

Assessment 1

Community Engagement

Module code: LCBB4002

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Introduction

With more than 1.5 million spectators and thousands of elite competitors in attendance, the 22nd Commonwealth Games, the largest multi-sport event to be held in England in 2022, were held in Birmingham in July and August. Participating in this event were people from more than 180 different countries. From the moment the iconic "Raging Bull" charged into the Alexander Stadium on opening night to the final notes from the legendary Ozzy Osborne as the curtain (James, 2022).

Birmingham 2022 turned out to be a spectacular sporting event. 877 medals were given out, 96 Commonwealth Games records and 4 world records were broken, and all the Home Nations experienced great success. There were more parasport events than ever before at a Commonwealth Games, more medal events for women than men for the first time at a significant multisport event, and women's T20 cricket, as well as basketball 3x3 and wheelchair basketball 3x3 all, made their debuts at the Commonwealth Games (de Ruyter, Hearne, Beer, & Zaman, 2020).

This report aims to evaluate and analyse how the local community undertook community engagement. The key areas in which they were mostly involved and what approaches had been adopted in respect of it. Furthermore, how the event has contributed to developing social and economical factors and how the overall community has been strengthened due to the event.

Analysis of the Commonwealth Games

About Commonwealth games

The quadrennial international multisport Commonwealth Games include competition amongst athletes from the Commonwealth of Nations. The Commonwealth Games are overseen by the Commonwealth Games Federation, which has its main office in London, England.

Astley Cooper, an Australian who advocated for the holding of sporting tournaments to show the unity of the British Empire, initially raised the notion of such games in 1891. A "Festival of the Empire" was held in 1911 to commemorate King George V's coronation. Teams from the UK, Australasia (Australia and New Zealand), Canada, and South Africa, and South Africa took part in several competitions in the sports of swimming, boxing, wrestling, and athletics. The first British Empire Games were held in 1930 in Hamilton, Canada (Guardian, 2022).

Birmingham's 2022 Commonwealth Games organisers have failed to meaningfully connect the city's varied populations, leaving them feeling "mostly disregarded" and disengaged (Guardian, 2022).

Practices adhered to including community engagement principles, standards, and stakeholders' participation

The Birmingham 2022 Commonwealth Games are expected to be a historic occasion, not just for the city but also for its impact on the future of supply chain sustainability and the sustainability of large-scale event management. Sustainability has risen to the top of the agenda since the UK hosted the last Commonwealth Games in Glasgow in 2014, taking centre stage in the Birmingham 2022 strategy (Yet, Manuel, DeVidi, & MacDonald, 2022).

The Commonwealth Games have long made an effort to increase sustainability; in 2014, the Glasgow Games received ISO 20121, an international standard for sustainable event management. This was accomplished by introducing entirely compostable dining utensils, recyclable bottles, and 12 waste streams to assist in the recycling of 49% of all garbage produced (Guardian, 2022).

Birmingham 2022 promises to be the "most sustainable Commonwealth Games since the event's inception nearly a century ago" and to leave a lasting impression on how subsequent versions are run. The event's efforts to benefit the community are evident in programmes like free public transportation for ticket holders promises to plant 2022 acres of forest, and the clearance of 22 miles of canals (Guardian, 2022).

Those companies hired to supply the Birmingham Games must adhere to Birmingham 2022's Sustainable Sourcing Code in order to support the achievement of its objectives. The rule outlines the minimal requirements for vendors in seven crucial areas, such as carbon air quality, circular economies to reduce waste, and environmental preservation. In essence, the criteria call for adopting a strategy to protect biodiversity and achieve net zero reforestation as well as the requirements to "consider rental equipment before purchasing." A system of audit checks and evaluations will be used to track compliance with the code, and if any rules are broken, the provider will be required to put a remedial action plan into place (Yet, Manuel, DeVidi, & MacDonald, 2022).

Some of the requirements might seem ambiguous and be largely impossible to enforce. For suppliers, the main concern should be the future of large-scale event procurement rather than immediate compliance. This guideline is the ideal guide for vendors that want to win future public contracts for major events and other public sector projects. Large-scale events will soon be required to use only sustainable supply chains, and sustainability scores in tenders will undoubtedly play a significant part in making this possible. As a result, many multinational firms are prioritising environmental, social, and governance (ESG) issues since they may help initiatives gain contracts and appeal to both the public and investors (Guardian, 2022).

The Birmingham 2022 Commonwealth Games should function as a catalyst for companies wishing to get contracts with the public sector, including those for sizable events. Before sustainability is required for all public sector contracts, you can get an early advantage by identifying activities in a supply chain that could be made more sustainable. Sustainable practices can be implemented at all levels by working with suppliers that have obtained FSC certification, optimising transportation modes to use less fuel, and changing the terms and conditions of new contracts to comply with sustainability objectives (Guardian, 2022).

There will be an upfront cost, as there always is with change. However, investing in transformation will give you a competitive advantage in public procurement contracts where sustainability scores are becoming more significant. The legal profession is attempting to arm businesses with the means to bargain for environmentally responsible practices. An example of practitioners working together to create standard terms that connect contract drafting with net zero aims is the Chancery Lane Project. A big advantage for future contracts will come from getting involved early in the drive to promote environmentally friendly practices. There will be a legacy from the Commonwealth Games in Birmingham in 2022. The sooner suppliers embrace more sustainable methods, the less likely they are to lose future contracts and lag behind the competition (Yet, Manuel, DeVidi, & MacDonald, 2022).

The varied populations of Birmingham, however, feel "mostly disregarded" and disengaged as a result of the 2022 Commonwealth Games' organisers' failure to truly involve them. The Birmingham Race Impact Group (BRIG) established a team of consultants and experts in racial equality to assess the Games in a number of areas, including legacy, community engagement, and procurement. According to the research, engaging with different ethnic groups in the city has been done in a "check box" fashion, according to local communities. All sections of the Games received a red (needs urgent action) or amber (needs work) rating. Flag-waving and participation in organisations that prioritise photo opportunities are specifically mentioned as being "similar to usual subjugation-style activities for minority communities." (Guardian, 2022).

Some of the report's assertions were fiercely refuted by the Birmingham 2022 organising team. The statement read: "We are happy that our workforce reflects the diversity of the West Midlands and are working hard to ensure that benefits [from the Games] are available to everyone across the region. Despite our disappointment with the report's conclusions, we welcome BRIG's input and will carefully evaluate their recommendations to make the most of every opportunity to assist as many members of Birmingham and the West Midlands communities as possible (Yet, Manuel, DeVidi, & MacDonald, 2022).

In the bid to win the Commonwealth Games, Birmingham's diversity "was leveraged as a positive asset," according to the report, but the organisers "failed to engage the city's different populations in a meaningful way." A forum for equality, diversity, and inclusion (EDI) that was created to foster better relations with minority groups "was far from conducive in building trust, confidence, and positive connections," according to the study, and participants expressed bewilderment about its goals. Director of the city's Aston Performing Arts Academy, Tru Powell, claimed that despite numerous attempts to have his organisation participate in the Games, it had been ignored (Tan et al., 2022).

"I had high hopes for the city's hosting of the Commonwealth Games. I was the first to stand up and exclaim, 'Hallelujah, yeah, this is going to be fantastic, there will be a tonne of opportunities!' " But as time went on, I began to notice who was profiting from the Games and, more significantly, who wasn't. We work with approximately 150 inner-city youth every week, ranging in age from six to thirty, making us one of the greatest grassroots arts organisations in the city, he claimed. I believe it is disastrous that we are not involved (Guardian, 2022).

Since there were only two minority-ethnic directors out of the original 14 directors on the board of the organising committee, there have been complaints about diversity with the 2022 Commonwealth Games. This led to the hiring of more board members. Five individuals of colour are currently present on the board. A six-month cultural festival that coincided with the Games earlier this year also caused controversy because some people believed it marginalised minority groups. To address the troubled background of the event, formerly known as the British Empire Games, former chief executive of the Commonwealth Games Federation David Grevemberg pledged a "truth and reconciliation action plan," but it never materialised (Husereau et al., 2022).

It claims that the event's "diversity credentials are at serious risk" and that its conclusions "leave the diverse communities of Birmingham feeling that they have been largely ignored."

Stakeholder consultation

During our engagement, they spoke with significant individuals from various departments and functional areas of Birmingham City Council, partner organisations, the West Midlands Growth Company, the delivery unit for the Commonwealth Games, UK Sport, and Sport Birmingham. They also had conversations with associates in business, academia, and global development (Pellicano, Dinsmore, & Charman, 2014).

They specifically asked them for their vision and ambition for major sporting events in Birmingham, what governance and partnership arrangements would be necessary, what types of events and properties we should take into consideration, and how to best maximise the value, impact, and return on investment for the city (Joosten et al., 2015).

During the consultation, a few common themes came up, and everyone agreed that they could approach the major sporting event offer better with better planning, coordination, and collaboration. They, therefore, intend to create a cross-sector Major Sporting Event Expert Advisory Group that brings together important sectors, organisations, and people in order to contribute knowledge and assistance to the implementation of our strategy (Pellicano, Dinsmore, & Charman, 2014).

Community engagement practitioner approach

It is really important for the community engagement practitioner needs to adopt a forward-looking approach in order to educate community members on internal and external factors that influence community development.

As the community is considered to be a significant stakeholder within the society for businesses and as well as a whole. It is important to provide them with better opportunities and equal opportunities to the whole society irrespective of their religion, colour, caste, ethnicity, etc. Providing better opportunities to society will help society to develop and grow in a better way and it can bring exceptional benefits within the society that will help to promote the overall culture, diversity and inclusion within the society (Emery, Mulder, & Frewer, 2014).

Conclusion

Based on the discussion and analysis performed within the report, it can be concluded that overall the community was ignored during the event. However, a few possible recommendations can be helpful to improve community engagement.

Firstly, it is important to build connections with the community by involving them and providing better opportunities for them to be involved. Secondly, provide them with the opportunity to meet with other community members, this interaction and involvement will help them to achieve a sense of being one community.

Moreover, try to be more responsive as people are likely to have listened. This will increase their confidence within the community and it will provoke them to bring positivity to society with their presence. Try to promote such activities within the society that attract more people to be a part of the current community.

Incentivize participation within the community. While organic community engagement strategies are excellent, you should also encourage participation. You can do this by establishing an ambassador programme and inviting both your staff and clients to participate. After that, you choose the best brand ambassadors for your company and pay them for completing duties like making social media content.

It is the intention to include brand advocates in community-building initiatives. You can add as many ambassadors as you like to your programme and select a payment option that fits your budget. Employees might receive monetary bonuses, while consumer ambassadors could receive free products each month.

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