



**An Evaluation of the Impact on a Project Based Program  
within an International Sport Exchange Model**

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women**WIN**



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## **Overview**

There are many lessons that children can learn from playing sports: leadership, self-confidence, unity, and teamwork while working towards a common goal. These are positive lessons that, if taken off the field, can lead to greater success in life. A caveat to this though is that while these lessons are ideal traits to take from sports, it does take time and concentrated effort to have the lessons instilled within an individual.

In regards to international sports development, a still young and emerging field, while some organizations have implemented year-round programs in country, others have utilized a short-term sport exchange model as the main program objective. While both methods can be effective towards creating long-term community development, it can be argued that the impact of a year-round program is far greater than a short-term exchange program. Although, if a short-term exchange is utilized in a sports development program, an effective implementation plan should be put in place in order to lead to long-term community development – even if this is might not the intended outcome.

The question then becomes how best can a short-term sport exchange program be implemented and tailored to help athletes act upon what they have learned in an attempt to create long-term impact within their community. One approach within the short-term sport exchange program is to utilize a project focused approach, coupled with providing proper follow-up support in the form of mentoring and seed funding for local project implementation. This model differs from some of the more conventional short-term sport exchange programs currently in place as some have little to no long-term outreach planning in place, thus impacting the few who participated in the program.

While the field of international sports development is still emerging, a greater emphasis must be placed in supporting local sports leaders in-country in order to enhance personal and community development. For developing countries like Morocco, athletics has the ability to address a number of social issues in a constructive manner, such as breaking down current gender barriers, helping youth to take a leading role in the social development of their country, and aiding in creating a safe space for young women to turn to within their community.

The objective of this paper is to provide the reader with a general framework within the field of international sports and development, explain how the role of women in Morocco is changing for those girls playing sports, demonstrate how sport programs combined with proper development protocol can lead to success off the field. The paper is presented as a case study using an Appreciative Inquiry evaluation approach of a project-based short-term exchange program implemented in the Summer of 2008.

The questions that guided this evaluation are as follows:

*Did the process of the program achieve its intended results?*

- What were the strengths and weakness of the program?
- To what extent, if any, did the mentor contribute to achieving program results?
- To what extent, if any, did providing seed funding have towards helping the participants implement their local community project?

*What was the effectiveness of the program?*

- To what extent, if any, were the local projects implemented?
- To what extent, if any, did the participants gain an increase in self confidence with their soccer skills?
- To what extent, if any, did the participants gain an increase in their program management skills?
- To what extent, if any, did the participants feel that there was an increase in their local support network?
- To what extent, if any, was there an extended impact of the program?

## CHAPTER 1 – Program methodology and analysis

### Program Summary

In an attempt to better understand the impact of a project-based short-term sport exchange program, a pilot program was implemented during the summer of 2008 by myself and colleague Nicole Matuska (the Moroccan program mentor) through a Nike funded Fellowship grant from Women Win, an international women's sports organization. The aim of the pilot program was to gain, on a small scale, a better understanding of the unique qualities a short-term international exchange program can have on its participants, and how to best translate that impact upon those in the participants' local community. The exchange program was implemented with follow-up support in the form of providing project seed funding for a participant initiated project, as well as providing in-country mentorship for the program participants.

The program consisted of number of key components, which if implemented properly, will have achieved the program objective of helping to promote local youth as leaders within their own community through a community capacity building process.

The project-based exchange program components included:

- Sport Exchange with a focus on Leadership and Sport Development: Four Moroccan female soccer players, along with one in-country mentor from Morocco traveled to the United States for a one-week soccer leadership exchange program. The exchange took place in Chicago, Illinois where the players and mentor attended the Julie Foudy Sports Leadership Academy.
- Project Implementation: The long-term in-country component of the program was the implementation of the projects developed while in the United States during

the exchange. The group collectively received a \$1,000 USD grant, which served as seed funding for their project with each participant receiving \$250 USD.

- Mentor and Follow-up Support: The local in-country mentor worked together with the players in supporting the implementation of their community project. The role of the mentor was one of providing guidance when asked, but not being the project implementer.

The pilot program was conducted by myself representing the Julie Foudy Sports Leadership Foundation (Foundation) in partnership with the NGO Moroccan Association of Sport and Development (AMSD).

AMSD acted as the mentoring and monitoring institution for the young Moroccan female sports leaders. Specifically, AMSD took on the role of recruiting the local Moroccan players for the program, assisted with the U.S. Visa application process, served as a fiscal agent by distributing the seed funding to the participants, and played a vital role in supporting the players in a mentoring capacity upon their return home to Morocco. One project coordinator, Nicole Matuska, accompanied the participants to the United States and helped in the project development process during the Academy.

AMSD aided in the initial implementation of the project and conducted regular follow up visits to see the participants upon their return to Morocco.

### **Program Objectives**

Ultimately, the program objective is to help develop and support female soccer leaders in a local community development approach. This was accomplished as the program:

- Provided on the field soccer training in the form of coaching drills, and soccer games while in the United States;
- Provided leadership training to the players in the form of group and individual sessions which focus on project development, project management, budgeting and project implementation while in the United States;
- Utilized the assistance of a local Moroccan mentor to support the players while in the United States, and upon their return to Morocco;
- Provided seed funding support for the development of the local in-country project, which will ultimately help provide a foundation for the players to make a community contribution.

### **Program Method in Depth**

The program was carried out through both an exchange as well as local program development. In implementing the program, I worked in strong collaboration with AMSD – Nicole Matuska in particular who was a Fulbright Scholar studying girls soccer in Morocco since 2006. I sought Matuska’s advice and guidance in the planning, implementation, participant selection, as well as the program follow-up components of the program.

The selection criteria for the participants was outlined to AMSD to include girls between 12-18 years of age – preferably towards the older end of that range as the players would likely be able to better serve as a stronger leader within the community upon their return home. In selecting the Moroccan players, I relied heavily on Matuska’s recommendation, tapping into her personal knowledge and experience with the players. Matuska did reach out to additional community leaders to seek their recommendation of

players who would benefit from the program, and who showed promise as players who would be comfortable in a leadership position. The community leaders who Matuska reached out to included a local women's soccer coach, a Peace Corps volunteer who works with youth, and a director of a youth center.

The first component of the program was the sponsorship of the four female soccer players and a local mentor to the States in order to attend the one-week Academy. The program took place in Chicago, Illinois and while soccer activities were the emphasis of the Academy, the other focus was to help the participants develop the project they would implement in Morocco with the support of the \$1,000 USD seed funding (each participant receiving \$250 USD). The classroom curriculum consisted of brainstorming different projects the girls might implement upon returning home – eventually deciding on one. In addition, the classroom sessions focused on teaching basic budgeting skills, as well as leadership and team building skills. While Matuska, the country mentor, sat in on the classroom session, it was the four players who played a key role in planning their project.

By the end of the week, not only did the program participants improve upon their own soccer skills, but they completed their project proposal and developed the skills necessary to successfully implement their project once they returned to Morocco. The Moroccan mentor, as a result of attending the program with the players, also gained an understanding of the expectation within the implementation of the participant's project, as well as her mentorship role to the players.

The long-term in-country component of the program was the implementation of the projects developed during the exchange. The seed funding was distributed to the

players by Matuska in installments as program benchmarks were met. This involved her meeting with the girls individually as they moved forward in implementing their projects, and also included visits to see their projects as they occurred. The participants were expected to keep receipts from all purchases related to the project in an effort to teach them the importance of program accountability and transparency.

The combination of the exchange and project implementation played a key role in ensuring that the overall program had long-term sustainability. Sometimes, program participants may lose the enthusiasm they gained after initially returning home from a short-term exchange trip. In this model though, the intent was that the long-term mentoring support coupled with the project implementation experience will have taught the participants that they can become leaders in their own community. Although soccer was the teaching vehicle for the program, it was not the main objective.

### **Overall Program Timeline**

The program timeline with tasks and completion dates are outlined in Table 1.

**Table 1: Program Implementation Timeline**

<b>Program Task</b>	<b>May 2008</b>	<b>June 2008</b>	<b>June/July 2008</b>	<b>July 2008 – March 2009</b>	<b>March 2009</b>
Select Participants	✓				
Apply for U.S. travel Visa		✓			
Travel to the States for the Julie Foudy Sports Leadership Academy			✓		
Development of participant project			✓		
Distribute project seed-funding			✓	✓	
Monitor the program (on-going)			✓	✓	✓
Conduct final evaluation of the program					✓

## **Purpose of the Program Evaluation**

The purpose of the evaluation is as follows: (1) provide information to Foundation staff and key stakeholders as a way to assess and improve the program in the future, (2) provide a comprehensive record of the pilot program to the Foundation and key stakeholders in making them aware of the impact and outcome of the pilot program, (3) utilize the evaluation as a method to analyze the impact both in process and effectiveness towards understanding the role that a project focused approach to a short-term exchange program can have, and (4) utilize the results as a means to not only expand the program in the future, but to serve as a model for other organizations that may utilize a short-term exchange as a program component.

## **Evaluation Use**

The results of this program evaluation would be utilized by the Julie Foudy Leadership Foundation as there are intentions of further expanding the international exchange program. The results from this program will play an instrumental role in determining the future course of the program, as well as determine what program changes should be made in order to ensure that the program design is effective.

In addition, the evaluation results will be provided to AMSD, WomenWin and Nike as they were key stakeholders in the project. As program supporters and funders, all three organizations should find the evaluation results useful towards their own understanding of sport exchange programs should they wish to either implement or fund them in the future.

Furthermore, the U.S. Department of State's Sports United should utilize the evaluation results. If the project-based model proves effective, then certainly this is a

program model that they should implementing in their sport exchange program component.

Finally, other organizations that conduct youth exchange programs should also utilize the results from the evaluation in designing the program components for their respective exchanges.

### **Stakeholders**

In regards to which key stakeholders were involved in the evaluation, this included the Foundation, AMSD, the program participants (the four Moroccan soccer players), and the local program beneficiaries who participated in the projects implemented by the players.

The Foundation was the entity conducting the evaluation, the participants were involved towards gaining their perspective on the project, and finally, the program beneficiaries were also be interviewed in order to gain their perspective on the implementation of the local project.

One major weakness though of the evaluation is the small number of data points for the study. In this evaluation, the project is focused on the four Moroccan players as a case study in the project-based short-term sport exchange model, and while the data collected from them was beneficial in supporting or refuting the model, a larger scale study is necessary to further legitimize the evaluation results.

### **Evaluation Questions**

The questions that guided this evaluation are as follows:

*Did the process of the program achieve its intended results?*

- What were the strengths and weakness of the program?
- To what extent, if any, did the mentor contribute to achieving program results?

- To what extent, if any, did providing seed funding have towards helping the participants implement their local community project?

*What was the effectiveness of the program?*

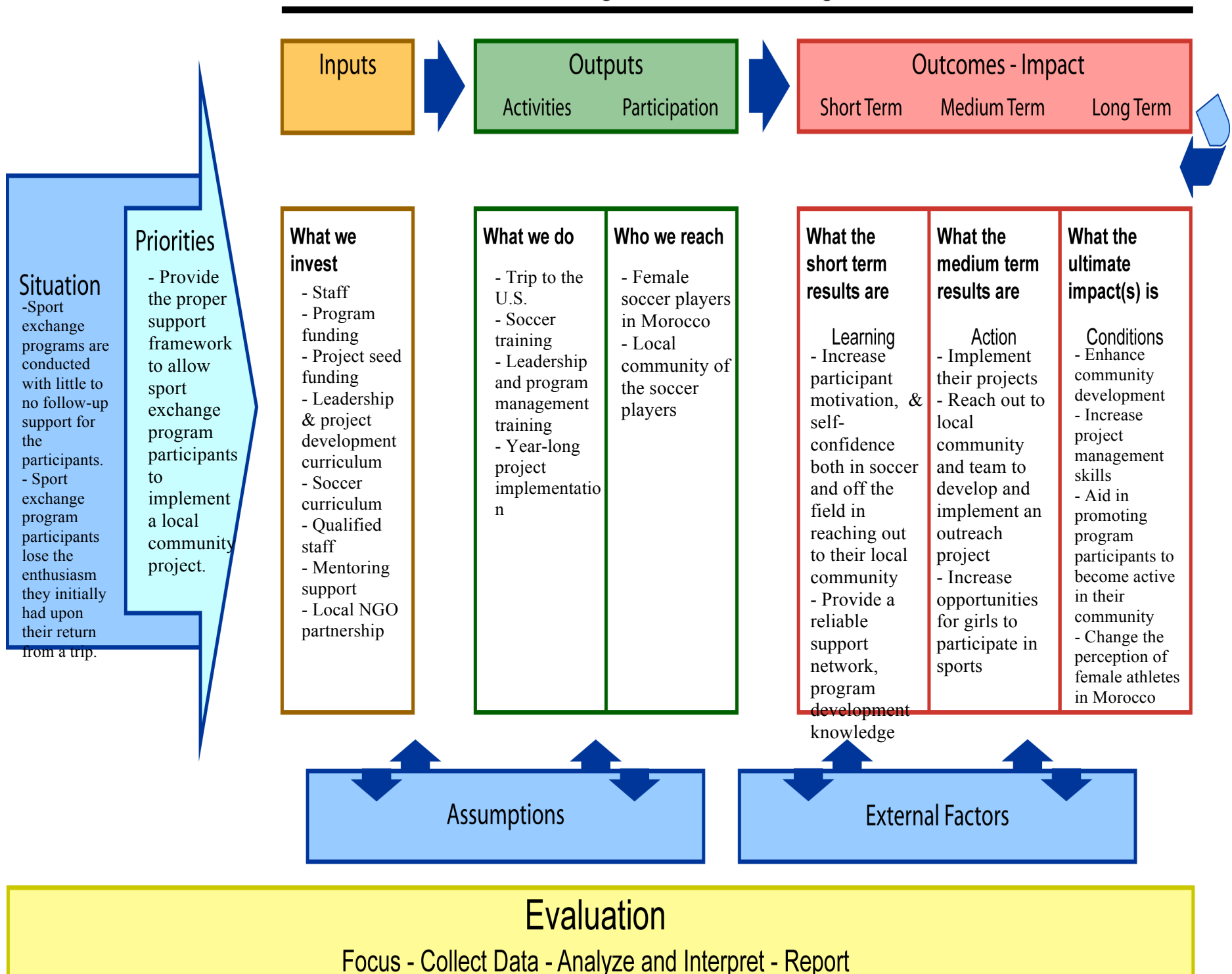
- To what extent, if any, were the local projects implemented?
- To what extent, if any, did the participants gain an increase in self confidence with their soccer skills?
- To what extent, if any, did the participants gain an increase in their program management skills?
- To what extent, if any, did the participants feel that there was an increase in their local support network?
- To what extent, if any, was there an extended impact of the program?

As indicated above, in order to answer the over arching evaluation questions, key sub-questions were investigated. The evaluation questions were determined based on a logic model (see Figure 1) of the program which lays out the program outcomes and objectives which the evaluation intends to measure.

The use of the logic model within the program evaluation is based on the work of Joseph Wholey (Wholey, 1996).

Figure 1

# Program Action - Logic Model



## **Basis for Judging the Project**

As the summative qualitative evaluation is assessing both the program's process and effectiveness, negative feedback for any of the evaluation questions would then identify areas for improvement in the program implementation. In addition, since the evaluation is determining the effectiveness of the model of incorporating a project-based approach to short-term exchange programs, the evaluation results would then indicate the success or failure of the model. If either of the main evaluation questions determines that the project failed in overall process or effectiveness, then it would be determined that the model failed.

## **Data Collection**

The program evaluation for the program was carried out by myself representing the Foundation and Nicole Matuska representing AMSD.

One aspect of the program evaluation took place immediately after the participants returned home as they responded to questions assessing their feedback of the state-side exchange. The initial program evaluation questions also assessed the skills the participants personally gained from the exchange.

In addition, program assessment was ongoing starting from the time the participants returned to Morocco. The ongoing program evaluation, in the form of project progress reports, was submitted to the Foundation by Matuska which was completed after follow-up meeting with each of the program participants.

Finally, a summative program evaluation was conducted by myself with a trip to Morocco in April 2009. The summative evaluation consisted of conducting individual interviews with the program participants utilizing an open-ended Appreciative Inquiry

approach, in addition, observations were made regarding one of the participants project which took place during the April 2009 evaluation trip. Finally, interviews were conducted with community members who directly benefited from the local projects.

Table 2 indicates the evaluation method used related to the evaluation questions:

**Table 2: Evaluation Questions and Method**

<b>Evaluation Questions</b>	<b>Interview with participants</b>	<b>Interview with mentors</b>	<b>Observations</b>	<b>Program documents</b>
<b>Did the process of the program achieve its intended results?</b>				
What were the strengths and weaknesses of the program?	✓			
To what extent, if any, did the mentor contribute to achieving program results?	✓	✓		
To what extent, if any, did providing seed funding have towards helping the participants implement their local community project?	✓	✓		✓
<b>What was the effectiveness of the program?</b>				
To what extent, if any, were the local projects implemented?	✓	✓	✓	✓
To what extent, if any, did the participants gain an increase in self confidence with their soccer skills?	✓	✓	✓	
To what extent, if any, did the participants gain an increase in their program management skills?	✓	✓	✓	
To what extent, if any, did the participants feel that there was an increase in their local support network?	✓	✓	✓	
To what extent, if any, was there an extended impact of the program?	✓	✓	✓	✓

### **Profile of the program participants**

The four program participants came from varied backgrounds in terms of geographic location within Morocco. An overview of each participant's location, city

population and project description is outlined in Table 3. Note that Imane and Ibtissam decided to work together on their project as outlined in the table.

**Table 3: Participant Profile**

Imane	Ibtissam
<p>City: Casablanca, Morocco            Population: ~3.1 million            Project Description:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Organize a soccer team in the town of Sidi Moumen for young girls who currently do not play soccer.</li> <li>• Organize a one-day NGO management/fundraising training workshop for directors, coaches and players of the Sidi Moumen girl's soccer team that Ibtissam plays for.</li> </ul>	<p>City: Sidi Moumen (suburb of Casablanca)            Population: ~170,000            Project Description:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Organize a soccer team in the town of Sidi Moumen for young girls who currently do not play soccer.</li> <li>• Organize a one-day NGO management/fundraising training workshop for directors, coaches and players of the Sidi Moumen girl's soccer team that Ibtissam plays for.</li> </ul>
Hind	Katour
<p>City: Ouarzazate, Morocco            Population: ~56,000            Project Description:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Gather those girls who currently play soccer in the town of Ouarzazate and start a formal team in the community. The team will play organized games against other women's soccer teams in the surrounding area.</li> <li>• Organize a girls soccer clinic for young girls in the community. The clinic will be organized by players on the women's soccer team.</li> </ul>	<p>City: Amizmiz, Morocco (suburb of Marrakech)            Population: ~11,000            Project Description:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Create a girls soccer club of girls who currently play and also for those who do not currently play soccer.</li> <li>• Organize a two-day girls soccer clinic for young girls in the community. The clinic will be organized by players on the women's soccer team.</li> </ul>

**Evaluation findings**

What were the strengths and weaknesses of the program?

Upon immediate completion of the state-side program, all of the participants completed a program evaluation which focused on the program's strength and weakness, in addition to highlighting the skills each participant learned while attending the Academy.

Program strengths as identified by the participants included the daily on-field soccer training, the daily classroom leadership and program management sessions, and the volunteer day experience.

Participants, providing their thoughts on the soccer training, stated that “we don’t do that in Morocco, we don’t learn these techniques, they tell us just to play and we play.” (Hind) Another stated that “it was amazing to play against other players from different countries and it gave me the opportunity to learn from the experience and better my playing techniques.” (Ibtissam)

In addition to the soccer training, the participants did feel that the classroom sessions where they had an opportunity to share their personal experience of life in Morocco with American soccer players was a major strength of the program. In this regard, participant stated that “I learned from listening to the US girls, when they talked about leadership, it was something we shared even though we came from other countries.” (Imane) In addition, another participant stated that “it was very interesting to listen to American girls like me talk about what they want to do to help their communities and it helped me to get excited about doing something in my community.” (Hind)

One day of the Academy was a volunteer day in which the program participants taught soccer to disabled youth at a community center. In response to that experience, all of the participants viewed it positively. Participants stated that “visiting the handicapped children [made me] feel happy to help them to play and it showed me how I can make a difference when I saw the smiles in their faces.” (Imane)

The one weakness that was highlighted by the two participants who did not speak English in the classroom sessions was the difficulty in communicating. The participants

who stated this said that “there was nothing I didn’t like [about the program] but what was difficult was communication with other participants of the program because of [the] language.” (Ibtissam) While the second participant also faced communication issues, she expressed her feedback as it being a positive challenge. “I learned how to communicate with girls even if we don’t speak the same language.” (Hind)

Matuska also agreed that it would have been better if all of the program participants spoke English as then they would have gained more from the classroom sessions. Matuska pointed out thought that because English is not a common secondary language in Morocco, finding girls who met the selection criteria and who also spoke English was a struggle.

To what extent, if any, did the mentor contribute to achieving program results?

The role of the mentor within the model was essential towards ensuring that the program participants had a local contact to reach out to. In the case of Imane, Ibtissam and Hind, Matuska served as their local mentor. For Katour, although Matuska was one of the mentors, she also utilized the support of a local Peace Corps volunteer Ami Paetzold – who also selected Katour for the program. Both Matuska and Paetzold said that while they served as a mentor, all of the girls worked independently of them in implementing their projects. This was expressed further as one program participant stated that “[Matuska] gave us a lot of advice and she helped us a lot and showed us how to start the project and listen to everyone and how with small [amount of] money we can do many things.” (Imane)

So while the mentor played a critical role initially, their role did diminish as the girls took the lead in their own projects, and rightfully so.

To what extent, if any, did providing seed funding have towards helping the participants implement their local community project?

Based on feedback from the program participants, the mentors and from reading through the program documents, providing seed funding towards the development of each participants local community project was essential towards ensuring that the project was actually implemented.

Each participant identified an initial project that they wanted to implement while in the United States, and each also knew that they would be receiving funding. According to both Matuska and Paetzold, knowing this did encourage the program participants upon their return home. More specifically, Matuska stated that the “girls were excited” upon their return home from the trip and fully understood that they were expected to implement a project.

Furthermore, Paetzold believed that, generally, lack of program funds is what prevents many project ideas from being implemented. Specifically, Paetzold noticed that with Katour, knowing that she had funding played a crucial positive role in her outlook on the project.

In addition, since all of the girls did successfully implement their projects fully utilizing the seed funding, it would be accurate to state that the seed funding played a vital role in the implementation of all of the local community projects.

**Did the process of the program achieve its intended results?**

Based on the assessment of the above evaluation questions, it can be stated that the process of the program did play a key role in achieving its intended results of providing the necessary skills and resources in ensuring that each program participant did

implement a local community project. Although the study was limited to evaluating only four participants, their feedback was consistent in supporting this statement. Certainly though, more case studies would be needed in order to substantiate this claim.

To what extent, if any, were the local projects implemented?

Based on interviews with the participants, mentors, the review of program documents and observations, local projects were successfully implemented. Although two of the projects changed from the initial planning phase to the actual implementation phase, the projects were implemented.

The projects ranged in scope from starting a local girls soccer team, to organizing a soccer clinic for young girls in the community and working with local NGO leaders.

The project outputs are listed in Table 4.

**Table 4: Project Outputs**

Imane & Ibtissam	
City: Casablanca, Morocco Project Output: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 40 girls attended their one-day soccer clinic</li> <li>• 25 girls now attend a weekly soccer program at a youth center</li> <li>• NGO leaders attended the one-day workshop.</li> </ul>	
Hind	Katour
City: Ouarzazate, Morocco Project Output: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 13 girls attended a one-day soccer clinic</li> <li>• 3 teammates assisted with the one-day soccer clinic</li> <li>• Created a girls club soccer team in Ouarzazate</li> <li>• Purchased team jerseys and equipment</li> </ul>	City: Amizmiz, Morocco (suburb of Marrakech) Project Output: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 55 girls attended the two-day soccer clinic</li> <li>• Created a local girls soccer team</li> <li>• Purchased of team jerseys and equipment</li> </ul>

To what extent, if any, did the participants gain an increase in self confidence with their soccer skills?

As demonstrated earlier in the program strength and weakness evaluation question, all of the program participants felt that a major program strength was the daily soccer training held at the Academy.

Program participants listed a number of soccer related skills that they learned from the Academy sessions. These include: controlling and striking the ball, the difference between dribbling and making transition passes, keeping the ball as a team and getting rid of the ball through passing and dribbling.

From my own observation of the one projects that took place while I was in Morocco, which was Katour's, I did notice that she did have an understanding of various soccer drills as she was able to lead the young girls in the soccer sessions.

In addition, after returning from the States, Matuska stated that Ibtissam began to teach more girls on her team about what she learned while at the Academy. The program participant herself stated that "during practices coach Faraz would train the older girls and I would take time and train the younger ones about the fundamentals of football and get them interested in and see their level in the game." (Ibtissam)

Based on the feedback from the participants, the mentors, program summary reports, as well as the observation of Katour's project, there is certainly a positive link in regards to the program and the general increase in knowledge of soccer that the participants gained which can be attributed to the soccer training sessions conducted during the Academy.

To what extent, if any, did the participants gain an increase in their program management skills?

Initial feedback upon the participants return to Morocco, before they implemented their projects, showed that they did gain practical experience from the classroom sessions that would be of further assistance to them while they implemented their projects.

For three of the four program participants, the local community project they implemented with the support of the seed funding, was the first time they served in a program management role. They all stated that they enjoyed the experience and would do it again if given the chance. This was evident from their feedback; “Yes, I’ve never been in charge of anything myself before. I really liked the experience and I liked coaching.” (Ibtissam), and “I was very happy on the day [of my clinic] because I taught the other girls who didn’t know how to play soccer.” (Hind)

Furthermore, mentors Matuska and Paetzold did see that once the girls returned from the trip that they were focused on ensuring that their projects were fully implemented. The participants returned with copies of their project plan and held themselves accountable to what they said they intended to do.

Based on feedback from the participants, and from observing Katour’s project, it was evident that the participants did internalize the program management component of the Academy towards ensuring that their projects were indeed implemented.

To what extent, if any, did the participants feel that there was an increase in their local support network?

In regards to the increase in the local support network, the participants did have a local mentor that they could reach out to, so in this regard, their local support network did increase.

Furthermore, participants also noted that there was an increase in support from their teammates after returning from their trip. In regards to her teammates support one participant stated that “they were very happy when I came back. They asked me to teach them what I learned.” (Ibtissam) In the case of Hind and Katour, their teammates were directly involved with the implementation of their projects and served as coaches in leading their soccer clinics.

The local support network for the participants certainly increased both in adding an extended adult mentor to reach out to, but also in creating a reliable peer network to also rely on.

To what extent, if any, was there an extended impact of the program?

As demonstrated from the project outputs in Table 4, there was an extended impact of the program that still exists.

Today, two local club girls soccer teams were created using the seed funding. Furthermore, although the clinic that Imane and Ibtissam held had the intention of being a one-off project, the impact has been extended which has lead now to weekly practices lead by both players. This occurred because the clinic participants expressed interest in continuing playing soccer beyond the one-day clinic.

Again, the peer-to-peer connection has proved vital in supporting the program participants and in extending the long-term impact of the projects.

**What was the effectiveness of the program?**

Based on the assessment of the above evaluation questions, it can be stated that the program did prove to be effective towards creating a long-term impact within the community of each of the program participants. As stated before, although the study was

limited to evaluating only four participants, their feedback was consistent in supporting the positive effect of the program. Certainly though, more case studies would be needed in order to substantiate this claim.

## **CHAPTER 2 – Recommendations and Concluding Remarks**

This evaluation of a project-based short-term sport exchange model helped to demonstrate that a long-term community development approach to an exchange program can be more effective towards creating an impact not only on the program participants, but also on project beneficiaries.

In this case study with the four Moroccan participants, the projects implemented by the program recipients thus far have already demonstrated a widening impact upon the community as teams were created using the program funds, and girls now meet regularly to play and practice soccer. The model demonstrates that “practicing leadership through developing collective activities and projects builds their self confidence and motivation” (Emery et al., 2007, p. 69). As a result, the program demonstrates that there was a return on the program investment in regards to building up the social capital locally, thus impacting more than just the four program participants.

Although the case study does provide a well supported argument to support the project-based short-term sport exchange model, further research is needed to substantiate the findings from this case study.

In addition, a large scale study should be conducted as a way to further compare the impact on program participants for those sport exchange programs that do not utilize a project-based approach and compare it to those who do.

Furthermore, another issue within the evaluation is the fear that there may be a tone of bias in reporting the results, as the evaluation was conducted by someone close to the project. While this can be an issue within program evaluations, it was the intention to

embark on the evaluation with an open mind towards the results in an attempt to eliminate any bias that may exist.

Although the report had a limited scope, key recommendations can be made to those organizations leading sport exchange programs based on this case study.

Key recommendations include:

- Provide project management and training to program participants in order to help them implement a project of interest to them;
- Provide seed-funding in supporting the participants projects;
- Provide the proper mentorship support to program participants;
- Conduct proper follow-up program evaluations as a way to determine the effectiveness of the program and to add greater discourse to the field of international sports and development.

Conducting exchange trips can be an effective program component within international sports development programs, but they are a costly investment. As such, steps can, and should, be made in order to ensure that the impact of the programs are far reaching and positively impact more than just the few program participants who are directly involved in the exchange. As stated by Emery, “these components alone, however, will not necessarily build capacity. Dialogue, conversation, and working together create the conditions for emerging leaders to socially construct what effective leadership and proactive community capacity means” (Emery et al., 2007, p. 69).

Furthermore, now is the time to implement the notion that such programs should have a far-reaching community development impact; otherwise, sport exchange programs in the long-term are by no means cost effective.