

The non-infrastructurel impacts of the Olympic Games on socially excluded groups in the host community: A comparative scoping study from Atlanta 1996 to Beijing 2008

Final report prepared for the International Olympic Committee in fulfilment of the obligations for recipients of a Postgraduate Research Grant

Executive Summary

This study examines the impact of the Olympic Games on socially excluded groups in the host community: more specifically it focuses on non-infrastructure programmes and initiatives that are directly linked to the Olympic Games. Academic discussion of the socio-economic impacts of the Olympic Games on the lives of socially excluded groups has exposed a divide between supporters and critics of the use of mega sporting events to achieve social goals. Where some see the Olympics as mere commercial boosterism, others argue that mega-events can act as catalysts to achieve social transformation. So far, academic studies have tended to focus more on the infrastructural changes to the city fabric, than on the more intangible, non-infrastructure effects. Research evidence of the effects of such programmes (such as sport initiatives, volunteering opportunities, training and employment schemes etc) of low-income groups is even scarcer, and when it exists often only discusses one host city or programme.

This scoping review has aimed to collect data from the last 7 Olympic cities (Atlanta, Nagano, Sydney, Salt Lake City, Athens, Turin and Beijing) to examine these non-infrastructure social impacts. Secondary data (academic, Olympic and other publications) were combined with email interviews with researchers, politicians and social organisations with specialist knowledge of the particular host cities. For each city between 13 and 26 data sources were used, of which at least 5 primary sources.

The study has shown that for many Olympic cities, social sustainability was not part of their aims, nor of the organisation of the Games. This was the case for Nagano, Salt Lake City, Athens and Beijing. For Turin, they were fleetingly mentioned with environmental sustainability. Atlanta and Sydney are the cities in the sample that made social aims the most explicit in their candidatures, but only Sydney seems to have made substantial efforts to turn these aims into practical programmes and initiatives.

Generally, it can thus be said that the awareness of social sustainability is fairly low. This is maybe not entirely surprising, since it has received much less attention than environmental sustainability in recent years. When looking at the Olympic Games evaluated in this study, a clear trend towards greater emphasis on environmental sustainability can be noted. The fact that the IOC places explicit importance on this form of sustainability is no doubt a very important factor here. If the IOC would be willing to place that same importance on social sustainability, the effects may be immediate – social sustainability will no doubt be important for Rio 2016, so these Games could be a perfect opportunity to add more concrete recommendations to the existing Agenda 21.

Full Report

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1. Introduction

This study examines the impact of the Olympic Games on socially excluded groups in the host community: more specifically it focuses on non-infrastructureal programmes and initiatives that are directly linked to the Olympic Games.

Academic discussion of the socio-economic impacts of the Olympic Games on the lives of socially excluded groups has exposed a divide between supporters and critics of the use of mega sporting events to achieve social goals. On the one hand there are those that emphasise that “the presence of the Olympic spirit in the host city, and in the national imaginary, does offer a real and rare opportunity to develop and mobilise cultural, communal and social action – opportunities to catalyse large-scale transformation” (London East Research Institute 2007, 16). On the other hand, there are those that liken the Olympic Games to “a self-serving commercial circus of property developers, construction companies, equipment suppliers and commercial sponsors whose benefits do not necessarily extend to the local communities (Keating in Essex & Chalkley 1998, 191). In this view the Olympic Games are a mere form of urban boosterism, invoked by elites and the media (Tufts 2004). An often-heard criticism is also the fact that in many cases, a large share of public money is invested in hosting the Olympic Games, thus threatening “core spending in health, education, welfare and transport” (Lenskyj 2000, 108).

Then there are those that propose that the Olympic Games, being primarily a sporting event, should not be expected to yield social benefits – they consider the Olympics to be a party, that places the host city in the international spotlight for a period of time, and this is the only benefit the host population can reasonably expect. This vision is expressed by Mackay about the Sydney 2000 Olympic Games:

“It is certainly true that, at the time, many people believed the Games would change us forever. Six months on, though, I am struggling even to recall what the changes were supposed to be. [...] But why search for more than you are ever likely to find? We have acquired some pleasant memories. Shouldn't we leave it at that?” (Haynes 2001, 10)

Considering the costs, investments and opportunities linked to hosting the Olympic Games, one may find this attitude somewhat lacking in ambition. The Olympic Games may not be a “magic wand” that *per se* bring social improvements to the host city, and seems reasonable that there needs to be “honest public acceptance of the limitations and promotion of realistic expectations” (Vigor *et al* 2004, 40). Nevertheless, Pierre de Coubertin included in the Olympic ideals that “sport should promote physical health and bring different nations and social classes together in a new age of democracy and social equality” (Essex & Chalkley 1998, 189). Therefore one could argue that the Olympic games are not really a success unless they contribute to this goal.

So far, academic studies have tended to focus more on the infrastructureal changes to the city fabric, than on the more intangible, non-infrastructureal effects. Research evidence of the effects of such programmes (such as sport initiatives, volunteering opportunities, training and employment schemes etc) of low-income groups is even scarcer, and when it

exists often only discusses one host city or programme. An overview of the variety of Olympic social programmes and their achievements is non-existent at present. This research project proposes to fill this research gap, and examine the presence of social sustainability aims and projects specifically aimed at socially excluded groups in recent years. The conclusions of the project are aimed to raise awareness of social sustainability with the International Olympic Committee (IOC) and future host cities.

Essex and Chalkley highlighted the need for comparative historical research about the socio-economic impacts of the Olympic Games, and drew attention to the methodological difficulty that “the further back in time the researcher wishes to stretch, the more fragmentary the evidence is likely to be. There may therefore be a case for concentrating enquiries on the more recent Games” (1998, 204). This study has therefore focused on the last seven Olympic Games, encompassing four Summer (Beijing 2008, Athens 2004, Sydney 2000, Atlanta 1996) and three Winter (Turin 2006, Salt lake City 2002, Nagano 1998) Games.

Summary of research objectives:

This study examines the impact of the Olympic Games on socially excluded groups in the host community: more specifically it focuses on non-infrastructure programmes and initiatives that are directly linked to the last 7 Olympic Games, and their effects.

Key questions:

- Have host cities included benefits of the Olympic Games for socially excluded groups via non-infrastructure initiatives in their aims?
- If so, how does the approach to social sustainability differ between different host cities?
- Are the differences between host cities dependent on their geographical location in the world?
- Are there noticeable differences between the Summer and the Winter Games?
- Are there best practice examples that can be identified?

2. Social sustainability and sports events – the literature

2.1. Social exclusion

The term “social exclusion” was originally coined in France in 1974 to refer to various categories of people who were unprotected by social insurance at the time but labelled as “social problems”, for example: the disabled, substance abusers, delinquents, single parents, aged invalids etc. However, in the 1980’s, this stigmatising and narrowly social view was superseded as the term became central to French debates about the nature of the “new poverty” associated with technological change and economic restructuring (Rodgers *et al* 1995, 1). Since then, the term is widely used internationally, and the range of definitions attached to it have become more diverse over time. The literature shows that, despite the growing use and apparent acceptance of the term social exclusion, there are still many (contested) definitions of what it means exactly and confusion about the relationship between social exclusion and poverty (Hodgson & Turner 2003, 266).

Walker and Walker define social exclusion very generally as “a dynamic process of being shut out, fully or partially, from any of the social, economic, political and cultural systems which determine the social integration of a person in society” (Walker & Walker in Hodgson & Turner 2003, 266). Another general definition is the one by Burchardt: “An individual is socially excluded if (a) he or she is geographically resident in a society and (b) he or she does not participate in the normal activities of citizens in that society” (Burchardt *et al* in Hodgson & Turner 2003, 267). Rodgers *et al* opt for a more sociological and psychological definition: “Social exclusion refers, in particular, to inability to enjoy social rights without help, suffering from low self-esteem, inadequacy in their capacity to meet their obligations, the risk of long-term relegation to the rank of those on social benefits, and stigmatisation” (Rodgers *et al* 1995, 45). Often definitions of social exclusion also stress a geographical or spatial factor, and concentrate on neighbourhoods where many problems are related to social exclusion. An example is this definition by Madanipour, describing social exclusion as “a multi-dimensional process, in which various forms of exclusion are combined: participation in decision-making and political processes, access to employment and material resources, and integration into common cultural processes. When combined, they create acute forms of exclusion that find a spatial manifestation in particular neighbourhoods” (Madanipour *et al* in Hodgson & Turner 2003, 267). The UK Index of Multiple Deprivation, developed by the University of Oxford, also includes this geographical aspect of social exclusion. It measures exclusion in terms of 6 “dimensions”: income, employment, health deprivation and disability, education and training, housing, and finally the geographical access to services (Miller 2003, 5). These dimensions were used to select respondents for this study: all respondents reported at least one dimension of social exclusion, and in many cases they were affected by multiple dimensions.

Another way of defining social exclusion (and a way around the theoretical differences in accents and definitions) is to describe the concept via its consequences or effects. These effects are situated on the negative side of the spectrum of the 6 dimensions mentioned earlier, and influence the individual as well as society as a whole. The costs to the

individual affect different aspects of their daily life: social exclusion for instance can lead to individuals not realising their full educational potential and, as a result, a higher risk of unemployment. Other related problems are poorer physical health and crime or the fear of crime (Social Exclusion Unit 2004, 7). Low travel horizons, or the fear to travel outside the own environment, is also connected to social exclusion. Mohan illustrates this with the example of marginal owners-occupiers in Swindon, who, “facing severe pressure on household budgets, found that their everyday lives were concentrated around their homes, which had almost become prisons” (Mohan 2002, 66). Different studies report that on average unemployed people (one of the groups more liable to be socially excluded) spend 51-52% of their waking day at home. Television is the major leisure pursuit, consuming two to three hours a day as a main activity and another hour or two alongside other activities (Glyptis 1989, 109). This suggests low involvement in social leisure activities and indicates isolation. Leary then describes the psychological effects of social exclusion, and links the concept to social anxiety, jealousy, loneliness, depression and low self-esteem (Leary 1990, 221). All these effects of social exclusion have a powerful influence on the excluded individual, but also affect society as a whole, and translated in an increased public expenditure in the form of income support, housing benefit, council tax benefit and public health services for this group.

Social capital

An alternative way to describe social exclusion is to define it as a lack of social capital. This sociological concept is a valuable tool in the theoretical discussion of social exclusion because of the fact that it is more strictly defined (even though also for this concept different definitions exist). Coleman contrasts social capital with two other forms of capital: Physical capital on the one hand (machines, tools, productive equipment), and human capital on the other hand (training). If physical capital is wholly tangible, being embodied in observable material form, and human capital is less tangible, being embodied in the skills and knowledge acquired by an individual, social capital is less tangible yet, for it exists in the *relations* among persons (Coleman 1988, 100). Coleman defines social capital by its function. “It is not a single entity but a variety of different entities, with two elements in common: they all consist of some aspect of social structures, and they facilitate certain actions of actors -either persons or corporate actors- within the structure. Like other forms of capital, social capital is productive, making possible the achievement of certain ends that in its absence would not be possible (Coleman 1998, 98).

As mentioned before, different definitions of social capital exist, each describing the relationship between actors as a resource from a different angle. Still, despite these differences, the consensus is growing that social capital stands for the ability of actors to secure benefits by virtue of membership in social networks or other social structures (Portes 1998, 6).

According to Coleman, there are three forms of social capital (Coleman 1998). Firstly there is the form of social capital that consists mainly of obligations, expectations and the trustworthiness of structures. This form ideally leads to co-operation and a smooth solving of collective problems. Connected to this form is the second one: norms and

effective sanctions. These norms regulate the co-operation and punish actions that go against the set obligations and expectations. The third and last form of social capital are information channels, as a network of close contacts can provide access to the network of information each of these contacts possesses. These three forms of social capital illustrate the fact that social capital is beneficial to the individual on the one hand and the other individuals inside or outside of the network on the other hand. Putnam calls these two aspects of social capital the “private” and the “public” face of social capital, whereby the private face are the connections individuals form that benefit their own interests. At the same time, “social capital can also have “externalities” that affect the wider community, so that not all the costs and benefits of social connections accrue to the person making the contact. [...] If the crime rate in a neighbourhood is lowered by neighbours keeping an eye on one another’s homes, a person can benefit even if he personally spends most his time on the road and never even nods to another resident in the street” (Putnam 2000, 20). This means that social capital can be simultaneously a “private good” and a “public good”. Some of the benefit from an investment in social capital goes to bystanders, while some of the benefit rebounds to the immediate interest of the person making the investment.

The private and public face of social capital shows in the benefits of social capital. Apart from benefits as co-operation, trust and trustworthiness (as mentioned earlier), Putnam also mentions social capital as a tool that “helps develop and maintain character traits that are good for the rest of society” (Putnam 2000, 288). Fighting social exclusion through the development of social capital is thus not only beneficial to the individual being included in a social network, but also for society, which gains members that can be of greater merit. If this refers to the rather public face of social capital, the last benefit refers more to the private face: social capital is also said to “help people cope better with trauma’s and fight illness more effectively” (Putnam 2000, 289). From this point of view, social capital can be seen as an important element in the overall physical and mental well-being of the individual.

As any form of capital, social capital has positive, but also negative uses. As stated before, one of the forms of social capital is providing norms and sanctions, based on the obligations and need of trustworthy structures in a network. More than once the question has then been asked if social capital is at war with liberty and tolerance (Putnam 2000, 351). This has to do with the concept of “closure”, which means “the existence of sufficient ties between a certain number of people to guarantee the observance of norms” (Portes 1998, 6). Closure is thus a form of social control and a reliable frame for the judgment of actions within a certain group. Close social control might on the one hand guarantee the smooth functioning of the network, it may also imply conformity. To integrate in a certain group members might have to assimilate, and all “deviant” individual may not be allowed access to the group. Closure thus protects the interests of the insiders of a group, but can also reduce the chances of outsiders to be allowed into the group. This illustrates the link between social capital, closure and social exclusion, and even the link between social exclusion, poverty and social capital. Putnam argues that “precisely because poor people (by definition) have little economic capital and face formidable obstacles in acquiring human capital (that is: education), social capital is

disproportionately important to their welfare” (Putnam 2000, 318). Their exclusion might thus have greater consequences, as they often lack the other forms of capital to form the so valuable connections. Not only their psychological well-being is affected; economists have developed an impressive body of research suggesting that social ties can influence who gets a job, a bonus, a promotion and other employment benefits” (Putnam 2000, 319). This means that social networks are often absent for people who need them the most: the unemployed, the excluded, the poor etc.

2.2. The infrastructural and non-infrastructural social impacts of events

A mega-event may be of short duration but it may have an impact and meaning far beyond the event itself for the host city (Hiller 2000). The impacts of the event can be on a social, economic or environmental level, or may address a combination of these areas. In terms of social impacts of mega-events, one can make a distinction between infrastructural and non-infrastructural, or tangible and intangible, or “hard” and “soft” impacts. Gratton & Preuss (2009) discuss the concept of event legacy in further detail, and categorise it along 3 dimensions: planned vs unplanned legacies, negative vs. positive legacies, and tangible vs. intangible legacies.

The tangible, and most visible impact of hosting a mega-event like the Olympics on host cities is usually related to the built environment. ”Hosting the Olympics almost always involves significant capital costs through the construction of specialised buildings and other infrastructural improvements” (Hiller 2006, 318). All host cities pursue these tangible, “hard legacy gains”, examples of which are new amenities, a clean-up and reorientation of city spaces, new types of land use, and improved transport infrastructure (London East Research Institute 2007, 9). These impacts are often presented as social, as well as economic, impacts: although the regeneration of urban areas often serves the economic goals of attracting new investment and stimulating the local economy, there are also social benefits attached to them. New sporting infrastructure may for example improve access to sport; Olympic housing developments may later be used as affordable housing units; and the redevelopment of run-down areas may increase feelings of safety and local pride.

Less visible, and less often discussed in the academic literature, are the non-infrastructural, intangible, “soft” impacts of mega sporting events. These impacts are more difficult to record and quantify, which may be one of the reasons why research evidence for them is more scarce and anecdotal than for the infrastructural impacts. These impacts can be divided into different categories::

1. Impacts relating to the *individual community members*. These can be split up in different subcategories:
 - 1.1. *Health benefits*: Sporting events have been linked to health improvements via increased sport participation, promoting healthy living, improved physical health and interest in Olympic sport (Atkinson *et al* 2008, Smith 2009, Haynes 2001, DCMS 2005).

- 1.2. *Mental health*: A number of authors also linked mega sporting events to mental health benefits for the host community members. These benefits tend to be placed within the realm of self-esteem, confidence and well-being (DCMS 2005, Smith 2009, London East Research Institute 2007). One text also linked this impact specifically to inspiring children (Smith 2009).
 - 1.3. *Skills*: In this case mega sporting events are seen as opportunities for gathering and developing skills, which can also impact on employability. Terms to describe these impacts used in the literature are skills, employment opportunities, providing experience of work, employment prospects and encouraging volunteering (DCMS 2005, Smith 2009).
 - 1.4. *Social capital*: This term refers to relationships and networks between individuals, that allow a person to improve his or her life. This term referred mainly to the opportunities events can provide to extend personal networks and strengthen communication links. (London East Research Institute 2007).
2. Impacts relating to the *community as a whole*: these tend to refer to improved links and co-operation within the community. Terms used to describe this impact are community cohesion, community buy-in, co-operative entrepreneurship, social inclusion, social integration, reinforcing collective identities, uniting people, social interaction, increased social and cultural understanding (London East research Institute 2007, DCMS 2005, Smith 2009, Bull & Lovell 2007, Atkinson *et al* 2008). One text also mentions more engaged government structures (London East Research Institute 2007).
 3. Impacts on the *image, status and sense of place* of the destination. This is classed here as a social impact because of the positive impact this improved image and sense of place is claimed to have on the local residents. Terms to describe this impacts are often buzz, pride of place, civic pride, sense of spectacle, atmosphere, nationalism, feel-good factor, reputation, showcase, image and status (London East research Institute 2007, Hiller 2006, Atkinson *et al* 2008, Tufts 2004, Smith 2009, Bull & Lovell 2007).

Although these non-infrastructure benefits of mega sporting events are reported by the academic literature, it is often highlighted that for many of them, only limited empirical evidence exists. When they are discussed, they are also usually applied to the host population in general – few authors so far have applied these concepts specifically to socially excluded groups. The following two paragraphs will highlight limitations and problems that are specifically linked to achieving infrastructure and non-infrastructure benefits of mega sporting events for socially excluded groups.

2.3. Infrastructure social impacts: a focus on socially excluded groups

The assumption that social benefits can be achieved through changes in the built environment, because of their ability to attract economic activity and investment to the locality, has its roots in urban policy in the 1980's, which emphasised economic regeneration. "The theory is that economic benefits will filter down to all groups in due

course. But evidence of such filtering of benefits to the poorest groups is difficult to find. The distance between the new, buoyant activities within a city, and the lives of the poorest citizens has instead tended to increase” (Healy *et al* 1992, 7). Because of this increasing polarisation of urban populations in which the wealthy and poor have very different urban lives, the Olympics, often heavily focused on property-led regeneration, are often viewed as reinforcing this trend (Hiller 2006). “Indeed, the costs involved of staging the Games are now so high that host cities can often only justify the expenditure when it is seen as leading to a major programme of regeneration and improvement (Essex & Chalkley 1998, 187).

The globalisation of the economy has given rise to what is referred to in the academic literature as “the entrepreneurial city”, wherein coalitions of urban elites unite to promote the economic development of their city to obtain a significant place within the global urban hierarchy. In this view, the Olympics are an opportunity to enhance and broaden the profile of the city, and to showcase the city as an attractive place for investment (Hiller 2006). Flagship developments and prestigious projects are often the key to achieve this aim. Still, on a social level, flagship projects enhance socio-economic inequalities between communities by increasing cost of living and doing little to increase employment opportunities or material outcomes for the most deprived (Hall & Hubbard 1998).

The main problem lies in the principle of “trickle down” economics that assumes that the public and private financial investment flowing into deprived areas will stay put. “In practice, it actually leaks out through consultants, developers and large companies which are best able to exploit new commercial opportunities. Those who actually benefit are the existing asset holders and the affluent middle classes (Ryan-Collins & Jackson 2008, 4). For socially excluded groups, the impacts may be more negative, for example via diluted community structures or an inflation of the housing market, which may force people who do not own their homes to move (Ryan-Collins & Jackson 2008, 4). In cases like these social sustainability tends to rely on the quality of the physical environment, rather than on the rights of the urban dwellers who occupied that environment to begin with (Smith 2009).

Examples are the development of new sporting facilities and new housing. It has been shown in academic research that sports events and their new infrastructure have the greatest impact on those already involved in sports (Vigor *et al* 2004, 97). It also suggests that the new facilities do not have great impacts on local employment or economic activity levels: the subsidies paid by governments to create or renovate stadiums do little to benefit the host populations economically (Ryan-Collins & Jackson 2008, 14). Another issue concerns Olympic-related housing, built to high standards to accommodate athletes and the media, which are built under pressure to be sold at high market value to pay for the construction costs and/or make a profit. “After-use then might shift to persons of higher income rather than the provision of housing for low-income persons” (Hiller 2006).

All this is not to say that infrastructural regeneration cannot make a significant improvement to the lives of residents in the host city. The point made here is that if all

economic strata in the host community are aimed to benefit of hosting the Olympic Games, these infrastructural improvements need to be integrated with targeted non-infrastructural programmes, specifically aimed towards socially excluded groups. Strategies to achieve this will be achieved in section 6. Section 5 will apply different types of non-infrastructural improvements specifically to socially excluded persons.

2.4. Non-infrastructural social impacts: a focus on socially excluded groups

In section 3, a general overview was provided of non-infrastructural impacts of mega sporting events as they appear in the academic literature. It was highlighted that compared to the infrastructural, urban regeneration and renewal impacts of these events, the non-infrastructural impacts are researched less extensively. When it comes to how these impacts relate to socially excluded groups, the evidence is even scarcer. This may have to do with the diversification of the traditional focus of the Olympic aims.

Hiller (2000) discusses how the two traditional pillars of the Olympic Movement are sport and culture. This is confirmed by the first Olympic principle in the Olympic Charter:

Olympism is a philosophy of life, exalting and combining in a balanced whole the qualities of body, will and mind. Blending sport with culture and education, Olympism seeks to create a way of life based on the joy of effort, the educational value of good example and respect for universal fundamental ethical principles. (Olympic Charter 2007)

More recently environmental aims have been added (reflected in the Sydney 2000 theme), and the Cape Town 2004 Olympic bid added a clear “human” aim, focusing on disadvantaged populations (Hiller 2000). Lenskyj (2008) argues social responsibility needs to be added as the “fourth pillar” of the Olympic Movement. Whereas the social impacts of major sport events have been consigned to a transient “feel-good” factor in the past (Smith 2009), the event is now increasingly seen as an opportunity for long-term social leverage, inclusive of all economic strata in the host populations. Because of the complexity of the term social leverage, definitions of this term can be rather general and vague: “Legacy relates to achieving the capacity for continuous improvement in governance structures, achieving the public capacity and support to continue to innovate after the completion of the Games (London East Research Institute 2007). For three areas within the field of social impacts of mega sporting events, a body of evidence specifically related problems in including socially excluded groups is growing within the academic literature. These three areas are *skills* (volunteering), *employment*, and *sports participation*.

Skills/volunteering: Olympic volunteering programmes have in past events been used and hailed as an exciting opportunity for people to improve their skills and employability. Olympic volunteering is often motivated by a pride for the own country and its culture, social contact and friendship, and a desire to feel needed and valued by society (Kemp 2002): all of which are in themselves positive intangible impacts of the mega-event.

Kemp's study (2002) shows that volunteering can go hand in hand with the generation of positive feelings and skills in the following areas: expanding of social network, learning to work together with people from different places, heightened self-esteem, a renewed sense of contribution to society and increased competence in function-specific skills. Whilst this confirms the potential value of the volunteering experience, there is one important limitation to this benefit for socially excluded groups: they are generally hard to engage and include in the volunteer experience. Hiller (2006) highlights that service workers (primarily white-collar employees) fit the model of the Olympic volunteer the best, seeing that they are more likely to be interested, and that they are usually conscientious, disciplined and image-conscious. Persons from socially excluded backgrounds may require more training and support to become and stay involved in volunteering – even though they may be most in need of the skills and experiences this can bring. Another limitation that is highlighted is that Olympic volunteering may have a negative impact on unionized labour, and its displacement of volunteers from work of greater social value (Lenskyj 2000, 115).

Employment: Increased employment opportunities are often used prominently to help justify the bidding and investment process for the Olympic Games. Still, the following experience in Sydney is representative for how these new employment opportunities are distributed: “Many Olympic contractors wanted people who were already employed, skilled, and having “the right attitude” to work, while a lot of the long-term unemployed and those from areas of high unemployment were not getting Olympic jobs” (Lenskyj 2000, 115). Just like volunteering opportunities, it seems employment opportunities usually benefit local people on the easier end of the citizen participation ladder: this shows that if employment and training programmes need to be more focused on socially excluded groups if they want to reach the long-term unemployed. Vigor *et al* (2004) therefore emphasise that if Games-related development is to provide new employment opportunities for those who are currently unemployed, then detailed work is needed with both employers and potential employees. Otherwise these opportunities will go to skilled individuals from further away, or will focus around non-unionised, inferior work opportunities. In Atlanta 1996 for example, “contractors made extensive use of day labour in their construction programmes.” The poorly paid and highly exploitative labour pools were in many cases principally composed of illegal immigrants (Rutheiser 1996, 241).

Sports participation: The Olympic Games as a mega sporting event have been linked to increasing interest and participation in sport activities. Participation in sport has been linked to a range of benefits, such as improvements in physical health, contributions to neighbourhood renewal and communities, reducing truancy and youth crime, improved attitudes to learning amongst young people, opportunities for active citizenship and development of social capital (Bailey 2005). Gratton and Henry (2001) add to those a potential reduction in vandalism, the empowerment of disadvantaged groups, an greater pride in the community, improving employment prospects and enhancing confidence and self-esteem. Henry (2005) also links sports to intercultural understanding and a promotion of multiculturalism. Although many of these benefits are claimed, these claims

are not always substantiated with robust academic evidence (Gratton & Henry 2001, 189).

Not engaging in sporting activities can then be seen as missing opportunities to benefit from the positive impacts of sports participation, and it has been shown that persons who are socially excluded are more likely to not participate in sports. Collins lists the three types of constraints on playing sports: the first type are structural constraints (such as poor facilities, poor transport, poor environment), the second type are mediating constraints (manager's attitudes, labeling by society), and the third type are personal constraints (lack of time, income, skills, confidence; fear over safety). Collins has found that poverty adds an extra dimension to each of these factors (Collins & Kay 2003, 27). Part of the reason for this finding is that engaging in sports often costs money – sport and physical activity have to a large extent become commodified (Collins 2004, 728). But money, or economic capital, is not the only inhibiting factor: sport involvement is also linked to cultural capital. This term, coined by Bourdieu, refers to tastes, attitudes and preferences, as well as skills and knowledge: it is gained from one's education and upbringing, and differs by social class (Wilson 2002, 6). Research shows that both people who are more affluent (richer in economic capital), and people who are better educated (richer in cultural capital), engage more in sports: importantly, these two tendencies operate independently from each other (Wilson 2002). This may be an indication that purely lowering prices for sporting facilities and/or sporting events will not necessarily increase participation: a change in attitudes may also be necessary to increase participation in socially excluded groups.

Jarvie (2008) goes even further and links sports participation directly to the acquirement of social capital. He suggest that if sports were to facilitate social capital then cities, rather than using sport as a basis for attracting national and international exposure as a destination for major sports events and sports festivals, might wish to resurrect the notion of sport as a social right rather than a spectacle or form of entertainment (104). He adds that “if this is the case, then sport as a social right for children and all vulnerable groups cannot be left to chance” (Jarvie 2008, 115).

As stated before, sporting events tend to have the greatest impact in terms of increased participation on those already involved in sports (Vigor *et al* 2004, 97). It is the more affluent groups in society who are most likely to attend sport events (Wilson 2002, Hiller 2006). Even within the general population, there is little evidence that shows sustained changes in interest and participation post-Olympics. Haynes reports that “the only areas of change that could be attributed to the Olympics are in the area of television viewing” (Haynes 2001). Once again, it seems that without targeted and specific programmes to increase sports participation, it is unlikely that the participation patterns of socially excluded groups will change much.

Some host cities have aimed to increase the attendance of socially excluded groups to the event itself via reduced price ticketing schemes. The “Olympic opportunity” ticketing scheme in Sydney 2000 caused a lot of controversy, when it emerged that it did not offer discounted tickets, but instead packages of low-price tickets to less popular events that

would have probably not been sold otherwise. SOCOG was accused of trying to swell television audiences, whilst appearing magnanimous (Lenskyj 2000, 123).

From all these examples, it becomes clear that the Olympic Games, and sports in general for that matter, do not improve the lives of socially excluded groups automatically. Special attention needs to be given to the needs of disadvantaged groups if they are to benefit, and section 6 will discuss in more detail how this can be achieved. Just as the Paralympic Games continue to strive for increased societal awareness for persons with disabilities, and their integration into all facets of community life (Landry 1995), host cities for the Olympic Games could make the needs of socially excluded groups a more central focus in the staging and hosting of the event. Because they usually have a clearer focus, medium-sized events are usually seen as more sustainable than “big-bang” equivalents (O’Sullivan & Jackson in Smith 2009).

2.5. Planning and management

The examples above have confirmed that “there is no guaranteed beneficial legacy from hosting an Olympic Games [...] and there is little evidence that past Games have delivered benefits for those people and places most in need” (Vigor *et al* 2004, xi). Although the Olympic Games are mainly and principally a sporting event, and not, as Andrew Young famously said about the Atlanta 1996 Games, “a welfare programme” (Rutheiser 1996, 238), there are practical ways to leverage the social leverage opportunities the Games present. These are fourfold: (1) to build links with existing policies and networks, (2) to adopt targeted rather than only universal programmes, (3) to encourage consultation and involvement of socially excluded groups, and (4) to deliver the legacy of the event during the so-called “pregnancy” period.

Building links with existing policies and networks: This point highlights the importance of the local government structures (public) and community organizations (often voluntary) to co-operate and represent the needs of socially excluded residents. Vigor *et al* (2004, xi) assert that “what is clear is that cities that have benefited most have embedded the Olympics in a wider urban strategy and social policy agenda”. The attitude should be that the Olympics are an opportunity for development *IN* the area, rather than *OF* the area. If embedded well in existing projects, the Olympics can bring valuable additional resources to the area. For the *public* sector, this would usually involve a systemic perspective on event planning, meaning that it is embedded in the local community’s social, economic and political structures (Bramwell 1997, 172). Practitioners need to spend their time on research and analysis, not on public relations, marketing, advertising and sales. The leadership of the project needs to be in their hands, not those of private developers and real estate entrepreneurs (Krumholz 1999, 84). Smith and Fox (2007) have called this form of regeneration event-themed, rather than event-led.

There is also a need for the public sector to build links with community networks “on the ground”. Particularly appropriate for the Olympic Games may be sports bodies, many of whom already possess good working relationships and networks within deprived

communities, and represent an existing resource that can be developed and promoted” (Vigor *et al* 2004, 45). Local charities and community organizations also provide useful channels to engage with socially excluded groups within the community, who may not be keen or lack the confidence to engage in formal decision making directly. A familiar local organization can increase the political inclusion of socially excluded persons in the community, “providing visible evidence that the regeneration project is treating all sections of the community as having the right and the capacity to make a contribution” (Brownill & Darke 1998, 2). Charities and community organizations can at the same time give an extra impetus to their own work by creating links with a mega event like the Olympics. An important barrier for their work though are the brand protection guidelines for non-commercial organizations: no person or organization who is not an official sponsor of the Games is allowed to associate their activities with the event. The guidelines for London 2012 state that:

“Unless you are working with LOCOG on an official London 2012 programme or have received official endorsement, please resist creating your own schemes named labeled as “2012” or “Olympic” as these could potentially undermine the exclusivity and value that can be offered to London 2012 sponsors. Charities should think of creative ways to capture the philosophies and values of the Games but without creating an association with them and should not use the Games as a way of promoting their causes without LOCOG’s approval” (Ryan-Collins & Jackson 2008, 18).

Although brand protection is no doubt a crucial part of securing the necessary private funding and sponsorship for the Olympic Games, it would seem that these draconian rules hinder a fundamental way of leveraging social opportunities for the host community.

Focused vs. universal programmes: Universal regeneration objectives are those that make reference to issues such as poverty, social exclusion, low skills, unemployment or poor health within the regeneration plans (Brownill & Darke 1998, 9). The objectives are expressed in general terms and the whole community is targeted through them. In the previous sections, it have been made apparent that universal programmes, such as employment or volunteering schemes, do not always reach the groups in the community that are most in need of them. It seems that where no efforts are made to direct effects, they may gravitate to those who *least* need them (Smith 2009). This has led claims that “Olympic legacy benefits will accrue to the already privileged sectors of the population, while the disadvantaged disproportionately bear the burden” (Lenskyj 2000, 131). More focused programmes, that take into account the characteristics of socially excluded groups, may be more suitable and successful in engaging these groups. Smith and Fox (2007, 1128) point out that a more targeted approach is notoriously difficult to achieve; still, they highlight the 2002 Commonwealth Games as an example of good practice

Participation and involvement: Balsas (2004) states that swift planning processes without due public participation can undermine the expected effects of regeneration and skew civic agendas. Misener and Mason (2006, 46) agree that “in order to ensure that community values are respected, the local community needs the opportunity to continue to be involved in the overall event hosting process. Seeing that socially excluded groups

are notoriously difficult to engage in a political context, the role of voluntary organisations may again be important here. Critics of the bidding process though have argued that in many cases no real consultation of the local community is held, and refer to the process as “manufactured consent” (Cashman 2002, 6).

Delivering the legacy during the “pregnancy” period: A significant proportion of the legacy of the Olympic Games is delivered before they are held (Vigor *et al* 2004, 22). Seeing that funding and interest in Olympic programmes often wanes after the Games are held (Smith 2009) policy makers need to plan beyond the funding period and find ways in which the regeneration project can be made more lasting (Taner *et al* 1997, 367). The funding sources and focus of the project may have to change: if the Olympic Games can be a motivating and exciting theme to drive the project up until the end of the event, after the Games there may be a feeling of loss experienced by many members of the host community, even a post-Games depression (Cashman 2002, 12). Therefore programmes should try and capitalise on the Olympic Games before the events, rather than building the legacy specifically on them straight after the event.

2.6. IOC Responses

This section reviews a number of key IOC policy documents, to review if and how the principles of social sustainability and inclusion are presented.

Olympic Charter

In the Olympic Charter, inclusivity in sport is mentioned as one of the ‘fundamental principles of Olympism’. ‘The practice of sport is a human right. Every individual must have the possibility of practising sport (Olympic Charter 2007, 11). This principle is repeated in the section on ‘Mission and role of the IOC’: mission 12 is ‘to encourage and support the development of sport for all’ (Olympic Charter 2007, 15). Other missions are to ‘promote a positive legacy from the Olympic Games to the host cities and host countries’ (although no benchmarks are identified here) and to ‘encourage and support initiatives blending sport with culture and education’ (although no specific target groups for these initiatives are identified). The environmental impacts of the Olympic Games are mentioned separately in mission 13, this is not the case for social impacts. The Olympic Charter also refers to Olympic Solidarity, referring to the organisation of assistance to NOCs, ‘particularly those which have the greatest needs of it’ (Olympic Charter 18). The support can be used to form teams and prepare athletes, to create sports facilities, to organise competitions and to train staff (amongst others). This is naturally a most commendable objective, but this type of support has so far not been used to support socially excluded groups in host communities – the fund is mainly aimed at supporting developing countries.

Candidate City Manual

In its “Manual for candidate cities for the Games of the XXIX Olympiad” (IOC 2008, 39), the IOC highlights its commitment to sustainable development.

“The Olympic Movement is fully committed to sustainable development and endeavours to contribute to the protection of the natural environment. The IOC is concerned that the Olympic games should be an exemplary event in this respect and that environmentally sound policies, programmes and practices be adopted. [...] Environmental protection is an area where candidate cities often experience tough public scrutiny and opposition and it is essential that, from the earliest stages of planning, a dialogue of cooperation is established with the governmental and non-governmental organisations in this respect.”

The interpretation of sustainability seems to be heavily focused on the environmental aspect of the concept though, as social considerations are not mentioned. Social inequality and the diversion of public money away from social projects to fund the Olympic Games is another area where organisers increasingly face public scrutiny and opposition. Lenskyj (2008) argues the IOC fears to be perceived as intrusive – the Olympic Games are a sports competition, and social issues may not appear to be part of the IOC’s jurisdiction. Nevertheless, highlighting the importance of environmental sustainability has encouraged candidate cities today to pay specific attention to this area: it can be expected that highlighting the importance of social sustainability would have a similar effect.

Agenda 21

The Olympic Movement’s Agenda 21 include social sustainability in its aims and objectives. The document highlights that Agenda 21 pays particular attention to the fate of minorities and the most disadvantaged members of society. In accordance with this, the Olympic movement has made it its goal to help combat social exclusion (24). The document recognizes two mechanisms for achieving this goal: by supporting plans that fight against poverty and the integration of disadvantaged social groups on the one hand; and by giving priority to encouraging sports activity in underprivileged social circles on the other hand (26).

Code of ethics

The IOC Code of ethics was adopted by the IOC Executive Board in Beijing in 2007. The text aims to safeguards the dignity of the athlete, the integrity of the Olympic Parties and their representatives, the use of resources etc. The Olympic legacy is not mentioned in this document. In a Code of Ethics that requires of organising parties to be ethical in the way they spend resources, it could be useful to also highlight the importance of putting the legacy of the Olympic Games centrally in their operations.

2.7. Conclusion

From this review of the literature it has become apparent that it is highly doubtful that the economic, social and environmental benefits of mega-events for host cities automatically

‘trickle down’ to socially excluded groups. The literature shows that a number of infrastructural and non-infrastructural benefits can be linked with the organisation of mega-events, but that to reach socially excluded groups, targeted and specialised programmes are needed. Although this is still an emerging theme in the theory, there seems to be a growing call for mega-events to spread their benefits more evenly and equally between different groups in the host population. Certainly in times of an economic downturn, it becomes vital that the groups who could be seen to suffer more under increased taxation and a shift in policy priorities, should also reap the rewards of this. Within the IOC a similar awareness of this problematic can be demonstrated in a series of documents, and with the 2016 Olympics in Rio now confirmed, it can be expected that this awareness is set to grow.

3. Method

This scoping report has focused on 7 Olympic Games: Atlanta 1996, Nagano 1998, Sydney 2000, Salt Lake City 2002, Athens 2004, Turin 2006, and Beijing 2008. To take this longitudinal view encompassing several editions of the Olympic Games is unusual, and comes with a range of challenges. Nevertheless, the need for a more longitudinal and comparative study has been highlighted by researchers. Essex and Chalkley for example specifically mentioned the need for comparative historical research about the socio-economic impacts of the Olympic Games, and drew attention to the methodological difficulty that “the further back in time the researcher wishes to stretch, the more fragmentary the evidence is likely to be. There may therefore be a case for concentrating enquiries on the more recent Games” (1998, 204).

The study aims to provide a more longitudinal and comparative outlook, by combining primary and secondary data about the different Games. The secondary data were taken mainly from academic research, but also from reports from social and charitable organisations, from the press and from IOC and NOC documentation. Because these data by themselves were deemed insufficient to discuss the research question in great depth, they were combined with primary data collected through email interviews. The respondents for these interviews were researchers who have published academically about the Olympic Games in host cities, representatives from charities and social organisations who work with socially excluded groups in the host cities, and representatives from political organisations (such as members of the city council).

The number of combined data sources for each city varied between 12 and 26. For each city, a minimum of 5 primary data sources were used. The recruiting emails were translated in Italian, Greek, Latin and Japanese. The lowest number of primary responses was found for Atlanta and Salt Lake City. A factor here can be that the Olympic Games were organised a long time ago, and that many of the persons who were then active in the research/social arena may since have moved on into different positions, which makes them difficult to contact. In total, 46 respondents returned the email interview. Generally more secondary sources about social exclusion and the Olympic Games were found for host cities where English is the official language – the language barrier made some sources inaccessible for the researcher. An overview of the responses is provided below.

	Atlanta	Nagano	Sydney	SLC	Athens	Turin	Beijing
SECONDARY	12	11	17	18	5	6	7
<i>Academic</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>5</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>4</i>
<i>Non-academic</i>	<i>11</i>	<i>11</i>	<i>11</i>	<i>18</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>6</i>	<i>3</i>
PRIMARY	5	6	9	5	7	8	6
<i>Social/Charity</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>0</i>
<i>Political</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>5</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>5</i>	<i>2</i>
<i>Researchers</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>4</i>
TOTAL	17	17	26	23	12	14	13

Challenges:

The research scope and method chosen raised a number of challenges. There were practical difficulties in generating data in 7 different locations within the time frame available to complete this research project. Of the responses received, not all were very detailed or contained much information – in these cases the main contribution of the respondents was to suggest other respondents in a ‘snowball’ approach.

If the Olympic Games were organised a long time ago, this made it harder to find respondents, but there are also problems with the validity of the responses. ‘Legacy assessments of Olympic Games are fraught with dangers of incorrect assessments and influenced by those who make them. There is the likelihood of insufficient or too much time having passed when the pronouncements are made to make any meaningful judgement. Secondly, there is the matter of objectivity depending on the stakeholder relationship’ (adapted from Toohey 2008). The researcher has aimed to gather responses from a variety of stakeholders to increase the likelihood of a fair representation. It is nevertheless impossible to draw firm generalisations for each city on the basis of the number of respondents per host city (between 5 and 9).

An added difficulty is that the effects of non-infrastructure programmes on disadvantaged groups, the results can be difficult to evaluate. Sanford et al (2008) for example reviewed a series of sports programmes for disadvantaged youth and their longer-term outcomes. They generally found that due to the nature of the target group, programmes rarely have guaranteed outcomes; and that the outcomes may at first sight look disappointing. When improvements are noted, it is also not clear if these will be maintained in the future. The impacts are likely to be uneven (107), but the authors note that positive outcomes can be maximised by tailoring project designs to the needs of the participants.

4. Findings

4.1. ATLANTA 1996

Aims

The mission statement in the official report defines the aims of these Olympic Games as *fiscal responsibility, sharing the spirit of America's South, positive spiritual and physical legacy, and inclusiveness in planning.*

- *Fiscal responsibility:* Atlanta is a famous (for some infamous) example of an Olympic Games that was organised without public investment and involvement, and based largely on commercial principles. “Scrupulous attention to keeping expenses commensurate with revenues was essential because of ACOG’s commitment to stage the 1996 Games without governmental financial support” (Official Report, 22).
- *Sharing the spirit of America's South:* This aim has a social and ethical foundation. The word ‘equality’ is mentioned on several occasions. “As the birth place of the modern human rights movement, Atlanta has the moral vision to express the *ideals of justice and equality inherent in fair play* exceedingly well” (Candidature file 2, 10). “Atlanta understands that the Games provide, as no other event could, a chance for a city to demonstrate to the world the true power of the Olympic Ideals. Atlanta is by no means perfect, but in many ways it embodies the values of human liberty and equality as well as any city on earth. As the birth place of the Civil Rights Movement and for many the capital of human rights, Atlanta reflects the high ideals of Olympism” (Candidature files, 19).

These ideas were clearly supported before the Games in Atlanta’s Master Plan summery (ACOG, 1992): “Through the preparation for and staging of the Centennial Olympic Games, Atlanta must live up to the measure of its historical rhetoric. We must prepare and implement this once-in-a-lifetime opportunity with the certainty that the rewards are fairly and fairly and equitably apportioned among all the citizens of our community. Atlanta is uniquely positioned among the cities of the world to make this dramatic and lasting statement of care and compassion” (Official Report, 2).

- *Positive physical and spiritual legacy:* Here the non-infrastructureal legacy of the Olympic Games is specifically addressed. The physical legacy refers to sports facilities, beautification of city, a new campus for Georgia Institute of technology, and housing units. The key aim for a spiritual legacy is a deeper commitment to volunteerism (Official Report, 194). The volunteers are acknowledged by having their names printed in footers and inside cover of report. Different committees were also formed: a committee on disability access, an interfaith advisory group, and an Olympic environmental support group (Official Report, 195).

- *Inclusiveness in planning*: This objective again refers explicitly to inclusiveness and equality of the host population. Community cohesion is a key aim here: “Valuing the concerns of people who would be affected by the Olympic Games and bringing them together.”(Official Report, 20) Making the Games available to a wide cross-section of people by minimising the cost of participation (Official Report, 21).

Approach to social sustainability

Although social sustainability and inclusiveness feature highly in these aims, many commentators agree that in practice, the Games mainly achieved objective 1, to the point where some would allege the Olympic Games in Atlanta were overly commercialised. This is clearly the opinion of C. Yarbrough, the Communications Director of ACOG, who wrote a book about his experiences. He calls the Olympic Games “a blown opportunity”. “Mayor Jackson Young’s view was that ‘what good is it to have the Olympic games if we can’t make a buck of them’” (Yarbrough 2000, 109). He adds “To know all you need to know about Atlanta, walk around the city today (but not after dark) and look. It is almost as if the centennial Olympic Games were never here. [...] The belief that having the Olympic Games in Atlanta would solve all our economic and social problems was naïve” (Yarbrough 2000, 109-110). In his view, the Games were seen as a cost that needed to be recouped (Yarbrough 2000, 117).

Primary respondents commented indeed that ‘ACOG viewed their task as taking care of what happens ‘inside the fence’ of the Games and not the city as a whole’. They report also that CODA, the Committee for Olympic Development in Atlanta, had the task to use the Games as a catalyst to improve the lives of the city’s poor residents. This organisation though failed to ‘get any substantial funds except from federal sources. These funds were tied to the rather vague ideas of ‘transportation improvements’ so most went to sidewalk improvements, planting street trees, and signs to direct pedestrians’. Although these improvements are no doubt beneficial for socially excluded groups as well, they cannot be seen as specifically targeted towards this group.

Rutheiser (1996, 238) agrees with this evaluation: Young asserted that the Olympics were not a welfare programme, they are a business venture”. A practice that clearly shows very little focus on social sustainability was the use of highly exploitative labour pools, many composed principally of illegal immigrants, combined with a lack of commitment to unionise labour (Rutheiser 1996, 241). Newman (1999, 151) asserts that this “led to frustrations among low-income neighbourhoods as revitalisation efforts failed to meet expectations”. Instead, he reports widespread relocation of residents of low-income neighbourhoods. A primary respondent adds that Mayor Jackson’s successor, Bill Campbell, did not attempt to move the ideas of reducing social disadvantage forward either.

Actions taken to target socially excluded groups

The Official Report refers to a *job training programme in the construction industry* (300 beneficiaries) and *internships* for young people (more than 200 beneficiaries, plus several hundreds volunteers at ACOG head quarters (Official report, 200-202). Rutheiser (1996, 253) comments that there was indeed ‘a minority contracting programme and modest job raining programme for residents of the neighbourhoods near the stadium’. He rates this effort though as more symbolic than substantive. He also adds that some of the construction programmes, such as the Centennial Park construction, destroyed more than 10% of shelter space for the homeless (Rutheiser 1996, 263). A primary respondent adds that residents in disadvantaged areas ‘were promised job training to help with the construction of the stadium, but few ended up qualifying for the programme, as most neighbourhood residents were both poor and old’. On the other hand, the primary responses do show appreciation for the employment programme, even if it did not reach the most disadvantaged: ‘I will say that the preparation for the Games did provide jobs for most who wanted them. There were so many projects like the sidewalk reconstruction, road paving, landscaping and the like that did not require extensive skills, and which were filled by locals and by people who came from all over in the hope of finding employment’.

Another project was the *Children’s Olympic Ticket Fund* – all honoraria received from ACOG Speakers Bureau presentations were used to purchase tickets for children in Georgia who might not otherwise have had the change to attend the Games. Another source of revenue was an auction on the 500th day before the Olympics. 17000 young people benefited from this scheme (Official report, 21).

The Atlanta Project (TAP) was not mentioned specifically in the Official Report, but highlighted by one of the primary respondents, and in a report of the Centre on Housing Rights and Evictions (COHRE 2007). This report mainly focuses on infrastructural impacts, but also includes section with a non-infrastructural focus. TAP was announced in 1991 by former President Carter, with the aim to address poverty and show the world that Atlanta possessed a social conscience. The COHRE project suggests it may be no coincidence that this project focused specifically on communities that would be most affected by the Olympic Games: ‘How better to improve the cooperation of those communities than to flood them with promises of resources and hordes of volunteers’ (COHRE 2007, 29). The report also criticises the fact that

‘TAP immediately began to raise funds for its own operation, competing with existing organisations that had long addressed poverty in those same communities. Feelings ran strong that TAP represented merely represented an effort to control organisations that were speaking about real injustice and addressing obvious inequality’.

After 5 years the programme was shut down, leaving many advocates of poor and homeless people to believe that ‘there was no institutional intent to solve issues of poverty, but to create the impression that Atlanta was a city with a soul’ (COHRE 2007, 29).

TAP itself highlights in its evaluation document that

‘TAP does not claim to have all the answers, or the solutions for eliminating urban decay. It hasn’t solved the problem of unemployment; but it is working to create conditions that are ripe for economic development, entrepreneurship, and job creation. It hasn’t solved the problems of juvenile violence, but it is looking at ways of getting youth involved in constructive and productive programmes. TAP hasn’t solved the homeless problem, but it is working with housing providers to keep some residents in structurally sound, clean, safe and affordable housing.’

TAP has recorded achievements in the areas of child immunisations, health clinics, family resource centres and employment partnerships. One of the examples of achievements of the TAP project is also the production of booklets and leaflets about reporting abandoned vehicles and unsightly properties in their neighbourhoods(www.cartercenter.org). This last example specifically does little to alleviate the impression that TAP was a clean-up and goodwill-generating project, rather than a project which achieved long-term positive changes for its target group.

The COHRE report also refers to racial inequalities in commercial opportunities that were offered. Many vendors were lured into huge investments and leased spots on city property, with promises of hundreds of thousands of customers. The report then quotes Professor Robert Bullard, who stated that ‘Atlanta went out of its way to block Olympian visitors from local vendors and small entrepreneurs in Atlanta’s African American communities, causing many to lose their entire investment’ (COHRE 2007, 31). No respondents were found willing within the Carter Centre or the Atlanta city government to respond to these criticisms.

Conclusion

From the data gathered here, one can conclude that Atlanta rated social sustainability very highly in its objectives, but that few of these objectives were achieved. Although some successes can definitely be reported, the objectives were highly ambitious, and only through intensive and targeted programmes could they have been achieved. In this study, little evidence of such projects was found.

4.2. NAGANO 1998

Aims

In the Candidature Files and the Official Report of Nagano 1998, the following sustainability aims are proposed:

- *Natural sustainability*: “We will strive to present an Olympics that is environmentally friendly, preserving the natural wonder of the Nagano site for our children and our children’s children” (Candidature files 1).
- *Participation of children*: A youth camp was organised for children from different countries, and half price tickets were made available for children.
- *Peace and friendship*: the Olympic Truce had been agreed year before (referring to the cessation of all violence during Olympic Games), and in this context NAOC established the ‘Nagano Olympic International Cooperation Fund’ (also referred to as the ‘Nagano Olympic Harmony Fund’). A primary respondent explained that this fund aimed to ‘improve the deteriorating educational environment for children due to poverty and conflicts’. Initiatives included (amongst others) a campaign to ban personal land mines, and a Patchwork Blanket campaign for Sarajevo.

Approach to social sustainability

From the aims included above, it can be deduced that social and environmental sustainability were seen as important values for the Games. In terms of social sustainability, the focus taken here is on the participation of children, and on the lives and well-being of children abroad, rather than on socially excluded groups in the host community. Due to the fact that Japan is generally considered to be a more homogenous society (see respondent comment below), there may also be cultural reasons for this focus.

Actions taken to target socially excluded groups

No programmes were found that specifically aimed to improve the lives of low-income people in the host community. The primary respondents commented for example ‘I think there were no projects that were aimed at poverty reduction or socially excluded people linked to the Nagano Winter Olympic Games’, and ‘My friends who have studied the history of the Olympics do not know any’. One respondent links this to the structure of Japanese society:

‘I personally think this (*reduction of social exclusion*) was not an intention. As you know, Japan is generally a homogenous society, where one cannot easily find disadvantaged people. [...] . This means the society does not have a large gap

between rich and poor. [...] I think when the Summer Games are taking place in a large metropolitan area, it involves more 'social reform' ideas (e.g. poverty reduction).

Some initiatives are mentioned by the respondents, but none are specifically targeted towards the reduction of social exclusion. One comment refers to the construction programmes and the effects on the local economy: 'Much money was invested to boost the economy of the region, particularly through construction. However, it was a one-shot 'dosage'. So after the Games were over, many local constructors, who over-invested in plant and equipment, bankrupted'. Two respondents also refer to the efforts of the organisers to include athletes from countries where winter sports are often non-existent. 'An example is the bobsled team from Jamaica, and a cross-country skier from Kenya, but both of those were commercially driven to product sponsorship'.

Conclusion

For Nagano 1998, social sustainability was one of the aims, but this concept is not applied to the host community. From the responses it can be concluded that there are cultural differences between host cities/countries that make that 'social exclusion' is not a concept that is universally relevant. The economic conditions during the hosting of the Olympic Games may also have played a role: GDP was very high in 1998, so that resources may have been deemed better spend in areas of the world with more severe levels of poverty.

4.3. SYDNEY 2000

Aims

Sydney's social sustainability aims are given a separate mention in its Official Report (333-341), under the header: Social aims (interactions and impacts). The key aims were:

- *Indigenous peoples:* It was an explicit aim to encourage the participation of indigenous peoples in the preparation and staging of the Games through artistic, ceremonial and sporting activities. Two organisations have played a role in the achievement of this aim: NSWALC: New South Wales Aboriginal Land Council; and NIAC: National Indigenous Advisory Committee.
- *Multicultural communities:* The engagement of different cultural communities was encouraged via the Multicultural Advisory Committee, Community Briefings, and a Community Newsletter (MOSAIC)
- *Assessment and research:* In 1995 a 'Preliminary Social Impact Assessment of the Sydney 2000 Olympic and Paralympic Games' was presented. The research objectives were overseen by the Social Impacts Advisory Committee.
- *Employment and training:* The key initiative here was a A\$ 10 million Training Strategy for the Building and Construction Industry, which led to 12000 additional training spaces. A Skills Centre was also opened on the main Olympic sites in Homebush Bay (the disadvantaged area of Sydney where the Games were mainly taking place)..

Approach to social sustainability

Social sustainability was an important aim for the Sydney 2000 Olympic Games, as is exemplified by the range of target groups mentioned above. The social impacts of the Games seem to have been carefully planned in the run-up to the event. Before the games for example, a 1995 Keys Young report, the Social Impacts of the Games, identified a number of potential negative outcomes from hosting the Games for the people of Sydney and New South Wales. Because of the report, many NSW government agencies introduced strategies to address the issues raised (Toohey 2008, 1963).

The choice of the site for the Olympic Games can be seen as an attempt to achieve greater equality in the host community. Waitt (2003, 198) explains that 'Sydney's population was polarised between the Northern suburbs (mostly highly skilled service economy employees), and the Western suburbs (higher levels of youth unemployment, higher numbers of unskilled migrants, lower levels of household income, education and English proficiency.' The Olympic site was located in the disadvantaged West. Through large-scale infrastructural changes to the area, it was intended to increase equality. "Locating an Olympics at Homebush provided a mechanism by which to implement a material and symbolical site transformation, former marginal brown site of noxious

industries and dump to a central, vibrant, clean, “green” economic base sustained by consumptive practices of culture economies, primarily sport” (Waitt 2003, 199). It has been argued earlier in this report that it doubtful that benefits through infrastructural developments ‘trickle down’ to socially excluded groups naturally. This could be one of the reasons why in 2008, Toohey argued that ‘any social impacts that were claimed as a result of the Games appear to have dissipated’ (2008, 1953). This is echoed by one of the primary respondents: ‘The Olympic industry propaganda made it seem that this (*social sustainability*) was an aim, but the reality was that the situation of low-income tenants, street homeless people, and Aboriginal people in Sydney and regional areas was significantly worsened’. One of the primary respondents, who was a representative on the Social Impacts Committee, negates this view and states that ‘I would not say that we were using the Olympics to reduce disadvantage, but we were trying to ensure that there were no negative side effects’.

Actions taken to target socially excluded groups

A number of specific programmes were introduced before and during Sydney 2000 that specifically targeted low-income and socially excluded groups in the host community. These programmes focused on event participation via social ticketing, employment initiatives and a strategy for dealing with the homeless.

Although an ambitious *ticketing policy* for Sydney 2000 was proposed in the run-up to the Games, providing affordable tickets to low-income groups, this strategy failed to have satisfied many social organisations and commentators. Haynes (2001) refers to this as the “Tickets for the Rich” scandal. Lenskyj (2000, 123) summarises that ‘social service leaders tried for many years to persuade SOCOG to offer discounted tickets to disadvantaged groups. With Olympic venues and associated infrastructure funded with public money, equality of access to Olympic tickets for low-income people was an important social equity issue’. SOCOG’s eventual ‘Olympic Opportunity’ ticket plan for community and welfare groups did not offer discounted tickets, but mainly packages of low-priced tickets (\$10-19) to less popular events that would probably not have sold otherwise. One cynical but probably accurate view, offered a few years earlier was that SOCOG wanted to swell the television audience at events in which Australian spectators had little interest (e.g. hand ball, fencing and badminton), while appearing magnanimous by giving poor people cheap tickets (Magnay 1997 in Lenskyj 2000). The council of Social Service of New South Wales (NCOSS), in 1998, less cynically welcomed the initiative, but added indeed that the 1.5 million tickets costing less than \$20, available to schools and disadvantaged people, were for ‘less popular Olympic events’ (ncoss.org.au).

In 2000, the number of tickets available in this scheme was reduced from 1.5 million to 735000. The initial sales offer was only made to schools only, sales to welfare groups were postponed until later in the year (Lenskyj 2000, 124). NCOSS highlighted the fact that the cheapest tickets were increasingly made available through commercial sales, and that the number of cheap tickets to prestige events was very low. This led to ‘the most marginal result in improving the access of low-income people to the Olympics’ (www.ncoss.org.au). NCOSS also suggested the tax on premium ticket packages could be

used to subsidise cheap tickets for low-income groups, but this proposal was not successful. In June 2000 SOCOG abandons the 'Olympic Opportunity' ticketing plan Olympic sponsor John Hancock Financial Services donates 2000 tickets to school children in low-income areas in the Sydney region (Lenskyj 2000, 125). The NCOSS 'pre-Olympic scorecard' gave Sydney 2000 a score of 3 out of 10 for the category 'access to events for low-income people' (www.ncoss.org.au).

A second area of activity was *employment and training opportunities* for the long-term unemployed. Although the Olympic Games provided opportunities for many, it seems these programmes were not sufficiently targeted to have a great effect on the long-term unemployed. In the literature review it was highlighted that targeting programmes is a necessity for success with these hard-to-reach groups, as otherwise market principles tend to take over. Lenskyj (2000, 115) states that "many Olympic contractors wanted people who were already employed, skilled, and having "the right attitude" to work, while a lot of the long term unemployed and those from areas of high unemployment were not getting Olympic jobs. [...] The widespread use of volunteer labour in the hosting of the Olympics has been justly criticised in the past for its negative impact on unionised labour and its displacement of volunteers from work of greater social value'. Although the initiatives thus may have brought opportunities for some, they were mainly situated at the "easier end" of the citizen participation ladder. NCOSS agrees by stating that 'It is clear that many employers and Olympics-related contractors are insisting on skills and experience which the long term unemployed, in particular, simply do not have' (www.ncoss.org.au).

This is supported by the primary respondents:

The reduction of social exclusion was not an explicit objective of either the NSW Government nor the bodies established to manage the processes (SOCOG and the OCA). There was a recognition that increased economic activity during the construction phase (1995-2000) and during the year of the Games should provide significant employment opportunities, some of which might be targeted at disadvantaged groups in the labour market. There were some attempts, generally at the margins, to provide employment and training opportunities in both the construction and the hospitality/security industries for indigenous people, but these were later in the process and could have been implemented with much greater impact had the political/governance will been there.

There was no evidence of using social procurement re the 2000 games as a social exclusion measure, although much was made of 'green' supply chains.

The Olympic Impact Coalition adds that 'Whilst a robust NSW economy, with Olympic influences, has spawned many jobs, the unemployed in disadvantaged parts of Sydney and rural regions have been left out' (featured on www.ncoss.org.uk). This lack of a targeted approach was also visible after the Games, when NCOSS proposed to the Olympics Minister and the Premier 'that a concerted and special effort be made' to find employment and vocational training opportunities for the unemployed Olympic

volunteers (www.ncoss.org.uk). The NCOSS pre-Olympics Scorecard awarded the Games a 4 out of 10 in the category 'Jobs and training for the long-term unemployed'.

The third action undertaken was the establishment of the *Homelessness Protocol*: a code of practice for how police, security, council rangers and other Olympic Co-ordination Authority officers should address street homeless people; and an assistance and referral service to be operated by homeless persons' workers specifically engaged by Sydney City Council. One primary respondent explains that

The Protocol was aimed at protecting street homeless people from being inappropriately moved on or treated during the Games period, and has survived to now. There were varying views about its effectiveness in the immediate post-Olympics period. Allied with this was the short term expansion of the number of emergency shelters and some supported accommodation places available in the inner city parts of Sydney, where NSW government made available to some of the larger NGOs empty State Government property and funds to organise appropriate emergency accommodation. This was time specific, largely ending by the end of 2000.

Even though the provision of additional accommodation places was temporary and this lacked longevity, the Homelessness Protocol is a lasting legacy of the Sydney 2000 Olympics for socially excluded persons in the host community and the wider region. The NCOSS pre-Olympics Scorecard awarded the Games a 7 out of 10 in the category 'Protecting the street homeless and providing extra emergency accommodation'.

Conclusion

The Sydney Olympic Games need to be commended for not only including social sustainability initiatives in their aims, but also for attempting to implement these in three areas: social ticketing, job and training opportunities, and a homelessness strategy. The levels of success varied by area: where the cheaper ticket promises were not kept, there were some improvements for the street homeless, even though some of these were short-term. The case of the employment programme for the Sydney Olympics in particular clearly demonstrates that to achieve real change for socially excluded groups, a targeted strategy is needed, as general programmes do not tend to reach those with multiple disadvantage. Many of the primary respondents testified that the reduction of social exclusion was not an aim as such, but that in many cases, the aim was to minimise the negative effects on socially excluded persons' lives. This may be one of the reasons why the NCOSS pre-Olympics scorecard only awards a 3 out of 10 for the category 'Reducing the social divide'.

4.4. SALT LAKE CITY 2002

Aims

The Candidature Files and Official Report of the Sydney Olympics are heavily focused on the principle that the Games will be privately funded, but do not mention community relations or social sustainability aims in great depth.

Approach to social sustainability

Because of the lack of social sustainability aims, there was also no clear approach as to how such aims could be achieved. All primary respondents agreed that there was no coordinated response in this direction. One respondent elaborates:

For the Salt Lake Olympics, there was no effort or intent to use the Games to reduce social exclusion or disadvantage. While the bid committee hinted that hosting the Games could be a way to promote social causes, once the 2002 games were awarded in 1995 the organising committee made it very clear that they were only interested in hosting an athletic event and had no interest in addressing social issues. Of course, unlike Atlanta, there was never any sense in SLC that the Games could or would be used to try to address social disadvantages.

Salt Lake Impact 2002 and Beyond, a coalition of community groups representing low-income residents, published a report card for a list of social categories and how these were affected by the Olympics. Although the Olympics have a good score in the areas of 'Civil Liberties' and 'Disability Compliance', the scores in the areas of 'Housing and Community Development', 'Impact Mitigation', 'Leadership/Ethics' and 'Community Representation and Involvement' are consistently low (Salt Lake Impact 2002 and Beyond, 2002).

Actions taken to target socially excluded groups

There is sporadic evidence of a number of initiatives that addressed the needs of two groups, youth and the homeless. In the youth category, only a small proportion of the initiatives found are specifically targeted towards socially excluded young people.

The Official Report mentions two initiatives for children and young people. The first one, *Olympic tickets for kids*, was an initiative funded through proceeds from the sale of Utah commemorative Olympic Winter games license plates. This provided nearly 60000 tickets for students – it is not specified though how many of these students were from low-income or socially excluded backgrounds, and would not have been able to attend the Games otherwise. The distribution process is described as follows: *Equitable ticket distribution*: "Every Utah public school district – as well as private and parochial schools – received a percentage of the total available tickets based on district student enrolment. Ten percent of the tickets were allocated to Families, Agencies and Communities Together (FACT), which included local interagency councils and site-based programmes.

The FACT coordinator participated on the District ticket committee, working closely with schools to select at-risk students to attend the Games. Other youth groups and agencies such as the Make-a-Wish foundation also received tickets” (Official report, 433).

A third initiative also includes young people, and was aimed at community cohesion. The *Y.E.S. Youth Engaged in Service* project was targeted at 52 Utah high schools. They were invited to attend Education-sponsored Service Learning training that was held in several locations across the state. YES students identified local needs and then organised and led service projects that benefited their local communities. YES left an Olympic legacy of community improvement throughout Utah (Official Report, 434). No evidence was found to support the longevity of this initiative.

Two respondents also highlight some activity in the area of homelessness. Following the example of Sydney, an effort was made to treat street homeless people fairly:

One concern expressed by advocates of the homeless was that there might be a ‘round-up’ of homeless people just before the Games as a way to try and improve the city’s appearance for Olympic visitors. Largely because of the publicity that topic received, there was no effort to try and move the homeless out or away from Salt Lake prior to the Games.

As opposed to the case of Sydney, this did not result in an official ‘protocol’.

Conclusion

Salt Lake City 2002 can be seen as an example of an Olympic games where social sustainability was not on the agenda. After the efforts of Sydney 2000, this can be seen as a step backwards on this front. An increased concern for safety and security after the attacks of 9/11 in 2001 could have played a role here, but from the candidature files (compiled long before the 9/11 attacks) it is clear that social sustainability was never seen as a priority or responsibility by the organising committee.

4.5. ATHENS 2004

Aims:

Both the Candidature Files and the Official Report concentrate heavily on the aim to achieve infrastructural improvements for the city. Social sustainability aims are but fleetingly mentioned. In the introduction to the Candidature Files, it says:

“For a country to take part in the Games or to express a wish to host them, is for it to state its desire for a better world, without poverty, without conflict – a free world in which physical vigour is the other half of mental creativity”.

Although poverty is highlighted here, it is hardly mentioned in the rest of the document. In the Official Report, community participation is only mentioned with regards to involvement in organisational issues such as transport, waste disposal and construction issues.

Approach to social sustainability

Based on the lack of clear social sustainability aims as indicated above, it can be said that there was no definite approach to social sustainability either. This is echoed by the primary respondents and by the literature. Kissoudi (2008) highlights that the main aims of the Olympics were infrastructural: there were meant to be a catalyst for the transformation of the city of Athens. In practice this means the objectives were to improve the quality of life for residents, to attract tourists and investors, and to improve the image of Athens. With regards to social sustainability, the primary respondents commented:

There was, we are quite sure, no policy for tackling poverty or social exclusion during the Athens Olympics. There was the occasional piece of rhetoric (about the need to ensure that the Olympics not only give a boost to development and ‘improvement’ but that they do so in a manner that is sensitive to the poor and excluded, blah, blah, blah). But in practice the whole thing was conspicuous by its absence.

Unfortunately the perspective of your research never preoccupied Greece in the form you try to examine. The whole Olympic Games preparation project was seen as a boost to the Greek economy, which increased considerably in those years. Mainly they were building projects, which changed the country’s infrastructure to the benefit of all.

Two respondents also referred to the fact that the organisers were more interested in fulfilling demands made from the IOC on environmental impact minimisation, than in community participation.

Actions taken to target socially excluded groups

None reported.

Conclusion

From the evidence presented here, it seems Athens adopted a strongly infrastructural approach to social benefits. The Olympics seem to have had a positive impact on the city's transport network and infrastructure, which, as one primary respondent highlights, can be beneficial for all citizens. It has however been highlighted in the literature review that the creation or improvement of infrastructure does not automatically bring great benefits to socially excluded groups. Compared to the Summer Olympics in Sydney four years before, Athens also hardly included social sustainability in its aims.

4.6. TORINO 2006

Aims

In the Candidature Files and the Official Report for Torino 2006, environmental sustainability was central. In some sections, the link with social sustainability is made, for example:

Environmental protection is one of the main objectives of Torino 2006: the candidature is aimed at promoting the protection of the artistic and natural heritage of the city and the mountains surrounding it. [...] The plans being drawn up for environmental improvement looking to Torino 2006 will be available for the city and will contribute to the welfare of all its citizens (Candidature Files, 64).

In the same document, TOROC highlights it intended to make the Torino 2006 Olympic Games an event not only “good for a few” but “good for all”. Socially excluded groups though are not specifically mentioned in suggested actions: instead the aims focus on actions such as green procurement, ethical sponsors and volunteering.

Approach to social sustainability

In the Sustainability Report 2004/05, solidarity initiatives across the region are mentioned that are supported by TOROC. Solidarity is mentioned as fundamental value of the Olympic Spirit, and a “social responsibility towards the underprivileged and disadvantaged” is highlighted. Most of the projects that are reviewed in the document though focused on disability, charity projects outside of the host community and the requirements of the athletes (Sustainability Report, 134). There are though some initiatives that refer to ‘projects for social co-operation, whose primary goal is the integration of residents via the development of initiatives aimed at integrating persons from disadvantaged backgrounds into the work force’ (Sustainability Report ,159). An example is provided in the section below.

Even though a number of initiatives are mentioned in the Sustainability Report, the document is clearly more focused on environmental sustainability. The consensus between the primary respondents is that social sustainability or a reduction of social exclusion was not a priority for the Turin 2006 Games:

When planning everything for the Games, the problems you are studying were rather far from their (*the organisers'*) main interests.

I am not aware of any project connected to the Olympic Games which was specifically aimed at people with social difficulties.

The Olympic Games in Turin did not modify the organisation of social services for the homeless.

For me, the Games have not had any impacts at all on socially excluded people or groups (nor on any other social service). The only impacts have been on the construction level¹.

This consensus clearly indicates that the social aspect of sustainability was relatively neglected, particularly compared to the environmental aspect.

Actions taken to target socially excluded groups

None of the primary respondents was aware of particular initiatives. One referred to a youth volunteering and employment scheme, but added it was not targeted to disadvantaged young people specifically. The Sustainability Report mentions the example of the Transistor Project, managed by Arcobaleno: this project was a recycling service for PCs, printers and videos. Arcobaleno (Italian for 'Rainbow') is a social co-operative that provides socially excluded persons with learning and employment opportunities in the sorting and recycling industry. The company recruits in cooperation with local social services, substance abuse units, and rehabilitation officers in prisons. The project focused specifically on disadvantaged persons in Chivasso, a municipality in the province of Torino that had become affected by industrial decline (www.gruppoabele.org).

Conclusion

From the evidence collected for this study, Turin can be seen to place strong emphasis on the environmental sustainability of the Olympic Games (mainly on minimising the negative environmental impacts of the event). Even though references are made to social sustainability, this was neither a separate aim nor a strong concern before, during or after the Games.

¹ There was indeed the Marginal Neighborhoods Plan which aimed to increase social inclusion and urban renewal through the regeneration of 17 city areas 'affected by urban and social decay' (Bondonio & Guala 2006, 4).

4.7. BEIJING 2008

Aims:

From the Candidature Files it can be seen that the one of the main aims of the Olympic Games was to improve the image of China and Beijing in the eyes of the international community. This can clearly be seen in the replies to the IOC questionnaire: “the whole world will get to know Beijing and China better, and it will further integrate Beijing and China globally” (Candidature Files Questionnaire, 2). Even though “People’s Olympics” is one of the themes, this at no point seems to refer to any particular part of the community specifically. In *See you in Beijing*, a document published by BOBICO in 2001 the People’s Olympics’ theme is further subdivided into categories like harmony, exchange, and development. Practically, this involved communication and educational programmes, with a focus on harmonising social progress and economic growth through sustainable development. There was also a nationwide fitness programme. The environment was a final focus.

Approach to social sustainability

In the academic literature, the function of the Olympic Games as an image-building event with a political meaning is regularly emphasised. Mangan & Dong (2009, foreword) for example state that “the Beijing Olympics is first and foremost a political act and assertion. It is also a statement of national intent, the culmination of ideological effort going back to 1999 and the outcome of political, social, cultural and economic changes. [...] In short sport has been the chosen ‘stage’ on which the Chinese perform in pursuit of world recognition, respect and esteem”.

The strong growth in the Chinese economy, and the desire to showcase this new economic status to the world, are often seen as underlying motives to host the Games. Although this economic growth has been positive for many, some authors highlight that it has not benefited all layers of the population equally. They also suggest that for lower-income citizens, most markedly those outside of Beijing, hosting the Olympic Games may seem like a vanity project: “Wanting everyone to have the chance to be elevated before the wealthy get even wealthier seems to be a sense of justice that is very popular in the lower echelons of Chinese society, where the notion that Beijing is often trying to run before it can really walk due to issues of face is popular” (Mangan & Dong 2009,195). Also in Beijing, the effects of the Games were not financially positive for all citizens: the price of land, homes and home rentals for example rocketed around the time of the Games (Jinxia & Mangan 2008, 2023).

According to Jinxia & Mangan (2008), hosting the Games had a range of benefits for Beijing, such as the encouragement of grassroots sports, the shaping of a national identity, the growth in environmental awareness, and increased sports participation among the young. It is hard to say though to which extent these initiatives reached socially excluded groups: as a number of the respondents aptly put it, the term may just be entirely irrelevant to Chinese culture and society:

I have visited China many times and have been collaborating with Chinese colleagues on various matters and I can tell you that the socially excluded point of view never occupied the Chinese Organising Committee because in a communist government there are no socially excluded citizens by default! I doubt strongly that you will find valuable material that is not censored.

I am not aware of poverty-reduction-oriented programmes in Beijing. Urban poverty itself is a new subject in China.

Caffrey (2009, 65) also refers to censorship as a way to hide social exclusion and inequality – specifically as Beijing wanted to present itself as a strong, wealthy and leading city: “While money is made and lives develop, not all lives. The image of poor people being sacrificed for the privileged, when it appears in Olympic coverage broadcast to the world, can have strong blowback potential”. He also states that “Beijing is hoping that the Games as a political instrument of broadcasting will accentuate the positives of its meteoric rise while suppressing the negatives” (Caffrey 2009, 62).

Several of the primary respondents indicated that the Olympic Games increased social inequalities, rather than reduce them:

I would say it is the opposite – the Olympics widened the gap.

I have seen no evidence that the state tried to reduce social exclusion in a meaningful way. Much to the contrary, the massive capital spent on the Olympics actually entrenched established privilege in most ways.

China is full of these types of projects – or at least full of projects that claim to be directed at this type of thing, and for a while everything there was tied to the Olympics at least rhetorically. But nothing strikes me as substantially connected, and I can think of none that are even particularly good examples of real inequality remediation efforts.

Actions taken to target socially excluded groups

There were affordable tickets available for the Beijing Paralympics, but these were not specifically targeted to low-income groups.

Conclusion

According to many, the aim of these Olympic Games was to present Beijing as a prosperous and attractive city. From this perspective, it is maybe unsurprising that initiatives that highlight groups that do not conform to this image, were hard to come by. An added difficulty is that just as in Japan, social exclusion is not an often-used concept in China – it may not be culturally relevant.

5. Discussion

In this discussion, the different research questions set out at the beginning of the report will be answered based on the findings of the study. These were:

- Have host cities included benefits of the Olympic Games for socially excluded groups via non-infrastructure initiatives in their aims?
- If so, how does the approach to social sustainability differ between different host cities?
- Are the differences between host cities dependent on their geographical position in the world?
- Are there noticeable differences between the Summer and the Winter Games?
- Are there best practice examples that can be identified?

The study has shown that for many Olympic cities, social sustainability was not part of their aims, nor of the organisation of the Games. This was the case for Nagano, Salt Lake City, Athens and Beijing. For Turin, they were fleetingly mentioned with environmental sustainability. Atlanta and Sydney are the cities in the sample that made social aims the most explicit in their candidatures, but only Sydney seems to have made substantial efforts to turn these aims into practical programmes and initiatives. Even in Sydney there are aims that were not achieved: the ticketing policy is a clear example, and the employment strategy can be said to not be sufficiently targeted. The Homelessness Protocol though is an example of a lasting social legacy. It has become clear though that overall, leveraging the non-infrastructure benefits of the Olympic Games for low-income groups has been ‘conspicuous by its absence’, as one primary respondent put it, in most cases researched here.

Based on the findings of this study, the difference in attitudes and approaches cannot be linked to the geographical situation of the city alone. In North-America for example, Atlanta 1996 did include social sustainability aims in the candidature, whereas Salt Lake City did not. Neither city seems to have placed great importance on the inclusion of socially excluded groups in the organisation of the Games, but this was not the case for Nagano, Athens or Beijing either. On the basis of this study, there was also no clear difference in approach and goal-setting between Winter and Summer Olympics – even though the Summer Olympics tend to take place in bigger urban centres, where social exclusion may be more visible than in smaller cities.

One cultural difference that was noted was the interpretation of the terminology around social sustainability. Social exclusion is not a term that is used in all parts of the world (In Japan and China for example the concept is still relatively unknown), and poverty is often seen as a relative concept. Terms like ‘community participation’, ‘social cohesion’ and ‘social mix’ may be appropriate - or maybe these are also coined too much from a Western perspective. Further research is needed to develop a terminology that will be acceptable more globally.

The findings of this study show that there are great differences between the past 7 Olympic cities when considering their approach to social sustainability. This is not unexpected seeing that each of the Games were organised in different parts of the world, each with their own culture and national circumstances, and at different points in time, which can affect the decisions of organisers greatly. Between the preparation of the candidature and the actual event many years pass and priorities may shift and change accordingly. Nevertheless, it will be discussed that there is a growing trend towards a greater emphasis on social sustainability, and with Rio now confirmed as an Olympic city for 2016, the topic will no doubt warrant further discussion and research.

Social sustainability is a relatively recent concept, so it is maybe not surprising that it has failed to make a big impression on Olympic organisers so far. The same was true for environmental sustainability in the past, and now the IOC has made it an important prerequisite and responsibility for host cities. Host cities now take it for granted that environmental practices are essential to their bid, and with a growing emphasis on social sustainability, particularly for candidate cities in newly developed countries, it is not at all inconceivable that this concept would follow a similar path, if the IOC is willing to insist more on it.

The Candidate Files of Cape Town 2004 (not awarded) and Rio 2016 (awarded) highlight the social sustainability aims much more explicitly than most of the Olympic cities in this sample have done:

“Cape town demonstrates a philosophical and practical commitment to the advancement of human dignity and opportunity and a devotion to the principle of sport as a power for social and economic good and for the unity of peoples.” [...] “To award Cape Town, following Atlanta and Sydney – an Olympic Games offering opportunity to those historically deprived of it, would demonstrate unequivocally the IOC’s own commitment to the promotion of the Olympic ideal as an instrument not merely of commercial benefit but of wider and more equitable human and social progress.” (Candidature Files 4)

Olympic values underpinning education and social development: “Brazil enjoys one of the youngest demographic profiles of any nation in the world. Recent initiatives by the Brazilian Olympic Committee, the government and non-governmental organisations to develop youth-oriented programmes based on Olympic values have had a dramatic impact, demonstrating the tangible power of sport as a transformation tool for social inclusion and education.” (Rio Candidature Acceptance Application, 11)

As a best practice example of a mega-event that has successfully leveraged the non-infrastructure impacts on socially excluded Groups, the 2002 Commonwealth Games in Manchester can be presented. The ‘Games Legacy Programme’ is summarised as follows in the evaluation document (ECOTEC 2003, 2)

‘The main driving force behind the original idea of the Games Legacy Programme was borne out of the political will (particularly within Manchester City Council) to ensure that the main legacy of the 2002 Commonwealth Games was more than simply the sporting facilities it left behind. Traditionally, most host countries see the legacy of holding an event such as the Commonwealth Games in terms of construction jobs and sporting facilities. Manchester City Council wanted more than this and felt it was simply not worth hosting the Games if the benefits were only related to physical infrastructure.

A key driver in Manchester’s bid to maximise and sustain the legacy of the event was the Games Legacy Programme, a £17.71 million programme co-ordinated by the City Council and funded by a range of initiatives across the North West between 1999 and 2005. The main aims of the Games Legacy Programme were:

- To improve skills, educational attainment and personal development
- To develop skills and improve cohesion through participation in events and health improvement projects; and
- To improve the competitiveness of SMEs.

In themselves, these aims were not untypical of any other regeneration programme across the country. Its uniqueness came in the fact that they would be achieved by harnessing the benefits of the 2002 Commonwealth Games.’

There were seven programmes linked to this initiative, situated in the following activity spheres: education (classroom packs), health, sports participation for young people, business links for local SMEs, culture (minority groups), promotion of the region, and volunteering. This last activity sphere is of particular importance here, as the ‘Pre Volunteer Programme provided an opportunity for people from specific disadvantaged groups to undertake additional, accredited training and to gain experience through volunteering at the Commonwealth Games itself’ (ECOTEC 2003, 3).

The Legacy Programme had its own Board and coordinator, and was managed largely independently of the Commonwealth Games. Many activities did not in fact have direct links with the Games, and were thus Games-themed, rather than Games-led. ‘The principal contribution made by the Commonwealth Games to the success of the Legacy Programme concerns the way the event acted as a ‘hook’ in order to encourage people to get involved in the Programmes activities’ (ECOTEC 2003, 7)

The Pre Volunteering Programme, due to its specialised focus, did achieve to involve socially-excluded persons in volunteering in great numbers, where the Olympic cities reviewed had this report have largely failed. In total, nearly 6000 people were engaged by the programme; 2200 passed the accredited qualification; and nearly 900 actually worked at the Games (www.gameslegacy.co.uk). At the time of the ECOTEC report, the programme was still running and continues to train volunteers for sporting events.

Even though this project can be seen as good practice, there have been concerns over its longevity. ‘There was a general recognition that once the Games had finished, the Legacy Programme began to experience difficulties maintaining the momentum, enthusiasm and

interest that was clearly evident in the run up to the event. Six months after the Games had closed the Board had stopped meeting regularly and the Programme Co-ordinator left their post. Attempts to secure quality leadership proved difficult and staff retention in general became a significant factor. M2002 also saw about 75% of its staff leave soon after the Games had finished meaning that there were few individuals left to champion the legacy cause during this key time' (ECOTEC 2003, 5). Long-term management and financing plans are thus essential for longevity.

6. Conclusions

This study has shown that although there are great differences between the past 7 Olympic cities when considering their approach to social sustainability, the awareness of this sustainability level for the last 7 Olympic Games has been relatively low. Only Sydney 2000 can be seen as an example of an Olympic city where an attempt was made to leverage the non-infrastructure benefits of the Olympics for socially excluded groups, and many commentators indicated that these attempts were not successful in all areas.

Generally, it can thus be said that the awareness of social sustainability is fairly low. This is maybe not entirely surprising, since it has received much less attention than environmental sustainability in recent years. When looking at the Olympic Games evaluated in this study, a clear trend towards greater emphasis on environmental sustainability can be noted. The fact that the IOC places explicit importance on this form of sustainability is no doubt a very important factor here. If the IOC would be willing to place that same importance on social sustainability, the effects may be immediate – social sustainability will no doubt be important for Rio 2016, so these Games could be a perfect opportunity to add more concrete recommendations to the existing Agenda 21.

There are those who claim that the Olympics are at heart a sporting event, and not a social welfare programme. Whilst the Olympic Games may have started out as a mere sporting competition, it is hard to deny that its symbolic importance has changed dramatically over the last century. Organising the Olympic Games involves great commitments of host cities, in terms of financial, political and human resources. There is a growing sense that these investments are only justified, if the positive power of the Olympics is harnessed effectively for all. Even if one disagrees with this social responsibility, it is undeniable that providing sports participation for all (so also socially excluded groups) is a key element of the Olympic charter. This study has shown that for many Olympic cities in the past, even this aspect has been largely rhetorical. Cities are now often competing to organise the 'greenest' Games – with IOC support, they could also be competing to organise the most inclusive Games.

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