Evaluating Sistema Scotland

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Today

- 10 minute overview of Sistema Scotland and Big Noise programme – Alison
- 10 minute overview of evaluation methods and findings from 2015 report – Chris

*Early Intervention* – Baby Noise
Raploch participant aged 11 months
Live tweets
#bignoiseresearch
@theGCPH
@sistemascotland
Early Days

- 2006. Sistema Scotland formed following fact-finding mission to Venezuela.
- April 2008 programme launched in Raploch
Sistema Scotland

The long-term goals…

- Transform children’s lives through music
- Empower communities
- Grow future orchestras
History:
Launch in Raploch 2008-
today
Centres in Raploch (Stirling), Govanhill (Glasgow) and Torry (Aberdeen)
Big Noise - Daytime Delivery
Big Noise - After school club
Core Programme

Baby Noise
Nursery Programme
Primary 1/2 Pre Orchestral Programme
After-School Orchestra
Adult Orchestra
Castle View School
Volunteer Programme
Holiday Schools
Youth Board
Young Leaders and Teachers

Pathways from birth to adulthood
Sistema Scotland
Long-term Programme and Relationships
Over Chris to look at evaluating the programme

www.sistemascotland.org.uk
www.makeabignoise.org.uk
Facebook – Sistema Scotland
Evaluating Sistema Scotland - approaching complexity, recognising different forms of evidence and embedding a life course study of impacts

(just really quickly!)
Scandinavian research: arts and cultural engagement independently predict a healthier, longer life.

Learning instrument over school years predicts better educational attainment.

Gaps in evidence: pathways and how to conceptualise arts-based delivery to impact on inequality.

Holistic regeneration acts on important determinants of health.

Social regeneration occupies a lesser status.

Gaps in evidence: how to implement social interventions and evaluate impacts.
To inform this evaluation, GCPH commissioned 3 systematic literature reviews:

1. The impact of art attendance and participation on health and wellbeing

2. ‘Arts and smarts’ – assessing the impact of arts participation on academic performance during the school years

3. Community-based music programmes, and health and inequalities – the impact on children/adolescents and their families

Plus

Brief synthesis of all three reviews

www.gcph.co.uk
Search “Sistema”

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Evaluation Vision:

- High quality, relatively low cost
- Be bold, ask others for help, multiple perspectives
- Life course evaluation: formative and summative design
- Different forms of evidence, human experience plus abstract
- Not disruptive to a fast-paced programme
- Not intrusive to participants’ lives – sensitive to stigma
- Senior advisory group
- Critically reflective of our methods
- Societal impact and influence
Evaluation aims

1. To assess, over the long-term, the outcomes of the Big Noise programmes in Raploch and Govanhill, in terms of social and behavioural development, educational performance and attainment and future impacts on the lives, health and wellbeing of the children and young people participating in the programmes. Additionally the social impacts at the family and community levels will be assessed. The programme impacts at a societal level will be assessed through an economic analysis which will consider the costs of the programme and the broader returns on investment.

2. To gain insight into Sistema Scotland’s ethos and vision, their approaches to selecting programme sites, adapting programme delivery to local structures and requirements, local partnership working and the characteristics of the staff and implementation which are critical to enhancing inclusion, engagement and retention and achieving positive outcomes for the individual, family and community.
Evaluation Overview & Timeline

Key points:
- **Life-course evaluation** - tracking BN participant outcomes for decades ahead
- **Phase 1: Formative, qualitative depth** - observe impacts and understand programme
- **Phase 2: Summative, quantitative** – Education, Health, Social Care, Welfare & Justice
- **Control statistical analysis** – outcomes for BN participants compared to control group

Phase 1: Formative Evaluation
- 2013
  - 1st report: BN Govanhill & Raploch
- 2015
  - BN Torry report
- 2016
  - 3 BN sites review report
- 2017

Phase 2: Summative Evaluation
- 2020
  - BN Raploch: Educational attainment analysis report
- 2025
  - BN Raploch: Social, Welfare & Justice system analysis report
- 2040
  - Preliminary health outcomes analysis report

Primarily qualitative
- GCPH still in existence? Transparent evaluation design, well documented, senior support
Short-term Methods

Phase 1 Formative Methods: primarily qualitative

• Semi-structured interviews (120 interviews)
• Structured observation (approaching 2,000 hours)
• Participant drawing exercise, Govanhill (110 children)
• Participatory filmmaking exercise, Raploch (6 young people)
• Case studies (12 children, parents, teachers, musicians)
• Focus groups for non-participants
• Develop theories of change
• Develop process learning (vital: how impacts are achieved)
Some Key Findings

**Impacts among children:** Improvements in confidence, pride, happiness, self-esteem, discipline and attitude.

**Impacts among teenagers:** Improvements in collaboration and co-operation skills, motivation and determination, positive peer groups, aspiration for higher education.

Depth of qualitative approaches and thematic analysis enabled richer insights...

### Principles for delivery
- Longevity and commitment
- Inclusive and accessible
- Innovation and flexibility
- Intensive and immersive
- Collective learning
- Pursuit of excellence
- Focus on relationship

### Impact Pathways
- Boosting learning and education
- Developing and building life skills
- Securing emotional wellbeing
- Building social skills and networks
- Respite and protection
- Developing as a musician
- Encouraging healthy behaviours

- Potential to improve health of participants and address inequalities
- Range of recommendations made to improve Big Noise programme
Respite and protection

Programme elements
- Afterschool and holiday programme
- One to one instrument tuition
- Take a Musician Home for Tea
- Orchestral/sectional instrument tuition/rehearsals
- Residential trips and activity weekends
- Break time

Programme outputs
- Regular access to a key trained adult
- Identification and support for participants at risk
- Free leisure activities
- Safe, warm and positive environment
- Routine and structure: stability
- Access to positive adult role models
- Positively defined parameters for behaviour
- Immersion in Big Noise

Short-term Outcomes (within 5 years)
- Sense of security
- Reduced stress
- Reduced exposure to home-based stressors (e.g. aggression, loneliness, lack of stimulation)

Medium-term Outcomes (within 10 years)
- Positive behaviours in relation to alcohol/drugs
- Reduced opportunities for drug/alcohol use
- Reduced opportunities for anti-social behaviour
- Improved employability
- Reduced involvement in criminality
- Increased resilience

Long-term Outcomes (after 10 years)
- Broadening of opportunities and destinations in adulthood
- Reduced probability of drugs/alcohol misuse
- Positive parenting as adults
- Improved health and wellbeing

OBSERVED  ---->  THEORISED
Strengths

• Life course study; good use of routine outcome data
• Depth of short-term qualitative methods; capture the complex, nuanced and generative nature of the work
• Mixed methods and robust plan - findings influential
• Evaluation partners, multiple perspectives

Limitations

• Qualitative approach - no assessment of prevalence of impacts among population, nor understanding of the duration or degree of engagement required for impacts.
• Impacts on participant mental health and wellbeing were not assessed using validated measures – cultural & language barriers, age-applicability and stigma/intrusion

Challenges

• Life course study requires patience; no shortcut to ‘hard indicators’ which are often seen as priority.
• Resource and capacity to undertake evaluation; maintain quality and focus.
Thank you so much

• Evaluation plan, Full 2015 report, summary report, technical appendices available at www.gcph.co.uk search ‘Sistema’
• Publication in Journal of Public Mental Health

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Thanks also to evaluation partners