# Codi’r To Research Project:

A Social Return on Investment Analysis

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**1. Executive Summary**

This report provides an overview, analysis and evaluation of the credibility of the music based intervention Codi’r To, a pilot project, set up in two schools in deprived areas in North Wales, namely Ysgol Glancegin, Maesgeirchen, Bangor and Ysgol Maesincla, Caernarfon. The report was commissioned to determine whether this project was having a positive effect on the participating children and, potentially, enhancing their lives. The initial aim of the report was, if the results were positive, to assist in acquiring more funding for this project, which has now received further funding until March 2015. The method used was Social Return on Investment (SROI) a method not normally used in conventional accounting, since it examines the social, environmental and economic value of a project or activity and places a monetary value upon it.

The stages carried out to complete a successful SROI were:.

1. To establish the stakeholders.
2. Mapping the outcomes.
3. Evidencing and valuing the outcomes.
4. Establishing impact.
5. Calculating SROI
6. Reporting, using and embedding.
7. Analysis.

It was decided to measure the impact of the Codi'r To intervention by attempting to establish whether happiness and confidence, school absences and educational attainments improved in the participating group of children in comparison with the control group, comprised of children not participating.

Due to lack of data and time constraints, it was not possible to obtain information on the educational elements. Therefore, the report focuses on the confidence and happiness values. The first outcome to be measured was the increase in confidence, which was achieved by comparing the results of a problem solving test carried out with both groups. Whilst strong anecdotal evidence and data show that the confidence of the intervention group had indeed increased, the control group scored higher on the problem solving test therefore showing that their confidence overall was higher than their counterparts. Although this has led to a negative value being shown on the impact map, which is based on comparison, it is important to bear in mind the effect of group composition upon the results and that non-comparative data and observational evidence from the professionals involved attest to a marked increase in the confidence of the intervention group. The research data also shows that there was a clear reduction in angst in the intervention group, with a corresponding increase in children's happiness

Stakeholders interviewed as part of the process were also enthusiastic about the positive effect which the project had on the children taking part, although this evidence is, of course, subjective.

The overall findings of the report are reassuring, with the Codi’r To project obtaining an SROI ratio of 1.76. There is certainly scope for further research to be conducted in the future, as the project matures and develops, particularly since a longer time span would allow for the effects upon school absences and educational achievements to be objectively explored.

## 2. Introduction:

Codi'r To is a project inspired by the success of the Venezuelan El Sistema project , replicated in the UK by initiatives such as In Harmony Liverpool and Big Noise Scotland. These schemes, by involving young people, especially those from poor economic backgrounds, in orchestras and associated instrumental training programmes have succeeded in improving young people's self-esteem, discipline and educational application, with positive consequences for their communities. Codi'r To aims to be just as inspirational and transformational for children, their families, schools and communities. It is hoped that, by engaging children in high quality musical training and performance, the project will address both social and economic disadvantage and educational under-achievement.

The purpose of this research is to explore the effect of the Codi’r To programme on vulnerable primary school children and to evaluate whether the programme is encouraging them to make positive changes in their lives.

The evaluation method used has been Social Return on Investment (SROI) analysis to measure the social, economic and environmental benefits of this activity and placing a monetary value on it.

Social Return on Investment (SROI) is an accepted method, based on generally accepted accounting principles, which may be used to help measure, manage and understand the social, environmental and economic value of a project or activity. This value is often missing from many current accounting methods and, therefore, from many decisions made about policy and practice. By using SROI, it is possible to show what is missing and to value it in a way which is both feasible and rational.

It is based on the following seven principles:

1. **Involve stakeholders.**

That is having a constructive dialogue with the people and organisations that experience change as a result of the activity.

2. **Understand what changes**

That is, understanding how change has happened and evaluating social, economic and environmental outcomes in order to provide evidence for the value which has been created.

3. **Value the things that matter**

Use financial proxies so that the value of the projects outcomes for the different stakeholders can be recognised.

4. **Only include what is material**

Ensuring that the evidence gives a true picture so that the stakeholders can draw balanced and reasonable conclusions. This will also help to show to what extent different stakeholders benefit from the activity.

5. **Do not over-claim**

In assessing the impact of the activity, only the value that the organisations are responsible for creating, should be claimed and not, for example, change which would have happened independently.

6. **Be transparent**

Demonstrate the basis on which the findings should be considered accurate, balanced and honest; and that the information will be reported to and discussed with stakeholders

7. **Verify the result**

SROI inevitably entails some subjectivity in its method. It is, therefore, important that there is appropriate independent verification of the account so that stakeholders can judge if the decisions are reasonable

## 3. Context

Measuring the current and potential social and educational benefits of the Codi'r To project must be made within the context of other similar projects worldwide which, like Codi'r To, were initially inspired by Venezuela's El Sistema youth orchestra project, which has been running since 1975. It was set up to improve the educational outcomes and life paths of poor and underprivileged children. 60% of the children in the El Sistema programmes had either dropped out of school or were at risk of doing so, many also being victims of family violence and social neglect (Price-Mitchell,2011). The project now has 31 symphony orchestras, 70 children's orchestras, 150 youth orchestras and between 310,000 and 370,000 children attending its music schools around the country (Tunstall, 2011). Its founder, musician Jose Antonio Abreu, believed that musical training could help to overcome the disadvantages of poverty and inequalities. Since then, El Sistema has been replicated in over 60 countries. In Venezuela it is mostly governmentally funded by the federal government but financing for major projects have been provided by the Inter American Bank.

The primary objective of all Sistema projects is to achieve social change through music. It is believed that the students, by developing control of their music and the discipline which that entails, are also being provided with an outlet to improve their social abilities. Commitment and dedication to the orchestra have been central features of El Sistema and striving towards musical excellence and success have been seen as highly motivational. Ensuring that the project is open to anyone who wishes to join has remained a key factor. Another objective has been to provide training from early childhood to adulthood and the project strived to bring families and communities together with parents attending rehearsals. It, therefore, not only improved pupil motivation but also strengthens communities.

The first Sistema in the UK was Sistema Scotland, founded in 2007. Its aims also have been to transform children’s lives with music and to empower communities. Big Noise, as it is known in Scottish communities, is an intervention that uses music in young children to build confidence and improving outcomes for children who face inequality and disadvantage, also providing an out of school orchestra programme delivered to primary school aged children. Big Noise also provides a wide range of activities and encourages whole families to become involved.

Whilst it is still too early to predict the long-term positive effects of Big Noise, the evaluation commissioned by the Scottish Government (2011) concluded that it was 'well placed to achieve a range of outcomes, including greater engagement in learning, higher academic performance, reduction in negative and health harming behaviours, benefits to families, employers and communities, and better employability skills.'

A survey of parents and carers which was conducted as part of that government research found that 100**%** thought their children were more confident as a result of Big Noise**, 93%** of parents thought that their children were happier, **79%** that they were more willing to concentrate, and **43%** had noticed behavioural improvement.

The project hopes that it will not only succeed in further developing children’s social skills and drive, but also hope to see an improvement in children's respect and emotional intelligence. Big Noise also would like to be able to provide a full programme to support and encourage the underprivileged families and create opportunities for parents to contribute to and also even help the parent with their social skills and confidence, which would further mirror the evidence of the Venezuelan initiative.

Similarly, In Harmony was set up in Liverpool in 2007 with a vision of a 'healthier, inspired and higher achieving West Everton empowered to celebrate the community through music.' (Burns and Bewick, 2012, p13). It was set up by the Royal Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra as a response to Department of Education concerns and like El Sistema and Big Noise, hoped that an all-consuming music programme would improve children's aspirations and achievement. In Harmony also wanted to support improvement in educational standards and school attendance. In addition to improving children’s confidence, they also wanted to empower the whole community and increase their confidence in their ability to change their whole lives through volunteering and exposure in live music and, at the same time, maximise the sustainable benefits of the new Royal Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra rehearsal centre in West Everton for the local community. Social change and the pursuit of musical excellence are given equal priority since it is believed that one happens through the other. Between 2009 and 2012, In Harmony Liverpool benefited over 350 children from babies to 16 year olds, creating music and performing in orchestras and ensembles for up to 10 hours each week in and out of school and with the programme reporting a 250% increase in both scope and reach. (Burns and Bewick,2012). Both quantitative and qualitative evidence point to direct benefits of the project, evidence which has also been highlighted in Ofsted Reports, pointing to evidence of 'exceptional rewards' not only in musical development but also refer to 'pupils progress improving quickly.'(Burns and Bewick, 2012, p31).

All 3 of the above projects have, therefore, been a major success. All have noticed a big increase in the children’s concentration and motivation. This has been the reason for its attractiveness to other localities.  In November 2011, the British government announced an expansion of In Harmony across England by extending funding from the [Department for Education](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Department_for_Education) and adding funding from [Arts Council England](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Arts_Council_England). Four new In Harmony local programmes, for example, were established in 2012 in [Leeds](http://www.operanorth.co.uk/education/in-harmony), [Newcastle Gateshead](http://www.sagegateshead.com/about-us/in-harmony/), [Telford & Stoke on Trent](http://www.inharmonytelfordstoke.org/) , and [Nottingham](http://www.nottinghammusichub.org.uk/in-harmony). All projects have noted that participating pupils are more focused on their school work with high percentages of children reaching their personal targets, leading to substantial academic improvement. Parents generally note a noticeable improvement in the children’s confidence as well as in their ability to formulate relationships with adults. All 4 concluded that the children became a lot happier after a few months of going to rehearsals and that they became much more socially adept and make and sustain friendships. Their capacity to work as part of a team continued to grow as has their musical ability.

## 4. Summary, Scope and Stakeholders

Inspired by the El Sistema project, Caernarfon’s Cwmni Cofis Bach, whose philosophy is that participating in the arts can enrich the minds of children and open doors to new possibilities, arranged a meeting with those involved in the Liverpool In Harmony project. Consequently the Codi'r To Project was established with a focus upon supporting young vulnerable children who may be experiencing behavioural difficulties, as well as educational and emotional issues. It would also probably be the only minority language (Welsh) focused El Sistema project in the world.

Originally set up in 2013, the scheme was due to be piloted for a year with an initial grant of £40,000, and would involve teaching children of all abilities to play the violin amongst other string instruments. It was hoped by the schools involved that the grant could be doubled by the following year to £80,000 in order to double the number of children involved. However due to unforeseen circumstance such as lack of funds and the unavailability of Welsh violin tutors, this did not materialise.

The project was, therefore, delayed for 8 months. Hence the current idea came to fruition, namely that of forming a school orchestra with its sole focus on brass and percussion and in creating an inclusive musical experience. Taught by trained musicians and tutors the pilot is being trialled in 2 schools, Ysgol Glancegin, Maesgeirchen and Ysgol Maesincla, Caernarfon, with only years 3 and 4 currently participating. The progress of the years in both schools will be monitored. If the pilot is successful the eventual plan will be to double the number of children involved and potentially involving the whole schools. Furthermore it is hoped in the future that they will be able to expand in the wider community which would allow the children the opportunity to busk on their local streets and perform concerts.

As a consequence of the late start we are only able to evaluate the impact of Codi’r To from the limited evidence of the last 5 months - from April 2014 to September 2014. SROI analysis, though not based on the full pilot study at the moment, can still be evaluative in determining the perceived effect of Codi’r To on the participating children thus far by measuring:

* Potential reduction in school absences
* Comparing the behaviours and achievements of the orchestra participants with those in a control group environment
* better general well-being, and relief of emotional stress
* instillation of confidence
* benefits for communities and parents / families
* educational attainments e.g. impact on reading, writing and arithmetic
* musical attainments
* general well being
* benefits for the schools

However, considering that the pilot has only run for 5 months so far, the most important contribution SROI analysis can make is in forecasting how much social value will be created if the Codi'r To activities meet their intended outcomes and what the potential return will be for the stakeholders who include:

* The Local Education Authority, who have allowed teachers to be involved in the project during school hours and who have an interest in the resultant effect upon educational achievement and behaviour.
* The participating schools, Ysgol Glancegin and Ysgol Maesincla, who have invested time and effort an initial investment of £1,800 and a promised further investment of £14,000 each. They have a direct interest in seeing positive educational and behavioural advantage and hope eventually to involve the whole schools in the project.
* The Codi'r To tutors, who have invested valuable time into trying to make the project a success and who hope to see its expansion.
* The children themselves, being the most important stake holders.
* Parents/families: they will benefit from a change of behaviour at home and possibly better school attendants, as well as possibly encouraging the parents to get involved and show an interest.
* Cofis Bach, which invested £4,263 to pay for instruments.
* Comic Relief which, on 11.6.14 agreed to fund the project for 2 years to the tune of £15,000 per annum.
* Communities First, who have contributed £20,000, and who have covered the co-ordinator's salary until December 2014, and who will hope to realise benefits for the communities involved.
* Gwynedd County Council, who have already invested £5,000 and on 13.6.14 confirmed a further contribution of £10,000.
* Community Foundation Wales, which has contributed £5,000.
* Reaching Wider which has contributed £3,000
* The Arts Council of Wales (ACW) who are considering a contribution of £40,000.
* The Paul Hamlyn Foundation which is considering a contribution of £40,000 but which has asked Codi'r To to make contact when the ACW has confirmed its contribution.

**5. Socio-economic profile**

In order to better understand the social and economic context in which the Codi’r To project operates we conduct a socio-economic profile of the two wards in which the schools are based – Marchog (Ysgol Glan Cegin) and Peblig (Maesincla). This is done using the latest Census data for 2011.

Ysgol Glancegin is a community school located in Maesgeirchen, a large housing estate on the outskirts of Bangor. It is considered to be a socially disadvantaged area and has been The Welsh Assembly designated a 'Communities First' area by the Welsh Assembly Government. Over 97% of the school’s pupils live in an area which is amongst the 20% of Wales’ most deprived areas. 42.3% of pupils receive free school meals, and 41.3% are on the additional needs register, percentages which are significantly higher than both Gwynedd and Wales averages. (Estyn Report June 2013).

Ysgol Maesincla, Caernarfon, is also located in an area of significant economic disadvantage and has been designated an Objective One area. All pupils live in one of the 20% most disadvantaged areas of Wales. 44% of the pupils are entitled to free school meals (Estyn 2011).

Both schools were chosen for the Codi'r To pilot due to their being in areas of both social and economic disadvantage and, therefore, areas in which it was felt that the project could make a difference.

Key statistics from the 2011 Census underline the fact that both Peblig Ward (population 2321) and Marchog Ward (population 2566), where Ysgol Maesincla and Ysgol Glancegin are respectively located, are clearly deprived compared to both Gwynedd and Wales averages.

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Marchog Ward**  **(Ysg. Glancegin)**  **%** | **Peblig Ward**  **(Ysg, Maesincla)**  **%** | **Gwynedd**  **%** | **Wales**  **%** |
| Population | 2,566 | 2321 | 121,874 | 3,063,456 |
| Tenure: Social/rented | 56.6 | 57.1 | 16.3 | 16.5 |
| Lone parent households with dependent children | 14.1 | 15.5 | 5.8 | 7.5 |
| Households with no car | 41.0 | 46.0 | 21.4 | 22.9 |
| Unemployed | 13.9 | 14.4 | 5.5 | 6.5 |
| General Health: Bad / Very Bad | 8.2 | 6.8 | 5.3 | 7.6 |
| Social class: Part/unskilled | 39.7 | 41.6 | 25.9 | 28.8 |
| People with no qualifications (Aged 16+) | 35.2 | 41.0 | 23.2 | 25.9 |

Table 1: Socio-economic indicators for Marchog and Peblig wards. Source: 2011 Census Key Statistics, Office for National Statistics © Crown Copyright 2013. Statistics used under the terms of the Open Government Licence.

Unemployment is clearly high in both wards, averaging at 14.2% compared to 5.5% in Gwynedd and the national percentage of 6.5% for Wales. The skills base in both areas is also seen to be low with an average of 40.7% being part/unskilled compared to the Gwynedd and Wales averages of 25.9% and 28.8% respectively. Of particular note in relation to the aims of the Codi'r To project are the percentages of people aged 16+ who have no qualifications, being 41% and 35% for the Peblig and Marchog Wards respectively compared to the Gwynedd average of 23.2% and the Wales average of 25.9%. This lack of qualification impacts on the skills base and employment opportunities of the inhabitants and leads to low disposable incomes as is reflected in the high percentages of people living in social housing and of households with no cars. Poor health is also more prevalent in both wards than the averages for Gwynedd generally even though the average for those with bad/very bad health is slightly lower in Peblig Ward than the average for Wales generally.

**6. Methodology**

An SROI analysis requires following the six stages which are identified in the Cabinet Office document *A Guide to Social Return of Investment* as being:

**1. Establishing the scope and identifying the stakeholders.**

Identifying the scope of the analysis should focus on what will be measured, the reasons for the analysis and above all on providing a clear indicator as to whether what is being envisioned is realistic.

The stake holders are the main beneficiaries of the project/activity. It is important to identify the key ones and how they will be involved, ranging from simple questionnaires, phone interviews or through focus groups. In the SROI analysis, the most important factor is to determine how much social, economic and environmental value has been created by the activity. This should allow a ratio of benefits to be analysed. For example, a 3:1 would show that each £1 invested has created £3 of social value.

**2. Mapping the outcomes.**

An impact map, also known as a theory of change, is built as a result of contact with the stakeholders. It enables the relationship between the inputs, being the resources used for the delivery of the activity, the outputs, i.e. the activity itself and the outcomes, to be observed. It normally consists of five columns. The first section of the impact map will contain information about Codi’r To and the scope of the analysis. This will be followed by columns identifying the stakeholders, intended or unintended changes based on the stakeholders’ feedback, the stakeholders’ inputs which may include a financial contributions or non-monetised inputs such as administrative support, teacher time or materials, all of which could have been important in making the activity happen. These inputs also need to be given a monetary value. The next two columns identify the outputs and outcomes for the stakeholders.

**3. Evidencing outcomes and giving them a value**

The activity's outcomes for the stakeholders need to be evidenced and the collected data used to give them a monetary value. Indicators will need to be identified which show whether the outcome has occurred and also by how much. It is important to attempt to identify how long the outcomes are likely to last, since this will also have a monetary value. Some of the proxies used in SROI to arrive at a monetary value are, by nature, challenging since they attempt to give values to benefits such as improved behaviour, which are harder to value and which, therefore, are normally left out of traditional economic analysis.

**4. Establishing impact**

Establishing the activity's actual impact involves taking deadweight and displacement into consideration. Deadweight measures outcomes which would have happened despite the activity. e.g. A decrease in truancy may be due to the activity but may also be due to other factors, such school, LEA or Welsh Government initiatives. Displacement, if appropriate, identifies whether the outcomes have merely replaced or displaced other outcomes. Establishing impact also involves identifying attribution i.e. an assessment, in percentage terms, showing to what extent the outcomes was caused by the contribution of other organisations or people. The extent to which the outcomes are likely to drop-off in future also needs to be measured. All impacts are normally rounded off to the nearest 10%.

**5. Calculating the SROI**

This consists of four stages

5.1 Projecting into the future: projecting the value of each outcome into the future

5.2 Calculating the net present value: a calculation of the costs and benefits paid or received. This involves calculating the entire project's benefit, subtracting any negatives which will identify the activity's discounted value and allow comparison with the investment made.

5.3 Calculating the ratio by dividing the discounted value of benefits by the total investment.

5.4 Sensitivity analysis: assessing to what extent results would differ if some of the assumptions regarding deadweight, attribution, drop-off, financial proxies, input values and quantity of outcomes were changed.

**6. Reporting, using and embedding**

The final step is to verify the report, to communicate the results with the stakeholders in a relevant and meaningful way, explaining the decisions and assumptions made in the course of the analysis and demonstrating that the calculations made are robust and accurate. It is important that the SROI analysis is used to initiate change and to ensure that any good outcome processes are embedded in the activity.

**7. Analysis**

The impact map is the cornerstone of Social Return on Investment Analysis focusing as it does on calculating and presenting the main metrics associated with the project. We narrowed our focus to concentrate mainly on the outcomes associated with the children themselves. The other stakeholders were duly considered and are the focus of the next section where we present a qualitative analysis of the responses collected by them. The first outcome we considered was improved confidence. It was necessary to associate increase in confidence amongst the children to something that we could tangibly measure and it was decided that the Wally Problem Solving Test would serve as a good proxy of increase in confidence. It was assumed that an improvement in scores on the Wally test would give an indication of improved confidence among the children. It was then necessary to decide how to measure an improvement. This has been achieved by comparing the results of the Codi’r To children, i.e. those that were involved in the project with a control group of children that were not involved in the project at follow up compared to baseline. A resulting estimate of the difference can then be calculated, that is, to what extent do the Codi’r To children perform better on the Wally test ( and therefore have greater confidence) than their counterparts that are not involved in Codi’r To? This outcome is then corrected for deadweight – that is, what would have happened without Codi’r To, which is the prevalence of the control group that achieve at least the average Wally score – and then we assume attribution to be 90%. This means that 90% of any effects witnessed among the children are attributed to the Codi’r To project. The next step is to find a proxy valuation for increased confidence. In this case this comes from Fujiwara’s Value Calculator and is estimated at £9,455 per child. What was found was that in fact the control group performed better than the Codi’r To children on the Wally test and so, as the deadweight was greater than the benefit to the Codi’r To children, we see a negative result which must be included in the impact map.

The next outcome considered was a reduction in anxiety/depression as proxy-measured by the School Children Happiness Index (SCHI). The difference, between baseline and follow up, in the proportion of children in the intervention group who had index scores above the average for the whole sample was calculated and inputted into the impact map. The incidence was then reduced by the amount of deadweight loss expected. This was calculated as the difference in the proportion in the *control group* who had SCHI scores above the average between baseline and follow up. That is the level of anxiety/depression aversion that would have occurred anyway –without the intervention. Finally we again estimated attribution as 90% and our proxy valuation comes from Fujiwara’s Value Calculator which values reduction in youth anxiety and depression at £11,819.

The SROI ratio calculated can be reported to be 1.76 over the initial six months of the project. This can be seen as very favourable as SROI ratios above one mean that for every pound spent more is being generated in benefits. The bottom line for this report is that for every £1 spent on the Codi’r To project a total of £1.76 is generated in measurable benefits to the children. It should be noted however that this analysis is relatively narrow focusing as it does only on the children as stakeholders. The next section considers the wider responses of the stakeholders in general, those that have contributed financially to the project, within a qualitative methodology. It is then considered what data requirements would hold if we wanted to do a fuller study.

Table 2: Impact Map for the Codi’r To project



\*Whilst strong anecdotal evidence and data show that the confidence of the intervention group had indeed increased, the control group scored higher on the problem solving test, therefore showing that their confidence overall was higher than their counterparts. Although this has led to a negative value being shown on the above impact map, which is based on comparison, it is important to bear in mind the effect of group composition upon the results and that non-comparative data and observational evidence from the professionals involved attest to a marked increase in the confidence of the intervention group.

**8. Stakeholder Feedback**

The feedback received from stakeholders regarding the Codi'r To project has been positive. The four key stakeholders interviewed clearly shared a similar vision, namely that of improving children's lives in disadvantaged areas. Community Funding Wales in particular placed emphasis on the fact that this project would be taught through the medium of Welsh. Cofis Bach, the original founders of Codi’r To, spoke with great enthusiasm and delight about the wonderful opportunities this pilot scheme has afforded to these children. They were particularly impressed by the ways in which the children’s confidence had substantially improved in 4 months an observation which reflects the Wally Test results. Gwynedd Education Authority and Reaching Wider emphasised that these are children who, without Codi’r To, would not have had the opportunity to participate in such activities and showcase their talents. After only 6 weeks, these vulnerable children, who were lacking in confidence, were able to sing in unison and move and dance remarkably effectively. Playing instruments skilfully in front of an audience after only 18 weeks has been a considerable step forward for them -and something they most probably would not have dreamt of doing previously. Reaching Wider also noted the increase not only in the children's confidence but also in their aspirations. They believe that the project has been responsible both for encouraging the children's self-discipline and sense of self-worth. Both Cofis Bach and Gwynedd Education Authority stated that the children look forward to coming to school on the days of Codi’r To, with teachers also being enthusiastic. According to Reaching Wider both teachers and other tutoring staff involved in the project have commented that they have witnessed noticeable changes in the children and, having been present at the final concert, Reaching Wider were very impressed and expressed how apparent it was that the children had learnt a lot musically and that they had obviously enjoyed the experience, an observation which is supported by the results of the Happiness Inventory. Despite the lack of sufficient statistical evidence, this feedback, though subjective, is commendable testimony to what the project seems to have achieved over such a short timescale and to what it could potentially achieve in 6 to 12 months' time.

It is not surprising that the head teachers of both pilot schools gave the go-ahead for the project to be recommissioned. Reaching Wider and Bangor University have reached an agreement to fund the project in 2014/2015. Community Funding Wales and Gwynedd Education Authority have also expressed an interest in contributing more funding if the criteria to do so are met.

**9. Lack of conclusive evidence and suggestions for the future**

Due to a number of factors including time constraints following the late start of the pilot and absences of teachers who were key to the project, it has only been possible to collect limited data. This also led to the lack of sufficiently detailed responses to a Strength and Difficulties Questionnaire (SDQ) for objective analysis. It had been hoped that evidence relating to a reduction in school absences / truancy and enhanced educational achievements could have been provided by the schools. Whilst the discipline involved in musical performance requires increased concentration and effort which may be translated into improved effort in the classroom, research has also shown that music and rhythm can help to improve pupils language and literacy skills in particular (Piro, J.M. and Ortiz, C., 2009).  Anecdotal evidence suggests that there were improvements in pupils' behaviour and effort but the short timescale thus far meant that objective statistical evidence of academic progress could not be provided at either school. Conclusive evidence in these areas could have helped to further strengthen the case for the release of funds to Codi'r To by potential contributors since educational improvements and social and emotional support were key factors in decisions to grant financial support.

Big Noise Scotland and In Harmony Liverpool have enjoyed major success over many years with children thriving both musically and academically as a result of similar El Sistema projects. This is exactly the reason Reaching Wider chose to invest. It can be argued that, since the responses to Codi'r To have already been positive, there is no apparent reason why it should also not thrive providing it receives the necessary funding and support.

It has been recently confirmed (August 2014) that Codi'r To has received further funding until March 2015. In order for it to be possible to make a stronger case for continued funding at that time, it is important that detailed evidence is kept regarding:

1. Any reduction in school absences / truancy.
2. Improved behaviour.
3. Any improvement in educational attainment, especially pertaining to music, mathematics, language and literacy as has been observed in other projects.
4. The ability of pupils to meet their personal targets.
5. Parental and family feedback.

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