by car to other places within the country. Consequently, the plane trip to Norway was something that caused great excitement; and a few nerves for some. Most players knew nothing about Norway, except that it was far away. Hence, they were eager to see how people live, dress, speak or simply how they do things ‘on the other side’. Seeing new things and making new friends are

⁶⁰Principal, School 1, interview, Khorixas 08.06.06, my emphasis

⁶¹ Principal, School 2, interview, Khorixas 08.06.06

therefore expressed as important objectives for participating in Norway Cup. But the players do not only want to see how things are done differently, they are also eager to show some of their own culture in return. Hence, cultural exchange is important; but so is football!

“Firstly it is to make friends and to show our culture. But we must go there to win and not to lose; and take the trophy home. We will feel bad if we go there and lose, because then the other learners will be against us and tease us and say that we wasted the opportunity we got”⁶².

Namibia ranks 123rd out of 199 national teams on the FIFA world ranking as of March 2007⁶³, and there are not many Namibians playing in football leagues abroad. However, the fairly low place on the statistics does not mirror the fascination for the game found throughout the country. The players are aware of Namibian football’s low rank internationally, and one points out that Norway Cup can be a good place to prove the statistics wrong

“We are traveling to take part in the tournament, so we want to win it. In Namibia there aren’t so many famous soccer players, so we want to show them that we can play soccer in Namibia too”⁶⁴.

Most of the players also reveal an ambition for their soccer playing to take them to wider horizons. Many mention that their goal for the future is to become a famous soccer player, and either represent their country or play for a good club in Europe. Quite a few state that their dream is “to play alongside Ronaldinho,” whom they also hope to see at Norway Cup. It is quite evident that some players hope that the exposure they get at Norway Cup will help them achieve some of these goals:

“Maybe some coach of for example Arsenal will see you play, and they have a development team that they will sign you up for”⁶⁵.

“Some coaches might see you play. For example, if we come there and play for the Namibian team, and then a Norwegian coach is watching and he sees that this boy – oh, he’s really good, we want to have this boy on our team. And then he might select us for an under 16 team in Norway to come and play with them”⁶⁶.

“People told me players from other teams will be watching, and also coaches, so maybe it can be a possibility to be signed for other teams, too”⁶⁷.

I also asked the players if they thought that they could gain anything on a personal level from participating in this project. What many of them were preoccupied with was that they could pick up new soccer skills and team spirit. However, many were also thinking that they would learn different things from experiencing a new culture, about the food, how Norwegians

⁶² Interview players, group a, June 2006

⁶³ FIFA, 2007, <http://fifa.com/en/mens/statistics/index/0,2548,All-Mar-2007,00.html>

⁶⁴ Interview players, group e, June 2006

⁶⁵ Interview players, group b, June 2006

⁶⁶ Interview players, group f, June 2006

⁶⁷ Interview players, group d, June 2006

behave socially and that kind of thing. Some, however, also pointed out that they would learn some new personal skills that we can relate to personal empowerment:

“I think I will learn to communicate better because we don’t know anyone and we have to get to know them”⁶⁸.

“I will learn more about how to behave in the community. Other things I can pick up is self confidence, ambassador skills, how to work with other people, and to make friends from other countries”⁶⁹.

It is only expected and natural that football is what is most important for the players. We must not forget that the reason they play football is because they find it to be great fun, and going to a huge tournament to do what they love doing is naturally emphasized. Since they have won a national tournament in order to go to Norway Cup, it is no wonder that they are also optimistic about the results they can achieve there.

5.3.3 Comparison of the Goals

A brief comparison of the objectives of the different parties is required to later analyze if the goals are met. The case seems to be that the discrepancy between the goals is more substantial the further towards the grassroots you go. The goals SCORE Namibia has for participating seemed to be most in accordance with NIF’s main objective for the project. This is not surprising, since as an organization they have been made familiar with the conditions for participation and considered these to a greater degree before applying than the 15-year-old players. The goals SCORE have for participating also comply well with the objectives they have as an organization. All groups focus on the utility values of sport, but the players less so than the others. This complies well with Loland’s (1998:23) argument that the intrinsic value of sport is the primary aspect, because that is what makes people engage in sport, but that utility values are derived from this participation (see 4.1.1.2).

NIF aims for the Norway Cup-project to be a development cooperation project, which means that equality and mutual dependence should characterize the project. Whether these characteristics are lived up to can be discussed thoroughly, but it is not the main focus of this thesis. Some comments on this are, however, in order when comparing the parties’ objectives in the project. One is that NIF’s main objective only talks about strengthening and empowerment of the youth and organizations in the south, and thus the empowering effects on the Norwegian friendship team are downplayed. Another is that the recipient principal is taken into consideration, because the partners in the south send in an application with their

⁶⁸ Interview players, group a, June 2006

⁶⁹ Interview players, group c, June 2006

own goals for participation in the project and how they want to do things. It is not dictated by the partner in the north how the projects should be designed and how they are carried out. However, they must comply with NIF's overall views on sport and development projects. There is, nevertheless, a chance for very different projects to get funding to participate in the Norway Cup-project. A clear example of this can be seen by taking a look at Ellingsen's (2006) findings from studying the team that participated through NIF's Zimbabwean partner organization, Youth Education through Sport (YES) in 2005, and compare it to the findings presented here.

This is a way of thinking that makes the partners to a certain degree more equal, but it is still hard to get away from the fact that the partner with the money has the most power. Seeing that the organizations in the south often depend on the funding of their partner organizations, they might be 'forced' to design projects that will fall within the focus areas of the funding organization. These are, however, circumstances that are unintended by both parties, but still hard to get away from. Having said this, it must be pointed out that this has not been an issue in my research, so I am not arguing that this holds true for this particular project. It is, nevertheless, something that is important to keep in mind when working on these kinds of projects, in order for them to address exactly what needs to be attended to in the specific communities. One comment in this respect is that the team and community are chosen after the project application, which means that place specific needs cannot be considered in the application. The 'Evening of the Future' is, however, a good chance for the team to develop community specific project goals, and a good way of including the youth in the decisions.

It is not surprising that the players' goals for participation in the Norway Cup-project are the ones that differ most from the official goals. As it has been emphasized from many involved, the sports field is an arena for the youth to have fun and do what they love doing. The balance between sport skills and life skills is very important, and since the kids are there to play sport, they must be allowed to focus on winning their games. Going there aiming to win the games is also what most Norwegian teams do, and when emphasizing equality and the sports arena as somewhere the kids can meet to talk the global language of football, it is only right that the boys focus on the game.

These aims on the boys' part, however, makes it essential to try to give them a realistic picture of how big Norway Cup is going to be and that the cup is consequently very hard to win. This seems extra important when you hear them state that it will be embarrassing to go back if they

lose, because their friends will tease them and they will be accused of wasting an opportunity. It is therefore central to emphasize participation as much as competition. Another thing that should be addressed to make their expectations realistic, is that Norway Cup is not somewhere where talent scouts and coaches of other teams go to seek out new prospective players, and hence it is not an opportunity to be signed up for an under 16 team or a development club in Europe (refer to quotes from the players, page 54). Going with these expectations can lead to false hopes and disappointments when reality turns out to be very different. As my interviews were carried out shortly after the preparation course, this implies that it could be fruitful to have a stronger focus on this in the course.

When it comes to the central concept of empowerment, it was something almost all the parties focused on as something that should be a positive outcome of the participation in Norway Cup. The personal characteristics that are the intended outcomes of empowerment, such as higher self esteem and self respect, are characteristic that come subconsciously. It is therefore not surprising that most of the players did not talk about some of the 'results' of empowerment as something they hoped to gain from participating. As discussed, however, a few did mention different personal characteristics linked to empowerment as something they hoped to obtain. What I found surprising was that as part of a development project where a certain focus should be on Kicking Aids Out!, no one mentioned anything about HIV/Aids or Kicking Aids Out!, neither when talking about what they had or would learn, nor when talking about what they imagined they would do in the community after returning home. The only thing they emphasized in this respect was that they would teach the community new soccer skills, tell them how it is to travel, and how things are done in Norway. It is consequently interesting to consider whether the way they are selected also influences their objectives and what work they will focus on when they come home to their community.

The fact that they are going as part of a development project, does not seem to have had a strong influence on the boys' expectations and goals for the project. One of the goals expressed on the Norwegian side was that the teams should be in the media in order for the Norwegian people to see results of development cooperation. However, if these kids are portrayed only as part of a development project, it means that there is a big discrepancy between their own identification as football players, and others' identification of them as part of a development project. This dilemma is discussed further in 5.4.2 and 5.4.2.1 below.

5.4 In Norway

The stay in Norway is divided into two distinct parts. The first week the team from Khorixas spent in Elverum, whereas the second was in Oslo and Norway Cup itself. Before departure from Namibia, the team saw this as a division of focus; the first week they would focus more on the cultural aspect, and when going to Oslo there would be a strong focus on winning football matches.

5.4.1 Elverum – the first encounter with Norwegian society

The friendship team for the Namibians was located in Elverum, a couple of hours by bus north of Oslo. Elverum Fotball was also friendship team for the Namibian team participating the year before, the first year SCORE Namibia took part in the project. The reason Elverum was asked to host the Namibian team last year was that the Namibia Association of Norway (NAMAS)⁷⁰ is based in Elverum, and the links between Elverum and Namibia are therefore substantial. The tradition was continued this year, but this time Elverum football club being more responsible for the project, and NAMAS was less involved.

5.4.1.1 Football - a “universal language”?

A couple of days after the team came to Elverum, they got their first meeting with Norwegian football through a friendly match against their friendship team. The theory “give the boys a ball and they can communicate across religion, race, language, and culture” is put to its first test. They all had fun on the field, but the boys from Namibia lost badly, and one of the players was sent off with a red card. The lesson was that they played a little too hard, and that their individual skills were good, but that they have some improvements to make as far as playing as a team is concerned. The Namibian Super Stars showed that they had learned a lot from this experience, and through many practices in Elverum they improved their attitude and cooperation. The universal language shows to have different dialects, as different styles of play is emphasized, but at the same time they have no problems understanding each other, and they play by the same rules. African football and footballers are often described as having an in-built grace and fluidity, quickness and good instinct that can result in “soccer magic” (Hoberman 1997:125pp), something maybe we attribute to an image of Africans having great innate skills for rhythm and movement. Norwegian football, on the other hand, is often described as lacking exactly these individual skills:

⁷⁰ The Namibia Association of Norway started as a Norwegian solidarity organization for the people in Namibia in 1980 and is now one of the longest standing Scandinavian NGOs working in Namibia (NAMAS, 2007)

“We’re curious of their football – there are some hints of Brazilian there, when it comes to technique. It’s more international, more Latino. They have more rhythm in their bodies, and here we dream of becoming like that”⁷¹.

We can also see this in the light of Tangen’s statements that sport is universal in the meaning of a social system that might have different expressions in different times and different cultures. It does not have to be something innate, but something derived from culture and society, and it is natural that different aspects of the same game are emphasized in different places. It does not mean that we cannot understand each other, and it also means a possibility to learn from each other. Also in the case of friendship teams it is pointed out that they have a lot to learn from each other:

“Both camps have something to learn from each other. The Norwegians should learn to show more happiness, singing and dancing, and openness towards others. The Namibians have a lot to learn football wise, also organizationally”⁷².

5.4.1.2 Cultural exchange

Football is, however, only a small part of the stay in Elverum. During this week the focus was also on cultural exchange while preparing for going to Norway Cup. The Namibian boys had a chance to become familiar with Norway and make some friends in the new country, and the boys from Elverum had a unique chance to meet and get to know another team their age from a different part of the world. I went to Elverum one day during the friendship team week, four days after their arrival. Two activities were planned that day; a trip to the local ‘show farm’ and afterwards dinner at a family farm outside of Elverum. I was invited to take part in both. The activities allowed the boys to see a Norwegian farm with animals and try some traditional Norwegian food, but I was quite surprised to find that it was only the Namibian team that was supposed to participate in the activities, and the players from Elverum were not present. Also, it turned out to be two ‘friendship teams’, both the under 16’s and the under 14’s from Elverum, which meant that each team did not spend very much time with the Namibians. In a way this can be good because they get to meet more Norwegian youth, but on the other hand it leaves little time for relation building in a time frame that is already limited. There were also activities where the Namibian and Norwegian teams were together, like a barbeque, friendly matches, and football practices, but from what I could see there were not many activities outside football where they were scheduled to spend time together. In some cases, however, some of the players from Elverum came over to the house where the Namibian team lived to

⁷¹ Coach Elverum, Erik Moe, interview, Elverum 26.07.06

⁷² *ibid*

'hang out' with their friendship team. Still, with so little time and so few activities together, the amount of cultural exchange and establishment of friendship bonds are bound to be limited.

The differences between Elverum and Khorixas are substantial. Through informal conversations I understand that the players are impressed with how green it is in Elverum, and they like the big, wooden house where they live, and the lake where they can all go swimming. Elverum is a relatively small town where the boys feel safe, and can go around town exploring and meeting people on their own. It is not just the scenery and temperatures, however, that are different in the two small towns in two different parts of the world. It cannot be concealed that the everyday life and quantity of material things are also substantially different. Most people in Norway are not very familiar with how everyday life in Namibia really is, except from the stereotypes we may have from the media. The topic is raised in conversations with leaders in Elverum – should we have more information about their situation before they come? Or maybe we should not? Maybe if we do not get to hear too much about their state of material poverty, for example, before they arrive, we have a better chance of meeting them as 'just people' on a more equal footing? The cultural exchange is a chance to get to know about each other's cultural differences and get new impulses, but it is also a chance to learn about the many *similarities* between youth from different hemispheres, youth with different cultures, and different social backgrounds. As discussed in chapter 3, Goffman (1959:9) understands interpersonal relations as plays set on a stage, where the performance we put on, to a certain extent, depends on the audience. In other words, how we behave in a situation is dependent on how we understand the 'other' and our relationship to them. If we have a certain perception of people from a different background and culture, or if we are insecure of how to behave and what we can ask about, that will certainly affect the way in which we behave. This runs both ways. People from Elverum may have had an image of the Namibian players based on the information we often get through the media. But it can also have influenced the Namibian players, because they are not used to interacting with white people, who in Namibia, are perceived as 'superior'. This, and the fact that they are now in a totally different country for the first time, might have influenced how the players behaved in the beginning.

How we present our way of life and culture is also dependent on the way we understand the concept. Most of my informants understood culture the way Giddens (1997:18) defines it (see 4.3), and put an emphasis on traditional customs and patterns of how things are done within a society. Many of the participants therefore talked about traditional dances, for example, when

talking about culture. The Namibian players were singing songs and showing some of their dances, and were also eager to see the same from the Norwegians. Traditional dances, however, is no longer a big part of Norwegian culture, and if the term ‘cultural exchange’ is understood as exchanging traditional customs this can cause a problem. What to show the Namibians as Norwegian culture, then, may be difficult:

“We think that the sport aspect is probably the most important because we don’t have the natural tradition of singing and dancing here. It wouldn’t be natural that we started showing them traditional dances, because it is not a part of our everyday life, so it would actually be unnatural to show them. So the sport and to get to know each other is the most important”⁷³.

It is worth noting that both teams are new to the friendship team arrangement. Consequently, they are learning from experience. The leaders from Elverum say that they learnt from the previous year when there had been too much official program. The social aspect and meeting people is now much more emphasized than museums etc.

“We got free tickets to museums, and as grown ups and educators we thought “oh great”, but it turned out that the players just ran quickly through the museum and found a little field in the back where they started to play football”⁷⁴.

The players from Elverum were not been included in the planning phase or evaluation of the friendship team week, so possibly different things could have been emphasized if they were.

Elverum Fotball has a long term vision of their hosting, and has purchased different materials such as blankets and pillows, which they plan on using in years to come. They also point out the utility value a project like this can have for their local community, and the extra dimension it gives to football. Having a friendship team and getting to know the players personally can help break down stereotypes and xenophobia in their own community. Elverum is a town that has a relatively large number of immigrants and people with different cultural backgrounds. Accordingly, it is pointed out that this can be a good start for encouraging better integration in the Elverum community also.

5.4.2 At Norway Cup – challenges for en equal footing

“We are thoroughly informed about how Africa dies, but how Africa lives – we no longer know” (Anders Ehnmark 1995, my translation). The images Norwegian people get of Africa through the media are often those of a continent marked by conflict, disease, and hunger. Presenting only these negative sides can easily lead to a one sided image in the Western world of Africa and Africans as “someone that needs to be helped”. Aid projects with a patron-client focus help to strengthen these images, but an emphasis on *cooperation* for development may

⁷³ Coach Elverum, Erik Moe, interview, Elverum 26.07.06

⁷⁴ *ibid*

provide a more balanced perception. The Norway Cup-project also focuses on development cooperation and the sports arena as a meeting place for youth who speak the global language of football on equal terms. The intention is that the Norwegian and foreign teams will have something to *learn from each other*. Ideally, the Norway Cup-project, with its emphasis on cultural exchange, provides a perfect opportunity to become familiar with how Africa lives. But even though the intention is that the patron-client image will be ‘washed away’ by this new focus, there are certain issues that need to be addressed because they still provide challenges that hinder an equal image from blossoming.

5.4.2.1 Namibian Super Stars become SCORE Namibia

Since the team had not been together for long, they also did not have a name. At the preparation course the boys were encouraged by NIF’s facilitator to come up with a name for their team. As the boys came up with numerous suggestions, the facilitator also pointed out that it would be smart to have something in the name that suggested their geographical location. That way, people in Norway would identify them with their native country. The brainstorming resulted in a passionate vote over three different suggestions; whereupon they finally decided to be called ‘Namibian Super Stars’. When they came to Norway Cup, however, the team was called SCORE Namibia, both in the official programs, schedules, and on their jerseys. It seems a little strange and unfortunate, that NIF encourages the team to find a name that they can identify with, when on previous occasions, the teams participating in the project have been given the name of the development project they represent once they come to Ekebergsletta. Both Hognestad (2005) and Ellingsen (2006) have showed that the same holds true for when the teams they followed participated in Norway Cup. The teams from Zambia and Zimbabwe were called Kicking Aids Out! and YES, instead of Breakthrough Academy and Tim FC, respectively. This can be seen in accordance with Norad’s emphasis on the teams being picked out of a long term work for development, and therefore must be parts of larger, local social development projects in the partner countries (Hognestad 2005:19).

As was also pointed out when encouraging the team to come up with a name, the name of a team often gives associations to their belonging or identity. Such a change of name, then, might make people identify this team as part of a development project more than a local football team. In this way, stereotypes of Africa as a continent ravaged by poverty, hunger, and disease, are likely to be strengthened rather than weakened (ibid). This can be seen as

problematic also in relation to empowerment theory and people centered development. These theories emphasize the importance of empowering people to be capable of reaching their full potential, and thus become subjects of their own development rather than objects (Thomas 2000:30). According to empowerment theory, then, it is important that it is the people who are developing their communities through developing their own potential, and that they are *not objects to be helped* (refer to 4.2, and Verhelst and Tyndale 2002:17, 19). Portraying the participants as members of a development project, instead of showing their identity as individual members of a certain community, does not comply well with this way of thinking.

As pointed out by Ellingsen (2006) and Hognestad (2005), this aspect is also quite problematic when it comes to cultural exchange. The friendship team is also part of the Norway Cup-project, but still gets to keep their name. It might be argued that in this case it is not as if the Namibian team has had a great identification with their name, as it was fairly new. The issue, then, is maybe not so much with their own identification as much as the identification of them by others. The African teams being presented as objects of a development project is not the most fertile soil for feelings of equality to blossom. Much of the cultural exchange focuses on performances of different traditional customs like dancing; hence the focus is on differences rather than similarities. As discussed in the previous chapter, Geertz (1973) provides a definition of culture that emphasizes identification with groups of similarity and hence differentiation from others. Group identification and differentiation between ‘us’ and ‘them’ can be particularly evident on the sports arena, especially when it comes to team sports like football. As all people are different, we have to make generalizations when identifying or differentiating ourselves from a certain group. Because of the load of information we are faced with on a daily basis, the human brain categorizes people and things into groups according to different cognitive schemata in order to be able to sort our impressions and ‘know’ what to expect. Putting the label of a development project on the teams participating in the Norway Cup-project strengthens the schemata most people have of ‘Africans’, instead of seeing similarities. These schemata take a long time to break down. When we see the goals and expectations of the Namibian players, we also see that they do not identify themselves with a development project. Rather, they want to be identified as good football players and known for their richness in culture. The discrepancy between their own identification and what other people may identify them as, is therefore substantial.

The meeting with Norwegian football does not always go as well as the teams have hoped and dreamed of. At Norway Cup the team did not win any of their games, but with two draws they made it to the B-play-offs. Apart from football, they also took part in other activities at Ekebergsletta. They performed a traditional dance at the cultural stage, and they also participated in Kicking Aids Out! games under the auspices of NIF with the other project teams from Zimbabwe, Mali, Tanzania, and El Salvador. The friendship teams did not participate in these activities, and the players from Elverum and Khorixas hardly met during the week in Oslo. The team also did a few other activities outside Norway Cup, like swimming at Sognsvann. When they were knocked out in the first game of the play-offs the cup adventure ended, but there were still four days left of Norway Cup before they were scheduled to go home. These are four important days considering it is the first time they have been so far away from home. The impressions are enormous, and now their 'once in a lifetime' trip is coming to an end. They came to Norway to play football, but now that part is over. Some long for home, some want to stay longer. There are impressions to digest, there are emotions to cope with – and there is nothing to do but to wander around Ekebergsletta. The likelihood of some of the project teams being knocked out at this stage of the cup is fairly high. It might consequently be an idea to have some things planned – or at least some suggestions of inexpensive activities that the teams could do during this time to get as much out of the Norway-experience as possible.

5.5 Back home – has the project resulted in empowerment?

Since empowerment is stated as the main goal of the project, I will analyze the events that took place after returning home in the context of this concept. Initially the focus will be on individual empowerment, before examining if there have also been effects on the community; trying to find whether the two levels are interlinked.

The concept of empowerment was presented in detail in the previous chapter. However, there are some issues that need to be discussed before looking at how it might have influenced the participants of the Norway Cup-project. Empowerment is meant to help people reach their full potential through gaining certain personal traits. In a sporting context, it is meant to give participants better self esteem, and self respect that will enable them to have a positive change in their own life and develop good attitudes. These attitudes will hopefully help them make reflective and educated decisions in a later situation. This way of thinking about empowerment, however, implies that it is a case of rational choice. Investing this power in

people would, then, entail that it automatically results in them making ‘good’ choices and have what we would describe as a ‘positive’ influence on themselves and others. But as pointed out by Rappaport (1984, in Page and Czuba, 1999), it is difficult to define empowerment in action because it takes different forms in different people and different contexts. Is it then appropriate to assume that empowerment always has these intended outcomes? Rational choice is a difficult concept to justify because for a choice to be completely rational, we need to have considered all possible outcomes of a situation before making a decision. A drawback to rational choice theory is that all people have certain psychological traits called emotions, and since all people are different, so are their emotions. It is, therefore, impossible to foresee the reactions people will have, and hence a decision cannot be 100% rational. Also, it is consequently impossible to take into account all the possible outcomes of a situation when planning a project that involves people. In this case, at least two possible outcomes other than those intended can be identified. One is that the participants can develop traits that would be seen as results of empowerment, like improved self confidence, but that this new confidence would have other influences on behavior than those originally intended. Their new identification as role models, for example, could result in them influencing others in less desirable ways or putting themselves above their peers. Another possibility could be that they gain a new popularity that causes them to get in more difficult situations. Another outcome can be as described in Chapter 4, that the new experiences do not at all lead to feelings of empowerment, but rather feelings of learnt helplessness that includes depression and unhappiness. It is important to follow up on the participants closely in the aftermath of the trip in order to detect on any such undesirable effects, and to help them cope if any of these signs should occur. When going back to Khorixas, I wanted to see if there were any signs of such results among the boys on the team. I also wanted to see whether they had participated more in the home community after their return from Norway Cup. I did not get to stay as long in Khorixas as could have been desired. Therefore, I did not get to observe the team over a longer period of time, but the results I found were obtained through group discussions and informal conversations.

5.5.1 Individual empowerment through the Norway Cup-project

As I came to Khorixas and met the boys again, they seemed very enthusiastic and happy, and eager to talk about their experience in Norway. The picture painted by people in the community shows a team of boys who have gained a lot of experience and are happy people

back in their home town. Most people I talk to emphasize what the boys have learnt personally, or the soccer skills they have gained.

Many people emphasize personal traits that can be linked to empowerment when describing the change they have seen in the boys. School principals and teachers especially, point out that they have seen a change in behavior in many of the boys after participating in the project:

“They have improved their skills. Some of the boys were a bit naughty before they went; their behavior and performance were not so good. But after they came back they have been showing better manners, better discipline, and are generally behaving better”⁷⁵.

“Discipline wise they really changed. Better now, yeah. (...) But really the boys have changed, they had a very huge experience in life, they were inspired of how people are staying there. And now all of them suddenly have good dreams, like I want to become a medical doctor, I want to become a soccer star. Now they have got a vision, that’s the response. I was even asking the other teachers to make an observation about these boys, and they say that the boys changed really after they came back from Norway”⁷⁶.

“One could see a bit of improvement in their personal behavior, they have changed a bit. Discipline wise also they have learned a bit. The problems they were experiencing in the classrooms before were minimized, they improved. As school learners they have improved a bit”⁷⁷.

What is drawn to our attention, then, is their behavior and discipline. Leaders who accompanied the boys to Norway, point out that an important lesson they learned while traveling was to respect each other. Somewhere along the line they started believing in each other and realized that they were a team and needed to count on each other if they were going to succeed – both while playing football and coping with being away from home.

The exposure and experience the boys acquired are also things that are emphasized within the community. They have been busy telling all their friends, families, and others about everything they have experienced, and they have many stories from Norway. One of the parents laughs and says that after the boys got back there have been huge crowds at her house wanting to know what Norway was like, what happened there, and what it looked like. The impression I get, and also get told from the people who meet the boys on a more regular basis, is that they are very happy boys after coming back from Norway.

“Yes, he grew, he did. He is now taking more responsibility than he did before. (...)He is a very quiet spoken boy; he will not tell you everything. But you can see on him that he enjoyed it. So it’s not so much in what he says, but how he has been since he got back”⁷⁸.

⁷⁵ Principal, School 1, interview 2, Khorixas 21.11.06

⁷⁶ Coach Richard Useb, interview 2, Khorixas

⁷⁷ Principal, School 2, interview 2, Khorixas

⁷⁸ Parent Y, interview, Khorixas November 2006

The self confidence that the boys have gained manifests itself in many ways. A couple of them have made it to the A-teams in their community, which can be attributed to the skills they have acquired during their time in Norway, but also to their improved self confidence⁷⁹.

Another anticipated effect of empowering the participants is to help them build positive attitudes. When I was interviewing the boys, one of the groups especially, was clearly upset by the fact that adults in the community had been wearing their football jerseys out to bars while being visibly drunk. The players were distressed that their football equipment would thus be connected to partying and alcohol, as they felt that these two things did not belong together. This is a good example of a valuable attitude acquired through sport, especially since alcohol is a big problem in their community. It also shows that they think of themselves as role models, who do not want their sport linked to alcohol. The SCORE country coordinator also pointed out that this shows that the boys now feel an ownership to the project:

“You see that’s the thing which also got me smiling is that showed that they had also taken ownership of what was happening in their community. (...) and they are quite aware of what is right and wrong. And they are willing to stand up for that, which I found really good”⁸⁰.

That the participants develop a feeling of ownership for the project is also important in terms of sustainability of the results.

After one of their games in Norway Cup, the team walked to catch the bus back to Ekeberg. Due to Norway Cup, the buses were full and a long time was spent waiting. However, there was also a Norwegian football team waiting for the bus, and where there are two football teams, there is usually also a ball. It did not take long before the two teams were engaged in a spontaneous game of football on the little patch of green grass behind the bus stop. This might not seem very significant in itself, but seen in a wider context it is quite meaningful. Coming from a country with a history of apartheid, and where blacks and whites still do not interact much, it is a very important step to now feel able to socialize with white youth.

“I mean for them growing up in Khorixas, or anywhere else in Namibia for that matter, a white person is always on top. And now they got to interact with white people in a different context all together”⁸¹.

The coach also found the cultural cohesion significant, and thought it was really nice to see that the youth from Norway did not discriminate against them, and wanted to ‘hang out’ with them.

⁷⁹ SCORE country coordinator, interview 2, Windhoek 02.12.06

⁸⁰ ibid

⁸¹ ibid

Even though it was the leaders more than the boys who emphasized the relationship between blacks and whites, it is likely that the players were also influenced by it but did not express it in interviews. An informal conversation I had with one of the players suggests this to be the case. When I asked whether the people in Norway were like he thought they would be, he said that they were not quite how he had pictured, because he had thought they might be a little condescending, but they hadn't been at all, they had been very nice. Through interactions and conversations with Norwegian youth, then, it seems that they started to realize that white people are not superior, but that they are in fact equal and can have fun together. In this way the differentiation between 'us' and 'them' was probably diminished to a certain extent, at least in this particular respect. Overcoming feelings of inferiority and realizing that one is worth just as much as the next person is certainly something that will change the way one looks at oneself, and is likely to help a person develop empowering feelings like self esteem and self respect. When seen from this respect, sport can definitely have elements of inclusion. Whether it had the same effect on the Norwegian side would have been interesting to look into, but has not been the focus of my research.

Another aspect drawn to my attention is that succeeding in making it onto the team empowers the players in terms of showing themselves that they are good at something. Although there are individual differences, it is said that many of the participants are not academically strong. Getting an opportunity like this shows that there are other things to be successful in besides school. Consequently, showing mastery of skills on the football field might have encouraging effects on the individual. One parent argues that:

“You see my boy is not very strong in school, but I think now with getting this possibility in soccer it *makes him see that he can do something right*, that he has maybe a chance with soccer and he can make a living out of that even if he is not doing so good in school”⁸².

The same parent points out that it does not entail making a career abroad, since there are also possibilities to find work within the sports sector at home, for example as a coach. The son has already made a team of younger boys, who he is trying to teach his new soccer skills to. One of the principals, however, points out that for some, their school results suffered a little. It was in the middle of exams when they returned, and the principal believes that maybe their absence, or that their minds being elsewhere after their big experience, caused them to perform poorly. Still, he believes that the overall result of the participation was very positive for the boys⁸³.

⁸² Parent Y, interview, Khorixas November 2006, my emphasis

⁸³ Principal, School 2, interview 2, Khorixas

If we go back and look at the goals the players had for participation, winning the cup seemed very important. It is therefore interesting to reflect upon whether being knocked out of the tournament fairly early could have led to feelings of learnt helplessness and shame, or if once at Norway Cup they had realized that experiences other than winning the cup would be equally important. Being knocked out of the tournament is not something the boys want to discuss very much, but some of them emphasize that they think they did quite well (“we almost won the cup”), and no one gives an impression of having felt any shame or been teased. The leaders of the team also say that the players were disappointed right after losing their last game, but that it did not run very deep and after half an hour it was forgotten. One of the players, however, expresses that they were disappointed not to win the cup because it would have meant that they would get a trophy that they would have to return next year. Winning the cup would consequently have secured an invitation to participate again next time⁸⁴. The players seem to have enjoyed the Norway Cup experience very much, because they are enthusiastically talking about how many teams they want to send next year, and in what age groups. Both these remarks suggest that they have unrealistic expectations of how the system works and about their possibilities to go to Norway again. These regulations should be explained thoroughly to the participants to prevent false hopes.

Care should be taken, however, to not paint a picture that’s too glossy of what participating in the Norway Cup-project can do, in terms of personality change and empowerment. Two of the boys on the team have been expelled from school after returning from Norway. Many people point out that these boys already had disciplinary problems before they went, but they were given a chance to improve their behavior. Their being expelled from school can therefore not be seen as a negative consequence of traveling to Norway, but it also shows that participation does not necessarily cause empowerment that leads to the kids taking reflected choices and consequently improve their behavior and discipline to fulfill their potential. Another thing that I witnessed was that on occasion some tried to get out of a difficult situation by saying “but I went to Norway, miss”. This shows that some may perceive themselves to be ‘special’ because they got to travel abroad, and could in turn create ‘winners’ and ‘losers’ in the society – which would be unfortunate.

One thing I noticed during Norway Cup, which some players also brought to my attention in our conversations in November, was that one of the players did not get to play a single minute

⁸⁴ Interview players, player 5, group 1, November 2006

while in Norway. This caused some difficulties within the team, as this particular player became very frustrated with the situation. It is important to note that in conversations with the player, he expressed that he loved being in Norway and he did not want to leave. However, it was evident that it was a frustrating situation. This can be discussed in relation to the different notions of children's sport, and the discussion of different emphasis put on the aspects play and competition. As the Norway Cup-project is grounded on a rights based principal that is based on the Convention of the Rights of the Child, article 31, the focus from the Norwegian side emphasizes the aspect of play over competition. However, not including the whole team on the field suggests a different focus on the Namibian side. The importance of sports' inclusive value rather than producing 'winners' and 'losers' can be discussed also in this respect.

Through my conversations, interviews, and observations it seemed that the boys generally benefited from participating. They seemed very happy and enthusiastic, and were easy to talk to. It is, however, difficult from the amount of time I had for my research to find out how it affected them individually and what deeper effects it might have had. Nevertheless, the focus now shifts to see if the boys' participation in the project has made them become more active people in their home community, by transferring the skills learned to a wider context.

5.5.2 Norway Cup – beneficial for the community at large?

The teams that participate in the project are expected to do community work after homecoming. This is also in accordance with SCORE Namibia's objectives for participation; that it will help their community programs through getting more people involved, and to use the players' new knowledge as a resource. It is emphasized from the Norwegian side that participation in the Norway Cup-project should not just be to go to Norway to play football and then nothing more, but that it needs to be part of a wider development plan.

The mere statement that empowering individuals should also lead to an empowerment of the community at large, also represents a vision of empowerment as a case of rational choice. This does not necessarily have to be the case, due to many factors. Two of these are discussed above – that it might lead to feelings of empowerment but that these new traits are used in other ways than originally intended, or that it may not lead to the desired empowerment at all but rather feelings of learned helplessness. From the earlier discussion we can see that the individual participants show signs of traits that can be linked to personal empowerment. It is, however, interesting to see if anything has been done in the community as a result of this.

On one of the last days of Norway Cup, NIF arranged an 'Evening for the Future', attended by the five foreign teams in the project. Here the teams formed groups working out community specific plans for what activities they would do in the third phase of the project. The Khorixas team decided that they would organize a tournament; encourage the schools to make football teams; organize a youth league; and increase the skills they had picked up in the tournament. They also decided to bring the community together and tell them about their experiences in Norway, and they would establish an AIDS awareness club where they would show Kicking AIDS Out! games and go out to the community⁸⁵.

These activities should all be implemented before the official end of the project, which is October 1st, but the activities are naturally meant to last, even though the project has officially ended. When I came to Khorixas in the end of November, however, none of these activities, except for telling people about their experiences in Norway, had been implemented. From the information I got, the team had not really done any projects in their home community. It needs to be mentioned that when I came back they were in the middle of exam times, and therefore not in sport season, but there should have been time to initiate projects before exams started.

As mentioned, there has been a debate of whether it can have negative effects for the kids to be exposed to the materialistic abundance of Norway Cup for two weeks, and then go home. All the people that I talked to on the Norwegian side acknowledged this dilemma, but pointed out that this makes it extra important to have structures in the communities to closely follow up with the children soon after the trip. Kyvåg points out that there needs to be such a network in order to ensure that the results of the experience are motivation, ambitions, commitment, and enthusiasm rather than envy, jealousy, depression, aggression, and crime⁸⁶. This kind of network is also important in order for the boys to be able to do something in their community, and in other words utilize the human resource they now represent.

I believe that it needs to be discussed whether these structures have been present in this particular case. The idea behind participation is that:

“Norway Cup is one way that assets or compliments what we are trying to do because the boys go out and they get exposed to different things, but then the idea is when they come back they should go into the sport system to try to increase the sport in the community, taking back the lessons learned”⁸⁷.

⁸⁵ Information from fieldnotes taken at 'Evening for the Future', Norway Cup

⁸⁶ Secretary General of Norway Cup, Frode Kyvåg, interview, Oslo 29.03.04

⁸⁷ SCORE country coordinator, interview, Windhoek 07.07.06

Most of the boys have not started any of their planned projects or been involved in much of SCORE's activities in Khorixas after returning home, which also implies that many of the objectives have not been met. The country coordinator points out that some boys are more than willing to do activities, and have tried, but without the support, guidance and leadership from the local community, it turns out to be like 'hitting against a brick wall'⁸⁸. He also points out that these boys are still young, and hence do not have the authority to tell people what to do:

“Reason being they haven't had guidance in them doing that. I mean, they are still young boys, they can't really go out in the community and command respect from people. Or tell people to do a, b, c, d... But if they had a proper support in the community or the proper people to push them, they would be able to”⁸⁹.

This shows that, as mentioned by Mwaanga (2003:40), it is important to be aware of the power structures in a given society when considering if and how empowerment can be transferred from an individual to a community level. This can also be interesting to note in relation to the discussion of the relationship between empowerment and power. It shows that empowerment should not be linked to power in the form of authority, but to the relation of social power and resources to make changes within the person and community. To make changes within the community, however, the empowerment needs to be recognized by the people with authority in the society. The boys say that they wanted to make a tournament, but there was one already planned for that week end which was a lot bigger than the one they could organize. They also wanted to participate as a team in the World Aids Day-tournament, but they did not have the financial resources to pay the admission fee. They have, however, played a game against the Namibian national Women's team after they got home. The coach of the team wants to start what he calls a 'School of Excellency', where he starts coaching boys at a very young age in order to make them good football players, and the female leader wants to be involved in a project for orphans. It needs to be discussed whether participation in the Norway Cup-project is justifiable if the structures in the home community are that weak, or if it would have been better to delay participation to a time where the structures are stable. A counter argument would be that Norway Cup could represent an end goal and a motivation factor necessary in order to get these structures working.

One of the objectives for participation was to get more people in the local community involved in sports, by giving them motivation and an end goal. It was hard to observe in the short time I was there, but from interviews I had with people, this objective seemed to have been

⁸⁸ SCORE country coordinator, interview, Windhoek 07.07.06

⁸⁹ *ibid*

successful. Local people had observed that the fact that these boys had the opportunity to go to Norway by being good at soccer also worked as a huge motivation for the younger boys to practice, so that maybe they would get the chance next time. The boys also seemed to try to teach their skills to others. When the Norway Cup-project has these spin-off effects, we can argue that it has a utility value also in the society at large, at least in relation to what some adults in the community commented on before departure. With the challenges the community faces, it is important for the youth to have something meaningful and healthy to be occupied with. It is therefore important not to downplay these effects just because they are not part of an organized system, because they seem to be valued greatly in the community.

Norway Cup represents a materialistic abundance far from Norwegian reality and even further from the reality of the boys from Khorixas. While staying in Norway, the boys were given a lot of equipment in the form of clothes, football gear etc. that they brought home to Namibia. Ellingsen (2006) observed the same with the Zimbabwean team that participated the year before, and discussed whether it could cause envy and inequality in their home community. The same can be discussed in relation to the Namibian team. The leaders of their friendship community, Elverum, stress that the equipment they get is to be shared with others at home. It was difficult for me to assess whether the equipment created jealousy among their peers. Most of my informants emphasized that the other youth were supporting the boys that went to Norway, and that they were good at sharing their equipment. Some did, however, point out that there had been some jealousy. One of the principals points out that these “new, beautiful, expensive things that the others are not wearing around here⁹⁰” are working as encouragement also for the others to train harder to be able to go next time. A difficult question then arises; does this focus on equipment create needs that were not there before? Now that they have become used to playing with ‘real’ equipment, will they not go back to playing with home made soccer balls etc once the equipment wears out? One of the advantages with football is that you really do not need much equipment. However, the equipment is not something that is introduced to them through Norway Cup. As eager readers of football magazines, they see their favorite players daily, advertising different brands of equipment and through Norway Cup have the possibility to get some of the things they see so often.

At the preparation course the boys were also introduced to Kicking Aids Out! and learnt to play some of the games. Kicking Aids Out! was also in focus at Norway Cup. There is a strong

⁹⁰ Principal, School 2, interview 2, Khorixas

focus on this concept in the project, and the idea is that the participants should act as ambassadors back home and use the knowledge gained in Norway to educate others in the community. Just as before they left for Norway, not many mentioned anything about Kicking Aids Out! in my interviews in November⁹¹. Only one or two mentioned HIV, but not in relation to educating others. In conversations with the SCORE coordinator, a couple of the boys had mentioned having gained a new understanding of HIV/Aids. It is still difficult to say how much they have learnt from Kicking Aids Out!, because it is unknown what they knew from before, and if and how often they are now playing the games with their friends. Although there is a substantial amount of information about HIV/Aids in the community, getting the information from a different angle and in a different manner proves useful. It is, however, significant to further develop their newly gained understanding of the topic, and guide them in Kicking Aids Out! (KAO) activities.

“And, I think it is difficult for them to grasp the whole concept of Kicking Aids Out!. Not if unless there was, again going back to the community, where there is a system where it can help them and keep them going within that context and making them understand the KAO concept and all of that. (...) they are just kids and their only interest is about playing and more playing and even more playing. And the whole idea of standing in front of people and talking about HIV/Aids, it needs a bit of guidance, a bit of support, because you never know what these kids might say, and you don't want them to say that wrong stuff (...) so that's basically why there needs to be a system in place that can absorb what they have learned and direct them in proper channels. (...) But I still want to be careful of taking them into the community and letting them do KAO activities, because I would want someone who is 100% sure of the content and information on HIV, so that when these boys go out and do what they do, I think if there is someone there to correct if they say something totally different”⁹².

It is very important to note how vital it is to not spread the wrong information about HIV/Aids in a community gravely affected by its consequences. However, this again goes back to structures in the community that are able to follow up on this new capacity when the boys return home. There needs to be peer coaches or other adults who can build on the knowledge and motivation the participants have obtained, and empower them further in terms of giving them enough skills to be peer coaches themselves, for example. In this way one can argue that it all comes down to the structures and individuals in the home community. To achieve this, all parties involved in the project must cooperate to make conditions favorable, for individuals and the wider community, to utilize the knowledge and empowerment gained through the project in the best way possible.

⁹¹ I did not ask specifically about it, but asked about what they had done in the community afterwards so that they could answer what they found most relevant, in order not to guide their answers.

⁹² SCORE country coordinator, interview 2, Windhoek 02.12.06

CHAPTER 6 – CONCLUDING COMMENTS

This thesis has focused on the Norway Cup-project, with the Namibian team that participated in 2006 as a case study. I have examined if there is accordance between the goals of the different parties involved on the Norwegian and Namibian side, and then attempted to see if the goal of strengthening projects in the south through empowering the participants was met. In this respect, I focused on signs of individual empowerment among the participants, and tried to see if their participation has led to implementation of new activities in the community.

The empirical data and analysis are based on information obtained from qualitative interviews, informal conversations, and observation done through two visits to Namibia and during two weeks in Norway, 2006. I chose a qualitative research approach because it allowed me to get more in-depth information both about the participants' backgrounds and their thoughts about participating. The time aspect was a drawback to this approach, as I could not build relationships or observe the participants and effects over time. This represented a challenge in the interviews with the players, and in terms of observing if they had obtained any traits connected to individual empowerment throughout the course of the project. The findings concerning individual empowerment are therefore on a general rather than personal level, observed through conversations and interviews with the players themselves and people in their surroundings (see 6.2). It is also essential to note that a qualitative research design will be influenced by the researcher's interpretation.

6.1 Summary of empirical findings and analysis

To answer the question whether the project had the desired results for both parties, I found it necessary to address their objectives for the project as a starting point. On the Norwegian side I studied the organizers' official goals for the project, and involved the organizations NIF, Norad, and Norway Cup. On the Namibian side I have considered the objectives on three levels; namely SCORE Namibia, representatives in the community, and the players of the team. My findings show that the goals for going to Norway differ increasingly from the main objective stated by NIF the closer you come to the grassroots. This can be seen as natural in a way, because the boys go there to play football and to see another country, which is a normal goal for participation in Norway Cup. Seeing that the team was selected based only on football skills, it is also natural that their focus is on the game. However, the developmental aspect does not seem to have had much influence on the boys.

As the Norway Cup-project is seen as a development cooperation project, the focus should also be on equality. The cultural exchange with friendship teams is one way to achieve this objective. The week with their friendship team seemed to be the favorite part of the Namibian boys' Norway experience, and in interviews in November, most of their stories were from Elverum. However, the teams did not spend very much time together in Elverum, and hardly any in Oslo. This means that the time for them to exchange cultural input and create stable relationships was very limited. The cultural exchange focuses mostly on showing traditional customs etc. which may be argued to highlight the differences rather than the similarities. Another aspect that can be seen as unfortunate for a feeling of equality is that the teams participating in the project are all named after the development projects they are a part of. The Namibian players being portrayed as parts of a development project might strengthen the image many Norwegians have gained through the media, of Africa as a continent marked by conflict, disease, and hunger, rather than creating a feeling of equality. Seeing the participants as someone who 'needs to be helped' would not comply well with empowerment theory.

Generally speaking, the participants of the project seemed to have developed personal traits that can be linked to empowerment. They seemed happy and enthusiastic, and no-one showed any signs of learnt helplessness or that the experience had had unintended effects. However, we must be careful in portraying empowerment as something that can only have what we would characterize as 'positive' outcomes. This presumes that empowerment is a case of rational choice, which it cannot be since it deals with emotions. Information obtained in Khorixas, nevertheless, suggests that the boys have improved in behavior and discipline, and that they have been inspired by the experience. Their self confidence has also grown, which has been demonstrated in numerous outcomes. An ownership of the program and a gain of positive attitudes are also suggested in that the players are upset that their football gear has been connected to partying and alcohol. Another essential issue is that it seems to have broken down the distinction of 'us' and 'them' to a certain extent when it comes to blacks and whites, as the players have interacted with white youth and seen that they are equal. The experience has also given some a feeling that they can master something in spite of not being academically strong. However, as some have dropped out of school, and there are some signs of 'big headedness', we cannot say that it has only had fortunate empowering effects. There has also been a stronger emphasis on the competition aspect than the play aspect of sport. It is therefore important to be aware so that such a situation does not create 'winners' and 'losers',

but that it is in fact uniting. It also needs to be reflected upon whether it complies with a Children's Rights based perspective, focusing on the right to play.

There is a strong focus on the preparation side in the Norway Cup-project, and the youth is given a preparation course in their home community before departure. The preparation course recognizes that these kids will go through a substantial alteration in their lives and get many (possibly overwhelming) impressions. They have been through a once in a lifetime event, and even though many have dreams of going back to Norway, most probably know that it is not going to happen. It is pointed out, however, that the important thing is that these kids get followed up by the structures in their home community after returning, to prevent any unintended outcomes of participation. Regarding this, the players had only one meeting with SCORE after they went home, which was to talk about their experiences and evaluate the project. However, some of the players had not met with anyone at all. I was even thanked by a representative for one school for coming and taking an interest in how the boys were doing, not just in football but personally also. This is clearly a job that needs to be done from people inside the project. I would argue that having a debriefing course in the third phase of the project is equally as essential as having a preparation course before departure.

Evaluation, debrief, and follow up are undeniably things which makes it essential to have well functioning local structures. Additionally, my research shows that these local structures are also significant in order to fully utilize the individual empowerment and knowledge gained through the Norway Cup-project in the local community. The team has not started or been involved in any development work in the community. They have only been telling people about their experiences in Norway, which has made their peers more motivated to join sporting activities. The value of this should not be downplayed, and my comments may reflect a western viewpoint in that I do not rightfully value the work that is being done informally in the community, but only evaluate results in terms of projects and structures that are established. However, it seems that the resources the boys can now provide are not being utilized to their full potential. The fact that these boys no longer play together as a team may also be a contributing factor in that they have not done much in their community.

Throughout the course of my thesis I pointed out that it would be interesting to look at if the way in which the players are selected, could have any influence on what their objectives for project would be, and also what they do in the final phase of the project. In this case I would argue that the three are in fact interlinked. As discussed earlier, the selection process was

focused exclusively on football. Although the players were introduced to Kicking AIDS Out! and some personality reflection activities (such as learning how to be an ambassador) at the preparation course, they did not focus on this in my interviews with them in the following weeks. Their focus before going was on winning the cup and seeing how things were done differently in Norway, which is also what they focused on after returning home.

In this case I believe the participation has been an opportunity of a lifetime, more than a realization of their own poverty. On an individual level they showed signs of empowerment and motivation, at least on a general level. I do, however, not think that the positive effects have been utilized to a great extent at a community level. Even though such projects need to have a certain emphasis on intrinsic values more than utility ones, I think the balance in this particular case is a little too much on sport rather than development.

6.2 Further research

As mentioned, there has not been an extensive amount of research done on sport for development projects. Regarding the Norway Cup-project there is one pilot study by Hans Hognestad (2005) about a Zambian team that participated in 2004, and a master thesis by Håvard Ellingsen (2006) about two teams from Zimbabwe that participated in 2003 and 2005. Comparing their findings with mine clearly show that one cannot generalize the findings across country borders. Nevertheless, this research points out different aspects that would be important to address in an evaluation of the project as a whole.

The project has many different aspects, and when doing research like this there are always new questions and issues that come up and would be worth studying further. One of the issues I find most important to do further research on, is the question of individual empowerment of the participating youth. To see if participating in the Norway Cup-project changed them on a more personal level – their thoughts and attitudes, behavior at home, ability to make reflective choices, possibilities to dream and act on their dreams etc – we need to apply a different research design. To answer these kinds of questions more thoroughly, one has to study the participants over a longer period of time, hence a project like this is too time consuming to be carried out in the work on a master thesis. To be able to study these things one would have to study the individuals and their interaction with family and community on a more daily basis even before the start of the project, and then extensively afterwards. Ideally, the same should be done with a ‘control group’, a group of their peers who did not participate, to see their development during the same period, as well as their reactions towards the ones who went.

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