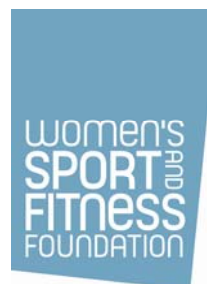




Women into Coaching 2 - London
Project Evaluation
August 2008



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1. Executive Summary

From August 2006 until July 2008 the Women's Sport and Fitness Foundation (WSFF) enabled over 159 women across London to pursue sports coaching careers through their Women into Coaching 2 – London (WiC2) positive action programme.

This report describes the process and sets out the findings from a research project undertaken on behalf of the Women's Sport and Fitness Foundation in the period December 2007 to August 2008. The main aims of the research were to understand whether the WiC2 had met its key objectives as set by the Learning and Skills Council and wider partners, and to establish good practice and guidance for future development in this area of work.

WSFF secured funding through the European Social Fund (Objective 3, co-financed by the Learning and Skills Council) to the value of £440,000. The two-year project was delivered across London's 33 boroughs and ceased on the 31st July 2008.

The rationale behind WiC2 was to use sport to engage with women and girls and provide a learner centred framework, with bespoke mentoring and support programmes, to reduce the impact of traditional barriers to sports employment. WiC2 aimed to engage with women new to the sports sector as well as those currently involved in sports-related activity (coaching, sports leadership and management) who wished to obtain formal coaching qualifications up to and including level 3.

In order to understand whether WiC2 had met its objectives, the evaluation focussed on three key areas: contractual requirements; the experience of the beneficiaries; and the experience of wider partners. The methodology used included an analysis of existing data relating to contractual outcomes and a collection of primary data capturing both the beneficiary experience and that of wider stakeholders.

The findings from the research showed a genuine feeling of success from all involved and cause for celebration of the project. The wider impact of the project was felt by beneficiaries and partners alike, with strong partnerships developed and the profile of women in coaching being raised. Key areas were also identified for learning.

Contractually the project succeeded in reaching 79% of its recruitment target. Qualification levels were high with 118 qualifications being achieved (69% of target) and employment outcomes were 70%. There was, however, a shortfall in the number of education progressions with only 1 beneficiary accessing further education.

There were a number of challenges to the project which included strict eligibility requirements defined by the funders, tight timescales, including the difficulty in collecting evidence from external bodies, and the impact of the new United Kingdom Coaching Certificate (UKCC) framework and the subsequent challenges in terms of course availability. The lack of mentors was also identified as a limiting factor on project numbers.

A robust system was in place to develop and support the learners which was recognised and appreciated. Beneficiaries cited this support process as a key factor in their individual successes, along with financial support which allowed many beneficiaries to undertake courses which they would otherwise not have been able to.

Effective project management and partnership working were identified as key attributes in the success of the project. Partners were involved at key stages of the project, and this contributed to its success, allowing strong, lasting partnerships to be formed.

WiC2 has succeeded in increasing the number of women qualified up to level 3 in coaching across London and in a number of non-stereotypical pathways. It utilised and provided further evidence for a learner centred framework and encouraged partnership working and the development of pathways to support this. The project also succeeded in increasing awareness of a range of issues relating to women and sport and, in particular, provided further evidence of the future needs of women and girls.

Although a number of specific contractual targets have not been fully achieved, there is a rationale for this shortfall and the partnership overall can celebrate a range of important achievements resulting from WiC2. As a result of this research, the partnership now has an evidence base to demonstrate successes, to learn from the experience of the project and guide and inform future work.

“[WiC2] trained women who would not have had the opportunity to achieve the qualifications otherwise, in a way that enabled them to create strong networks between themselves, their coaches and their National Governing Bodies.” Delivery Partner

2. Introduction

In December 2007 the Women's Sport and Fitness Foundation, through the Steering Group of the Women into Coaching 2 – London Project, commissioned HelmePark to undertake an external evaluation of the project to meet a number of objectives.

A project evaluation was a contractual obligation as part of the Learning and Skills Council agreement with the partnership. In addition, the Steering Group were keen to identify and celebrate project successes, promote best practice and build an evidence base to support future funding opportunities.

The Steering Group also felt it essential that they were informed of the experience and value of the project to stakeholders, particularly beneficiaries and project partners. Specifically, they were keen to capture the learning from the project in order to identify any changes to future practices and identify how best to work with women in sports coaching.

HelmePark and the project team jointly identified three areas of focus for the evaluation.

- The extent to which contractual outcomes had been achieved
- The experience of the beneficiaries
- The experience of wider stakeholders

During the planning stage it was evident that data was collected periodically relating to the contractual elements of the project. It was agreed, therefore, that the focus of the primary research by HelmePark was to capture data relating to the experience of the beneficiaries and wider stakeholder group and to draw this together with other existing information to provide a comprehensive analysis of the impact of the programme.

This report outlines the research methodology followed, prior to setting out the main findings under headings as defined by the research questions agreed by the Steering Group.

It then draws a series of conclusions in support of the original project objectives and identifies key learning points based on these findings.

3. Background

3.1 Women's Sport and Fitness Foundation

The Women's Sports Foundation (WSF) was established in 1984 and became the UK's leading organisation dedicated to improving and promoting opportunities for women and girls in sport and physical activity. As a gender-focused organisation, WFS was committed to improving, increasing and promoting opportunities for women and girls - in all roles and at all levels - in sport, fitness and physical activity through advocacy, information, education, research and training. The role of WFS was not to deliver sport, rather to work with policy-makers and practitioners to help them understand how to make what they do work for women and girls.

In November 2007 WFS became the Women's Sport and Fitness Foundation (WSFF), the charity that campaigns to make physical activity an integral part of life for women and girls in the UK.

The core objectives, direction and purpose of the charity were reviewed by Sue Tibballs, CEO, who has been in post since October 2006. The re-positioned organisation and the addition of 'Fitness' to the title is in response to an urgent challenge: 80% of all women are not sufficiently active to benefit their health. Never before have the concerns about women and girls' inactivity and the consequences of this been so high on the agenda in the sport sector.

WSFF recognised the need to broaden the scope of the organisation, lift their sights and refresh their identity. They wanted to work across all activities and reach all women and girls, not just the 'sporty', and be clear about what they do and the benefits of their work.

WSFF, a registered charity and limited company receives exchequer funding distributed via Sport England in addition to funding from commercial organisations which is continually being sought to support research and other activities.

The vision for WSFF is:

- To make sport equally appealing
- To make exercise compelling
- To make fit and healthy women role models

WSFF campaign to:

- Make sport as appealing to women and girls as it is to men and boys
- Make women aware of the importance of being active
- Make fit and healthy women and girls social and cultural role models

Women are currently underrepresented in sport at every level; at the elite performer level of sport through to sports administration and participation. Recent research and surveys show that far fewer women than men participate in sport and fitness. Specifically WSFF indicate that:

- 1 By the age of 7 girls already believe that they are not 'sporty'
- 2 Between the ages of 16 and 24, only 20% of women take part in regular activity compared with 40% of men of the same age
- 3 Just 19% take part in regular sport and physical activity for at least 30 minutes compared with 24% of men
- 4 42% of women feel that having more body confidence would help them play sport or exercise more
- 5 Around 81% of women do not do the recommended levels of regular physical activity to maintain health

The picture for women at the elite end of sports coaching tells a similar story. Using the Olympic and Paralympic Games in 2004 in Athens as an example, less than 10% of British coaches were women despite 40% of athletes being female.

The target for the 2012 London Games is for a minimum of 15% of British coaches to be female (British Olympic Committee). It is expected that positive action programmes such as WiC2 will impact on increasing the number of female coaches in the workforce.

Since 2000 WSFF has delivered targeted workforce development programmes to encourage and enable more women to become sports coaches. This has been as a direct response to both the need to readdress the balance between the numbers of male and female coaches currently practising and to provide female coaches with relevant industry standard qualifications.

In 2005 the WSFF secured funding through the European Social Fund (co-financed by the Learning and Skills Council) for the Women into Coaching - London (WiC) programme. This positive action programme ran until December 2006 and increased the number of women involved in the delivery of sport, gaining qualifications up to level 2.

More specifically WiC celebrated the following outcomes:

- 66 beneficiaries achieved their learning outcome (up to level 2 qualification gained)
- 17% of the women who successfully completed their qualification became qualified as multi-sports coaches

- 45% of women successfully gained their sports coach UK equity training course qualifications

3.2 Women into Coaching 2 – London

3.2.1 Rationale for the Project

The rationale behind Women into Coaching 2 – London (WiC2) was to build on the successes of the original programme and use sport to engage with women and girls and provide a learner centred framework, with bespoke mentoring and support programmes, to reduce the impact of traditional barriers to sports employment. WiC2 aimed to engage with women new to the sports sector as well as those currently involved in sports-related activity (coaching, sports leadership and management) who wished to obtain formal coaching qualifications up to and including level 3.

WSFF recognises the important role that female coaches have to play as role models and mentors in developing female athletes. Female coaches can make a big difference in increasing and sustaining female participation in sport at every level, from beginners through to the elite level performers. Research has shown that female players who are coached by women perceive less discrimination and are more included to enter coaching than those women coached by men (Everhart and Chelladurai, 1998).

The UK Strategy Framework for Women and Sport carried out by UK Sport and WSFF (January 2006) recognises the need to increase leadership in sport for women. It identified that women make up only 26% of strategic sports boards and committees and although women make up half of the jobs in the sports industry, many are employed in clerical and secretarial roles and women are under-represented in senior management roles. This results in an earnings gap of 19% between men and women working full-time, explained in part by women working in lower grade positions. The report speculates that this is a result of a combination of lack of qualifications, opportunities, training, self-confidence and lack of role models or support, some of the areas WiC2 aimed to alleviate.

In their recent report, Sports Coaching in the UK II, 2007, sports coach UK report an increase overall in the number of practising coaches in the UK, from 1.2 million to 1.5 million in the 2 years from 2004 to 2006. Exact figures are not available but anecdotal evidence suggests that most of these coaches are male – between three fifths and three quarters – implying that as few as 1 in 4 coaches are female.

As well as gender differences in coaching, the research also highlights an under-representation of ethnic-minority coaches and coaches with a disability. In addition there is a

concentration of coaches in a small number of sports, with over three quarters coaching in football, swimming, rugby union, cricket, gymnastics and athletics.

The 2006 figures show a 12% increase overall in the number of coaches who are qualified. However, despite this increase, only 46% of female coaches and 53% of male coaches hold a governing body qualification.

Specifically, in London, the 2004 sports coach UK research revealed that individuals rate the standard of coaching provision as the lowest compared with the rest of the country. The WiC2 programme aimed to contribute to increasing satisfaction levels across London.

With the forthcoming Olympic and Paralympic Games taking place in London in 2012, the Pan London Learning and Skills Council have identified sport as a priority area and are therefore considering future skills needs in relation to the Olympic and Paralympic games. Women living in London will need to be qualified to the right level and experienced to enable them to fully engage in these opportunities both to participate in the Games as coaches, volunteers and leaders, but also to capitalise on the pre and post Games opportunities to improve the quality of life for themselves and their families.

WSFF secured funding through the European Social Fund (Objective 3, co-financed by the Learning and Skills Council) to the value of £440,000. The two-year project was delivered across London's 33 boroughs and ceased on the 31st July 2008. Project aims and objectives were agreed as a direct response to the findings from the body of research defined above.

3.2.2 Project Aims and Objectives

The aims and objectives of the project as defined in the original contract were as follows:

- 1 Increasing the number of women involved in sports coaching, development and leadership to meet the needs of London.
- 2 Increase the number of women gaining up to NVQ level 1, 2, 3 or its equivalent.
- 3 Provide a learner centred framework to support women throughout and beyond the programme. The project will develop leadership skills and knowledge through a range of accredited courses, work experience, bespoke horizontal development courses, shadowing opportunities and peer mentoring.
- 4 To increase the number of women progressing onto FE courses.
- 5 Increase the number of women employed in community sports development, management, leadership and coaching.
- 6 Widen the socio-economic background and diversity of women involved in sports delivery in London.

- 7 To raise the profile of women as coaches, managers, leaders, mentors and role models in London.
- 8 To share best practice with pan London organisations working to achieve equity standards.

3.2.3 Project Management Structure

WSFF worked in partnership with a range of training providers, sports training sector specialists, County Sports Partnerships, Community Sport & Physical Activity Networks, local authorities and community & voluntary organisations. The WiC2 Steering Group comprised both strategic and delivery partners as follows:

Strategic project partners included:

- Skills Active
- London South Bank University (hosting the Football Association)
- Sports Leaders UK
- sports coach UK (scUK)
- Pro-Active London Community Sport & Physical Activity Networks (CSPANs)

Project delivery partners included:

- English Gymnastics
- Asian Action Group
- Amateur Swimming Association
- Rugby Football League
- Amateur Rowing Association
- Badminton England
- England Basketball
- English and Wales Cricket Board
- London Community Sports Network
- Richmond and Kingston College - Centre of Vocational Excellence (CoVE)

The Steering Group partners each signed up to a Terms of Reference (Appendix One) and met formally on a quarterly basis to review the overall progress of the programme and ensure that the equality and sustainable development objectives were being met. Staff from WSFF formed the project team who were responsible for the day to day running of the project, and led by the Project Manager.

In addition to the formal partnership structure, a small group of 'informal' partners with a vested interest in upskilling more women and girls as coaches were also involved in the

project, comprising primarily of staff and development officers from National Governing Bodies of sport. These 'informal' partners referred women and girls to the project, ran women-only coaching courses and helped to promote WSFF and its positive action programmes.

3.2.4 Eligibility Requirements and Application Procedure

As part of the original contract, women who joined the programme had to meet a range of eligibility criteria as follows:

1. Minimum age of 16 years
2. Applicants must work and/or live in London
3. Funding could not be used to support women working in the public sector or those in large enterprises. FE and HE students were also ineligible
4. Applicants must not have received ESF funding for more than two consecutive years before applying for the project
5. Applicants must commit to completing the coaching qualification and attending all courses and training sessions
6. Applicants must provide documentation prior to starting the coaching course, this included a passport copy (proving British citizenship or right of abode in the UK) and a signed declaration from an employer (if applicable)
7. The Steering Group also added a preference for potential beneficiaries to be involved in a club (depending on the particular sport) which, on completion of the course, may be able to support them in securing coaching placements

The Steering Group established an application procedure to ensure that women were both eligible and able to complete the programme. On receipt of an application the project team would establish eligibility of the applicant. Applicants who met the criteria were then directed to a relevant partner (for example a football course applicant to an FA representative) to review their suitability for the programme and to take up relevant references. Those applicants who were not eligible or suitable were directed to an alternative programme where possible.

This procedure ensured that retention rates for the project were high and contributed to the sharing of ownership for the outputs with wider partners.

4. Research Methodology

The following research questions were agreed between HelmePark and the project team in order to meet the requirements of the evaluation. The research questions were formed, in the main from the aims and objectives as defined in the original bid document (see 3.2.2).

4.1 Primary Research Question

To what extent has the Women into Coaching – London 2 project met the aims and objectives of the Learning and Skills Council and delivery partners?

4.2 Supplementary Research Questions

1. To what extent did the project meet the contractual outputs and outcomes as defined by the Learning and Skills Council funding criteria?
 - a. What are the key successes?
 - b. What were the key challenges?
2. To what extent were barriers to learning reduced?
 - a. What were the barriers that were identified at the beginning of the project?
 - b. What systems were in place to reduce these?
 - c. Were these effective?
 - d. Have the barriers changed? What learning has taken place?
3. What was the impact of the learning centred framework?
 - a. How were the learners supported?
 - b. What was the impact on the learners?
4. How was the project managed to meet the requirements of the project?
 - a. What systems and procedures were in place and how effective were these in meeting the needs of the project?
 - b. What was the communication strategy and how effective was this in meeting the needs of the project?
5. To what extent have partnerships been developed?
 - a. Were partnerships fully utilised?
 - b. What impact did they have on the project?
 - c. Have new partnerships been formed as a result of the project?
6. How were pathways developed to support the sustainability of the project?
 - a. What was the impact of the project on those who supported the project with exit routes e.g. further education and employment (community sports development, management, leadership and coaching)?
7. To what extent was the profile of women as coaches, managers, leaders, mentors and role models raised as a result of the project?
8. What learning has taken place for women and girls in sport as a result of the project?

The use of these questions provided a robust and transparent process for providing the appropriate information and evidence to allow partners to make the necessary strategic decisions relating to the future development of the project. The rigour of the methodology engaged and involved a wide range of beneficiaries, staff members, funding partners, Steering Group members and wider stakeholders. The detail of the research process can be found in Appendix Two.

5. Findings

5.1 Contractual Targets

Table 5.1.1 shows the main contractual targets as set by the partnership to meet the requirements of the Learning and Skills Council. These targets formed the basis of the main payment schedule for the project.

Definition	Target	Actual	Variation from Contract	Target %	Actual %
Registered (eligible and paperwork completed)	200	159	-21%		
Qualifications obtained	170	118	-31%	85%	74%
Level 1 Quals obtained	67	77	+15%	34%	48%
Level 2 Quals obtained	83	37	-55%	42%	23%
Level 3 Quals obtained	20	4	-80%	10%	3%
FE Progression	60	1	-98%	30%	1%
Employment Progression	10	7	-30%	5%	4%
Voluntary Employment Progression	30	21	-30%	15%	13%

Table 5.1.1 Contractual Targets

5.1.1 Registrations and Qualifications

325 applications in total were received by the project team and, following the application procedure as defined by the Steering Group (see 3.2.4.), 189 of these applications (58%) were accepted as eligible to join the project. 159 of these successful applicants (84%) completed relevant paperwork such as Individual Learning Plans (ILPs), and enrolled on to courses as part of the programme. These 'starters' represented a variation of 21% to contract.

Of the 159, 140 beneficiaries started their courses, with 10 beneficiaries starting more than one course within the project timescale. Of the 150 courses that were started 118 (79%) were completed and evidence provided. The rigorous application procedure, which was adapted during the project to include references, resulted in fewer women being accepted onto the programme but was a direct reason for this high retention rate of beneficiaries.

As we see from Table 5.1.2 the reasons given for beneficiaries dropping out of the courses were primarily related to time pressures either from other commitments or from beneficiaries not recognising the amount of commitment necessary to complete the course.

Status of Course Completion	Number of Courses	% of total (150)
Completed with Certificate	118	79%
Pass - Waiting for Certificate/CRB	1	1%
Non-completion of course within deadline	2	1%
Failed Assessment	11	7%
Illness/Injury prevented completion	3	2%
Dropped out	15	10%

Table 5.1.2 Status of Completion

More beneficiaries than expected accessed and completed level one courses with targets not being reached for level 2 and 3 courses. There was high demand for the higher level places but this proved to be a challenge for the project. Many of the National Governing Bodies require level 2 coaches to have a minimum of 12 months' coaching experience before they are considered for the level 3 qualification. This prevented some coaches who completed their level 2 qualification with WiC2 from progressing, and therefore being funded to take the next level of their qualification within the timescale. However, this information would have been available at the time of bid writing so could have been acknowledged by the project team.

5.1.2 Progressions

It was identified at the start of the project that the relationship with Richmond and Kingston Centre of Vocational Excellence, who organise Sports Leaders UK courses, would be key to the achievement of the education progressions. However, the strict eligibility criteria, specifically the difficulty in engaging with beneficiaries from FE and HE, did not allow for this relationship to be operationally effective, resulting in the college not being accessed for further education progressions as was necessary to complete this outcome for the project. The eligibility criteria were not communicated at the outset of the project and therefore could not be acknowledged and adapted.

Based on the figures provided during the project, employment progressions were more positive with 28 women securing paid or voluntary employment, only 30% variation from contract. As a percentage of beneficiaries who qualified, the project was on target, and this was a key success of the project. These targets were defined as those women securing employment who were, at the start of the project, either unemployed or economically inactive.

The beneficiary research taken during the evaluation indicated that this figure was in fact higher than the contractual figures, showing that 24 of the 47 respondents (51%) had secured work as a result of WiC2. Some defined securing work as doing additional or changing work (i.e. were not unemployed prior to the project) and employment ranged from 1 day voluntary (2 respondents) to full time paid work (4 respondents). The beneficiary research also found that 85% of respondents were currently coaching, for some the project allowed them to coach more or to change their coaching focus. As these were different definitions of working than was allowed by the LSC, these figures were not counted, suggesting therefore that the contractual figures understate the performance of the project.

5.1.3 Specific Targets

The original contract bid identified particular target groups to be engaged through the project as well as targets for geographical split and specific sport qualifications.

As shown by Table 5.1.3 there was a negative variation from contract for the specific targets identified in the contract. However, when comparing these targets against the number of women who were involved in the programme, the percentage rates are comparable with the expected percentages of the contract for most of the outcomes. This is with the exception of BME recruitment and the 20-24 and 50+ age ranges, although the completion rates for the 20-24 year olds and 50+ are high.

Definition	Target	Actual	Variation from Contract	Target %	Actual %	Completed	% Completed
Beneficiary starts with ILP	200	159	-21%				
Beneficiaries (disability)	36	25	-31%	18%	16%	30	67%
Beneficiaries (BME)	70	45	-36%	35%	28%	17	68%
Beneficiaries (Lone Parent)	30	23	-23%	15%	14%	15	65%
Age							
16-19	30	28	-7%	15%	18%	19	68%
20-24	60	33	-45%	30%	21%	26	79%
25-49	100	91	-9%	50%	57%	66	73%
50+	20	7	-65%	10%	4%	7	100%

Table 5.1.3 Specific Target Groups

Targets were also set to ensure representation from each of the London boroughs. Table 5.1.4 shows that actual figures for London Central far exceeded the targets set, with those living outside of London being 76% under target.

Geographic profile (home address)	Target	Actual	Variation from Contract	Target %	Actual %
London - Central	21	33	+57%	11%	21%
London - North	19	22	+16%	10%	14%
London - East	52	36	-31%	26%	23%
London - West	32	22	-31%	16%	14%
London - South	34	36	+6%	17%	23%
Outside London	42	10	-76%	21%	6%

Table 5.1.4 Geographical Profile

As described in section 3, three quarters of coaching is carried out across 6 main sports, namely, football, swimming, rugby union, cricket, gymnastics and athletics. However, the project did not simply aim to increase the numbers within these sports, nor did it focus attention on those sports with a high female participation rate such as netball. Instead, WiC2 aimed to develop women across a range of disciplines and ensured its partnership comprised of representatives of sports that typically find it hard to attract women. Table 5.1.5 shows the

courses that were accessed by beneficiaries were varied and included some of these sports, namely Rugby League, Rowing, Badminton and Basketball.

	L1 Started	L1 Completed	L2 Started	L2 Completed	L3 Started	L3 Completed	Total Started	Total Completed	% of courses completed against courses started (by sport)
Badminton	8	7	4	4			12	11	92
Basketball	17	14					17	14	82
Cricket	8	8	4	4			12	12	100
Football	13	12	11	6	5	1	29	19	66
Gymnastics	15	13	7	5	4	2	26	20	77
Rugby League	1	1	1	1			2	2	100
Rowing			7	5			7	5	71
Swimming	19	17	8	8			27	25	93
Community Sports Leaders Award (CSLA)	7	5	4	4			11	9	82
Higher Sports Leaders Award (HSLA)					2	0	2		0
Certificate in Community Sports Work (CCSW)					5	1	5	1	20
Total	88	77	46	37	16	4	150	118	79
Percentage of courses completed against courses started (% by level)		88		80		25		79	

Table 5.1.5 Qualifications by Discipline

Table 5.1.5 also shows the percentage of courses completed within these sports was high resulting in better qualified women now available to coach in a range of disciplines. The number of level 1 courses completed was high at 88% whereas only 25% of level 3 courses were completed.

The strategy employed by the project team was to find suitable women to fill the higher level course places early in the programme giving the maximum amount of time to devote to an intensive, time-consuming qualification. However, the strict eligibility requirements and changes, and subsequent implementation, of the United Kingdom Coaching Certificate (UKCC) caused delays to the number of courses being run in and around London by a number of National Governing Bodies (NGBs). This was due to a number of factors such as a lack of

qualified tutors and internal and external verifiers and lack of appropriate venues to run the newly updated courses.

In addition to these issues, fewer than expected applications for other courses were received such as the level 3 Higher Sports Leaders Award. As with the education progressions this relied heavily on the relationship with Richmond and Kingston COVE, and was a challenge for the project. Additionally, in March 2007, mid way through the project, Sports Leaders UK's Community Sports Leaders Award (CSLA) was upgraded to a level 2 qualification. This change had not been anticipated or scheduled at the time of writing the WiC2 bid and the change meant that the original allocation of course places across courses was displaced.

The delays and course availability issues caused by the UKCC changes were the reason for 'dropping out' given by 60% of those beneficiaries who did not start their qualifications.

5.2 Barriers to Learning

5.2.1 Identified Barriers

The WSFF, in their Fact File "Barriers to Participation, 2008", suggest that barriers to women participating in sport can be grouped and defined as shown in Figure 5.2.1. During the early stages of the programme, beneficiaries were asked to identify any barriers to learning as a coach and the feedback received supported this research particularly those barriers shown as bold.

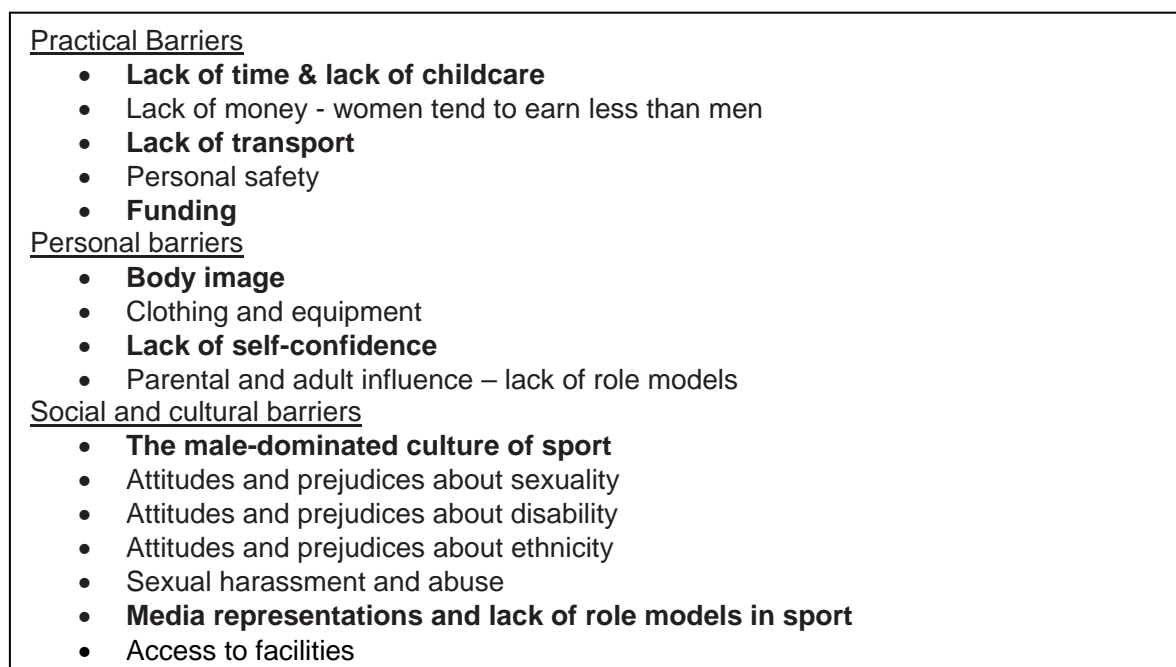


Figure 5.2.1 WSFF Barriers to Participation 2008

The new UKCC structure has resulted in higher costs of courses and women suggesting, more than for previous programmes, that if they had to self fund their qualification, they would

not have had the financial means to do this. The timing of the WiC2 project has therefore been essential for developing the female coaching workforce in London, particularly in trying to alleviate this financial barrier.

As part of the final questionnaire, beneficiaries were asked again for their opinions regarding barriers to women and coaching. Figure 5.2.2 shows that in the main the responses support the WSFF research, with gender, childcare and funding issues being recurring responses.

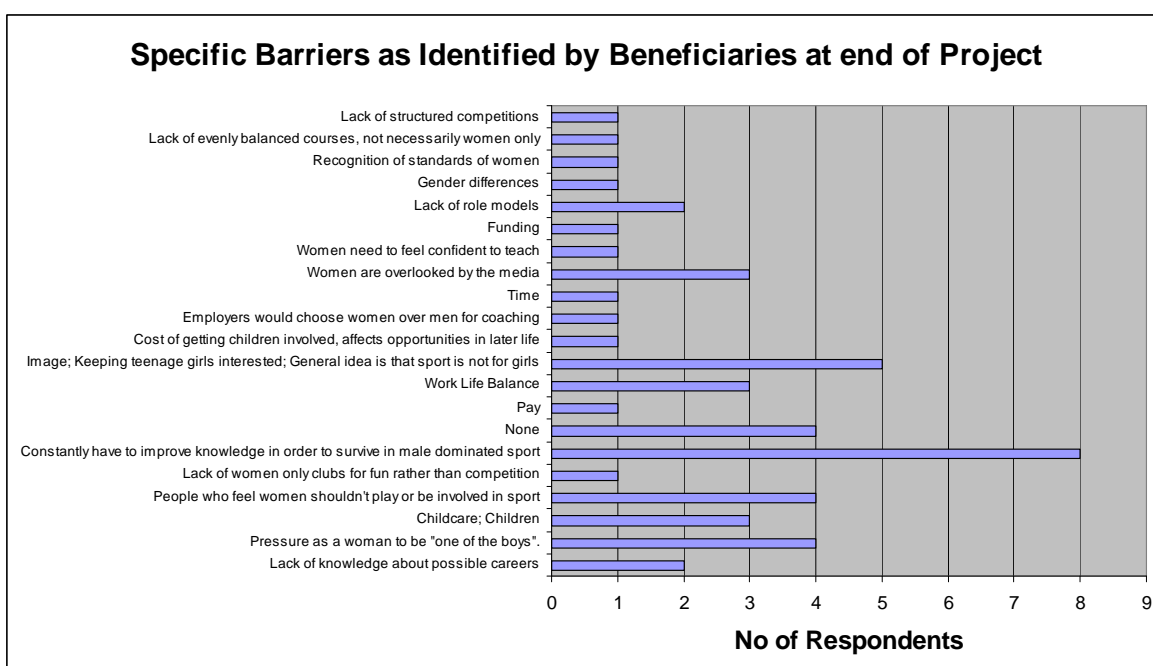


Figure 5.2.2 Barriers to Women and Sport – Beneficiaries

“For women choice is often family OR sport, it is not easy to do both well without good support.” Beneficiary

Other interesting feedback included a lack of structured competitions for women and a lack of recognition of gender differences and therefore a majority of courses geared to males. By contrast other women felt that there were no barriers, or certainly none that differed from their male counterparts:

“Women can progress as well as men - I have never encountered any prejudice; For a good professional there are less challenges no matter what their age or gender” Beneficiary

5.2.2 What systems were in place to reduce barriers?

The project was developed as a direct response to some of these barriers defined above and was ‘women centred’ i.e. decisions were made with their needs and requirements in mind. Financial support was the primary obligation of the project along with flexible learning opportunities and learner centred support. Course costs were paid along with expenses for transport and childcare costs.

More specifically WiC2 responded to these barriers by aiming to offer:

- 1 Fully funded courses
- 2 Fully funded travel (to and from course venue) and childcare costs (crèche or registered childminders) for parents
- 3 Some women-only courses
- 4 Where possible, flexible course dates and venues, e.g. local courses near where learners work/live
- 5 Peer mentoring support
- 6 Mentoring support, when available
- 7 Support costs for learners with learning difficulties, learning support needs
- 8 Continuing professional development opportunities such as short equity sports courses which sports coach employers want coaches to have attended before they are employed
- 9 Relevant and regular information points including provision of an online notice board for beneficiaries

5.2.3 Were these systems effective?

“WiC2 enabled me to train in a career never possible before” Beneficiary

Beneficiary responses to questions regarding this support (see Appendix Three) were generally felt to be very positive, particularly regarding course costs and transport reimbursement. 1 beneficiary felt the transport support was not sufficient and 2 others felt the payment process was slow. In contrast 2 beneficiaries described payment of transport expenses as “very prompt.” None of the beneficiaries who responded to the questionnaire accessed the childcare support; only 1 beneficiary in total was evidenced as accessing this support, with 36 drawing down the transport funds.

Consultation with partners and staff members described childcare as more of a time issue than a cost issue. Also the childcare offered was often unsuitable for beneficiaries to access.

“Our experience of delivering workforce development programmes clearly showed that women with young children did not use registered childminders. They would not attend a course if their relatives/friends could not mind their children.” Project team member

Availability of courses was a limiting factor for a number of the beneficiaries and was a popular reason for women ‘dropping out’ of the programme. The availability of courses, particularly at levels 2 and 3 was a particular issue for the project overall, primarily due to the effect of the UKCC changes. The impact of these changes was such that fewer courses were running and

those that were running were targeted centrally and therefore not always local to the beneficiaries, as was originally hoped. Partners also echoed a sense of frustration over not being able to offer more flexibility in dates and venues.

“We understood that a key factor of the project was to make the courses as accessible as possible to beneficiaries and this, it would seem, was not always possible, which was a concern to the group” Steering Group member

However, in contrast when beneficiaries were asked if the actual timings of courses they had accessed were suitable 96% felt they were suitable for their needs.

The feedback from partners and beneficiaries would therefore suggest that the course and transport funding and course timings were sufficient to aid the removal of these specific barriers, but the location and frequency of courses had a negative impact on beneficiary numbers and there needed to be a more effective means of supporting parents.

Feedback relating to mentor and other learner support is discussed in section 5.3.

5.2.4 What learning has taken place?

In addition to these barriers, there was recognition amongst both partners and beneficiaries that many challenges are personal and exist within each individual, and individuals therefore need to be encouraged to take responsibility for their own learning and development. In effect, many beneficiaries needed support on an individual basis, but this was not always possible due to the capacity of the project.

“A challenge for mentors was keeping the women engaged there needed to be a level of commitment and responsibility from beneficiaries to complete the courses.” Mentor

Beneficiaries were asked about the gender and style of their tutor and whether or not it had any effect on their learning. 29 respondents (62%) believed the style of coaching affected their learning (both positively and negatively), but only 10 respondents (21%) felt that the gender of the tutor had an effect on their learning with the majority of responses stating that professionalism, technique etc. were more important than gender.

The gender attendance of the courses the women attended was also analysed. An aim of the project was to provide women only courses where possible. Some of these did go ahead; however, less courses being available resulted in beneficiaries attending mainly pre set courses. From the beneficiary research, 16 of these courses were male dominated with a number of beneficiaries being the only female on the course. 10 courses that the beneficiaries

attended were female dominated (some being organised through WiC2 as female only courses) and 10 had an equal split of male and female attendees.

Part of the rationale behind WiC2 was to increase the number of female coaches in order to inspire other women and girls to participate in sport and physical activity. When asked about the significance of gender to coaching, 30 of the 47 respondents (64%) believed the gender of coach to be significant to women and girls being coached. Some of these reasons are given in Figure 5.2.3 and include suggestions that women can empathise better and understand the needs of other women and girls and the impact of a role model. This would suggest a greater focus on the number of female run courses and also further supports the rationale for projects such as WiC2.

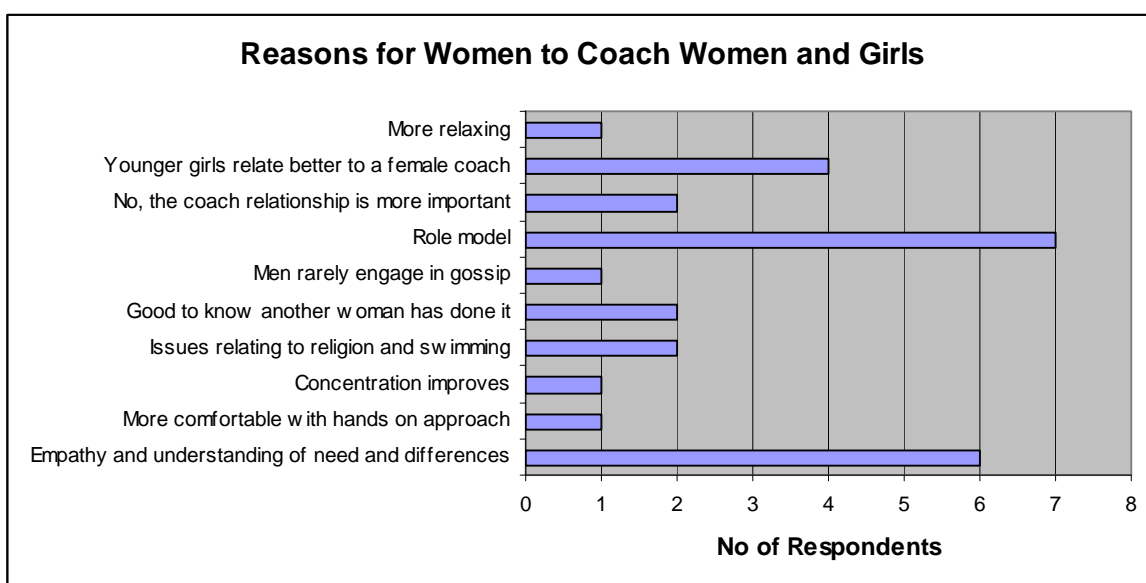


Figure 5.2.3 Reasons for Women to Coach Women and Girls

It would seem therefore that the beneficiaries themselves were not concerned about women only provision however, they did assume that this was a barrier to other women's involvement in sport. The coaches therefore have different values on behalf of other women than they do on themselves. It was not the intention of this research to consider this further but this could be an interesting opportunity for WSFF to consider for future projects.

5.3 Learner Support

5.3.1 How were the learners supported?

Following the application procedure as developed by the Steering Group (see 3.2.4) the project team developed a structured recruitment procedure including an induction programme and completion of various forms of documentation with support from the project team. These process flows helped the internal management of the project but also helped to provide the beneficiaries with project expectations and clarity in their responsibilities.

The use of documentation such as Individual Learning Plans (ILPs) was felt to be valuable by the learners. These were well received and helped the beneficiaries particularly by providing a focus and goal setting as highlighted in Figure 5.3.1.

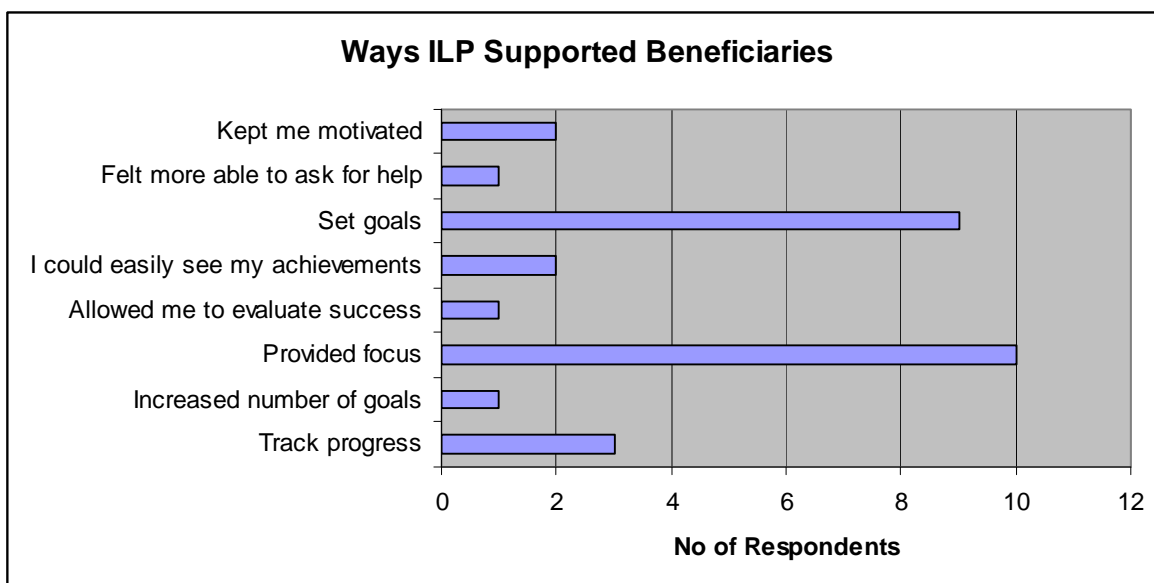


Figure 5.3.1 Impact of ILP

A web based notice board was also provided for learners which held information about exit and employment routes (voluntary and paid) for learners. In addition to this other information was provided through the notice board for sports coaches and leaders such as continuing professional development courses, details of other funded projects in and around London and frequently asked questions about sports coaching.

From the beneficiary research, only 11 respondents (23%) accessed the notice board, with 82% of those who did describing it as useful. Some beneficiaries did not know about the notice boards or could not access it due to the need for internet access.

5.3.2 Impact of Mentors

It was recognised during the contract development stage of the project of the importance and potential impact of a mentor on a learner to alleviate some of the barriers as defined in section 5.2. As a response to this the funders set a specific target, which was attached to funding and aimed to engage 70 mentors to support beneficiaries on the project. However, in practice only engaged 14. This shows there was both a shortfall of mentors engaged with the project and of the number of beneficiaries who worked with a mentor. However, there was a correlation between beneficiaries who completed their course and those who had mentor support. Those who were mentored also had an increased level of confidence from the experience.

“My mentor was essential to me completing my course” Beneficiary

There were far fewer mentors available than were needed to support the programme. This was due to a number of factors including the trend of mentoring generally falling to the same person within an organisation or club each time but also the need for projects such as WiC2 to reflect better the needs of mentors and provide a framework of support aligned to their needs.

As part of the interim reporting process, the project team attempted to address the issue of too few mentors and asked the beneficiaries to identify/nominate an individual within their club or place of work who could support them. The recent beneficiary feedback would suggest that this approach was effective. 16 respondents to the beneficiary questionnaire (34%) said they had a mentor, which is higher than the 7 beneficiaries, as was reported.

Ways in which the mentor supported those beneficiaries included encouragement, feedback and motivation in addition to more technical support. 3 respondents without mentor support specifically requested a mentor for future programmes.

Beneficiaries and partners alike described the relationship between members of the project team and the beneficiaries as that of mentoring. This support was invaluable to beneficiaries and should not be overlooked as part of this evaluation.

“The project team were helpful and supportive, would give me a push n the right direction when I was being lazy and did not get paper work in on time.” Beneficiary

5.3.3 Employability Courses

At the application stage all learners were asked to indicate whether they had completed sports coach UK’s equity training courses, namely ‘Safeguarding and Protecting Children’, ‘Equity in Your Coaching’ and ‘Coaching Disabled Performers’.

Those learners who had not attended were given the opportunity to complete these workshops at venues across London. The aim of providing access to these courses was that all coaches on the programme could be qualified to minimum operation standards. 20 courses were accessed by beneficiaries as shown in Table 5.3.1.

How to Coach Disabled People in Sport	7
Safe Guarding and protecting children	9
Equity in your Coaching	4

Table 5.3.1 sports coach UK Equity Courses Taken

5.3.4 What other support would have been useful?

Beneficiaries were asked to list 3 positive aspects of the project and the areas that could have been improved. Figures 5.3.2 and 5.3.3 show these responses.

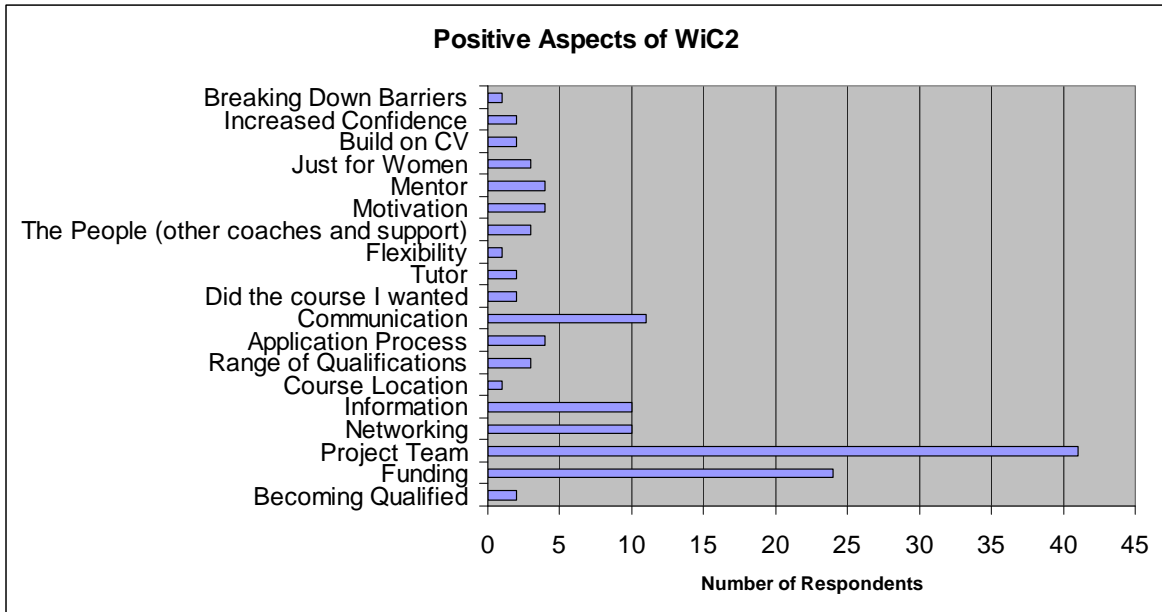


Figure 5.3.2 Positive Aspects of WiC2

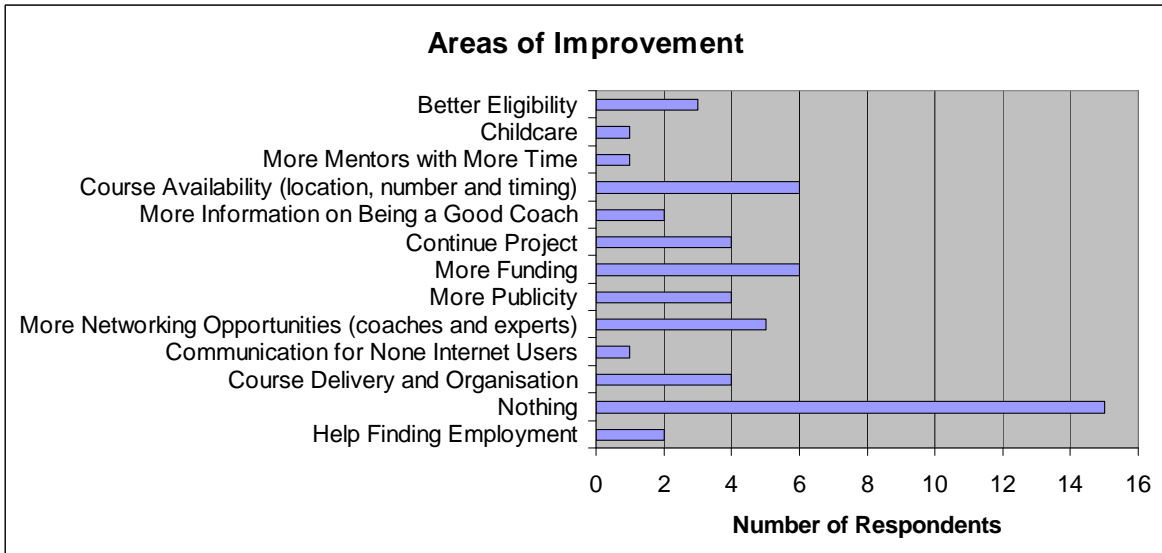


Figure 5.3.3 Areas of Improvement

It is clear from this information that the funding was a key success factor along with the support of the project team. 15 respondents (32%) felt that nothing should be different with eligibility, course availability, networking and additional funding for other courses being suggestions for change.

Beneficiaries were asked to suggest any additional support, above and beyond mentoring, to alleviate any barriers to their development. The majority (67%) of learners felt that the support had been sufficient for their needs.

Suggestions for additional support included more opportunity to network and work with other coaches on the project and particular limitations resting with the specific national governing

body. 2 beneficiaries suggested support to find clubs to gain work experience would also have helped to alleviate barriers to learning.

5.3.5 Beneficiary Motivations

During the application procedure beneficiaries were asked to state the reasons for wanting to be involved in WiC2. These motivations are shown in Figure 5.3.4. The most common motivation for beneficiaries (26%) was the desire to helping others to improve and develop themselves in terms of their health and physical, emotional and social development.

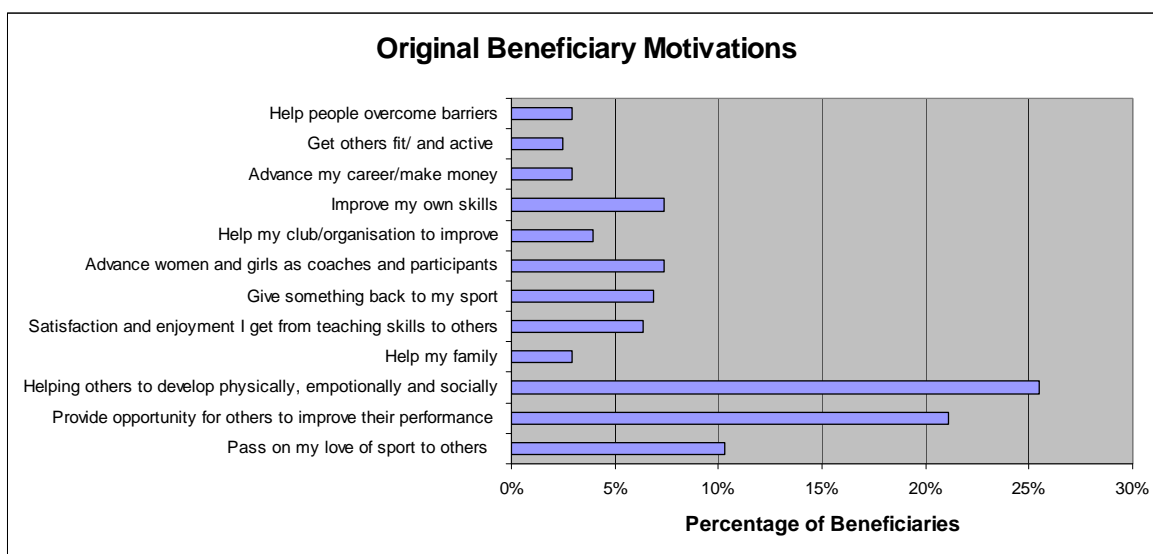


Figure 5.3.4 Original Beneficiary Motivations

When asked at the end of the project if their motivations had changed, 40% of beneficiaries described feeling even more motivated and encouraged to go even further with their coaching.

“I wasn't really looking to coach but it's given me the confidence to do so and an added dimension as an individual within a rugby league club” Beneficiary

When beneficiaries were asked if they felt WiC2 had increased their confidence 33 respondents (70%) said the course helped them increase their confidence levels. Beneficiaries felt that the project team and the information available contributed to this.

“Getting a qualification and knowing you have the support of a national organisation increased my confidence.” Beneficiary

5.4 Project Management

5.4.1 Project Management Strategy

Feedback from partners and beneficiaries alike agreed that the way the project was managed and delivered was a key factor in its success. The project team was overwhelmingly praised for the strategy they employed to deliver the project, which included managing the high volume of paperwork that was necessary to meet the contractual requirements.

Standardised internal procedures were well utilised and ensured effective communication and equality. Procedures that were adopted by the project team included a strict application procedure to ensure eligibility requirements were met and involvement at this stage from the Steering Group ensured women were both eligible and able to complete the courses. Following this, the women attended an induction where they met the team, were introduced to the project and given details of the expectations of the project. At this stage they were supported to complete the relevant paperwork.

To assist with this, documentation was developed and agreed including partners Terms of Reference (Appendix One) and Equality Objectives (Appendix Eight). These were applied rigorously throughout the project starting with the application process.

Throughout their time with the project the women were supported by the project team and relevant partners and, where appropriate and available, mentors to support them with their courses. Beneficiaries agreed that this support and the excellent communication was invaluable and a key factor in them completing their courses and other ILP goals.

There were a number of challenges that the project team faced, mainly due to the number of women who showed an interest in the programme (325) and the need to process their information. 58% of these original applicants were eligible and able to continue, however, the time taken with this task reduced the time available to recruit and subsequently train other beneficiaries. In addition to this external factors such as NGB course timings, CRB documentation and, towards the end of the beneficiaries courses, certification timescales also caused problems for the project team and resulted in some courses not being evidenced and therefore not eligible for funding.

The quarterly Steering Group meetings were well run and allowed partners to be proactive in their support of the project. All partners who were involved in this process described a sense of ownership about this group and felt they were both supported and supportive.

“Honesty and realisation in meetings kept everyone motivated and “on the ball”. Targets were reviewed and barriers discussed and adapted where possible.” Steering Group member

5.4.2 Marketing Strategy

Outside of the Steering Group meetings the most effective ways of raising awareness of the WiC2 programme were identified by the project team and the following strategies adopted to promote and market WiC2:

- ‘Fact cards’ were produced for each of the sports and courses being offered as part of WiC2.

- All project marketing and publicity referred to the WSFF website, a section of which (Get Involved) was devoted to WiC2.
- The Project Manager attended a number of regional meetings and events organised by strategic and delivery partners to further promote the project.
- A number of sports clubs and organisations were visited to further promote the project.
- Members of the project team visited coaches whilst delivering coaching sessions again to raise awareness and the profile of the project.
- Partners were proactive in publicising information about the project on their websites and within their brochures.
- Press releases about WiC2 progress were posted to lead partner and delivery and strategic partner websites.
- When attending their induction learners were encouraged to further publicise the project and the opportunities being offered. A number of referrals from learners recruited to the programme were made in addition to a number of referrals from women who were funded by the predecessor programme to WiC2.
- An article about the progress of WiC2 and a specific women-only level 1 basketball course was added to Metro3 newsletter (ESF Objective 3 newsletter produced in conjunction with the LSC London Region) which is sent to a large subscription list each quarter, a good way to promote both project and organisation.
- The Project Manager attended a sports networking meeting in April 2007 organised by ECOTEC and attended by the small number of other ESF-funded projects working within the sports sector.
- The majority of applicants knew about the WiC2 programme from information online about the benefits of the project.
- All project publicity included the logos of the funding organisations.

The marketing of the project within the sector was effective with 325 women showing an interest in WiC2. This ensured retention rates stayed high and met the short timescales of the project. However, this did not address the issues of attracting women who were new to the sector and feedback from beneficiaries included a number of women who felt that the project could have been marketed more effectively outside of the sector. One partner commented that they could have, with additional time, promoted the project further within their networks.

5.5 Partnership Development

At the contract development stage of the project partnerships were identified as being crucial to the success of the project. Partners were provisionally signed up at an early stage with a number of these remaining as active partners throughout the project. The project team were

flexible in their approach to partner involvement and invited new partners to the table where necessary and when the need arose.

Throughout all discussions with partners there was an overwhelming agreement that partnerships were fully utilised and were instrumental in the success of the project. Specific outcomes for partners included a strengthening and widening of their networks, a better understanding of the needs of women and girls in sport, identified opportunities for work outside of the project, opportunities to involve more women in their sports/organisations and access to funding.

“The Steering Group and the partners’ networks have been vital to every step of the project.” WSFF Representative

The involvement, interest and support of NGBs was cited by partners as another great success of the project. In addition, project partners were involved in the identification of learners. The smooth running of the project and delivery of training have created a network which, in the event of further funding being secured, may be sustained for future initiatives.

“Because there were different sports involved this supported cross-learning and communication was excellent.” Strategic Partner

5.6 Pathways and Sustainability

It was crucial for WiC2 that strategic and delivery partners were involved and good relationships with clubs and employers existed to ensure that beneficiaries had the support they needed to complete their courses and meet the goals identified as part of their ILPs. Many beneficiaries already had this support through existing employers or clubs and many of those who were involved in coaching stayed within their own environment. Although the notice board that was provided aimed to provide beneficiaries with access to courses, job vacancies, placements etc. as previously indicated, very few beneficiaries made constructive use of this.

In terms of the sustainability of the beneficiaries through the project, 40 out of 47 respondents to the beneficiary research felt that the project had provided sufficient support to help them carry on with their coaching, with 2 respondents suggesting that the project could have offered the next level of support. In terms of the sustainability of the project itself, one partner suggested that the high quality support that was given will ensure longevity of involvement. However, at the end of the project there was a feeling of helplessness amongst some partners that they now had little impact on the beneficiaries. It was evident that they were now reliant on the sports and employers to continue the support of the new coaches.

“The lesson we need to learn here is how flagship projects such as this can be better mainstreamed and supported beyond their initial funding.” Delivery Partner

43 beneficiary respondents to the questionnaire (91%) said they would like to progress onto the next stage of their career in coaching and there is evidence from partners that some have already done this.

“Most places I have been lately I have seen an increase in women coaches, many of whom have come through the women into coaching 2 project.” Mentor

Those women who were ineligible or ‘dropped out’ of the programme were referred onto other funded projects in and around London such as the Sprint Project (London Community Sports Network) and the SkillsActive Bursary Programme.

5.7 Raising of Profile

“There are role models and people who have aspirations and a “can do, will do” attitude.” Strategic Partner

Partners generally felt that WiC2 was a great success in terms of raising the profile of women in London and outside of the capital. The project has received attention nationally for its success and as an example of good practice from the way it was managed. It was also an opportunity to keep the issues of women in the spotlight.

Partners agreed that the profile has been raised through partnerships and through the community and educational elements of the programme. It was felt however, that perhaps this project scratched the surface and more needed to be done to continue the good work and reach across all of London and all sports. Suggestions from partners to increase the profile further included showcasing beneficiaries for example preparing and sharing case studies.

When asked what WSFF could do differently beneficiaries suggested a number of opportunities as figure 5.7.1 shows. Continuing the scheme and better publicity were popular responses to this question.

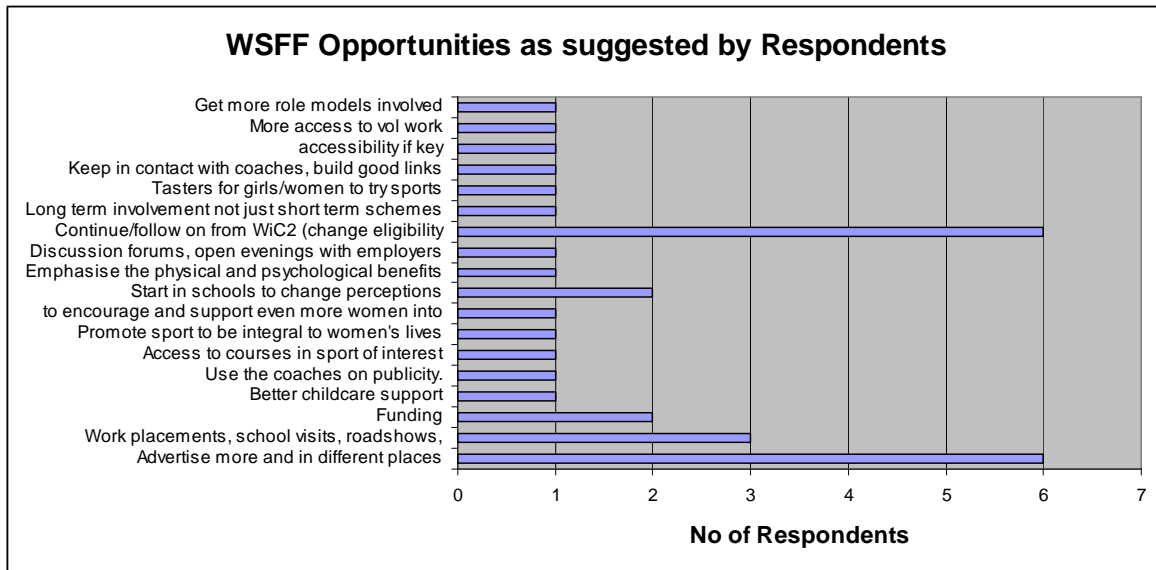


Figure 5.7.1 WSFF Opportunities

“Get younger girls exposed to working in sport, change perceptions about not having to be young, size 10 or an Olympian to enter the industry” Beneficiary

It was also agreed by partners that demand for women and coaching was highlighted further through WiC2 and the need for similar projects to ensure continued support of those who have been through the system and to bring even more new coaches into the sector.

Two partners felt that the strict eligibility criteria may have damaged its profile as many women who were encouraged to apply did not receive funding due to this and were therefore perhaps not enthused by the whole process.

Obtaining references helped the project team and partners to select the most appropriate learners for the programme as well as further promote the awareness and benefits of the WiC2 programme.

“The project was a huge success but I think there is a huge amount of work to do to encourage women and girls into sport and to see it as integral to their lives. At the same time, the men (fathers, husbands, boyfriends, sons etc.) must see it as part of their lives too, and accept that many females need to do sport of some kind” Delivery Partner

6. Conclusions

These conclusions have been drawn in support of the original project objectives (see 3.2.2) and aim to clarify whether these objectives have been met through the programme. Learning points have been drawn in support of these conclusions.

6.1 Contract Objectives

WiC2 met its initial objective of **increasing the number of women involved in sports coaching, development and leadership to meet the needs of London**. 325 women made contact with WSFF through WiC2 and 189 of these women were identified as eligible and therefore accepted onto the project. The strict eligibility criteria set by the funders constrained the project at this early stage and resulted in fewer women being able to be recruited onto the programme than was hoped. However, those who were not accepted were directed to other projects with partners of WSFF. WiC2 enabled 159 women to be involved in coaching, development and leadership and to take their chosen qualification. In addition to these 159, it is acknowledged that a number of those who were not accepted stayed within the sector, with many of the 325 now having a greater understanding of the opportunities within sport and the role of WSFF.

150 courses were started as part of WiC2 with 118 qualifications being achieved, helping to achieve the second objective and **increase the number of women gaining up to NVQ level 1, 2 and 3**. These figures were however, lower than target due to a number of factors namely the timescales of the project, which had a direct effect on the level 2 and 3 completions and the changes to the UKCC framework reducing the number of courses available.

The identification of specific barriers and the strategies adopted to alleviate some of these barriers were critical to the success of the project. Objective 3, to **provide a learner centred framework to support women throughout and beyond the programme** encompassed a range of support including the much celebrated involvement of the project team and wider partners to support beneficiaries, as well as the recruitment of mentors. Despite being a focus for all involved in WiC2 it proved difficult to recruit mentors onto the programme. This was, in part, due to the project not aligning funding to meet the particular needs of the mentors themselves. In addition, there was an acceptance that some beneficiaries, already based within the sector, already had access to such support. The need for mentors was identified as greater than supply, therefore a key learning point for the project team and partners.

The funding of courses and transport was well received but the research suggested a need for the partners to understand better the needs of parents and particular the trends in terms of the use and availability of certain types of childcare. For example the project covered

childminding and crèche costs but few parents appeared willing to use childminders, and crèche places were limited.

There was a sense from many of those who were consulted of an increased understanding of the barriers that women face and of the strategies needed to overcome these barriers, therefore helping to shape future programmes. However, it was felt that many of these barriers are personal and involve a high degree of commitment from the beneficiaries themselves. As a consequence for some beneficiaries the importance of this support role, including mentoring was more critical than for others.

Partners felt that they relied heavily on employers and the existing infrastructure to support the coaches following the end of the programme, this it would seem was at times left to chance and it was suggested that having employers involved at the outset would have aided this pathway development.

The inability for the project to engage with FE and HE students was a limiting factor for the project, in particular, resulted in the project not meeting objective 4, **to increase the number of women progressing onto FE courses**. Only one beneficiary was evidenced as progressing into employment.

In contrast, the project succeeded in **increasing the number of women employed in community sports development, management, leadership and coaching**. Those evidenced as securing paid or unpaid work met 70% of the contract targets, with 17% of those starting the programme gaining employment against a target of 20%. In addition to this, the research collected as part of the evaluation suggested that more than half of the beneficiaries had in fact gained employment as a result of the project, but were not able to be counted due to either their status at application or the nature of the work they were doing. In addition to this, the number of women now coaching (85% of respondents to the research) was a significant achievement of the project.

Targets were set at the start of the project to ensure the project met objective 6, **widen the socio-economic background and diversity of women involved in sports delivery in London**. The project met its target in terms of a percentage of actual starts for beneficiaries with a disability and lone parents. It also engaged and qualified 17 beneficiaries from the BME community, and, although it did not meet its target for women over 50, all those women over 50 who did start the project completed their qualification.

The project also engaged women across all boroughs within London and succeeded in meeting targets set for women becoming qualified in those sports classed as non-traditional to women. The research also suggested that the project could have recognised the individuality of specific sports and their particular requirements as well as addressing the needs of women. Some NGBs felt they could have offered much more due to excellent facilities and availability of courses particularly at levels 2 and 3 but the eligibility criteria and target driven nature of the project did not allow for this.

WiC2 allowed a greater understanding of the needs and challenges of women and girls to be developed and therefore of how in turn to deliver programmes to meet these needs. The project also succeeded in **raising the profile of women as coaches, managers, leaders, mentors and role models in London** by the women who have been involved in the project, now being role models themselves and within and outside of London by the project itself being recognised as a model of best practice. The challenge now it would seem, is how to continue the good work and keep those women motivated who have been involved in the project. The sustainability of the project itself is a challenge and critical to recognising and building on the successes to date.

In addition to this, the new and stronger relationships that have developed through partnership working and the engagement of wider partners such as National Governing Bodies to deliver outcomes is also part of the legacy of the project and continues to raise the profile of women and sport through these new and growing networks.

This partnership working also contributed to the final objective, **to share best practice with pan London organisations working to achieve equity standards**. The way in which the project was managed and driven as an inclusive, partnership approach was a key factor of its success and one which partners have cited will be lasting and grow within their own organisations. The wealth of knowledge that has risen from this project must be captured and shared further with partners across London. To support this, WSFF have developed an 8 point guide to working with women in sport as a learning tool. See www.wsff.org.uk.

It is clear for future projects that to meet contractual obligations project goals need to be aligned to organisational goals in order to fully benefit those targeted. By having to meet strict external criteria the project and subsequently the Women's Sport and Fitness Foundation were not able to fully react to the needs of the sector and of the women and girls it endeavours to engage. However, overall the project can be recognised as a great success in terms of meeting the original contract objectives, as an example of best practice in terms of

management and partnership working and overall it has performed well against its contractual targets.

6.2 Key Learning Points

The research suggests that the following are critical to the success of positive action projects such as WiC2:

- **Focussing on a clearly identified range of outputs and outcomes**
- **Recognising and celebrating success outside of contractual targets**
(A key success of the project was 85% of women coaching following the project, this however could not be evidenced as part of the project due to the particular LSC definitions)
- **Partnership involvement and delivery**
- **Drive and commitment of individual officers**
- **Appropriate and communicated procedures**
(The rigorous application procedure that was applied improved retention. In contrast, eligibility criteria was not established and communicated clearly in advance and resulted in a barrier to WiC2 success)
- **Attracting and making efforts to retain women on courses, reducing costs and providing local opportunities**
- **Understand the particular needs and barriers to women and sport**
(There was some doubt over the need to provide women only courses for this particular cohort. However this cohort nevertheless felt that having women coaches and role models was important to the development of women in sport. This is contradictory and needs clarification. The reasons for the lack of use of childcare support offered is also critical to understand)
- **Understanding and reflecting the particular needs of mentors**
- **Consideration given to sustainability of the project at the outset**

Figure 6.2.1 Key Learning Points

7. References

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WSFF (2008) "Barriers to Participation" available from <http://www.wsff.org.uk/>

Appendix One - Terms of Reference: WiC Partnership Committee

Aim

To be responsible for the development and implementation the Women's Coaching Programme for London programme. The Women into Coaching 2 – London programme is a partnership project to provide 210 women across the five sub-regions of London with the skills, training and support to move into sports coaching and development and progress onto sustainable employment.

It will use sport to engage with women and provide a learner centred framework, with bespoke mentoring and support programmes to reduce the impact of traditional barriers to sports employment.

In addition to National Governing Body courses, women will be encouraged to participate in community sports development and management courses, providing alternative progression routes into employment.

Functions

1. To oversee the planning, implementation, management, monitoring and evaluation of the Women's Coaching Programme for London programme.
2. To report back to their organisations on the progress and success of the project.
3. To co-ordinate input from expert organisations representing specialist groups of workers or employers.
4. To share best practice with employers and training providers in the sector.
5. To oversee the production of a detailed evaluation report on the impact of the project for the sector.

Membership

6. The Partnership Committee shall consist of one representative, unless agreed otherwise by the Chair, nominated by each of the following organisations:

Women Sports Foundation
Badminton England
England Basketball
Sport Leaders UK
Sports Coach UK
Rugby Football League
Amateur Swimming Association
Amateur Rowing Association
British Gymnastics
Football Association
England and Wales Cricket Board
Asian Action Group (AAG)
SkillsActive
Sport England
London Community Sports Network
Richmond and Kingston Centre of Vocational Excellence
Pro-Active London Partnerships

7. The Partnership Committee will decide which other organisations shall be represented on the Committee as appropriate.

Quorum

8. The Partnership Committee shall have a quorum comprising not less than 2 of its members at any time.

Frequency of Meetings

9. The Partnership Committee will meet four times a year. Appendix 3 details the months for which meetings are scheduled.

Powers and Duties

10. The Partnership Committee shall be an advisory body. It shall make recommendations to the Women's Sports Foundation and the employed programme staff on matters of policy, process and budgets within its area of responsibility.
11. The minutes of, or a report from, each of its meetings will be copied to all Partners actively involved in the project.

Project lifespan

12. ESF / LSC funding was granted on the 1st August, 2006 for two years and ceases on 31st July, 2008. All courses need to have been delivered and completed within this time.

Appendix Two - Evaluation Framework

The evaluation framework is underpinned by a Theory of Change (TOC) approach. We have found that clients value a Theory of Change approach as part of programme planning and evaluation because it creates a commonly understood vision of the long-term goals, how they are reached, and what is used to measure progress along the way. In addition to the robustness of the approach, the participatory nature of the process provides a transparent framework on which conclusions are made, and recommendations acted upon, that are supported by the widest possible stakeholder group.

The use of this evaluation presents a robust and transparent process for providing the appropriate information and evidence to allow the WSFF to make the necessary strategic decisions pertaining to the future development of the project.

The rigor of the methodology engaged and involved a wide range of beneficiaries, staff members, funding partners, practitioners, steering group members and wider stakeholders throughout the whole project.

Figure A2.1 provides an overview of the methodology, which includes a scoping phase to define the success criteria and outcomes for the project. Whilst each phase of the project is shown separately for the purpose of the diagram, activity within the phases was interlinked and some activity was delivered simultaneously.

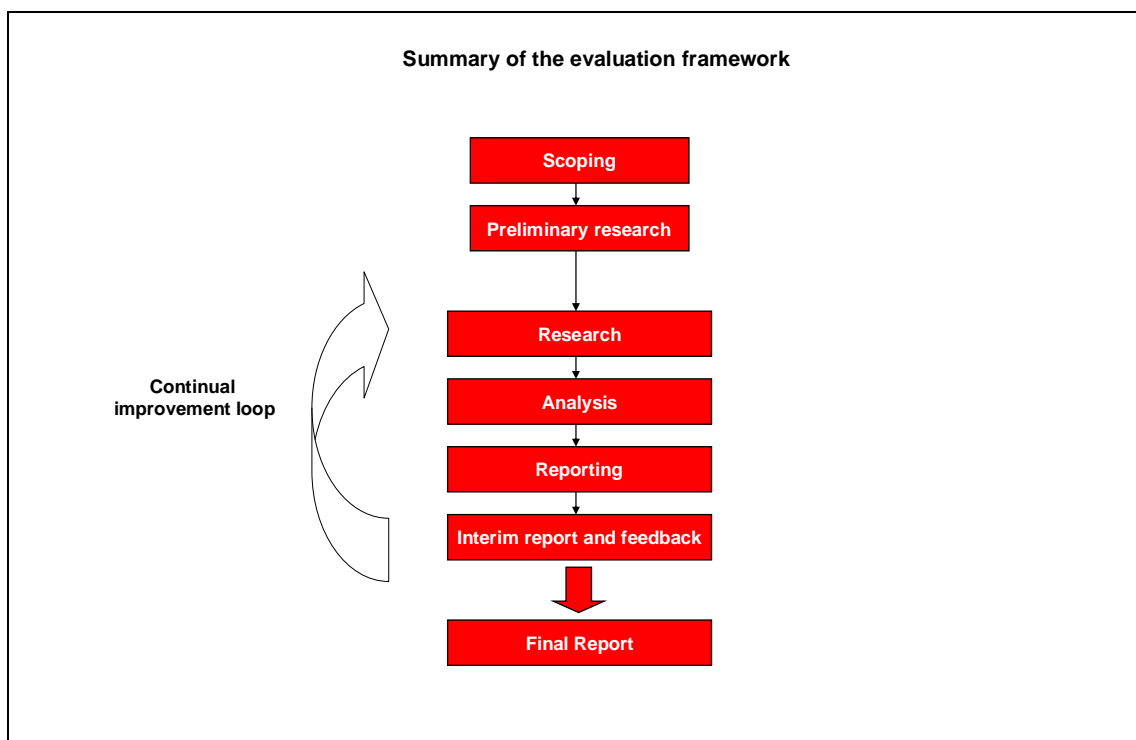


Figure A2.1 Evaluation Framework

Phase 1 Scoping

The first phase of the methodology aimed to clearly define the outcomes and success criteria, timescales and reporting mechanisms of the project. This included a preliminary intensive scoping session with the Project Manager and resulted in a detailed and agreed evaluation framework.

The framework built on existing planning documentation for the Women into Coaching 2 project, including the funder's specific requirements, to further define the project evaluation aims and identify the success criteria to incorporate the baseline data.

An important part of the scoping phase was to seek to identify preferences for the specific consultation methodologies, the stakeholders to be included and reflect on any issues or sensitivities which need to be addressed. Critically, we shared the evaluation framework with all stakeholders and partners so that they were aware of the purpose and scope of the evaluation. Specifically we consulted with the Project Steering Group as to this framework in February 2008. We have found that this inclusive approach contributed to a more positive engagement with the evaluation and better ownership of the subsequent outcomes.

Phase 2 Preliminary research

Phase 2 of the evaluation is made up of two parts. The first sought to understand the strategic context in which the project is set including government policy, local initiatives and objectives and national priorities.

The second part of this phase used existing documents to understand the baseline data against which future progress could be measured. Particular targets were identified and validated as defined by the Learning and Skills Council and the Women's Sport and Fitness Foundation. The quantitative data was collected through traditional desktop research and analysed using Microsoft Excel as required. Qualitative data was mapped against the HelmePark Impact Assessment tool to determine a consistent approach.

Phase 3 Research

The research phase comprised of collecting both quantitative and qualitative data at phased intervals.

The quantitative and qualitative data was collected using both existing data from the Women's Sport and Fitness Foundation project team and the collection of primary data to support the research. This was based on beneficiary recruitment targets, retention rates, achievements and progression. This also involved those responsible for running the programmes to further

understand the process and achievements of the beneficiaries and to validate and provide richness to the research.

In the scoping exercise of Phase 1, the Consultants and the Project Manager identified a range of stakeholders, including staff members, funding partners, mentors, beneficiaries and Steering Group members. A range of questionnaires were developed from the research questions and stakeholders were contacted. Copies of the questionnaires used for the stakeholder groups can be found as appendices to this report. Feedback was received from 47 beneficiaries, 5 members of the project team (WSFF), 4 mentors and 7 Steering Group members.

During this process a number of limitations were identified, for example some partners felt that they had only had peripheral contact with the project and could not therefore respond in detail. Nevertheless a selection of these individuals were still encouraged to respond, to ensure that issues relating to their level of involvement were considered.

Where appropriate all data was validated with practitioners before being entered into the Microsoft Excel for analysis by the evaluation team.

Phase 4 Analysis

The evaluation team analysed the quantitative data using Microsoft Excel to generate a statistical profile based on the evaluation framework and outcomes pathway.

The qualitative data from the interviews and consultations was analysed against the Impact Assessment Tool template to measure depth of change and make judgements with regard to the sustainability of the change. The partner interviews were mapped and tracked against a robust partnership assessment framework, the Nuffield Partnership Assessment Tool.

During the analysis a member of the evaluation team who was not engaged in collecting the data acted as an independent analyst and challenged the evidence to validate the conclusions.

Phase 5 Report and dissemination

Regular reporting is an essential component of the participative and formative approach adopted by HelmePark. Both informal and regular formal reporting systems were utilised in order to maintain a continuous feedback loop and keep all relevant partners involved in the evaluation process.