

Spreading Social Innovations – A Case Study Report

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1. Introduction	4
2. Case study 1: Co-operative Trust Schools.....	9
2.1 Introduction and narrative	9
2.2 Mechanisms for spreading this innovation	12
2.3 Challenges to spreading the model	20
2.4 How has this form of innovation changed and adapted as it has spread?.....	23
2.5 What are some of the key learnings from this case study?.....	23
3. Case study 2: Teach For All.....	25
3.1 Introduction and narrative	25
3.2 Mechanisms for spreading this innovation	28
3.3 Challenges for the network	30
3.4 How has this form of innovation changed and adapted as it has spread?.....	32
3.5 What are some of the key lessons from this case study?.....	34
4. Case study 3: Realising Ambition Programme – Lions Quest Skills for Adolescence	36
4.1 Introduction and narrative	36
4.2 Mechanisms for spreading this innovation	39
4.3 How has this form of innovation changed and adapted as it has spread?.....	42
4.4 Challenges to replicating this intervention.....	45
4.5 What are some of the key learnings from this case study?.....	48
5. Conclusion.....	49

1. Introduction

The question of how and why innovations spread has been a major topic of study within social sciences over the last 50 years. There is an extensive literature that attempts to better understand processes of innovation diffusion. Much of this has been focused on product innovations, examining what determines the rate of adoption across different populations. However, diffusion studies have also been extended to look at the spread of social practices, social movements, news and other forms of information.

Within social innovation literature, it has been common to frame the question of spreading social innovations in terms of ‘scaling up’ rather than diffusion. This usually refers to the growth of an organisation or the spread of a particular practice. There is also much interest in the idea of ‘scaling social impact’ which suggests we should focus less on organisational growth as a means of spreading innovation and more on non-growth strategies such as replication and dissemination. We examined both these literatures in an accompanying paper, reviewing the existing literature on growing social innovations.¹

We argue that the discourse around ‘scaling social impact’ has not done enough to fully unpack non-organisational growth strategies for social innovation.² In part this is due to the current dominance of social enterprise – which has a strong organisational lens – within discussions of social innovation. While consideration of social enterprise is of course valid as one dimension within social innovation, this focus can be limiting because it distracts from the reality that not all social innovations take the form of social enterprises or grow like social enterprises. In many instances, social innovations do not have organisational forms at all and will need to be rolled out or implemented within established systems or institutions.

Indeed, discussions about spreading social innovation will be more meaningful where we are specific about the unit of analysis we are concerned with spreading. We need to be clear about whether the innovation to be spread is a new practice, a new process, a new type of organisation, or a new law or regulation.³ Below we propose a typology of social innovations which suggests how the growth of different types of social innovations might be conceptualised. We argue that each of these types of social innovations will spread and grow in different ways. It is for this reason that we also urge caution when using the language of ‘scaling’ or ‘scaling up’ to refer to the growth of all types of social innovations; adoption of this language can narrow the way we think about routes and approaches to growth.

¹ See TEPSIE deliverable 7.1, A Davies and J Simon, *Growing social innovation: a literature review*. Available online at <http://www.tepsie.eu/images/documents/d71final.pdf>

² Ibid

³ This typology is not exhaustive but intended to illustrate the fact that there are different types of social innovation.

Figure 1 Typology of social innovations

Types of social innovation	Examples	Growth could be conceptualised as...
New services	e.g. new interventions or new programmes to meet social needs	Replication, scaling up, mainstreaming, adoption
New practices	e.g. new services which require new professional roles or relationships	Adoption, replication, mainstreaming, change management
New processes	e.g. co-production of new services	Adoption, mainstreaming, implementation, change management
New rules and regulations	e.g. the creation of new laws or new entitlements	Policy diffusion
New organisational forms	e.g. hybrid organisational forms such as social enterprises	Diffusion, replication

In this report, we have used a case study approach to explore in more depth what the spread of social innovations looks like in contexts that go beyond organisation growth. The aim of this report is to explore the spread of social innovations where those innovations are new programmes, practices and organisational structures.⁴ Areas for future research might include looking at the spread of social innovations where those innovations are new laws, regulations or entitlements or new processes.

Based on our findings in the accompanying literature review, we were particularly interested in examining the role of intermediary organisations in spreading social innovations. Some social innovations are spread very deliberately by a defined actor, while others are diffused over time with contributions from multiple actors and without a single actor orchestrating the process. What is the role of intermediary organisations that support the spread of social innovations? What functions do they perform and how do these change over time? And how do they manage trade offs between supporting grassroots led innovation and adopting a more centralised, directed strategy? There is currently a significant lack of research on the role of intermediaries, federations and umbrella organisations in the spread and growth of social innovations. This report marks a first attempt to address this gap.

We also wanted to examine some of the tensions that exist between replication and adaptation that were highlighted in the literature.⁵ Replication is often touted as one potential strategy to ‘scale social impact’. However, as innovations travel they inevitably adapt to fit into new contexts. What are the tensions between faithfully replicating a successful, proven social innovation and

⁴ We use the terms social innovation and innovation interchangeably in this report.

⁵ Racine, D., 2003. Dissolving dualities: The Case for Common sense replication, *Non-profit and Voluntary Sector Quarterly* 2003 32: 307 and Uvin, P. and Miller, D., 1996. Paths to Scaling-up: Alternative Strategies for Local Nongovernmental Organizations. *Human Organization*, Vol. 55, No. 3, pp.344-354

being open to the possibilities for further innovation? As well as opportunities to explore these issues, we wanted our case studies to look both at transferring innovations within the same country context and spreading across national borders to examine how cultural contexts play a role in hindering or enabling the spread of a social innovation.

These three cases highlight a number of issues which are of relevance to the field of social innovation more broadly. Interestingly, all three cases show a number of commonalities; in particular they emphasise the role of interpersonal ties in spreading awareness of the social innovation in question. They also show that the spread of a social innovation is a dynamic process; processes of adoption, adaptation and replication are intimately tied together and in many cases, spreading an innovation can provide a platform for new complementary or supplementary innovations to be developed. In addition, they show that intermediary organisations can play a critical role in spreading social innovations but that this role changes over time.

Methodology

These cases are exploratory and we used the diverse case study method.⁶ Using the typology above, we selected one programme, one practice and one organisational form to examine in greater depth as part of this report. We selected these three types in order illustrate some of the ways in which these different types of social innovation spread. This was a deliberate attempt to move away from looking at how social enterprises grow and increase their social impact.

Beyond this, we had four criteria for selecting the case studies: first, an intermediary organisation had to be involved in the spread of each of the social innovations we explored; second, we wanted to look at one example which was global, one which involved spreading an innovation between two countries, and one which had spread within a national context; third, to narrow down our search we focused on interventions within the field of education and; fourth, carrying out the research had to be feasible. This last criterion meant that we were somewhat limited by language and focused largely on UK and US case studies. In a separate paper we will be examining the spread of citizen owned energy co-operatives across Germany. This will be published in the summer of 2014.

We developed these case studies by conducting qualitative semi-structured interviews with individuals directly involved in the spread of each of these forms of innovation. We interviewed between 8 and 10 individuals for each case study in order to validate and triangulate the information we have received from multiple perspectives. Interviews were done in person where possible but frequently by telephone and lasted for an average of 45 minutes to an hour. Interviews were recorded and the transcriptions analysed to identify common themes and narratives using a matrix approach.

⁶ J Seawright and J Gerring, 'Case Selection Techniques in Case Study Research: A Menu of Qualitative and Quantitative Options', *Political Research Quarterly*, Vol. 61, No. 2, June 2008, pp. 294-308

Introducing our case studies

1. The spread of co-operative schools in the UK

The basic concept behind co-operative schools is to find a way of rooting a school in its local community by providing an opportunity for pupils, staff and community members to participate in school governance. Since the model was first put into practice in the UK in 2006 there has been rapid growth; in 2014 there are now over 700 co-operative schools across England. While there have been some forms of support made available for schools to make this transition (namely from the Co-operative College) this spread has happened apparently without much political will or policy support, and tends to be conceived of as a grassroots, bottom up movement.

2. The expansion of the global Teach For All network

Teach For All describes itself as a 'Global network for expanding educational opportunity'. It was established in 2007 to spread the principles underlying Teach For America and Teach First in the UK. There are now Teach For All programmes in 34 countries. At its core, the model is based on recruiting and training young leaders who will have a positive influence on students in the short-term and go on to create systemic change in the education sector as alumni. The umbrella Teach For All organisation provides various forms of support to help the set up and growth of new country programmes but aims to be responsive to local appetite and capacity rather than to mastermind the spread of the model.

3. Replicating an evidence-based PSHE programme in a new country context

Realising Ambition is a £25 million investment from the Big Lottery to replicate a portfolio of 25 evidence-based interventions to help young people avoid pathways into offending. It is an example of spreading innovation where the aim is to spread a tightly defined innovation in very specific contexts. We have focused on just one of the interventions: a personal and social development programme (Lions Quest Skills for Adolescence) which is being delivered by youth membership organisation, Ambition. This licenced intervention was first developed in the US and although it has been rolled out in many countries worldwide, it is being implemented in the UK for the first time as part of the Realising Ambition programme.

Interviewees

The full list of interviewees for each case study is shown below. Many thanks to all of these individuals for spending time speaking with us, without whom this report would not have been possible.

Case Study 1: Cooperative schools, England

Mervyn Wilson, Chief Executive, The Co-operative College

Jon O'Connor, Regional Development Manager at Schools Co-operative Society

Deb Bacon, Operations Manager, Burton Co-operative Learning Trust

Sean Rogers, Lead on Co-operative Trust Schools, The Co-operative College

Bernadette Hunter, President of the National Association of Head Teachers and Headmistress of William Shrewsbury Primary School

Ken Hall, Associate, The Co-operative College

Tony Hand, Headteacher, Dosthill Primary School

Trisha Jaffe, Principal, Corelli College

Sandra Mitchell, Headteacher, Seabridge Primary School

Case study 2: Teach For All, Global

Nick Canning, Chief Operating Officer, Teach For All

Phil McComish, Vice President, Network Impact, Teach For All

Amy Black, Vice President, Growth Strategy & Development, Teach For All

Juan Carlos Perez Borja, CEO, Enseña Ecuador,

Mārīte Seile, CEO, Iespējamā Misija (Latvia)

Dzameer Dzulkipli, CEO Teach for Malaysia

Franco Mosso, CEO, EnseñaPeru

Evgenia Peeva, CEO, Teach for Bulgaria

Case study 3: Lions Quest Skills for Adolescence, UK

Patrick Pemsel, Head of Training, Ambition

Hew Punter, Youth work co-ordinator, Young Gloucestershire

Jo Oxlade, Head of Business Development, Ambition

Gabor Papp, Senior Trainer, Lion's Quest

Michael Di Maria, Lion's Quest International Education Specialist

Shaun Whelan, Senior Associate, Young Foundation (Realising Ambition Consortium)

Esther Thompson, Head of Training, London Youth

Bella Relph, Volunteer Manager, Hackney Quest

Janita Halsey, Youth Manager, Hackney Quest

Tim Hobbs, Head of Analytics, Social Research Unit (Realising Ambition Consortium)

2. Case study 1: Co-operative Trust Schools

Case study snapshot

Name	What is being spread?	What concept of spreading innovation is being used?	Who are the key actors involved?	What is the geographical scope?
Co-operative Trust Schools	A new school structure to embed co-operative values	A decentralised diffusion of the model, with some key supports in place	Individual schools; The Co-operative College; The Schools Co-operative Society	England



A mind map from the co-operative visioning day held at Wrekin co-operative Learning Trust in Telford.

2.1 Introduction and narrative

The Education system in England is currently undergoing major structural change. Since the introduction of Local Management of Schools in 1988, there has been a shift to reduce the role of

Local Authorities in education provision.⁷ Since then, successive Governments have moved powers away from municipal governments (i.e. Local Authorities) and created various new types of school which are directly funded by central government rather than local government. This trend continued under the Blair Government with the establishment of the academy school model – schools that are directly funded by central government (specifically, the Department for Education) and independent of direct control by local government in England. These schools have greater freedoms than other state schools over their finances, teacher pay and conditions and curriculum – they can choose their own curriculum so long as it is “broad and balanced”.⁸ Provision was first made for the development of academies in 2000 (initially known as ‘city academies’) and in 2010 the right to become an academy was extended to all publicly funded schools with an option to be ‘fast-tracked’ for schools that were rated as ‘outstanding’ by Ofsted, the schools inspection body. The 2010 Academies Act also made provision for ‘free schools’ – new schools that can be set up by groups of parents, teachers, charities and religious groups and like academies are funded directly from central government. Since 2010, 174 Free Schools have been established across the UK.⁹

It is against this background that the co-operative movement has become active in the development of school structures over the last decade. In 2003, the Co-operative College worked with Mutuo (an advocacy organisation for mutuals and co-operatives) and CfBT Education Trust (an education charity) to produce a report outlining possibilities for developing co-operative and mutual models for education. Then in 2004 the Co-operative Group agreed to sponsor ten specialist Business and Enterprise Colleges. Although this gave an opportunity to experiment with embedding co-operative values into learning and school support across a network, the Co-operative College wanted to find a longer-term model for this. They therefore decided to pursue a co-operative trust model, made possible under the 2006 Education and Inspections Act. This Act allowed schools to become foundation schools which establish a trust – the trust acts to safeguard the ethos of the school, its land and its assets; it is a charitable company limited by guarantee (CLG) and registered as such at Companies House. Trust schools remain part of the Local Authority family and are funded on the same basis as other maintained schools, according to the Local Authority’s funding formula. However, the Governing Body of the school takes on new responsibilities, becoming the legal employer of staff rather than the Local Authority and setting admissions arrangements. Ownership of the school’s land and assets is also transferred from the Local Authority to the co-operative trust where it is held mutually on behalf of the governing body and its local school community.

What is distinctive about a co-operative model for trust schools? These have a number of key characteristics:

- An ethos drawn from the globally shared co-operative values which are then formally recognised in the trust constitution.

⁷ Local Management of Schools (LMS) was introduced as part of the Education Reform Act of 1988. This allowed all schools to be taken out of the direct financial control of Local Authorities; financial control would be handed to the head teacher and governors of a school.

⁸ See Academies Act 2010. Available online at <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2010/32/section/1>

⁹ <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/new-school-year-sees-number-of-free-schools-double>

- Governance mechanisms that directly engage key stakeholder groups – parents, staff, learners, and the local community through membership.
- A curriculum and pedagogy that embraces cooperation, drawing on co-operative approaches to teaching and learning.

In 2008, Reddish Vale in Stockport became the first school to adopt the co-operative trust model. At the end of 2009, there were 36 co-operative trust schools. The College has also developed a co-operative model for converter academies – the first of which was Kirkby Stephen Grammar School and Sports College in Cumbria, itself previously a co-operative trust school. However, the trust model has proved most popular and as of April 2014 there are now 689 co-operative trust schools (primary and secondary). The breakdown for all co-operative schools from 2011 to today is given in the table below.

Co-operative schools	Sep-11	Sep-12	Sep-13	Jan-14	Apr-14
Co-operative Trust schools:					
Secondary Schools	63	83	94	98	104
Primary Schools	76	207	389	435	450
Special schools	6	23	30	39	40
Associate Members	30	36	72	85	100
Co-operative Academies					
Sponsored by the Co-operative Group	3	3	6	6	6
Sponsored by SCS				1	1
Converters	5	18	33	35	36
<i>Secondary Schools</i>			22	23	24
<i>Primary Schools</i>			9	10	10
<i>Special Schools</i>			2	2	2
Co-operative sponsored Business & Enterprise Colleges (other than Trusts or Co-operative Academies)	5	5	5	5	5
Total schools	188	375	629	704	742

Source: Figures provided by the Co operative College, 2014

The spread of co-operative school models is an interesting case of how an innovation (in this case, a new legal structure) can be rapidly adopted even where there has not been strong policy support for it. And it is an example of where a wider ‘bottom up’ movement has been significant. This case also illustrates the importance of a context where adopters are receptive to change, and also how ‘spreading an innovation’ in some cases may be as much about facilitating new forms of innovation as it is about proliferating one particular phenomenon.

In what follows we look at:

- Mechanisms for how this model has spread, including motivations to adopt
- Different explanations for the rapid spread of the co-operative school model
- The specific challenges that have arisen from the fact that the innovation has spread in a bottom up rather than centralised way
- The extent to which the model has adapted or proved to be a catalyst for further innovation
- Key lessons

2.2 Mechanisms for spreading this innovation

2.2.1 Awareness

Awareness of the co-operative trust school model was consistently described by interviewees as dependent on existing headteacher networks and ‘word of mouth’. Some talked about hearing about the model through their Local Authority (Tony Hand describes a presentation from their Local Authority outlining different options including ‘academisation’ and co-operative trusts). Others mention exposure at events such as the National Association of Head Teachers (NAHT) annual conference. However, it is personal contacts of one kind or another that seem to be decisive. Headteachers Sandra Mitchell and Tony Hand had both worked with schools in their area that had already made the move to co-operative trust status. As Operations Manager at Burton Co-operative Learning Trust Deb Bacon explains, “heads like to speak to other heads to find out what it's all about”. Bernadette Hunter, herself a head and former President of the National Association of Headteachers (NAHT) concurs: “once the story is told, headteachers talk to other headteachers - we trust each other.” Jon O’Connor of the Schools Co-operative Society notes that the background to this is a policy climate in which there has been a “constant and quite wearing conversation about which school structure is a colleague embracing.” Mervyn Wilson, Chief Executive at the Co-operative College explains that when a co-operative school is formed in a ‘desert’ area where there are no others, and headteachers are questioned about how they came across the model, they often mention off the cuff discussions or chance conversations with colleagues they have known for years. These networks clearly play a crucial role in the spread of the model.

Certainly there is a sense that the growth of co-operative schools over the last six years has come about as the result of a grassroots or bottom up movement, as opposed to a concerted campaign. The Co-operative College is the most visible supporter and enabler of the co-operative schools movement but, as Mervyn Wilson notes, “we have zero marketing budget... it’s all about organic growth”. Trisha Jaffe, head at Corelli College notes that there has been “no proselytising anywhere... no big campaign”. Jon O’Connor admits that description of the movement as a ‘quiet revolution’ can be something of a cliché, but he maintains “there is some truth in that – this hasn’t

been trumpeted because it isn't a big brand or a government policy". Indeed, Wilson explains that although there has been quite wide political consensus that the idea of co-operative schools is a good thing and many MPs from across all parties have been supportive, there has been no support or advocacy for co-operative trust schools from the Department of Education: "you won't find a word about trusts on the Department for Education website, there's no promotion whatsoever".

2.2.2 Motivations

Given this context, why are headteachers (and their governing bodies) making the decision to pursue a conversion to co-operative trust status? A number of factors seem to be important here:

Co-operative values

The values associated with co-operatives are attractive for many – both intrinsically and for how they fit with a school's existing ethos.¹⁰ Ken Hall, Associate at the Co-operative College and former headteacher explains:

"What really attracted us was when we started looking at the values - I know you'd struggle to find someone who didn't agree with them - but you're adhering to them and you're putting them up in a very public place. We felt that was something we wanted to be associated with."

Deb Bacon agrees: 'It was the underpinning values that struck the heads - this is where their moral compass is set'. Similarly, Jon O'Connor explained that "the thing that's the trigger is often the identification with a set of values – educationalists want to be part of a force for good". Others put this motivation in terms of being able to secure the existing ethos of the school. Trisha Jaffe explains that for her school, Corelli, it was about "protecting a value system that the school has... A lot of schools want to secure the next steps of the institution in a way they feel are empathetic to those values". Having values 'locked into' the school's articles of association was also felt to be attractive for ensuring that "they can't just be changed by someone else coming in, just like that".

The desire to cement existing relationships

Being able to draw on the support of local partners is a key driver for many. This refers both to the trust partners (for example local colleges, universities or businesses) as well as other schools in multi-school trusts. This is frequently described as formalising existing relationships rather than establishing new ones. Bernadette Hunter notes that primaries have always worked alongside other schools. What the co-operative model allows them to do is about "formalising that relationship in a very uncertain scenario...It's saying 'We know we get on, but let's put a bit of a more formal responsibility on all of us to work together, to bind us in'".

¹⁰ See the International Co-operative Alliance statement on co-operative values: "Co-operatives are based on the values of self-help, self-responsibility, democracy, equality, equity and solidarity. In the tradition of their founders, co-operative members believe in the ethical values of honesty, openness, social responsibility and caring for others." Available online at: <http://ica.coop/en/whats-co-op/co-operative-identity-values-principles>

Similarly, for Deb Bacon, the co-operative trust model provides a convincing response to the question of “how can we continue to maintain the trust we have in each other and formalise the relationship?” Trisha Jaffe felt that “becoming linked in a multi-institutional network gives you a natural group that has shared interests and provides back up for you.” Sean Rogers of the Co-operative College notes that “the creation of a co-operative school trust will usually emerge from a history of informal partnership working between a group or cluster of local schools...Formalising this into a legal co-operative trust is for many the next step and it helps them to ‘future-proof’ the relationship-building and joint working that they will have built up.”

Benefits of collaboration

Unsurprisingly, a key motivation for adopting the co-operative trust structure is the expectation of a positive impact on the school. As Jon O’Connor puts it, “the decision to convert is usually related to some confidence that there will be a positive dividend”. The nature of this positive dividend is expressed differently by the school leaders we spoke to. Some were particularly enthused about initiatives that had been enabled by introducing local organisations as formal partners in the trust. For example, headteacher Sandra Mitchell comments that “we’ve been very engaged with Keele [University] in delivering their teacher training - some of our staff have given lectures there which is great for their professional development”. New trust partners are also able to contribute non-school based expertise. The co-operative movement is strong in Tony Hand’s local area of Tamworth and one of the school partners is a retail co-operative. They are able to attend the school’s procurement meetings, “offering a business perspective that we don’t have”.

Collaborating on procurement for services like catering and cleaning between the schools in a trust is another frequently mentioned benefit. For Bernadette Hunter, collaboration is across the board: “We look at procurement and savings, improving teaching and learning, sharing expertise and headteachers supporting each other”. At Hand’s trust, two of the teachers completed an Improving Teacher and Outstanding Teacher Facilitator training programme which means they are now licenced to deliver this training to other teachers across the trust: “that has been key to raising the quality of learning and teaching across the schools”, he comments. Having local support is also especially valuable. Mervyn Wilson explains the teacher perspective he frequently hears: “when I need help on English I’m not going to go to a chain hundreds of miles away - I want to talk to the good English department down the road”.

The impact of the co-operative ethos is also understood as a significant benefit. Trisha Jaffe explains that in the context of her school where there are high levels of deprivation, the co-operative emphasis on pupil involvement in governance and ownership of the school has been very important:

“Student leadership was big for us... Becoming part of a community with very clear values and where you can make a difference as a young person mattered to us a lot. A lot of our youngsters come in with a passivity, without the feeling they can take control of their world. We wanted to give them an opportunity to do that. Students apply for posts of responsibility in writing, are interviewed and then take them on. It’s changed relationships in the college and between students”.

Others point to the impact of working collaboratively on driving up school performance: “there’s a tremendous potential for school to school support to bring about improvement” says Bernadette Hunter. She believes that this approach of cooperation is very much at odds with the current Coalition Government’s agenda of improving standards through greater parental choice and competition between schools:

“The Government envisages that it is only good or outstanding schools that can share best practice, but in our experience, even schools [that] might not be judged as good yet by Ofsted have things they can offer. There are pockets of good that can be shared in all schools and because those structures are formalised in co-operative schools, schools can work together to help the weaker ones”.

She gives an example from her own trust where one of the schools received a poor inspection from Ofsted and “the other heads worked together to support them”. This perspective is shared by Mervyn Wilson. He highlights an important motivation as the “growing recognition that mutuality and working together is the best way of bringing about sustainable improvement”. Similarly, Sean Rogers highlights that in the co-operative model, school improvement is “about doing with, not being done to... it’s not about a potentially hostile takeover model with some strong school taking over or running a perceived weak school. It’s about a group of schools taking responsibility for supporting each other and also respecting the school being supported, while recognising that mutual co-operative support develops and delivers real and sustainable capacity”.

2.2.3 How has the number of co-op schools grown so quickly?

The Co-operative College predicts that there will be 1000 co-operative schools by the time of the next General Election in May 2015. As Mervyn Wilson puts it, “we’re talking about an 8% market share with no funding in 5 years...There are four times as many co-operative schools as free schools, despite the millions that has gone into them”. What has enabled the rapid adoption of this particular school structure, with apparently little government backing? Our interviewees suggest a number of key enabling factors.

Support of the Co-operative College

The help provided by the College to get through the conversion process is mentioned frequently as an important enabler. Sandra Mitchell comments, “...the College were very supportive... this was one of the reasons we felt it was for us...it wasn’t an area of expertise - changing our status - and so we liked the idea that the College would guide us through the process”. Trisha Jaffe agrees, “They were phenomenally helpful - second to none.” And Bernadette Hunter comments that the College were: “endlessly patient in talking to governors and helping with all the legal process...they gave a lot of support on the technical side of it. They also spent time talking to us about ethos, values, the movement...That was really helpful in our decision making.”

Although the College only has two full time staff members working on co-operative schools, they work with a range of independent associates (many ex headteachers) on a consultancy model. A school thinking about converting to a co-operative trust model can get support from an associate throughout the whole process, from initial discussions to explain the model, to developing the consultation process, attending consultation meetings and drafting all the necessary documentation. This costs around £4,000 for a single school and then £650 for each additional school in the trust.

The wraparound nature of the support for conversion is highlighted as particularly important. Associate Deb Bacon explains, “What’s good is they [the schools] are not dropped and left to get on with it. They’ll have the continued support of the College through someone sitting on their trust board until a local co-op can be found... People I converted last year will still call me and ask me questions”. The fact that associates are typically ex-heads and themselves committed to the co-operative model is also significant. Jon O’Connor argues that what the College provides is “an empathetic service that understands the context in schools”. And Deb Bacon notes that associates are effective “either because they are passionate about values or they are part of a trust themselves like I am - that makes you a good spokesperson for it.”

Over time the College has built up significant expertise related to the process. As Mervyn Wilson comments, “it’s a complex process you only ever do once...but our associates will have heard all the questions many times before”. The College is now working on developing its support into a tighter package that takes schools through the first 18 months and extends to attending the first two meetings of the Trust. This package will also include some of the other support elements the College has developed such as a trustee handbook and a company secretary handbook. This approach should reduce the transaction costs of selling these different pieces individually. As Wilson explains,

“One of the reasons for the success of the scaling we’ve seen is that we have learnt to largely commodify the process. It’s a combination of complete customisation with commodification of the process. You make it as simple as possible to take large numbers through it.”

However, there is a clear distinction between the role of the College in convincing people to undertake the conversion and supporting them to convert once they’ve made the decision to do so. As Wilson comments, “I’m almost in denial about our role in it...what we’ve managed to do is find people who are interested – and to show you how you can do it.” Deb Bacon agrees, “I never got the impression that the College is about a hard sell – they are slick at what they do and are passionate about the model...It’s not a big sales pitch, it’s very much, if you think these values are important to you, that’s how you’re going to come to it”.

Support from unions and professional associations

Another important element is that the co-operative model has received backing from influential groups such as unions and professional associations. In 2011, the Schools Co-operative Society (SCS) signed an agreement with UNISON which represents the majority of school support staff. A

year later, the Schools Co-operative Society and NASUWT (the National Association of Schoolmasters Union of Women Teachers) entered into an agreement to promote co-operative solutions for schools. In this they stated their “shared commitment to education as a democratically accountable public service which operates in the public interest” and NASUWT agreed that it would “encourage its members to join and become active members of the Schools Co-operative Society.”¹¹ In Mervyn Wilson’s view, NASUWT have accepted that changes to the system are inevitable and that if there has to be a shift away from Local Authority community schools, the co-operative trust model “is the least worst model and a model whose values they share, so they’re happy to engage with it”. In September 2013, the Schools Co-operative Society and the Co-operative College signed an agreement with all the Trades Union Congress (TUC) affiliated unions. This agreement stated that the unions “recognise that the co-operative models developed enable key stakeholder groups to have a central role in the governance of schools and as such will encourage their members to actively engage in them”.¹² This agreement which confirms that the co-operative model is one that respects the voice and rights of staff, “has been pivotal” says Jon O’Connor.

Bernadette Hunter, President of the National Association of Headteachers (NAHT) of 2013/2014 and herself a headteacher of a primary co-operative trust school explains that the unions “recognise this is a model that is very supportive of staff and in line with union principles”. While the position of the NAHT is not to advocate for any particular school structure, she believes that the co-operative trust model fits very well with their position that “school structure should be outward facing and not damage other schools - and it should be open to collaboration.” Indeed, at their recent annual conference in May, NAHT members voted to support a manifesto that proposed that all schools should be part of a cluster or collaboration with ‘strong mutual accountability’ and that schools should be rewarded for collaborating with and supporting others.

A context of inevitable and rapid change

Perhaps the most important factor in enabling this rapid spread of the co-operative model is a context of major change and upheaval in school structures. The Coalition’s first Education White Paper released in 2010, *The Importance of Teaching* made clear that the Government wanted to pursue radical structural reform. The paper states that: “It is our ambition that Academy status should be the norm for all state schools, with schools enjoying direct funding and full independence from central and local bureaucracy.”¹³ Against this background, many Local Authorities began to encourage their schools to think about their future structure. Deb Bacon explains, “the Local Authority were saying to schools ‘you cannot do nothing, you need to make a change’. It was a case of, make a decision while you still can”. Similarly, in Sandra Mitchell’s Local Authority, “the message was: you shouldn’t be sitting back and doing nothing, your destiny is in your own hands.”

¹¹ Statement of Joint Principles between the Schools Co-operative Society and the NASUWT. Available online at: <http://www.nasuwt.org.uk/Whatsnew/NASUWTNews/PressReleases/CooperativeSociety>

¹² National Agreement and Statement of Joint Principles: The Schools Cooperative Society, the Cooperative College and the Education Unions. Available online at <http://www.co-op.ac.uk/wp-content/uploads/2013/12/TUC-SCS-Co-operative-College-Agreement-September-2013.pdf>

¹³ The Importance of Teaching. The Schools White Paper, 2010. Available online at https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/175429/CM-7980.pdf

Bernadette Hunter agrees there was a sense of “a rapidly changing landscape” and a concern “will I be the last standing?” Trisha Jaffe also felt that “with all the changes going on with [the] Ofsted framework, it did seem it was the one window we had to make a bold move.” Mervyn Wilson summarises this well when he says “as it becomes clear that the status quo is not an option anymore, more of them [schools] are looking at what to do...inertia is no longer an option”. A situation where schools are being forced to consider their structural status clearly provides fertile ground for the adoption of a new model.

As well as this general context of the need to make a change, interviewees also spoke about a particular concern to avoid the academy route. Bernadette Hunter explains that in her case, “there was a concern about predatory takeover. So we had to get ourselves into a structure to give us protection”. Trisha Jaffe agrees, explaining, “...there is such a rapaciousness in the chains to take over what they perceive as less successful institutions - so there is also a protection factor to decide to become a trust independent of any sponsor or chain.” In several cases this was about a desire to protect the autonomy of the school. Sandra Mitchell explains her school’s position as follows: “what we don't like is being ‘done to’... we looked at it - ‘being academised’ - and we didn't want to be an island on our own – we really value working in partnership with other schools.” Mervyn Wilson also notes that as the Government agenda to pursue academies has continued there has been “a growing recognition of the scale of the democratic deficit that this creates. That’s where our model is different – it’s the only one that provides a real voice for the key stakeholders.”

Regional multiplier effect

Another factor felt to be important for quick growth is the emergence of regional clusters of co-operative schools. Looking at the map of locations of co-operative schools, there tend to be pockets of areas with many trusts. This is particularly pronounced in the Southwest and specifically in Cornwall and Devon.



The location of co-operative schools within England. Source: The Co-operative College

Bernadette Hunter comments, “...there's a snowball effect - other schools have looked at what we're doing and are saying - can we come talk to you about it...maybe we could do what you've done? It's almost a copycat situation...You see another group and then another and another becoming interested”. Being able to look to another school in the local area is important for many new trusts. Tony Hand explains that when thinking about conversion, his school was able to draw

on the experience of Burton Co-operative Learning Trust: “We were able to use them and follow processes and procedures that others had used. We looked at their pamphlets and consultation documents and adapted them for what we needed and our reasons for moving.” Ken Hall also notes the regional multiplier effect: “once a school goes, others [in the local area] are more inclined to take it up”.

Adoption by schools in new areas can be a much slower process. For example, Hall is currently working with schools in an area of the North East which doesn’t have a history of co-operative schools. One recently formed in East Cleveland was the first in this particular local authority to convert and immediately became the country’s largest co-operative trust with 21 schools. Another is in the process of forming in West Cleveland. Similar developments are now underway in Middlesbrough and Sunderland.

It is also important to note that growth of the network happens not just from the formation of new trusts but also from schools joining existing trusts. Sandra Mitchell and Tony Hand both added local schools to their network after converting. Mitchell explains that they had already been in consultation with local schools prior to conversion. Afterwards they held a launch event and invited local schools: “we didn’t want to do a hard sell but we said we’d love it if you’d want to join us. Fairly quickly we had a special school that decided to join and then another primary in July 2013. And after that two primaries went through consultation”. Tony Hand added another two schools to their trust to take them to eight schools: one high school and seven primaries. These vary from a village school of 60-70 children to Hand’s own which is a primary of 600 pupils. Asked about the potential for further growth, Hand responded “I think there’s an optimum number you get to in terms of collaboration but we haven’t fixed a figure. If other people came along for the right reasons and wanted to work collaboratively and adopt the principles, I’m sure we would be open to that.”

2.3 Challenges to spreading the model

By any measure, the spread of the co-operative school model has been rapid, surpassing the expectations of even those committed to the movement. But what are some of the challenges associated with spreading a model that is frequently discussed as bottom-up or ‘grassroots’ in character, that arguably has more in common with a movement than a controlled implementation process?

Lack of resourcing

One of the biggest concerns highlighted by interviewees is a lack of funding to support the growth of co-operative schools. First, there is currently no funding for individual schools undertaking the conversion process. As Mervyn Wilson points out, “as it is, schools have to dip into their own pockets to pay for the conversion process, and for small primaries, that’s a challenge”. Jon O’Connor argues that “if central government provides funding for the academy model, there’s a disconnect if they fail to provide other opportunities for other networks. There’s still a cost to conversion... it would be good to have pump priming funding.”

Second, there is also no funding to support the school-to school collaboration that is one of the key potential benefits of the model (funding provided by the previous Government to assist with developing a trust's co-operative membership base was ended by the Coalition Government soon after its election). Trisha Jaffe explains that current collaboration is "entirely based on mutuality - it's what schools put into it. There is no highfalutin organisation that is running this - it is entirely us." And this inevitably creates challenges for what can be achieved, as Bernadette Hunter argues:

"...there is no slack in the system to allow [this sharing] to happen. If we had a small amount of funding in the system – if you had a fantastic maths teacher from school X you could send them into school Y which was struggling. While there isn't any funding, that is hard".

Resourcing is also a struggle for the two key institutions that have played a role in the growth of this movement: the Schools Co-operative Society and the Co-operative College. Certainly lack of resource limits the amount of promotion they can do and their ability to reach into new areas. Mervyn Wilson comments: "without a marketing budget, you can devise good resources but people don't know they are there... this is where some financial resource would really help". The situation is similar for the Schools Co-operative Society. Trisha Jaffe says "a lot of what SCS is doing is self funded. We're not a Harris or an Ark¹⁴ - we don't have collective resource from central government. Maybe this is part of what we need to argue for."

The need to consolidate and leverage a diffuse network

When asked about the potential for further spread of co-operative schools, a common response was that although continued growth was expected (given teacher motivations and current context), how far this could go would be dependent on demonstrating the concrete advantages of becoming a co-operative school. Jon O'Connor comments:

"It will be necessary in the next two to three years to evidence that - not only is this ethical, it is also educational - it does provide by any measure you like, success stories based on impact and progress indicators...Educationalists, MPs, and the public at large will be asking the same challenging questions of co-operative schools as they'd ask of any school now - does it work, are there learning gains?"

Similarly, Ken Hall argued that:

"The growth - how rapid it is, depends on what the schools see as the advantages compared to academy converter or chain... If they see schools are successfully working together on school improvement and maintaining their autonomy and getting support not hindrance from [the] LA [Local Authority], that's very attractive. If they don't see that, they'll look elsewhere."

¹⁴ Harris and Ark are two large academy chains. See <http://www.harrisfederation.org.uk/> and <http://www.arkschools.org/>

Tony Hand also identified that a hindrance to further growth would be “if people were feeling there was no gain and school to school support wasn’t helping schools to improve”. There is a need to prove that in the co-operative school model and network there is “something on offer that can help schools to move forward”.

Further developing the support and services provided by the Schools Co-operative Society is felt to be key to this. Several interviewees argued that more work needs to be done to realise the benefits of the growing network of co-operative schools. Deb Bacon notes in relation to the Schools Co-operative Society, “when you get more and more schools you need to think about a sustainable model... what are their expectations as members...and how do we then provide that support?” And Ken Hall commented that the Schools Co-operative Society “is going to be crucial to make this model successful. It’s got to look at how schools will support each other – and what it can do in regional groups...The next stage is that [the]Schools Co-operative Society develops how it’s going to work with schools and what it can offer in terms of training and advice.” Some of this is already being trialled, for example Jon O’Connor has been involved in setting up a subscription based regional network for London and the South East which would look to provide a virtual network through a database which details current strengths, priorities and partnership work across schools, so that they can get in touch with one another for support. They are also looking into developing a partnership with Roehampton University which would enable the network to offer professional development and leadership training.

One of the reasons this work is challenging is that co-operative schools are operating in a loose, voluntary network as opposed to being organised in a more directive way by some centralised body. Ken Hall expresses the dilemma well: “[in academy chains] there are some very top down elements - which has its advantages; there are some quick wins in particular that you can gain from this. How does this work compare to the collaborative co-operative model? That’s something that we have to look at for the long term”. Similarly Mervyn Wilson identifies that there is a challenge for government about how to interact with this different kind of structure: “How do you move from a statist, top down command and control mentality to one that is about devolved governance and creating an enabling environment in which co-operatives can flourish. That to me is the biggest challenge.”

However, it is something that goes to the heart of the ethos of the co-operative approach. Wilson draws parallels with the nineteenth century co-operative ‘missionaries’ spreading retail co-operatives: “they didn’t simply try to set up a branch in a new area. They came to talk to local people about how to do it.” Similarly, the co-operative schools movement is about finding “volunteers, not conscripts”, he explains. Sean Rogers notes that “sometimes, Local Authorities will come up to us and say: ‘can you come and make all our schools co-operatives?’ Of course the answer is no – it has to be voluntary - they’ve got to want to do it!”. As Dave Boston of the Schools Co-operative Society explains, “we are determined to prove that you can have a bottom up co-operative network that is every bit as effective as a top-down command and control chain”.¹⁵

¹⁵ Dave Boston, quoted in ‘Cooperative schools’ by Mervyn Wilson, Cooperative News, 31 December, 2013.

2.4 How has this form of innovation changed and adapted as it has spread?

One of the issues we are interested in exploring in this set of case studies is to what extent we see innovations morphing and adapting as they are spread to new places. How does this play out in relation to co-operative schools? In one sense, the co-operative school structure is an innovation that stays quite static as it travels, since at its core is a set of governance articles and a legal structure that is applied in a consistent way in each case. Yet the educationalists involved in this model see this structural element as merely the starting point for a whole range of potential activities. In other words, the structural change acts as a kind of platform for a variety of potential initiatives which build on a co-operative ethos. Trisha Jaffe explains, “what you do internally is entirely up to you – there’s nothing that prescribes what will make it a co-operative apart from the governance structure. The rest is what you make of it - you can take it as far as you like, or only as governance.” Sean Rogers concurs, pointing out that while the conversion process can be straightforward, “the big issue is always, how do we grow the trust and move from having completed the legal process to actually getting this thing up and running”. Similarly Jon O’Connor notes that one of the things headteachers often struggle to understand when he first speaks to them about the co-operative option is that “the downside is whatever you make it and the upside is what you make of it as well - if you don't engage you won't get much out of it.”

There are early signs that the co-operative schools movement is beginning to spark co-operative and mutual approaches that go beyond some of the less formal school to school support already mentioned. Jon O’Connor highlighted the case of Newham, where the Local Authority together with around 90 schools have established a new mutual organisation – Newham Partnership Working (NPW) to run and commission services to its members and beyond. On 30th July 2012 NPW took over the running of four key services from the London Borough of Newham – Education ICT, Schools HR, Governor Services and School Support Services. And in Devon, the Plymouth Association of Primary Headteachers (PAPH) has recently created a co-operative Community Interest Company (CIC) to deliver a portfolio of mutually owned services to local schools. This includes Supply+, a primary school teacher recruitment service, which is already delivering efficiencies.

In another development, conversations are beginning with further education colleges about developing a co-operative model that works for this sector. Wilson comments, “interestingly, most of the colleges we’ve engaged with on this so far are already partners in co-operative school trusts...the ones I think will lead the process are the ones already aware of co-operative models from the work going on with schools.” This is a good illustration of how we might understand the spread of the co-operative school structure as facilitating new forms of innovation as well as the proliferation of an existing phenomenon. Wilson explains it as follows: “I'd call it a virus; when people have seen the impact and the passion, all of a sudden they start to say, 'could we do something like it over here?'”.

2.5 What are some of the key learnings from this case study?

Reflecting on this case study we can make a number of observations relating to the nature of spreading social innovation:

- The importance of a receptive audience is frequently acknowledged in literature about diffusion and adoption of innovation. However, it is particularly pronounced in this example. A situation of rapid change where school leaders are forced to make a decision about what structure to adopt is clearly fertile ground for a new model to take hold. Interestingly, this echoes a finding of the recent WILCO project reflecting on welfare innovations, that “a good idea is not convincing in itself – it comes when people are open to it...an innovation is adopted when minds are ripe”.¹⁶ It is also important to note that this idea of receptiveness does not necessarily imply overriding enthusiasm for an innovation; being ‘receptive’ might equally be about being in a position where there is no option but to adopt a new approach of some kind. In this case for example, the decision to move to a co-operative trust model was sometimes a defensive move against the threat of unwanted structural change, such as forced academisation.
- Personal networks and trusted peers appear to be very decisive in the adoption of new models. In this case, the headteachers were clearly most open to being influenced by other heads who had also adopted the co-operative school model. This finding is also reflected in the literature on diffusion of innovation and the diffusion of social movements which sees interpersonal ties as highly significant for determining rates of adoption. (See TEPSIE 7.1).
- Some form of organised support and information is essential to make the move from initial interest and motivation to the reality of adoption. Having a body like the Co-operative College dedicated to spreading and actually making something of motivation has been crucial in this case. None of the schools we spoke to had gone through conversion without help from the Co-operative College and many felt this would not have been possible, given their lack of knowledge or capacity to take this on. This highlights the significance of being able to package and routinise processes that are necessary for adoption of something new.
- We often talk about the importance of a favourable policy context for spreading innovation. While in this case there was a framework that enabled this model to be adopted (the foundation trust school 2006 legislation), in terms of other policy support, this has been non-existent. As Bernadette Hunter puts it “this is a movement that has happened in spite of the Government, not because of it”. The experience with co-operative schools suggests that alternatives to a government-backed agenda can thrive so long as the right motivations and incentives are also in place.

¹⁶ The WILCO Project: A Summary of the findings. Available online at <http://www.wilcoproject.eu/wilco-project-findings-summary/>

3. Case study 2: Teach For All

Case study snapshot

Name	What is being spread?	What concept of spreading innovation is being used?	Who are the key actors involved?	What is the geographical scope?
Teach For All	A set of practices which are based on key principles and a model which involves recruiting and training young leaders who will have a positive influence on students in the short-term and go on to create systemic change in the education sector as alumni.	A decentralised network to take a key concept to new regions, with adaptations	The Teach For All organisation; social entrepreneurs in different countries; ministries of education	Global; Teach For All is currently in 34 countries



Teach For All

3.1 Introduction and narrative

In 1989, Wendy Kopp wrote her Princeton thesis entitled 'A Plan and Argument for the Creation of a National Teacher Corps'. By 1990 Teach For America – a programme to place top performing graduates in challenging US public schools for two years – was operational. The idea of Kopp's programme was to incentivise talented graduates to work in schools for a minimum of two years, changing attitudes about teaching as a profession whilst improving the calibre of teachers in deprived schools. The hope and aim is that these graduates then continue to work to expand educational opportunity after their 2 year placement. Teach For America has since become a top campus recruiter and in 2010 was awarded one of four \$50 million 'scale what works' grants by the US Department of Education. In 2002, Brett Wigdortz sought to establish a similar program in the UK while working as a management consultant at McKinsey. The UK programme, Teach First, had early buy-in from the UK Government and has also gone on to attract large numbers of graduates becoming the biggest single recruiter of university graduates in the UK in 2013.

In 2007, after receiving many enquiries from other individuals wanting to implement similar models in their countries, Kopp and Wigdortz decided to found a network organisation that would support and encourage the development of similar programmes across the world. Six years later, there are now 34 partner countries as part of the Teach For All network spanning hugely different contexts, from Latvia to Colombia to China.

The Teach For All network is held together not by a tight franchising model but by a set of shared value statements that are set out in a partnership agreement. The shared mission of the partner organisations is to "enlist their nation's most promising future leaders in the effort to address educational need, by teaching for two years in high- need schools and becoming lifelong leaders for educational excellence and equity". In addition to adhering to this core mission, partner organisations must also commit to a set of unifying principles. There are five principles which set out the broad parameters of the programmes partners will deliver:

- Recruiting and selecting as many as possible of the country's most promising future leaders
- Placing participants as teachers for two years in high-need areas
- Training and developing participants to maximise their impact on student achievement
- Accelerating the leadership of alumni
- Driving measureable impact

And there are three principles related to the features of the organisation:

- A local social enterprise that adapts the model, innovates and achieves ambitious goals despite constraints
- Independence from the control of government and other external entities, with an autonomous board and diversified funding
- Partnerships with the public and private sectors that provide the teaching placements, funding and supportive policy environments

In order to join the network, interested parties must work with Teach For All to understand the model and develop a feasibility and business plan which they present to Teach For All. This process is managed by a Growth Strategy and Development Team which is responsible for all interactions with potential partners (who they describe as ‘social entrepreneurs’.) Groups accepted into the network then receive a range of supports as their programme gets established and matures. This is led by the Network Impact team and is of four types:

1. **Capturing and sharing knowledge** that comes out of the network. Teach For All identifies effective practices across the network and creates tools and resources that specialists based in each region use to help partners adapt these approaches to their individual contexts. A new extranet is currently under development to assist with knowledge sharing so that partners can download, rate and comment on relevant resources.
2. **Facilitating connections** – Teach For All runs around 35 events per year which range from small ‘network learning trips’ focused on finding out what a particular partner is doing well, to conferences that bring together heads of different functions - e.g. a meeting of all the recruitment heads - to the annual conference which brings together the CEOs and other senior staff and supporters from across the entire network.
3. **Fostering leadership development** – all CEOs have access to leadership development training. For example, Teach For All hosts monthly workshops on topics such as “building a leadership team with shared ownership” and “determining when and how much to grow.”¹⁷ One on one support visits around specific issues mean that CEOs also have access to coach-like mentorship.
4. **Creating access to global resources** – Teach For All can broker a range of resources for partners. For example, they established a global relationship with Salesforce which enables them to arrange free licences for country programmes. Teach For All also brokered an agreement with Harvard University that any individual who wanted to enter the programme (from any partner country) could defer their entry to Harvard for graduate school.

Although the partner countries receive this support, they remain independent entities responsible for their own recruitment, programme development, strategy and fundraising. Teach For All partners also develop their own branding.

Teach For All represents an interesting case of the role of an intermediary organisation spreading an innovation across national boundaries. It highlights key issues around the trade offs between control and flexibility for localised innovation as well as how a central idea can give rise to different adaptations. In what follows we look at:

- How the network has spread

¹⁷ W Kopp, Empowering Movements for Global Education Reform, Stanford Social Innovation Review, May 2014. Available online at http://www.ssireview.org/transformational_scale/entry/empowering_movements_for_global_education_reform

- Explanations for this spread
- Challenges faced by this network approach to spreading innovation
- Adaptations that have been necessary, both to individual programmes and to the operation of the network over time
- Key lessons

3.2 Mechanisms for spreading this innovation

3.2.1 Awareness and motivations

How do individuals in new partner countries become aware of the Teach For All model? A common means by which Teach For All's country CEOs first come into contact with the programme is while studying or working abroad. Juan Carlos Perez Borja, current CEO of Enseña Ecuador, heard Wendy Kopp speaking on campus while studying in the States, and had several friends who joined Teach For America. Evgenia Peeva, CEO of Teach for Bulgaria came across the programme for the first time while at Harvard, noting "Teach For America typically recruit here, so you inevitably hear about it, especially if you're interested in these issues." So a common way the programme has travelled has been via international students who spend time in the US or UK, get exposed to the programme and then get interested in implementing something similar in their own countries. Phil McComish, Vice President of Network Impact highlights that management consultancy networks have also been important – Brett Wigdortz, CEO of Teach First, was previously a McKinsey consultant and there are several CEOs from the large consulting firms.

Increased visibility and press coverage of the US and UK programmes has also been influential – McComish comments that "in publications like *The Economist*, about once a month there will be a mention of Teach First or Teach For America". Amy Black, who leads the Growth Strategy and Development Team and has first contact with individuals wanting to take the programme forward in their country, says that there are some examples of people just coming across the programme from articles they have read online. But it is more common for there to be some kind of personal connection or real-life exposure to the programme.

While the network has grown relatively quickly through word of mouth, there is growing awareness that this approach has its limits. For example, there is currently only one partner in the whole of Africa (TEACH South Africa). Teach For All has therefore made a decision to hire an individual to work on developing awareness in Africa, where these university or consultancy networks are less prevalent and awareness about the model is limited.

Awareness of the programme is of course only a small part of the explanation of why people become motivated to start a programme in a new country. When asked about their attraction to the programme, several of the CEOs pointed to an affinity with the core mission. Juan Carlos Perez Borja of Enseña Ecuador says that "the idea of really trying to address the problem with the best talent and professionals in the country seemed incredible to me". He was motivated by trying to

“change the paradigm” whereby talented Ecuadorians who study abroad rarely come back to the country to work, and if they do, it’s almost always to work in the private sector. Others were also attracted by joining a network with a tested model and capacity to share learning. Franco Mosso, CEO of Enseña Peru highlights “the fact that it was a model that had been used over and over already” as well as “the extent of the information they already had and the tools they could share with the network” as important to his decision making. Evgenia Peeva notes that some kind of personal experience – such as seeing the implications of a poor education for themselves or for a family member – is usually significant for CEOs.

3.2.2 How do people account for the rapid spread of the network?

Teach For All team members point to a number of different explanations for why adoption by 34 countries has been possible. Phil McComish suggests that Teach For All has benefited from a context where education is becoming much more globalised. There is increased visibility for international measures like the PISA rankings and this has contributed to a situation where people are “more likely to look across borders for solutions”, he argues.

The universality of the core mission of the network is also seen as significant. Chief Operating Officer Nick Canning explains that when Teach For All started, the team had a lot of questions about how many countries the model would really work in – was it just naturally more suited to the UK and US contexts where it had already grown? However, over time they have found that “when you boil it down to the basics, it’s about channelling a country’s top talent to improving education in that country – and at that simple level we have found it appealing to countries at all different stages of development.” Mārīte Seile, CEO in Latvia agrees that this flexibility has been important for them: “we share core ideas of equity and high quality education for every child, but the programme doesn’t force us to use any particular operational model”. Dzameer Dzulkipli, CEO of Teach For Malaysia, concurs: “the model can be adapted very easily. And it was implemented in places that we thought it couldn’t be – so that raised the sense of possibility for everyone...when we learnt of it in India, we thought, well if India can do it with all its bureaucracies, so can Malaysia”.

Others point to the orientation of the network. Evgenia Peeva comments, “...it is a network that wants to grow”. In her view Teach For All “is so open to collaborating and doesn’t want to limit the number of social entrepreneurs involved - there is complete open-ness. The message is - if you can demonstrate and cover the major requirements, then we are going to be with you and help you”.

There is also an important element of ‘success breeds success’ operating here. Phil McComish describes a multiplier effect whereby as more countries join the network, “there’s a lower burden of proof when this critical mass is achieved”. He also notes that there has been a regional multiplier effect now that several regions such as Europe and Latin America have a large number of Teach For All programmes: “it used to be, if you were trying to set up in Chile, you had to look at Teach For America and say, look, the US has done this. But now if you’re Ecuador you can say, look at

Colombia, Argentina, Peru, etc.” This has enabled people to make a strong argument that the model works for their region. Mārīte Seile notes that this is particularly important in her context in Latvia where credibility (in the education field at least) is established by positioning the programme as developed locally rather than as a US/UK franchise. This is because “a lot of foreign models have been brought into Latvia, and people have been very sceptical of these”. Franco Mosso of Enseña Peru agrees, noting, “the fact that we have tried to reach countries in every different continent is also helpful for the network to get to different places”.

There are further benefits to strong regional clusters developing. For example the Baltic Teach For All countries (Estonia, Lithuania and Latvia) have monthly calls to share learning, and also support one another with fundraising. For example, a relationship with Samsung developed by Latvia is now being extended to Lithuania and Estonia.

3.3 Challenges for the network

The Teach For All network model is relatively unusual. While there are certainly international NGOs organised in networks or federations, an umbrella organisation with a mission to spread a particular type of education initiative is less common. What are some of the challenges to operating in this way?

Nature of the activity

One observation is that the type of activity Teach For All engages in is in itself difficult and resource intensive. Amy Black draws an analogy with spreading other forms of innovation that NGOs might be concerned with:

“The value we create... success or failure, it lies in the quality of human development. Some initiatives have a huge element of this while others don't - for example a vaccination is a vaccination but a teacher is not a teacher! So it's very human capital intensive... so much of what we are trying to do requires shared learning.”

Resourcing

It can be difficult to fund a network that has a mission to support the activity of other organisations rather than implementing programmes itself. Amy Black comments that “it takes a lot for people to understand what we're doing”. Even once that understanding of the purpose of the network has been communicated, there is still an issue of motivation. As Black says, “after all, most people come from a place” and so will tend to be more motivated to give to a particular country programme rather than to the network for all. One approach has been to broker financial support that incorporates both network and individual country funding. For example, Teach For All agreed a global partnership relationship with DHL which involves \$1 million support for the network and \$500,000 to be split amongst country partners.

Balancing a strategic vs. bottom up approach

Members of the Teach For All leadership team are clear that the network aspires to be an enabler of future growth rather than to actively plan or control that growth. Nick Canning explains that

early on in the organisation's history, "...we took a decision to be responsive to interest rather than proactively determining where we wanted the model". The approach is more about "being open to the model being established wherever there is local interest and capacity". Amy Black agrees: "We aspire not to be in the driving seat - we take a de facto leadership role in order to make sure everyone understands and to make connections, but generally we say in our model, the contexts themselves select the entrepreneurs." Partly this results from a feeling that it is not the job of the network to take a position of which countries should or should not develop a Teach For All programme. When asked about whether there were countries he felt the model would not be suitable, Phil McComish explained that when talking to any new potential partner about joining, "we will have a lot of questions". But ultimately, "if they feel it will work, we don't have an opinion about, 'we can't be in x or y country". Similarly, Canning explains that certainly in the early years of the network, "we felt we weren't well placed to determine where it would make sense. If people locally felt they could do it and could demonstrate they had the capacity to do it, then we back them, rather than us trying to centrally decide."

However, there has been a slight shift in thinking about the need for the network to have a concerted strategy for growth in certain regions. There is now a goal to focus particularly on Africa – a region where there has been little growth (there is just one programme in South Africa). However, there is still a distinction made between this approach and deciding to take control and put the resources in place for a new programme. This commitment to the region has been exhibited through employing someone to build up awareness and networks in Africa of Teach For All. As Amy Black explains, the commitment to being "demand driven" is still evident: "The impetus and energy needs to come from the national environment - it's not something we seek to impose. So even in these new contexts, people come to us independently just as they have elsewhere – but it is Teach For All's role to make them aware in the first place."

What are the ambitions for future growth overall? Although from the outside reaching 34 countries in seven years feels rapid, several Teach For All staff commented that the growth did not feel so quick to those working in it because at any one time there will be a pipeline of 10-20 individuals they are speaking to about becoming a partner; it is a small proportion that end up becoming established. Nick Canning explains they have settled on a strategy that aims for growth at a similar rate to what is happening now, which is about six programmes added to the network each year. This felt right to the team he says because it was "neither trying to really accelerate growth, nor to dampen it down".

Balancing local ownership vs. oversight and quality control

Another issue related to finding the right level of centralised control relates to responsibility for success and quality. To what extent does Teach For All see itself as an arbiter of success across the network?

Nick Canning explains that "we don't think our role is oversight" but he acknowledges that "it's true that we are custodians of who should be in the network". There have been cases where it was no

longer appropriate for partner countries to stay in the network. This tends to come down to Teach For All's judgement about whether or not they are operating within the unifying principles. For example, the partner organisation in Brazil was unable to establish a route for placing their teachers in schools and so it was mutually agreed that the best thing was for them to leave the partner network. Amy Black agrees that "the key measure is – are we still adhering to the unifying principles?" But she concedes that even here there has to be flexibility – partners need to demonstrate that they at least have intentions to comply with these principles. For example, Teach For All will continue to support partner countries with aspirations to grow their cohort of teachers but are finding this process slow and tough. What would be more difficult is if "a partner was content to stay at 25 teachers and didn't want to grow – that would be a problem".

What about the role of the network in trying to bring about success and high quality results in partner countries? Again there is a tricky balancing act to be managed. Phil McComish acknowledges that "it is difficult and it is tempting when a partner is starting up to err on the side of doing too much to ensure that it is successful ...But ultimately it is their programme not our programme." This attitude means that network support tends to come in the form of building up skills and capacities, or as Canning puts it "learning how to do things rather than doing things for them". Dzameer Dzulkipli acknowledges this 'hands off' character of the support made available to the network: "Teach For All do not get too involved. There was a time when Teach For Malaysia was almost on the brink of failure. They were there to support us but they weren't going to make sure that we were successful – you have to go through this yourself". This approach he believes has contributed to the success of the programme in the long run because "it results in a lot of local capacity".

This attitude Amy Black describes as striking a balance "between deeply believing in local ownership and local entrepreneurialism and trying to design Teach For All as an organisation that both attracts and facilitates that kind of leadership locally." It has an impact on how Teach For All attempts to drive improvement across the network. The Network Impact team does collect data on how each partner is performing across a number of indicators (percentage growth in cohort, percentage of the cohort who continue in education roles, and so on) but this is shared in terms of averages across the network and highlights of good practice as opposed to a policy of 'naming and shaming'.

3.4 How has this form of innovation changed and adapted as it has spread?

3.4.1 Adaptations across partner countries

One of the strengths identified by interviewees is the adaptability of the Teach For All model to different country contexts. Some of these changes have been about adapting aspects of the programme so that it makes sense for the political context. Phil McComish explains: "in a country where the Government thinks it already provides pretty high quality teacher training, the idea that a non profit would say, 'we as an NGO are going to run all our own training' would just be a non starter. But in India, Teach for India does all its own training because there isn't a high quality

government alternative". In Ecuador, where it took 18 months just for them to be allowed to establish as an NGO, the team decided to place its first teacher cohort in private fee paying schools. While in some contexts this would mean deviating from the Teach for All partner commitment to work in areas of 'high-need', in Ecuador recent investment in public schools has meant many teachers have left the private system and private schools are now some of the worst performing in the country.

Sometimes adaptations are about a necessary change of emphasis. Evgenia Peeva identifies a major 'perception challenge' in Bulgaria that students are demotivated and do not see the value of education as role models tend to be those who have become wealthy without education. In this cultural context they have needed to invest much more in media work and working with external organisations that can get their message to a wider audience. As Peeva argues "we don't see any possibility of change in policy if mindsets don't change".

In other cases, adaptations might be about how best to interpret the core mission of Teach For All to develop lifelong leaders in education. A shared commitment to help alumni to reach positions of influence may look different in different contexts. So in Australia, it might be that the team believes that the highest impact can be had by participants staying on in schools and becoming school leaders because head teachers have a lot of autonomy and these positions can be powerful levers for change. In contrast, in China, the view is that the highest impact will come from students going on to set up for profit and non profit education companies in order to try and catalyse change from outside the system. This would be an example of what Phil McComish describes as "operational choices rather than belief and mission choices". In other words he does not view them as major deviations from the things that unify the network and make it coherent.

What is perhaps more interesting is where country adaptations have added to the richness of the Teach For All model overall, enabling innovations to be taken up by multiple partners. Some of these involve new team roles: for example, Bulgaria introduced the role of impact assessment coordinator which several other countries have taken up. A theme of several of the newer country programmes is that they have a powerful diaspora so they have needed to work on how you get high achieving young people to return home. As Amy Black comments, "that was not an innovation that was going to come out of the US model. And those learnings have relevance for so many countries coming on board". In outlining the various elements he has learnt from newer member countries (about fundraising from China, about leadership and values from India), Dzameer Dzulkifli comments that "it wasn't that Teach for America and Teach First couldn't share their learning – it was that more innovation was happening from those countries in the start up phase where resources were just tighter". This comment helps to capture how important it has been for the model to adapt and change as it has entered new contexts very different to the UK and US where it began.

3.4.2 Adaptations to the network offer

As the network has grown the character and activities of Teach For All have also needed to shift. First there have needed to be changes in the kind of support that Teach For All can provide to partner countries. Initially, all new joining countries were assigned a Partner Engagement Director for two years – an internal consultant who would come along side them and work with them on the ground as the organisation became established. But as more countries joined the network, this model became unsustainable. The old model meant that a new hire needed to be made every time a new country came on board. This brought with it visa costs but also recruitment costs since the positions were fairly niche (as Canning explains you would find yourself looking for someone who spoke Japanese, understood the Teach For All model and was willing to relocate for two years). Since these Partner Engagement Directors were generalists, it also limited the resources that could be put into specialists who could give support on particular areas such as recruitment, fundraising or policy. So in 2013 Teach For All underwent an internal restructuring process. New countries no longer have a two year consultant working along side them. Instead the network moved to a model of regional specialists working alongside regional generalists. The generalist has a remit around relationship management and is the key contact for a country CEO. But those who have specific roles e.g. the recruitment lead, will work with their regional specialist on recruitment. Several of the CEOs interviewed mentioned feeling lucky that they were in the early cohort that got the dedicated two year individual working alongside them, so that there may be a perception that support is now not as intensive as in the original model. However, Nick Canning argues that this new model “feels more scalable and impactful”.

Another way the network has had to change is in the way it is organised geographically. In the early days, almost all members of staff were based in the US which reflects the strong role Teach for America played in the start up phase of the network. However, this was impractical when trying to manage an international network – trying to support Malaysia is difficult when the time zone difference makes even getting on the phone a challenge. As the network has become more global, it has been important to develop the regional presence of Teach For All staff. London is now the hub for those working in Europe, Doha for the Middle East, North Africa, and South Asia, Hong Kong for East-Asia Pacific and New York and Washington, DC for the Americas. At present there are still more staff based in New York than anywhere else but Phil McComish anticipates that “over time, that will change”.

How will the network continue to change as the partner country organisations mature and develop? Could there be a scenario in which Teach For All becomes less necessary as the partner countries increase in independence? Phil McComish believes that there will always be a need for someone to focus on the network and have that as their priority. “Things always go much better when someone facilitates...I think we will always be needed but we might need to do different things”.

3.5 What are some of the key lessons from this case study?

Reflecting on this case study we can make a number of observations about the way in which the innovation has spread:

- There is an important trade off between control and the potential to spread innovation. Teach For All has had to adopt a more 'hands off' approach which in some cases may have limited what individual country organisations have been able to achieve or how quickly they have been able to establish programmes. But if Teach For All had insisted on being able to have tight control and oversight for each partner country, there would not have been the capacity to spread to so many places.
- Adaptations are not just features that enable an innovation to fit into a new context. They add value and change the nature of the original innovation as well, often adding richness and depth that could not have emerged had the innovation stayed in the same context. This is clear from how interviewees describe the learning that has come out of Teach For All programmes that have a very different character from the original UK and US incarnations. This supports the idea that processes of adoption are often very close to processes of innovation.
- An intermediary organisation that functions in such a way to provide myriad forms of support is clearly very valuable in enabling widespread and rapid diffusion of a particular model. However, the role that this kind of organisation needs to play is unlikely to stay static – it will need to shift as adopters mature and require different forms of support.

4. Case study 3: Realising Ambition Programme – Lions Quest Skills for Adolescence

Case study snapshot

Name	What is being spread?	What concept of spreading innovation is being used?	Who are the key actors involved?	What is the geographical scope?
Realising Ambition Programme – Lions Quest Skills for Adolescence	A personal development skills programme for young people aged 11-14	Replicating an intervention in specific new context	Lions Clubs International Foundation; Ambition UK; The Big Lottery Fund	Global but this particular roll out is focused in the UK



The Skills for Adolescence Program is being delivered with young people at Hackney Quest, London

4.1 Introduction and narrative

Realising Ambition is a programme funded by the Big Lottery in the UK to invest in replicating evidence based and promising approaches that help prevent children and young people aged 8-14 from becoming involved in the criminal justice system. Over five years, a £25 million investment is

being delivered to a portfolio of twenty-five projects. The programme reflects two important current concerns within children and family interventions: first, a desire to fund those interventions which have a robust evidence base, and second, an increasing interest in preventative approaches.

Realising Ambition is investing in two kinds of interventions: those that are well established and internationally recognised evidence based programmes and those they term ‘promising interventions’ – these are relatively well defined but have not yet been rigorously evaluated with experimental or quasi experimental methods. All ten ‘evidence based’ programmes were developed outside the UK while the fifteen ‘promising’ interventions were developed in the UK. You can see the full portfolio of 25 interventions in the table below.

The Realising Ambition programme is distinctive from the other case studies in this report because it represents a highly targeted and directed attempt to introduce a specific intervention into a new geographical context. It enables us to explore key questions about the nature of replication and the relationship (and possible tension) between replication and innovation. Rather than attempt to look at all twenty-five interventions in the portfolio, we have chosen to narrow our focus to one in particular: the Lions Quest Skills for Adolescence Programme. However, in our interviews we also drew on some of the lessons emerging from the experience of replication across the Realising Ambition programme overall.

In what follows we look at:

- What Lions Quest Skills for Adolescence entails
- How it is being rolled out in the UK and the factors that are enabling this to be done successfully
- How the programme has been adapted as it has spread
- Challenges associated with spreading this form of innovation
- Key lessons

The Realising Ambition Project Portfolio

Evidence based programmes	Promising interventions
All Stars (Barnardo’s)	Anne Frank Schools and Ambassadors Programme
Be Safe Programme (North Bristol NHS Trust)	(Anne Frank Trust UK)
Co-operative Primary School (Success for All UK)	Chance UK Early Intervention Mentoring (Chance UK)
Functional Family Therapy (Action for Children)	Children’s Parliament Community Initiative
Life Skills Training (Barnardo’s)	(Children’s Parliament)
Lions Quest Skills for Adolescence (Ambition)	Conflict Resolution: Uncut (Working with Men)
Multi-Systemic Therapy (Extern)	Friends of the Children (Treyla)
PATHS Plus (Barnardo’s)	It’s Not OK (Ariel Trust)
Roots of Empathy (Action for Children)	Malachi Early Intervention Programme (Malachi
Strengthening Families Programme (Oxford	Community Trust)
Brookes)	Plus One Mentoring (YMCA Scotland)

	Positive Assertive Confidence Strategies (PACS; Kidscape) Safer Schools Partnership (Restorative Schools, Remedi) Shelter: Realising Ambition (Shelter) Stepping Up (Bridge Foundation) Strength to Strength (BANG edutainment) SWITCH (Winston's Wish) Respect Young People's Programme (Respect)
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4.1.1 About Lions Quest Skills for Adolescence

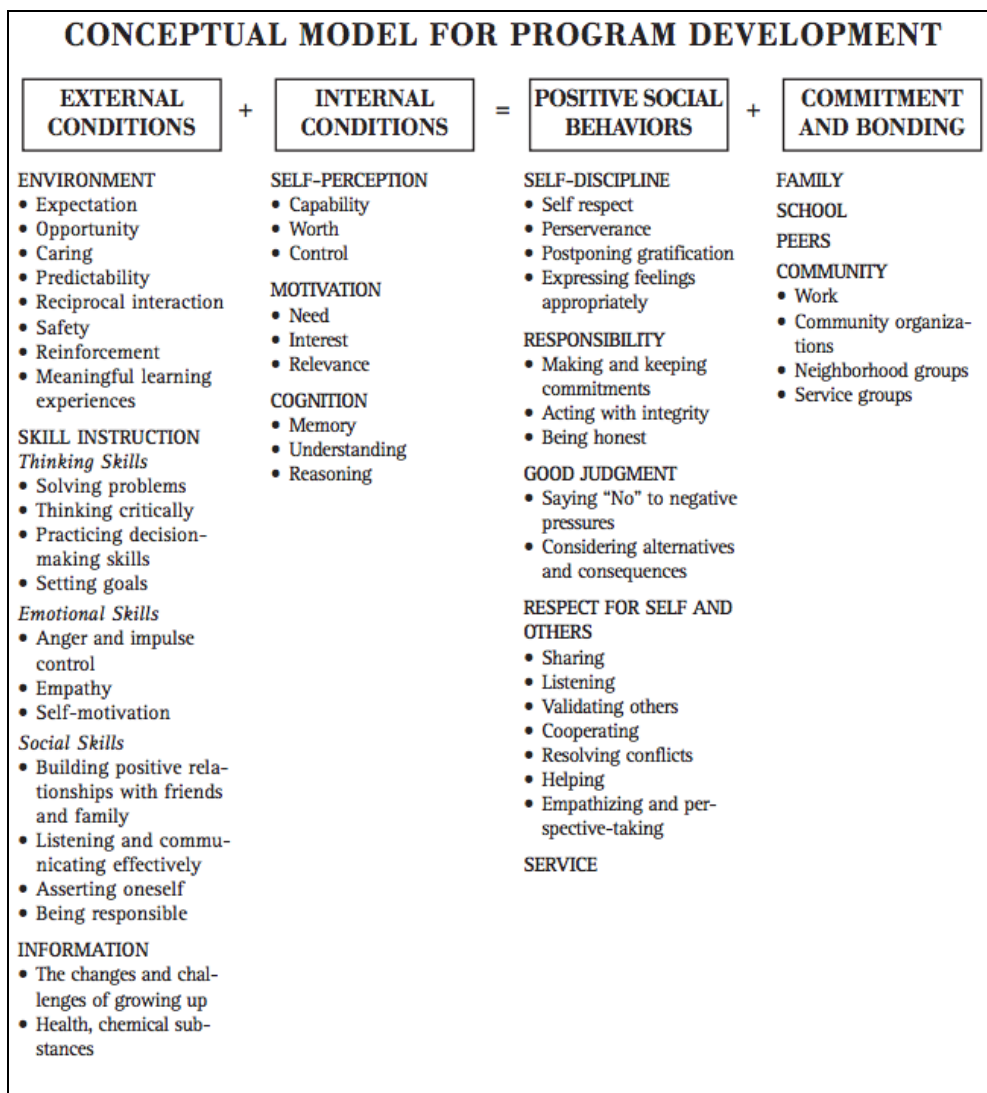
Lions Quest is a programme developed by Lions Clubs International, a secular service organisation that is active in 205 countries and with over 1.3 million members. Lions Quest is a youth development programme that promotes social and emotional learning, civic values and the prevention of substance use and violence. There are three programmes within Lions Quest, each targeted at different ages:

- Skills for Growing
- Skills for Adolescence
- Skills for Action

Skills for Adolescence is aimed at young people aged 11-14. It consists of seven units:

- Entering the teen years: the journey of adolescence
- Building self confidence and communication skills
- Managing emotions in positive ways
- Improving peer relationships
- Strengthening family relationships
- Making healthy choices
- Setting goals for healthy living

The programme can be delivered across different time scales as either a nine week, or one, two or three year programme. However, since research suggests the programme is most effective when delivered regularly over a longer period of time, Lions Quest recommend that the three year model is implemented where possible. The units are all based on a conceptual model, developed by Lions Quest using key findings of youth development and prevention research studies. This model is illustrated below.



Skills for Adolescence has been rated as a "Model" programme by the Center for Substance Abuse Prevention (CSAP), U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. Originating in the US, it has now been translated into over 30 languages and been implemented in over 80 countries.

4.2 Mechanisms for spreading this innovation

The replication of Lions Quest Skills for Adolescence in England as part of the Realising Ambition programme is being delivered by Ambition, a large youth club charity. Ambition is a membership organisation that supports more than 3,500 youth clubs and youth community projects, reaching over 350,000 young people. It is delivering Lions Quest through ten of its partners, located in a variety of different urban and rural contexts across England:

- Berkshire Youth
- Action4Youth (Buckinghamshire)

- Essex Boys and Girls Clubs
- Young Gloucestershire
- Hampshire Youth Options
- London Youth
- Lancashire Boys and Girls Clubs
- Somerset Rural Youth Project
- Safe in Tees Valley
- Warwickshire Clubs for Young People

Some of these clubs are delivering the programme in schools and others in youth club settings, but all are covering the same seven units of personal and social development.

Ambition first came across the Lions Quest Program when it was highlighted in the 2011 Allan review of early intervention programmes amongst a group of 19 programmes with very robust levels of evidence to support them.¹⁸ Jo Oxlade, Head of Business Development at Ambition, comments that “it was credible, and had been delivered in 80 other countries but not the UK, so we started to think, could we bring that to the UK? Also, it is schools based and we wanted to test it in youth clubs as well so there was an element of innovation in there”. Ambition invited its membership to tender for delivering the programme and selected the partners above based on how many young people they said they could reach, their budget and their existing partnerships that could be leveraged. Ambition also needed to make an agreement with Lions Clubs International Foundation (who hold the copyright for all Lions Quest materials) which would confer on them a licence to deliver the intervention for the duration of the Realising Ambition years of funding.

Part of obtaining the licence meant going through training in Lions Quest materials. Since Lions Clubs International Foundation cannot provide oversight of all the programmes being delivered across the world, its training process offers its best opportunity for quality control around how Lions Quest is used. Ambition’s Training Manager Patrick Pemsel has led this process in the UK. He took part in three training conferences, the first as a participant, the second leading some sessions and the third doing some solo delivery. This reflects the Lions Quest approach to training which is very much rooted in experience based on a principle of learning through doing. By summer 2014, Patrick will have gone through enough training sessions to ‘graduate’ in the programme so that he can teach Lions Quest to youth workers and teachers in the UK on his own, without the involvement of another trainer.

It is important to note that the programme roll-out in the UK is not typical for how Skills for Adolescence has been adopted in other countries. The more usual process is that adoption of the programme is led by Lions Clubs in that country. Typically, a member of a Lions Club will hear about

¹⁸ Early Intervention: The Next Steps. An Independent Report to Her Majesty’s Government, Graham Allen MP. Available online at https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/284086/early-intervention-next-steps2.pdf

the programme and decide they would like to introduce it. They can apply for funding from Lions Club International Foundation to translate and adapt the materials but they also need to get support from local Lions Clubs to help fund training and the purchase of materials for teachers. Michael Di Maria from Lions Clubs International Foundation (LCIF), the headquarters for Lions Quest based in Illinois, explains that the approach of the foundation is a combination of “reactive and strategic...we're not in a hurry to get to 100 countries – we're actually slowing the process down in a lot of areas so that it is done right”. He comments that there has sometimes been a situation where one or two workshops have been run in a couple of schools, and then there is a lull in activity, either because financial support wasn't there or there was a lack of school interest. The goal of LCIF is therefore to encourage slow, more sustainable growth in new countries, and growth that is based on a core of support for the programme – in the most part, from the network of Lions Clubs.

4.2.1 What has enabled successful role out in the UK?

Clearly an important factor in the spread of this programme in the UK is the fact that there is a dedicated form of financial and organisational support in Realising Ambition, committed to making it happen. However, Shaun Whelan from the Realising Ambition consortium cautions against assuming that financing is the key reason for programme success: “there was an expectation that because the Realising Ambition interventions are typically free at the point of delivery, they will automatically be embraced, but that has not been the case. There still has to be a significant amount put into relationship building to get the intervention in situ.”

In the case of Lions Quest, a major reason why roll out has been possible is the existing network that Ambition brings. Commenting on the UK situation, Lions Quest senior trainer Gabor Papp points to the fact that “...in the UK, Ambition has a very professional delivery network – they are used to adopting and delivering programmes and they know how to implement”. Shaun Whelan agrees: “having an infrastructure in place the way Ambition has with its membership organisation structure, it has been significantly easier to gear up a new intervention in a new area. It has been very tough where those relationships haven't existed already.” Michael Di Maria also notes that the Lions Quest program has a higher rate of success when “you have the boots on the ground who know how to speak to schools and youth clubs and know the language.”

There are also features of the programme itself which are significant. Those who have used the programme have been impressed with the emphasis it places on group dynamics and getting these right so that the delivery of content is more effective. Patrick Pemsel comments,

“a lot of PHSE [personal, social, health education] is about imparting information, but this is about relationships in the room as much as it is anything else...There's a deliberate use of energisers and ice-breakers to get young people feeling comfortable with each other...Once they've gone through the stages, they are onto being able to perform effectively and relate to one another in a bonded, team like way”.

Those working with the programme at Hackney Quest also highlighted the strength of the group dynamic as a context for learning and development. Bella Relph comments “the confidence the young people get by learning to trust that group through the year long commitment is essential... we didn’t foresee that would have such an impact.” Janita Halsey agrees: you can see the change from where they were with the group at the beginning – confidence grows over the year so that they really feel it is *their group*”.

Another feature is the connection to the context that surrounds the young people. Pemsel notes: “The programme is designed to make links to parents”. And Michael Di Maria comments that the strength of the programme “is in bringing the school, the family and the community together in support of the child.” This element of the programme has been clear at Hackney Quest where the youth worker delivering Lions Quest speaks to the parents of the young people involved every week, letting them know what units they have been studying so that they are prepared for any discussions that come up. Hackney Quest also runs parenting courses which complements the work being done in Lions Quest. Janita Halsey from Hackney Quest comments that this holistic approach has had major benefits in terms of commitment to the programme: “once they [parents] were on board, attendance was much better”.

However the feature that is highlighted most often by those managing or delivering the programme is its highly structured nature; the programme has a set number of units that should be covered in order to convey specific learning points. At first, the directive nature of the programme was met with some resistance. Patrick Pemsel comments that amongst the youth workers who would deliver it, “there was an initial phase of, ‘is this teaching grandmother to suck eggs?’” Similarly, Jo Oxlade notes that “before it came out, a lot of the youth workers thought, I don’t need this”. But having used the programme with groups, there is now a lot of appreciation for this structure and the resources. Hew Punter, Youth work co-ordinator from Young Gloucestershire explains “it has a very clear beginning and stages...for me it is very much about having that structure and being able to work through it”. And Pemsel notes that the support provided by the programme materials is a rarity in this field: “you don’t often get materials of that structure and quality...youth workers are expected to develop sessions themselves in their own time - and they are often working part time or on a voluntary basis, or they are not paid for planning time.”

4.3 How has this form of innovation changed and adapted as it has spread?

There has been significant adaptation required in the roll out of Lions Quest in the UK. The biggest adaptation for the UK context has been using Lions Quest in a youth club as well as school environment. Michael Di Maria explains that the original US programme was very much designed with the principle of “whole school implementation” – the idea that it is most effective if it is a programme in which the entire school participates. Tim Hobbs from the Social Research Unit at Dartington (part of the Realising Ambition consortium) comments, “taking a school based programme and putting it into youth clubs is in itself a significant departure: changes to delivery

settings and target groups are risky adaptations. You need to be careful not to alter core components of the intervention that have been hypothesised or demonstrated to be responsible for changes in outcomes". He notes that there is an example within the Realising Ambition portfolio where moving a programme from school to youth club context had been attempted but been much less successful because it had proved very hard to get retention of the young people participating.

In Lions Quest, this adaptation has been managed effectively, in part because the programme is being rolled out through partners who have existing relationships and club activities. As Bella Relph from Hackney Quest explains, the deep roots they as an organisation have in the community mean that "parents trust us to share their fears about what is happening with their child." Practitioners have also recognised the need to make changes – for example reducing reliance on written exercises, which may not be appropriate, and adapting the length of sessions so that they fit in with the time available in a typical youth club session. This is not to say that there are not greater challenges around retention in a youth club setting. Hew Punter from Young Gloucestershire explains that "the voluntary context means young people can come and go as they please". At Young Gloucestershire they have seen numbers tail off over the course of the programme, but the group that remains is "a core that come every week". In fact, having a voluntary group who choose their participation is seen as an advantage by some. Esther Thompson at London Youth says that feedback from those delivering at the clubs in Hackney and Harrow is that this voluntary aspect "gives quite an amazing potency to the programme – they don't have to come, they choose to be there. You have to work on their engagement, but that reaps rewards."

Other adaptations involve builds or additions to the core programme that different delivery partners have decided to implement. London Youth worked with their two clubs (Hackney Quest and the Avenues in Harrow) to design a joint residential weekend that they use to deliver the peer relationships unit. According to Patrick Pemsel: "it couldn't be better in terms of education in action...the group dynamic process is illustrated over those three days." Hackney Quest has also added a series of family outings to its Lions Quest programme, supporting whole family engagement in the programme, as well as an option for one to one mentoring, which can help the young people to deal with some of the more complex emotions coming out of the unit on family relationships. At Hampshire Youth Options they deliver a morning of Lions Quest content and then take the group out of school to do outdoor activities that complement the work done in the classroom. At Young Gloucestershire, they now give certificates to the young people when they complete a unit. As Hew Punter explains, "Lions Quest allows us to be quite creative in acknowledging the young people's success". And some clubs have made particular use of alumni once they have completed the programme, getting them to come back to do delivery of the programme themselves. Patrick Pemsel summarises, "these are all different innovations on the model".

Another set of adaptations relates to the materials that accompany the programme. Pemsel notes the wide variety of practice in using the resources: "some use the Changes and Challenges books [the programme workbook], others photocopy relevant bits, others haven't used them at all and

make their own resources". Most of those doing delivery noted that the materials were both "too Americanised" and "out of date". Addressing this takes significant resource, explains Hew Punter:

"...my first thought was - it's all mapped out in the book - its going to be a breeze - that wasn't the case at all. There is a huge amount of preparation you need to do. The more you work with the young people, the more you get a sense of 'this won't work', so you'll have to adapt it to create something else. It's Americanised and also you need to make it current."

Bella Relph had a similar experience at Hackney Quest: "We had to redesign it completely and step away from the work books...they are very wordy and intense... There's an important element of adapting it to the way your organisation works, as well as tailoring it to your specific group".

This is not something most of the delivery organisations had anticipated before the roll out of the programme began. Jo Oxlade highlights that, "it's been much more time consuming for youth workers to go away and plan their sessions. When partners put in their expressions of interest, they probably didn't take this into account in their budgets."

How do those doing delivery reconcile these adaptations with the idea of replicating a fixed intervention? There seems to be a clear understanding that changes can be made so long as the core of the programme is maintained. Esther Thompson from London Youth explains that although some of the youth organisations needed to create their own session plans, "there is understanding and acceptance that it is about the model in terms of units and following them through in a structured way." Similarly, Patrick Pemsel notes that:

"...when we first started we thought we were going to have to replicate this exactly...word for word. But it soon became apparent talking to Frey [a Lions Quest 'master trainer' for Europe] that that wasn't the model and it wouldn't be possible...There's a real value in the structure but there's also an understanding that we know what works and what doesn't, and we're going to adapt it but without losing the underlying learning outcomes of each lesson".

Similarly, Bella Relph felt the importance of adaptation was made clear from the outset:

"...in the training they get you to think about how *you* are going to run it. Everybody will always run something slightly differently because we are all different, but as long as you are sticking to the core of the learning, it's still there. Frey was very good at filling people with confidence about that."

The need for adaptations in the UK context reflects the experience of delivering Lions Quest globally. As well as the US version of the programme, there are now some very well established alternative versions that have been fully adapted for context, not just language. Gabor Papp, senior Lions Quest trainer, highlights that the German version is now used as the template for many new countries such as Hungary and Romania: "it is closer to European values, and the examples don't include American football players or references to Bill Crosby that European kids wouldn't be familiar with."

Michael Di Maria notes that “one of the strengths of the program is its adaptability and flexibility”. He describes a number of adaptations in recent years. Some of these involve additions to the content. For example in Turkey, they have added a specific conflict resolution and peace education unit. Other adaptations are about taking the principles of the programme to a new context. In Norway, the Lions Club approached a professional football team and trained them on the programme so that the players could use the techniques as part of the school visits they take part in. Di Maria comments, “there’s a lot of creative thinking going on”. Adaptations to make the course materials up to date and culturally relevant will also soon be much easier with the digitisation of Lions Quest materials, due for release during 2015: “the digital tools will be easy to adapt from - they’ll have design files that they can drag and drop things into and change images and so on”.

4.4 Challenges to replicating this intervention

What are some of the key challenges that have emerged from the experience of replicating the Skills for Adolescence Programme in the UK context? We identified three closely related themes.

Finding the right balance between fidelity and adaptation

First, negotiating the tension between faithful replication and necessary adaptation is certainly one of the challenges for the roll out of Lions Quest. This is an issue that is familiar to most of the projects being delivered as part of the Realising Ambition programme. Shaun Whelan, Senior Associate at the Young Foundation notes that all of the interventions in the portfolio “have had to adapt to some degree - even those that are fully manualised like Lions Quest is - but there is adherence to the core of the programme”. Tim Hobbs from the Social Research Unit explains the consortium’s thinking on this issue as follows:

“We draw a distinction between *surface* and *core* adaptation. Surface adaptation is often necessary to get a fit to the local context and create a demand. What you need to be careful about is not making adaptations to the core underlying features of the intervention that have been hypothesised or proven to lead to changes in desired outcomes. If you make core adaptations, then you are not really replicating the intervention – and any evidence-base underpinning it will be undermined. It’s about find that balance between surface adaptation yet not stepping over the line.”

Why is it important to stick to the core underlying logic model? Usually because it has been proven to be effective and changing it can have unpredictable consequences. (As Hobbs explains, studies have indicated that when you change the logic model of an evidence based intervention, say by doing only 50% of the activity, it’s not the case that you tend to get 50% of the outcomes; rather, you tend to get none of them). This is why the concept of fidelity is particularly important when thinking about effective replication of evidence based interventions. Hobbs explains that we can think of fidelity as having four critical components:

- Targeted delivery: “is the intervention being delivered to those it was intended to be delivered to?”
- Adherence: “are practitioners delivering all of the core components of what they are supposed to be doing? E.g. if there are 14 sessions that cover x, y, and z, do all these get covered?”
- Dosage: “do they deliver the right volume of the intervention –e.g. if it is supposed to be delivered over the year and you only do three weeks, you're not going to get the same impact”.
- Quality of practitioner delivery: “you can have three practitioners all delivering the exact same programme but some of them do it really well – this may come down to how fun and engaging they are, which may be about their motivation or skills”.

Ensuring these four types of fidelity are present when an innovation is adopted in a new context will often be challenging, if not impossible in some cases, but this does give helpful specificity to what it means to replicate an intervention faithfully.

Licensing: control vs maximum dissemination

A second challenge that is visible in the Lions Quest experience is how to maintain high quality delivery while reaching as many places as possible. The Lions Quest model attempts to deal with this issue by licencing its content. The licence can only be granted once someone has attended a training session to explain how the materials should be used. Gabor Papp explains: “some teachers think ‘I've taken part, now I can train other teachers’ – that’s not the case at all, you can only use the materials. And you cannot just buy the materials, you need to come on the training and then you get the materials. This way we make sure quality is assured.”

The fact that the programme is licenced represents an important signal of quality to some. Hew Punter comments that “the advantage is that it is tried and tested over many years and in many different contexts. Not many PSHE packages have that gold standard. So to me that speaks volumes... I'm all for evidence based practice, so long as it doesn't stifle innovation and creativity”.

However, the licence model can also be problematic. Jo Oxlade notes that in reality it may be difficult to control the spread of the programme that tightly, especially in a school environment: “The ethos is that people can be trained to deliver the programme but they aren’t trained to train others to use it. But if a teacher gets a pack of resources, why would they not share it with a colleague? It’s tricky”. The licence model also means that Lions Clubs International Foundation (LCIF) holds the copyright for all versions of the programme. This can dis-incentivise formalising adaptations that have been successful in country contexts. For example, Oxlade explains that Ambition have had conversations about adapting the materials for a UK audience based on their experience in this roll out and holding a joint copyright. However, this is not something LCIF are able to do since they are committed to a model whereby all copyright is held solely by them. Oxlade also notes that the licence can restrict more organic spread of the model: “We can only deliver the programme within the limitations of the Realising Ambition funding. Some of our

partners have been approached by other schools who are keen to deliver this – but at the moment we are constrained by the licence and can't take it any further.”

Again, this is an issue that has come up within the Realising Ambition programme more broadly. Reflecting on the issue of licensing, Tim Hobbs comments: “the tension is, it is somewhat restrictive, but it does help to drive fidelity. The less restrictive a programme, the more adaptation you see and there are advantages and disadvantages to this.” A good case in point, says Hobbs, is the distinction between approaches taken by two well-known evidence-based parenting interventions: the Incredible Years and Triple P; “the former has very tight control over training, quality assurance and accreditation of practitioners, whereas the latter is less demanding in these regards. The result is that Triple P is probably more widely adopted, yet the quality of delivery is likely more variable”.

Disseminating programme knowledge – codified vs. tacit approaches

Thirdly, the Lions Quest programme highlights the challenge of balancing a manualised approach against face to face knowledge exchange and practitioner autonomy. The fact that Lions Quest materials are licenced suggests that a lot of weight is placed on the content of the manual itself. However, in reality, much of the knowledge about how to deliver the intervention effectively comes from face to face exchanges through the experience of initial training and follow up support. Gabor Papp notes that his senior trainer “never gave me a manual”. Rather his approach was to talk through all of the units, and get Papp to start to develop his own session agenda as he learnt. Those taking part in training for Lions Quest in the UK also highlight the experiential nature of the process. Hew Punter comments that in the course of the training it was clear that “Patrick was trying to give us an experience of what it will feel like for the young people.”

Being able to call on Patrick for continued support has also been important: “after the training I'm available to support when people are getting up and running. For example, one of our practitioners was really struggling, spending 15 hours planning her one hour sessions. I went down to help out and try to reduce to a minimum what she was doing”. Gabor Papp notes that the Lions Quest trainers tend to develop a supportive community that shares best practice. Some of this is facilitated through annual conferences, but also through attending training workshops together: “because of the steps you go through together...you often develop friendships”. He explains that these relationships mean there are a group of people he could happily call if he had an issue with the programme he wanted to discuss.

The importance of in person knowledge exchange is something recognised by the Realising Ambition consortium overall. Shaun Whelan argues that: “tacit knowledge is always, always a significant component of delivering interventions... We want to see those products [manuals] in place, but we want to encourage them [the programmes] to think about how they articulate some of the stuff that cannot be written down.” Tim Hobbs agrees: “face to face exchange has been absolutely critical. We would never say a manual is all you need - it may be necessary but not sufficient. The experience of most programmes is that you need to have good training and peer

support... You need that physical interaction in the room when training you to deliver and hearing the experience of others who have delivered as well.”

4.5 What are some of the key learnings from this case study?

Lions Quest Skills for Adolescence is a tightly defined intervention that has been trialled and found to be successful in reducing young people’s contact with the criminal justice system. Its implementation in the UK as part of the Realising Ambition programme is an example of highly intentional spreading of an intervention, and this is a process that is ongoing (the Realising Ambition funding runs until 2017).

What lessons about replicating these kinds of interventions can be drawn out of the Lions Quest roll out in the UK? We suggest three here:

- Where a social innovation involves a proven and tested innovation (as opposed to something with high promise that is yet to be proven effective) there is likely to be value in distinguishing between what about the intervention is core and what can be safely adapted as it spreads. This suggests that while adaptations to context will always be crucial as innovations spread, there is a point at which innovation around the core logic model should cease if it is to be replicated effectively in other places.
- Even where there is dedicated resource and will to replicate an innovation, this does not guarantee its successful adoption. This is much more likely to be successful where those responsible for implementation have pre-existing relationships to draw on, and where the features of the innovation itself are such that it is well received.
- There is a clear tension between the ability to control for quality and the ability to spread an intervention as widely as possible. The Lions Quest licensing model does limit its spread. However, it makes it more likely that those who use the intervention will be well trained, which promotes high quality delivery.

5. Conclusion

What broader lessons can be drawn from these case studies? As indicated in the introduction, this report is not intended to help us reach a 'how to' guide or a toolkit for spreading social innovation. These case studies are exploratory and intended to mark a first step in better understanding how different forms of social innovation spread and grow. We selected these three case studies in order to explore issues including:

- The spread of social innovations beyond organisational growth – we chose rather to look at new programmes, practices and structures.
- Replication vs. adaptation - what are the tensions between faithfully replicating a successful, proven social innovation and being open to the possibilities for further innovation?
- The role of intermediary organisations – what functions do they perform to support the spread of social innovations?

Reflecting on these cases does suggest a number of principles about the nature of spreading social innovation. First, thinking about factors that are important for successful spreading and adoption of innovation, three points stand out:

- *The significance of trusted peers and networks for spreading awareness and take up of an innovation.* In each of the cases here, adoption of innovation was successful partly because there was a group that can spread information and confidence about the innovation. In the case of co-operative schools, this was existing networks of headteachers; for Teach For All, networks from university, business schools and consultancy work were significant; and for Lions Quest, Ambition's network of youth club organisations that had established links to the communities where the programme would be rolled out. This point is particularly starkly illustrated by the Realising Ambition programme. This case involved the most targeted funding and support for replicating an innovation, but even where all these resources were present, it was still largely the quality of the existing networks of those doing delivery that determined how successful was the roll-out process. This finding is very much supported by the literature on diffusion which suggests a key role for trusted peers and strong interpersonal ties for successful and rapid adoption.¹⁹
- *The importance of intermediary organisations to support the adoption process.* An organisation providing a range of supports was at the heart of all three cases: the Co-operative College, Teach For All HQ and both Ambition and Lions Quest International. Two characteristics of these organisations are also notable:

¹⁹ See Tepsie deliverable 7.1, A Davies and J Simon, *Growing social innovation: a literature review*. Available online at <http://www.tepsie.eu/images/documents/d71final.pdf>

- The role that these organisations play changes over time. Initially the support they provide is largely about reducing barriers to adoption by providing the necessary tools and resources (training, manuals, consultancy and so on) – we might think of this as supporting the adoption of the core ‘content’ of the innovation. But after this initial period, their role is likely to shift so that it is more about facilitating connections between different nodes of activity (whether that be schools, country partner organisations or youth delivery organisations) so that they can learn from one another.
- There are clear trade offs for support organisations between control which enables quality, and the speed and extent of the spread they can achieve. High quality replication of an innovation is ensured when organisations hold tight control over who can implement it. However, this tends to slow down the rate of innovation spread. The right way to balance these two factors will need to be assessed on a case by case basis, depending on the nature of the innovation concerned and the risks associated with a low quality version of it spreading.
- *The significance of receptive contexts.* Following the stories of these three cases, it is clear that strategies and tactics for spreading innovation are secondary to the context and mindsets into which an innovation is introduced when explaining success. This echoes the findings of the recent WILCO project which concluded that “a good idea is not convincing in itself – it comes when people are open to it... an innovation is adopted when minds are ripe”.²⁰ Our cases also support the idea that the success or otherwise of social innovation diffusion will be very much dependent on ‘fertile ground’ rather than the merits of the innovation itself. This ‘fertile ground’ could be a context where change is pervasive, so that an innovation is adopted as a defensive strategy, as we saw in the case of co-operative schools movement. While this might seem an obvious point, it is an important reminder of the limited degree of control that should be expected by those who want to embark on spreading innovation in a deliberate way.

As well as these more pragmatic observations, the three cases also suggest two observations about the nature of spreading social innovation at the more conceptual level:

- Social innovations rarely stay static when they travel and are adopted in new contexts. Sometimes changes involve adaptations that are more peripheral; their role is to allow the core innovation to fit into a new context – we see many of these types of adaptations in the Lions Quest and Teach For All programmes. But sometimes adaptations change the nature of the original innovation, building on it or going beyond it in a way that adds new content or features that could not have emerged had the innovation stayed in the same context. In this sense, the process of an innovation spreading can act as a platform for new types of innovation. This finding suggests that the lines between processes of adoption and processes of innovation are frequently very blurred.

²⁰ The WILCO Project: A Summary of the findings. Available online at <http://www.wilcoproject.eu/wilco-project-findings-summary/>

- Tracking the spread of social innovation is inherently problematic. Typically, what we want to spread via social innovation is quite complex – changed behaviours, routines, relationships and so on. However, what we are able to follow is the vehicle for some of these changes – the take up of new legal structures, new programmes and so on. It remains highly uncertain whether the successful spread of these structures and programmes will indeed result in the changes we are interested in. For example, the successful spread of the Teach For All model is not the same thing as the spread of increased educational opportunity. Recognition of this complexity is a perspective that is sometimes missing in the managerial discourse we see about the need to invest in ‘spreading what works’.

It is clear from these case studies that spreading innovation is not a process that is easy to control or direct. However, the cases also point to a strong role for intermediary organisations and networks that can provide the supports necessary to make adoption more likely, if not certain. Questions around how to best structure these intermediaries, and how they can be managed so that they are most effective is a potentially fruitful area for further research.