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Evaluation of the Uniformed Youth Social Action Fund 1

Final report

Ilana Tyler-Rubinstein, Fiona Vallance, Olivia Michelmore and Julia Pye



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- Church Lads' and Church Girls' Brigade Ulster Regiment, Durham Regiment (Hunger Project) and St David's Broom Leys Company;
- Combined Cadet Force Association Westcliff High School, Brompton Academy and City of London Academy;
- Fire Cadets Clacton, Frome and Exmouth Units;
- Girlguiding 1st Yorkley Brownies, Freebridge Marshland RGU Senior Section and 1st Llwynhendy Brownies;
- Jewish Lads' & Girls' Brigade Mill Hill, Redbridge Band and Cardiff Units;
- Marine Society & Sea Cadets Ballymena, Manchester Trafalgar and Tiverton Units;
- Reserve Forces and Cadets Association (RFCA) Broxburn Academy and Govan High;
- St John Ambulance Peer Education unit and Newham East Cadets;
- The Boys' Brigade 1st Newtonstewart, 2nd Kilmarnock, 1st Llay and 1st Tonteg Units;
- The Girls' Brigade England and Wales Croydon Tabernacle, 1st Huncote n:vestigate; Cathays Methodist (3rd Cardiff) n:vestigate and 2nd Bedford South n:gage;
- The Scout Association 5th Sutton Scout Group Explorers and 1st Leasowe;
- Volunteer Police Cadets Clackmannanshire, Gwent – Newport and Dunfermline Units and;
- Woodcraft Folk Bradford DFs, Bradford Venturers, Twickenham and Shipley Elfins/Pioneers

Executive summary

Executive summary

Ipsos MORI was commissioned by the Cabinet Office to evaluate the impact of the Uniformed Youth Social Action Funds (UYSAF) 1 and 2. This evaluation report relates to UYSAF 1.

UYSAF 1 and 2 form part of the Government's commitment to provide more opportunities for young people to take part in social action. Social action in this context is defined as 'practical action in the service of others'; the term incorporates volunteering, as well as other activities that aim to help society and/or improve the environment, such as campaigning. UYSAF 1 aimed to increase the number of social action opportunities available to young people through Uniformed Youth Groups by providing funding for 14 social action-oriented Uniformed Youth Groups to open new local groups ('units') and create 15,000 sustainable places for young people by 31 March 2016. UYSAF 2 encourages Uniformed Youth Groups to pilot new and innovative ways of engaging those young people who may ordinarily struggle to participate in youth social action or Uniformed Youth Groups.

The evaluation of UYSAF 1 explores the impact of youth social action on those individuals that the activities aimed to benefit (beneficiaries). Working closely with 40 selected Uniformed Youth Group units that were funded through UYSAF 1, questionnaires were administered to 1,011 beneficiaries of youth social action during the period 15 June -30 December 2015. Beneficiaries are defined as those individuals or groups on the receiving end of social action activities, such as residents at an old age home visited by Uniformed Youth Groups, members of the community who witnessed Uniformed Youth Groups collecting litter and staff working at a homeless shelter. Beneficiaries were identified by those carrying out social action activities. Measures of perceived impact were collected from beneficiaries during or shortly after social action activities took place using a self-completion paper questionnaire.

This survey represents a first attempt to quantitatively measure the impact of social action on its beneficiaries directly; previous research in the field has typically measured the impact of activities on beneficiaries indirectly – by using measures collected from participants – or has used qualitative approaches. The methodology provides an indication of the short-term perceived impact of social action on beneficiaries, and highlights some features of youth social action that are associated with stronger perceived impacts. It is worth noting that the measures used are limited in some respects because the survey method was inappropriate for use with the most vulnerable beneficiaries, will not capture the full range of impacts of any given activity, and may lead to some over-claiming of impact.¹

The impact of youth social action

What impact does youth social action have on beneficiaries?

- The findings suggest that social action can help beneficiaries to meet new people they would not otherwise have met: 90% of beneficiaries said they spoke to the young people who were carrying out the activities.

¹ Please see 'Benefits and limitations' in Section 2.3 for a discussion. The questionnaire captured a generic set of measures that may not have covered the key aims of any given activity. It was administered immediately after social action took place, when beneficiaries may have been more likely to over-state its impact on their opinions and likely future behaviour. Vulnerable groups include children and those where the survey questions and/or methodology may not have been suitable (e.g. homeless adults).

- The findings also suggest that social action has the potential to improve beneficiaries' views of young people and help them feel more engaged with their communities. The great majority of beneficiaries surveyed were positive about the impact of youth social action:
 - Three quarters (75%) of beneficiaries surveyed considered the social action they experienced to be very worthwhile and 80% said they felt more proud of their local area as a result of the activities.
 - The majority (63%) of beneficiaries surveyed claimed they were more likely to take part in social action themselves as a result of the activities they saw young people carry out.
 - More than three quarters (77%) of beneficiaries surveyed said they had a more positive impression of what young people contribute to their local communities as a result of the social action activities.

When is youth social action most effective?

- Beneficiaries who spoke to young participants were more likely than those who did not to report the social action was very worthwhile, increased their sense of pride in their local area, improved their opinions of young people, and increased their propensity to volunteer themselves. For example, 61% of beneficiaries who did not speak to any young people thought the activity was 'very worthwhile', compared with 73% of beneficiaries who spoke to young people.
- Broadly speaking, the more young people beneficiaries interacted with, the greater the reported impact of the activity. For example, 76% of beneficiaries who spoke with six or more young people said they were more likely to volunteer themselves as a result of experiencing social action; this fell to 64% among beneficiaries who spoke with one to five young people, and to 42% among beneficiaries who did not speak to any young people at all.
- Campaigning activities were more likely than other forms of social action to be considered worthwhile by beneficiaries: 81% of beneficiaries considered them very worthwhile, compared with 75% of beneficiaries overall. Campaigning activities primarily relate to Remembrance Day activities, such as parading.²
- Activities that aimed to improve the local environment directly were more likely than other forms of social action to improve beneficiaries' opinions of what young people contribute to the community. This includes activities such as litter picks and community gardening. Some 86% of beneficiaries of activities that aimed to improve the local environment said their opinion of what young people contribute to their local area had improved, compared with 74% of beneficiaries of other types of activity.

What types of beneficiary does youth social action have most impact on?

- Beneficiaries who were relatively engaged with their communities were more likely than others to report that youth social action had affected their opinions and likely behaviour. Those who already felt proud of their area and/or were active in volunteering were more likely than others to report that activities had increased

² Note that the evaluation used a classification of social action activities based on that used by Step Up To Serve. Remembrance Day parades and activities have been classified as 'campaigning' under this framework. See section 2.2 for the framework.

their sense of pride in the area (84% vs. 40%, respectively), their propensity to volunteer (71% vs. 21%) and their views of what young people contribute to communities (83% vs. 42%).

Implications for funders and Uniformed Youth Groups

- This evaluation highlights that Youth Social Action can produce clear, quantifiable benefits for the communities in which it is delivered beyond those experienced by the young people themselves.
- This evaluation suggests that government funding for youth groups that is tied to commitments to carry out social action has the potential to improve inter-generational relationships and communities' feelings of pride in local areas. The evaluation shows that, in most cases, social action led to direct interactions between adult beneficiaries and young participants, and that in most cases beneficiaries reported this contact had improved beneficiaries' opinions of what young people contribute to local communities.
- The current evaluation demonstrates that even those who are not actively engaged in their communities experience positive benefits of youth social action.
- Volunteers in local Uniformed Youth Group units often discount activities they are doing as 'too small' to qualify as social action, such as running a stand at a local fair or event or visiting a care home. However, the survey findings demonstrate that a wide range of activities – including relatively small actions – are reported as having a very positive impact on beneficiaries. Those organising social action activities for young people should be made aware of the potential for these activities to reach local residents and positively impact their impressions of their areas and communities.
- A large number of the activities covered by the evaluation occurred around Remembrance Day (e.g. parades) and over the Christmas period. To some degree, this may reflect that unit leaders do not consider smaller, 'everyday', activities as social action. However, there may be value in encouraging some Uniformed Youth Group units to engage in more regular activities throughout the year.
- Uniformed Youth Groups and those organising activities for young people that involve bringing together the participants and recipients of social action should consider the opportunities that young people have to interact with beneficiaries, as beneficiaries were more likely to report positive impacts where they spoke to participants³.
- Newly established Uniformed Youth Group units can carry out social action activities. Project managers within Uniformed Youth Groups explained that it is relatively rare for newly-established units to carry out youth social action during their early months of operation. Typically, units start to engage in social action when they are well established and adult volunteers have built up experience and confidence in leading activities. However, Uniformed Youth Groups were creative in finding ways to support new units involved in the evaluation to carry out activities (such as buddying with established units). Similar practices could help to establish social action within new units in future more quickly.

³ Note that the current evaluation only focused on activities where there was some form of contact between participants and beneficiaries of social action; it was not possible to collect impact measures in cases where social action took place but beneficiaries were unlikely to be aware of the activities and/or who had carried them out.

- Quantitative evidence on the impact social action has on those receiving it is limited, and this evaluation aimed to fill this evidence gap through trialling a newly-developed method. This evaluation demonstrates that it is possible to capture a measure of the impact of social action quantitatively. While this method has some limitations – for example, it is inappropriate for use with the most vulnerable beneficiaries, will not capture the full range of impacts of any given activity, and may lead to some over-claiming of impact – it provides a useful indication of the nature and scale of the perceived impact of youth social action, and highlights the types of social action that may have the greatest perceived impact on communities.

Background and context

1. Introduction

1.1 Background

Ipsos MORI was commissioned by the Cabinet Office to evaluate the impact of the Uniformed Youth Social Action Funds (UYSAF) 1 and 2. These funds aim to increase the number of social action opportunities available to young people through Uniformed Youth Groups. Social Action in this context is defined as *'practical action in the service of others'* that benefits those providing and those receiving social action. Participating in social action activities is expected to help young people to build important skills and character traits for adulthood and benefit the wider community.

The Step Up To Serve (SUTS) #iwill campaign is aiming to double the proportion of 10 to 20 year olds taking part in meaningful social action over the period 2014-2020. UYSAF 1 and 2 are part of the government's response in support of this ambition, providing funding to expand the number of places available for young people in social action-oriented Uniformed Youth Groups.

A total of £10 million in funding has been devolved to Youth United Foundation (Youth United), a membership organisation that supports Uniformed Youth Groups. UYSAF 1 is intended to enable young people living in disadvantaged areas, or from hard to reach communities, to get involved in social action by joining Uniformed Youth Groups. Youth United aimed to establish 15,000 sustainable places for young people by 31 March 2016.⁴ A second round of funding was launched in October 2014 to pilot innovative approaches to engaging the most hard to reach young people (UYSAF 2)⁵.

The successful Uniformed Youth Groups selected for UYSAF 1 are:

- Catholic Guides of Ireland Northern Region
- Church Lads' and Church Girls' Brigade
- Combined Cadet Force Association
- Fire Cadets
- Girlguiding
- Jewish Lads' & Girls' Brigade
- Marine Society & Sea Cadets
- Reserve Forces and Cadets Association /Army Cadet Force/Air Cadets
- St John Ambulance
- The Boys' Brigade
- The Girls' Brigade England and Wales
- The Scouts Association
- Volunteer Police Cadets
- Woodcraft Folk

⁴ Internal monitoring data (not seen by the evaluation team) shows that over 19,000 places had been created for young people via UYSAF 1 by December 2015, three months before the end of the funding window.

⁵ Please see separate report on the evaluation of UYSAF 2.

The SUTS campaign aims to ensure that young people have the opportunity to participate in meaningful social action. SUTS has defined six principles that characterise ‘meaningful’⁶ social action (see Figure 1.1). The social action offered by Uniformed Youth Groups should adhere to the principles of social action as defined by SUTS, and these are the criteria upon which applications to UYSAF 1 were assessed.

Figure 1.1: Six principles that underpin high quality youth social action



Source: Step Up To Serve (SUTS) #iwill campaign <http://www.iwill.org.uk/about-us/principles/>

Meaningful social action is expected to create a “double benefit”, by having a positive impact on both those who take part in social action and those who are recipients of social action. This evaluation aims to build on the evidence base for the second part of the “double benefit” model, by aiming to measure the impact of youth social action on its beneficiaries. As we outline below, a range of evidence exists that demonstrates the impact of social action on participants but less quantitative evidence is available to demonstrate the nature and scale of its impact on recipients (referred to as ‘beneficiaries’ throughout this report).

This report explains the approach used to measure the impact of youth social action on beneficiaries (see Chapter 2). It then presents the findings from the 1,011 beneficiaries of social action activities carried out by UYSAF-funded groups (see Chapter 3). Finally, it looks at the lessons learnt and implications of this approach to measuring the impact of social action on beneficiaries (see Chapter 4).

1.2 The impact of social action: existing evidence

This section sets out the existing evidence relating to the impact of social action, and highlights the lack of quantitative evidence about the impact of social action *on its beneficiaries* that the current evaluation aims to fill.

Previous studies in this field typically measure the impact of social action on those carrying out social action rather than its recipients. For example, in 2015 SUTS commissioned a survey of 10-20 year olds to measure rates of participation in social action and the benefits for those who participated. It found that 96% of young people

⁶ The definition of meaningful social action according to the #iwill campaign is that activities should provide a benefit for participants as well as others, and meet the type of criteria outlined by the campaign for high quality social action.

participating in social action reported that it had benefitted them in some way⁷. The impacts of social action on participants have also been measured experimentally: for example, the Behavioural Insights Team in March 2015 published findings of a randomised controlled trial to measure the impact of a series of social action programmes, and found that participants gained crucial social and employability skills as a result of their involvement⁸. A comprehensive literature review by Demos in 2015 collates and outlines the existing evidence to date on the impact of Youth Social Action on young people⁹.

Research among beneficiaries has typically been qualitative rather than attempting to capture quantitative measures. Social action and its beneficiaries are diverse and can be difficult to measure using standardised instruments on a large scale. As a result, qualitative methods are an obvious choice when researching beneficiaries because they can be tailored to the specific circumstances of individual activities and their intended outcomes. For example, the evaluation of the BIG Lottery Fund's Transform Your Space (TYS) assessed the societal impacts of community action on beneficiaries through longitudinal qualitative case studies across 36 locations from 2004-2006. The evaluation concluded there were 'considerable' benefits of TYS, including environmental, community, social, health and economic benefits. The evaluators note they chose a qualitative approach because of the great diversity in the activities being carried out in different locations, which made it difficult to develop a common quantitative assessment that would be valid and capture the full range of activities conducted.

Where the impact of social action on beneficiaries has been measured quantitatively, it is often estimated through indirect measures. These measures either ask participants (or other agents) to estimate their impact on beneficiaries, or take a measure of impact on participants that is extrapolated to estimate the benefits for others.

For example, SUTS found that 96% of social action participants perceived their activities had benefitted others¹⁰. vInspired, the youth volunteering organisation, measured the perceptions of grant recipients to gain an assessment of the impact of youth volunteering on communities¹¹. The evaluation concluded that grant recipients recognised a number of societal impacts, such as increased propensity for young people to get involved in their local community and assume civic responsibility; an improved image of young people and better inter-generational relationships; and greater awareness of volunteering opportunities and access to volunteering among young people.

Other studies have extrapolated the benefits experienced by young people to estimate the benefits for society as a whole. For example, the evaluation of the National Citizen Service (NCS)¹² found that the societal benefit to cost ratio of the NCS programme in 2015 was between £1.09 and £4.80 for every £1 spent on the programme¹³. These

⁷ Data from Ipsos MORI/SUTS research from 2015 <https://www.ipsos-mori.com/Assets/Docs/Publications/sri-youth-social-action-in-uk-2015.pdf> accessed 12/02/16

⁸ Behavioural Insights Team, Evaluating Youth Social Action <http://38r8om2xjhl25mw24492dir.wpengine.netdna-cdn.com/wp-content/uploads/2016/01/YSA-Report-Final-Version1.pdf> accessed 12/02/16

⁹ Service Nation report, Demos (2015) <http://www.demos.co.uk/project/service-nation-2020/>

¹⁰ Data from Ipsos MORI/SUTS research from 2015 <https://www.ipsos-mori.com/Assets/Docs/Publications/sri-youth-social-action-in-uk-2015.pdf> accessed 12/02/16

¹¹ NatCen (2013), "Formative Evaluation of v", available at <https://vinspired.com/media/W1siZiIsIjIwMTQvMDMvMTEvMTcvMjYyNTkvNTU2LzA3XzMzXzU0XzI1NV9mb3JtYXRpdmVfZXZhbHVhdGlvbl9vZl92LnBkZlJldXQ> last accessed 05/02/16

¹² The 2015 report is awaiting publication, the 2014 report can be found here <http://www.ncsyes.co.uk/sites/default/files/NCS%202014%20Evaluation.pdf>

¹³ Specifically, the benefits were found to be between £1.39 and £4.80 per £1 spent on the programme for the summer cohort and between £1.09 and £4.71 in the autumn cohort.

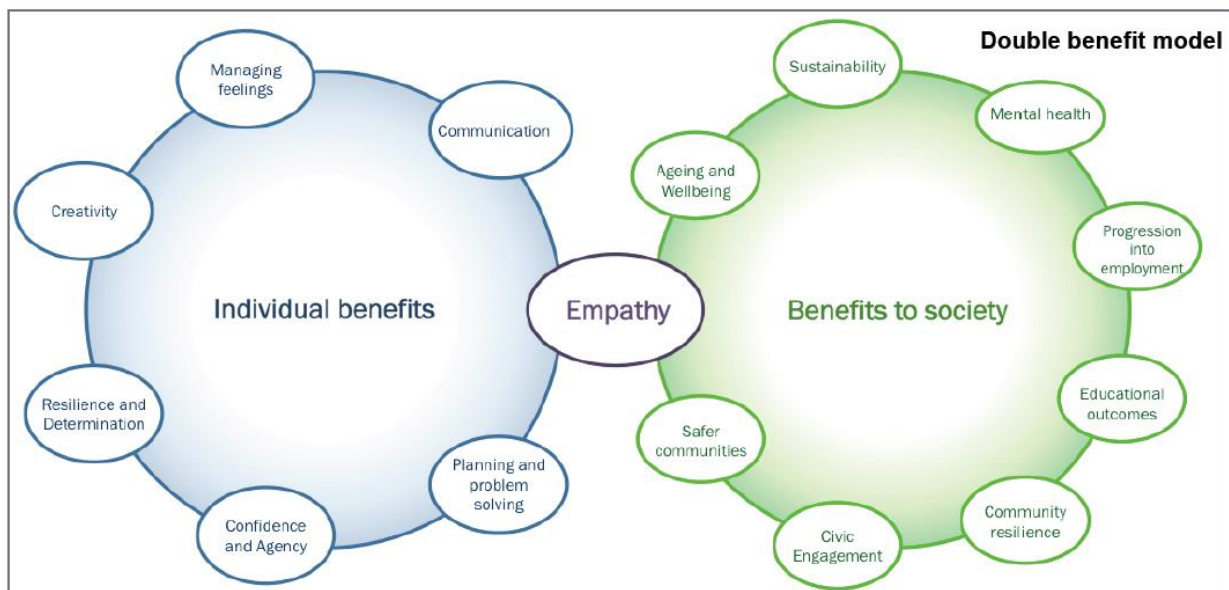
are benefits that are realised because of young people's enhanced prospects in areas such as education, employment, and health, after taking part in NCS.

Inspired have also used non-survey methods to estimate the impact of social action for others, by extrapolating from outputs of activities. For example one measure involved calculating the number of grams of food donated to foodbanks and quantifying how many families could be fed over a fixed period of time.

Attempts to measure the impact of social action on beneficiaries quantitatively have acknowledged the challenges involved. Generation Change¹⁴ designed a framework to help evaluate the 'double benefit' of social action, that is, a set of measures that would apply to participants and beneficiaries across all types of social action. Generation Change emphasised that because different social action programmes involve unique interventions across a range of social causes, "it appears [to be] difficult to assign a set of common outcomes which all youth social action programmes could be asked to report on". The framework developed by Generation Change is shown in Figure 1.2 below¹⁵. The current evaluation aimed to implement the 'benefits to society' strand of this model, by developing a set of common measures that could be used to assess the impact of social action across a range of activities and beneficiaries.

Figure 1.2: Double Benefit Model, Generation Change

Source: Generation Change, Community Outcomes Roundtable



The current evaluation of UYSAF 1 aims address the gap in evidence that exists in quantitatively measuring the impact of social action on its beneficiaries. The evaluation involved the development of a methodology and questionnaire that could be administered to beneficiaries across a range of social action activities. The next section of this report describes the development of the questionnaire and methodology, and explain how it was implemented for the current evaluation.

¹⁴ Generation Change, who facilitate a partnership of 18 specialist youth social action organisations in the UK

¹⁵ Generation Change (2014), "Community Outcomes Roundtable – write up", internal document, not externally published.

Methodology

2. Methodology

The following section outlines the evaluation framework and the research design implemented to address the objectives outlined in the previous section. Further details about the development of the evaluation methodology, including the key challenges in quantitatively measuring the impact of youth social action on beneficiaries, the development of the survey instrument and methodology, and the sampling of 40 units to participate in the evaluation, can be found in the technical annex.

2.1 Logic model

The evaluation is based around a framework that is illustrated in Figure 2.1 (overleaf). The purpose of the logic model was to identify a set of generic outcomes and impacts of youth social action that would apply to all types of beneficiary, regardless of their status or the type of social action they experienced. The model maps the main categories of youth social action, the immediate beneficiaries, and the anticipated outcomes and impacts. The model helped to define the overall aims of the evaluation, and the content of the questionnaires administered to beneficiaries.

The logic model was developed in partnership with the Office for Civil Society and project managers of the 14 Uniformed Youth Groups funded by UYSAF 1; it was discussed with the project managers and other staff within the participating Uniformed Youth Groups during meetings in October and November 2014. Stakeholders were invited to comment on the logic model and these led to the final version shown in Figure 2.1.

Figure 2.1: UYSAF 1 Evaluation logic model



The types of social action presented in the model are based on a classification developed by SUTS,¹⁶ and refined through further information provided by the project managers across the 14 Uniformed Youth Groups who each provided a list of the types of social action their units carry out. The evaluation team worked with project managers to identify the likely beneficiaries and outcomes for each type of social action. In Figure 2.1, those beneficiaries, outcomes and impacts shaded in grey are common across most or all types of social action. Those depicted in coloured boxes relate to outcomes and impacts that are specific to one or a few types of social action.

¹⁶ See <https://www.ipsos-mori.com/Assets/Docs/Publications/sri-ecf-youth-social-action-in-the-uk-2014.pdf>

The evaluation questionnaire aimed to capture the impact of social action on the *common* outcomes of social action that would apply to any form of activity. As such, the survey questionnaire was designed to capture only the common outcomes (i.e. those shaded grey in Figure 2.1), and did not attempt to capture the full range of impacts of each activity (and indeed, may not capture the most important impacts of any given activity).

A more detailed description of the model can be found in the Appendices (see section 6.2).

2.2 Evaluation aims and metrics

The key aim for the evaluation of UYSAF 1 was to develop the first quantitative measure to assess the impact of youth social action on its beneficiaries. Following the development of a framework that classified the types of social action that Uniformed Youth Groups carried out, and the intended impacts of those activities (see section 2.1 above), the evaluation team outlined five key areas for which evidence was collected, as illustrated in Table 2.1 below¹⁷.

Table 2.1: Evaluation questions and measures

Evaluation questions	Core questionnaire measure
Has the social action resulted in beneficiaries viewing young people more positively?	Is your opinion of what young people contribute to your local community any better or worse as a result of the things [NAME OF UNIFORMED GROUP] have done, or have they made no difference?
Do the beneficiaries feel more engaged with their community as a result of the social action?	Would you say you are more or less likely to take part in activities to help your local community in the future as a result of the things [NAME OF UNIFORMED GROUP] have done, or have they made no difference?
Has the social action resulted in beneficiaries meeting new people that they would not otherwise have met?	How many young people from the [NAME OF UNIFORMED GROUP] did you speak to today?
Do the beneficiaries feel their life has been improved in some way? (i.e. subjective well-being measures)	Do you feel any more or less proud of your local area as a result of the things [NAME OF UNIFORMED GROUP] have done, or have they made no difference?
Has the social action resulted in beneficiaries viewing young people more positively?	Is your opinion of what young people contribute to your local community any better or worse as a result of the things [NAME OF UNIFORMED GROUP] have done, or have they made no difference?

The full questionnaire can be found in Annex 6.3.

¹⁷ Note that during the questionnaire development phase, some items were tested that related mainly to a few types of social action (i.e. outcomes that may not apply to some forms of social action). The testing of these questions showed that they did not work well, and that the questionnaire would need to be limited to common impacts only. See section 6.7.2 for more details of the questionnaire testing.

2.3 Survey methodology

Sampling

Each of the 14 Uniformed Youth Groups funded by UYSAF 1 were asked to nominate either 2 or 3 units¹⁸ benefitting from the grant (and who were also expected to participate in social action during the survey fieldwork period) to take part in the survey. The selected units were given a target of 25 questionnaires to have completed by beneficiaries. Staff were advised that beneficiaries could be defined as any person or group that benefits from a youth social action activity either directly or indirectly. They were provided with a leaflet and a briefing note which outlined the research and how to administer the survey to beneficiaries. Examples of social action and beneficiaries were provided; the latter included people requiring/ receiving medical assistance during a football game, social workers responsible for a young carers group and elderly people in a care home.

Questionnaire development

The questionnaire was developed via consultations with project managers across the 14 participating Uniformed Youth Groups. The questionnaire was then cognitively tested with beneficiaries at three social action events; findings from the testing were presented at a meeting of Uniformed Youth Group project managers and revisions made. The questionnaire was then piloted across a series of social action events, to ensure that the questions were appropriate and applicable across a range of social action activities and for a range of beneficiaries.

Mode of interviewing

While the pilot stage suggested that it was helpful to offer Uniformed Youth Groups the option of offering surveys either by telephone or using pen and paper interviewing, in practice nearly all respondents completed the paper survey. The pen and paper method involved the uniformed groups distributing paper self-completion surveys as soon as the activity was finished. The telephone method involved collecting the beneficiary contact details after the social action had taken place. Contact details were then sent to Ipsos MORI's telephone centre, and trained interviewers began contacting beneficiaries as soon as details were received. Only three interviews were conducted by telephone ultimately; in most cases, the volunteers responsible for administering the survey found the pen and paper method easier to administer.

Fieldwork

The main survey fieldwork was conducted from 15 June to 31 December 2015. A pilot wave was conducted before the main stage between 18 April and 31 May 2015 and the data has been aggregated with the main stage. A total of 1,011 completed questionnaires were received across both the pilot (37) and main stages of research (974). Further details on the pilot can be found in the technical annex, section A.2.

In total, 41 of the participating units completed social action activities during the survey fieldwork dates and returned beneficiary questionnaires (see Table 2.2 for a profile of the participating units by Uniformed Youth Group and region). The beneficiary questionnaires were collected across 57 social action events across the whole of the UK.

¹⁸ A unit is a local youth group that meet for regular (usually weekly) sessions. Often based in a school, church or village hall. Each unit is run by one or more adult volunteers. Adult volunteers are recruited and supported by regional development workers.

Please note that these figures relate only to the units participating in the evaluation, and do not represent all the social action carried out by local units funded via UYSAF 1.

Table 2.2: Social action activities by Uniformed Youth Group

Uniformed Group	Number of units	Number of activities	Region(s)
Catholic Guides of Ireland Northern Region	2	2	Northern Ireland
Church Lads' and Church Girls' Brigade	4	4	Northern Ireland, North East, East Midlands
Combined Cadet Force Association	3	4	London, South East
Fire Cadets	2	4	East of England, South West
Girlguiding	3	5	South West, East of England, Wales
Jewish Lads' & Girls' Brigade	4	4	London, Wales
Marine Society & Sea Cadets	3	8	Northern Ireland, North West, South West
Reserve Forces' and Cadets' Associations	2	4	Scotland
St John Ambulance	2	2	London, Yorkshire & Humber
The Boys' Brigade	4	4	Scotland, Wales
The Girls' Brigade England and Wales	4	5	East Midlands, East of England, Wales, South West
The Scouts Association	2	2	London, North West
Volunteer Police Cadets	3	5	Scotland, Wales
Woodcraft Folk	3	4	London, Yorkshire & Humber
Total	41	57	

Questionnaires were received in relation to a wide range of activities¹⁹, as shown in Table 2.3 below. Categories were defined in consultation with groups at the scoping stage of the evaluation²⁰. The most common type of social activity undertaken was supporting individuals and groups in the local community (23 activities).²¹ This category covered a wide range of activities, including Christmas visits to nursing homes and assistance at community events (such as fundraising, fairs and sporting events).

Table 2.3: Types of social action carried out

Type of Social Action	Number of activities	Example activities carried out
Supporting individuals or groups in the local community	23	Providing support at community events; visits to nursing homes; refugee support activities; first aid assistance
Fundraising/sponsored activity	17	Bake sales; car washes; supermarket bag packing; fundraising coffee mornings and stalls.
Campaigning for causes (non-political)	13	Remembrance day parades and related activities
Improving local area/environment	5	Community garden assistance ; environment clear-ups and litter picks
Tutoring, coaching, mentoring	3	First aid training; crime prevention help and swimming lesson assistance for disabled children

Some activities have been categorised as more than one type of social action; for example bag packing that was primarily aimed at raising money for charity, but also helped people in the local community.

Benefits and limitations

This section highlights a number of benefits and limitations in conducting the evaluation that should be taken into consideration for future evaluations. Greater detail on these challenges can be found in the technical annex.

- Self-reported impact studies provide valuable information and help to fill the evidence gap about positive impact of youth social action on communities, and the nature and type of activities that have the greatest impact. Impact has been measured through post-activity measures that ask respondents to estimate the impact that activities had on them. More robust measures of impact were not practical within the survey budget, because beneficiaries could not be identified or surveyed before activities took place, and no single comparison group (or set of comparison groups) could be constructed.
- The local youth groups (units) participating in the evaluation were selected specifically. There was no comprehensive list of the local units that have been established through UYSAF 1 from which the evaluation team could draw a random sample. Similarly, no centralised list of planned social action activities existed. Project managers each selected a small number of local units that would give a spread across the regions

¹⁹ Categories based on the evaluation logic model (see section 6.2)

²⁰ Please note that this is a 'best fit approach. Remembrance Day activities have been grouped under campaigning but may be quite different to other campaigning activities.

²¹ Note that there were a few instances where groups were conducting social action but where it would have been inappropriate to conduct the survey (for example, where beneficiaries were under 18. In these cases, parental permission could not usually be obtained and so surveys could not be carried out. In other cases, very vulnerable groups were helped, such as the homeless, and the questions asked on the survey were inappropriate / irrelevant for these groups.)

and UK nations, and focused on units most likely to carry out larger-scale social action during the fieldwork period to ensure the evaluation resources were deployed most efficiently. Those units that were selected may not be representative of all those funded or established through UYSAF 1.

- Identifying beneficiaries of youth social action is challenging. There is no centralised database available as beneficiaries are often only identifiable once the activity has taken place. Furthermore, there is often a 'chain' of beneficiaries, and it is not always appropriate or possible to survey the ultimate beneficiaries of social action (for example, because the ultimate beneficiaries will be unaware they are beneficiaries or be unaware of who is responsible for improvements they have witnessed). This has implications because the evaluation could only capture impact measures where there was direct interaction between participants and beneficiaries (i.e. where beneficiaries were aware of the activities being carried out).
- Engagement with the local units, youth groups and volunteers conducting the social action is crucial to help identify where social action is taking place, to ensure that data is collected accurately and to ensure that the evaluation has their support. Initial consultations revealed that many local unit leaders were not familiar with the term 'social action', or dismissed activities they were carrying out as being 'too small' to qualify as social action. The evaluation team developed tools and materials that explained the types of activities that qualified as social action.
- The activities carried out are diverse. Impact measures need to be suitable for any social action or type of beneficiary in order to provide a useful quantitative measure. For this reason, the questionnaire asked a set of generic questions that could apply to all circumstances and, as such, only top level impact could be assessed. This means that the survey and evaluation may not capture some of the biggest impacts of individual activities.
- The evaluation also identified challenges in reaching some more hard to reach groups in society such as children under 18 or the homeless. There are therefore limitations in assessing the impact of what could be considered the most meaningful social action on the most vulnerable beneficiaries.
- The evaluation tested two ways of capturing data to explore ways of gathering the most valid data possible from beneficiaries: a telephone survey administered 1-2 weeks after activities took place (and therefore could capture more sustained measures of impact) and a pen-and-paper survey administered immediately after activities took place. In practice, while both options were offered for the evaluation, local units found it easier to offer the pen-and-paper surveys than collect beneficiaries' telephone numbers.

Key findings

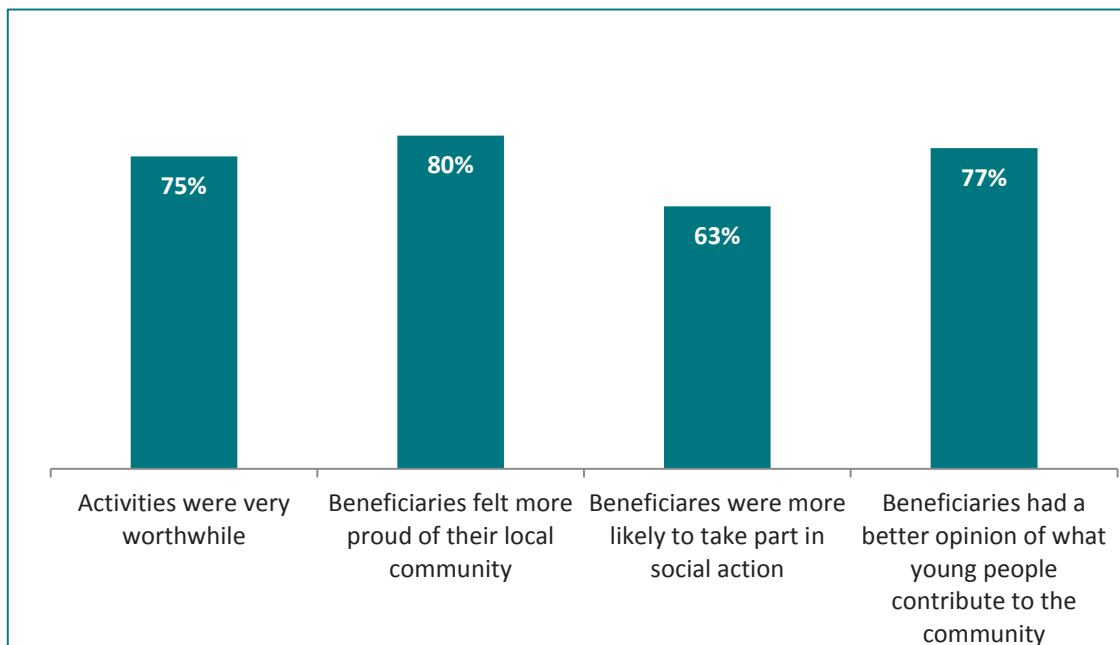
3. Key findings

3.1 What impact does youth social action have on beneficiaries?

- Adults benefitting from social action carried out by Uniformed Youth Groups typically reported that the activities they experienced were very worthwhile (75%) and enhanced their sense of pride in their local area (80%).
- The majority (63%) of beneficiaries claimed they were more likely to take part in social action themselves as a result of the activities they saw young people carry out.
- More than three quarters (77%) of beneficiaries said they had a more positive impression of what young people contribute to their local communities as a result of social action activities.

The great majority of adults who had benefitted from the youth social action activities covered by the survey were positive about its impact on them and their local community (Figure 3.1).

Figure 3.1 Impact of youth social action on beneficiaries by interactions with young people



Base: All respondents (993-999) bases may vary as not all questions were answered by all respondents

- Overall, three in four beneficiaries (75%) believed the activity they experienced was 'very' worthwhile with only 1% indicating they saw little worth in the activity²².

²² This amounts to 12 of the 1,011 beneficiaries responding to the survey reporting that the activities they experienced were 'not at all worthwhile'. They are unlikely to have taken part in volunteering activities before and are no more likely to take part in activities in the future.

- Four in five (80%) beneficiaries said they felt more proud of their community as a result of the social action activities they experienced. Just over one in ten (12%) claimed that the social action they experienced made no difference to their sense of pride in the community, although this group already expressed high levels of pride in their local community (74%).
- Nearly two thirds (63%) of beneficiaries said they were more likely volunteer their own time to help their community as a result of their experiences. The remainder typically said the activity had not changed their likelihood of volunteering (25%) or that they were unsure whether it had had any impact (11%). While 1% said they had been deterred from volunteering as a result of their experiences, these views were concentrated among those who were relatively disengaged from their communities²³.
- Over three quarters (77%) of beneficiaries reported an improved opinion of what young people contribute due to the social action activities they experienced; only 14% said it made no difference to their views of young people's contributions.

Beneficiaries' comments about their experiences highlight the significance of the inter-generational interactions engendered through youth social action:

"Young people get a bad name [but] quite a lot of them are well mannered and well behaved: they just need adults to interact with them"

"It's nice to see younger people taking part in activities that are community led - they are our future - it fosters understanding and cultural understanding"

Those beneficiaries who reported little or no change in their perceptions of young people and their community nevertheless expressed positive opinions about both in their written comments about the activities:

"I don't notice which organisations are volunteering, but I do notice the young people and that is a bonus to every/any community"

"Keep going, don't change, please continue"

"Such events are an asset to the community"

The findings highlight that the social action carried out by youth groups covered by the evaluation was viewed positively by those members of the community who benefitted from the activities. Taken together, the findings suggest that government funding for social action-oriented youth groups has the potential to achieve the impacts that UYSAF 1 was intended to achieve, including improved inter-generational mixing and relationships and beneficiaries feel more engaged with their communities.

²³ Eight respondents said they were less likely to volunteer their time as a result of the activities they had experienced. Seven were classified as 'relatively disengaged' because they had not volunteered in the past two years or felt no pride in their area.

3.2 When is youth social action most effective?

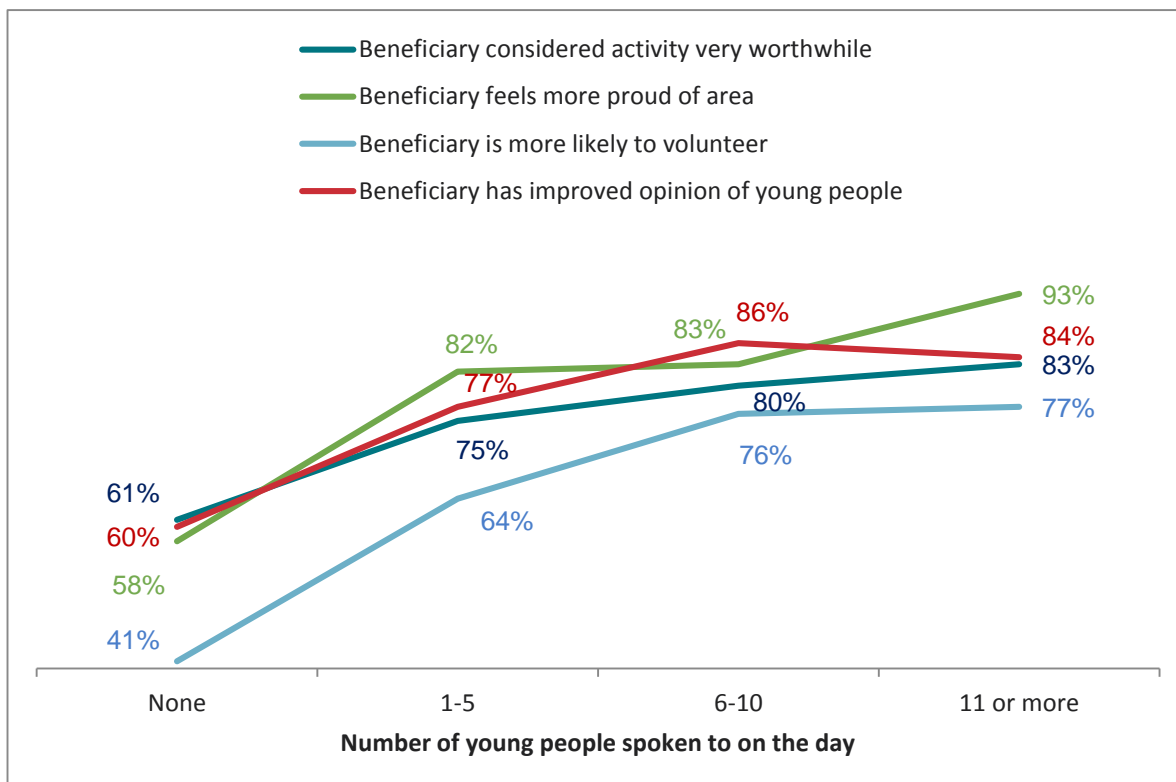
3.2.1 High numbers of interactions with young people

Beneficiaries were more positive about their experience of youth social action when they directly interacted with the young people who carried out the activities. Broadly speaking, the more young people beneficiaries interacted with, the greater the reported impact of the activity.

Beneficiaries who spoke to young participants were more likely than those who did not to report that activities were very worthwhile, increased their sense of pride in their local area, improved their opinions of young people, and increased their propensity to volunteer locally themselves (Figure 3.2). For example, 77% of those who spoke with six to ten young people said they were more likely to volunteer themselves as a result of youth social action; this fell to 64% of those who spoke with 1-5 young people; and to 41% among beneficiaries who did not speak to any young people.

The findings suggest that those organising social action for young people should consider the opportunities that young people have to interact with beneficiaries when designing and carrying out activities, as the reported impact on beneficiaries is particularly strong where the activities enable interaction with participants. There may also be value in recognising the importance of this interaction between participants and beneficiaries in models defining high quality social action (see Figure 1.1 above, and the discussion in section 1.2).

Figure 3.2 Proportion of beneficiaries reporting that social action had positive impacts, by number of young people they spoke to during the activity



Base: Spoke to no young people (102-106); spoke to 1-5 young people (591-597); spoke to 6-10 young people (159-161); spoke to 11 or more young people (89-91) bases may vary as not all questions were answered by all respondents

3.2.2 Activities that support groups in the community or campaigning activities

In general, beneficiaries' views were similar regardless of the type of social action activity they experienced. However, there were a few differences. Beneficiaries who were on the receiving end of campaigning activities (primarily Remembrance Day parades) were more likely than beneficiaries of other forms of social action to consider the activity worthwhile (Figure 3.3).

Figure 3.3 Impact of youth social action on beneficiaries by type of social action

	Total	Improving the local environment	Campaigning (non-political)	Supporting people in the community	Fundraising	Tutoring, coaching, mentoring
Activities are very worthwhile	75%	67%	81%*	77%	74%	64%
Beneficiaries feel more proud of their local community	80%	83%	80%	81%	77%	76%
Beneficiaries are more likely to take part in social action	63%	66%	60%	67%	60%	60%
Beneficiaries have a better opinion of what young people contribute to the community	77%	86%	72%	78%	74%	73%

*Significantly higher than the total at 95% level

Key: green cells indicate the relative high scores on each measure, yellow-orange indicate the relative mid-scores and red cells indicate the relative low scores

Base: All respondents (993-999) Improving the local environment (62-65); Fundraising (444-447); Campaigning (335-337); Tutoring, coaching, mentoring (50-51); Supporting people in the community (345-347) bases may vary as not all questions were answered by all respondents

Activities that directly aim to improve the local environment such as litter picks were more likely than other forms of social action to improve beneficiaries' opinions of what young people contribute to the community. Some 86% of beneficiaries of activities which aimed to improve the local environment said their opinion of what young people contribute to their local area had improved compared with 74% of beneficiaries of all other types of activity. This may be a result of beneficiaries witnessing the direct and immediate impact of the social action – such as cleaner parks – at the point they were surveyed, compared with activities such as campaigning that have longer-term, less tangible and/or less direct benefits.

The volunteers with whom the evaluation team consulted to set up the surveys often discounted activities they are doing as 'too small' to qualify as social action. For example, some groups running a stand at a local fair or event were unsure if their presence would qualify as social action. Additionally some group leaders assumed that activities that did involve 'doing' or 'making' would not qualify as social action, such as visiting the elderly at a care home without baking for them. However, the survey findings demonstrate that a wide range of activities – including relatively small actions – can have a very positive impact on communities. Those organising social action activities for young people should be made aware of the potential for these activities to reach local residents and positively impact their impressions of their areas and communities.

A large number of the activities covered by the evaluation occurred around Remembrance Day (e.g. parades) and over the Christmas period.²⁴ To some degree, this may reflect that leaders of local Uniformed Youth Group units do not consider smaller, 'everyday', activities as social action. However, there may be value in encouraging some units to engage in more regular activities throughout the year.

3.3 Who does youth social action have most impact on?

3.3.1 Who is social action reaching?

The majority of beneficiaries surveyed had volunteered in their local community in the last two years themselves, although rates of volunteering among beneficiaries appear to be no higher than the national average. Some 82% of beneficiaries claimed to have helped in their local community within the last two years, and 36% in the past month. Although comparisons should be treated with caution, because questions were asked in different ways and via different survey methodologies, these rates of volunteering are slightly lower than those reported in the Cabinet Office's Community Life survey of English adults (2014-2015): in that survey 47% volunteered either formally or informally at least once a month²⁵. Many beneficiaries were already proud of their local areas; almost nine in ten (89%) reported feeling very or fairly proud of their local community.

While many beneficiaries were already engaged in their communities, the social action activities covered by the survey also reached relatively disengaged members of the community. Some 17% of beneficiaries reported helping their community no more than once per year, and a similar proportion (18%) had not helped in the past two years.

Beneficiaries' comments about their experiences highlighted how they felt their support for the social action carried out by young people was an important part of their own contribution to their community:

"I try to support community work as much as I can. It was lovely to see local cadets from a local school here today."

3.3.2 Which beneficiaries report the strongest impacts?

Beneficiaries who were defined as relatively engaged with their communities were more likely than those classed as disengaged to report that social action had a positive effect on them. Engagement was defined in terms of beneficiaries' previous levels of volunteering and their sense of pride in their local area²⁶. This pattern may reflect the effects of 'socialisation', that is the way that active communities encourage the adoption of co-operative behaviours.²⁷

²⁴ 25 of the 57 activities covered by the evaluation were specifically Remembrance Day or Christmas activities (figure excludes activities that took place around Christmas but were not specifically Christmas activities).

²⁵ Source: Community Life Survey, England, 2014-2015

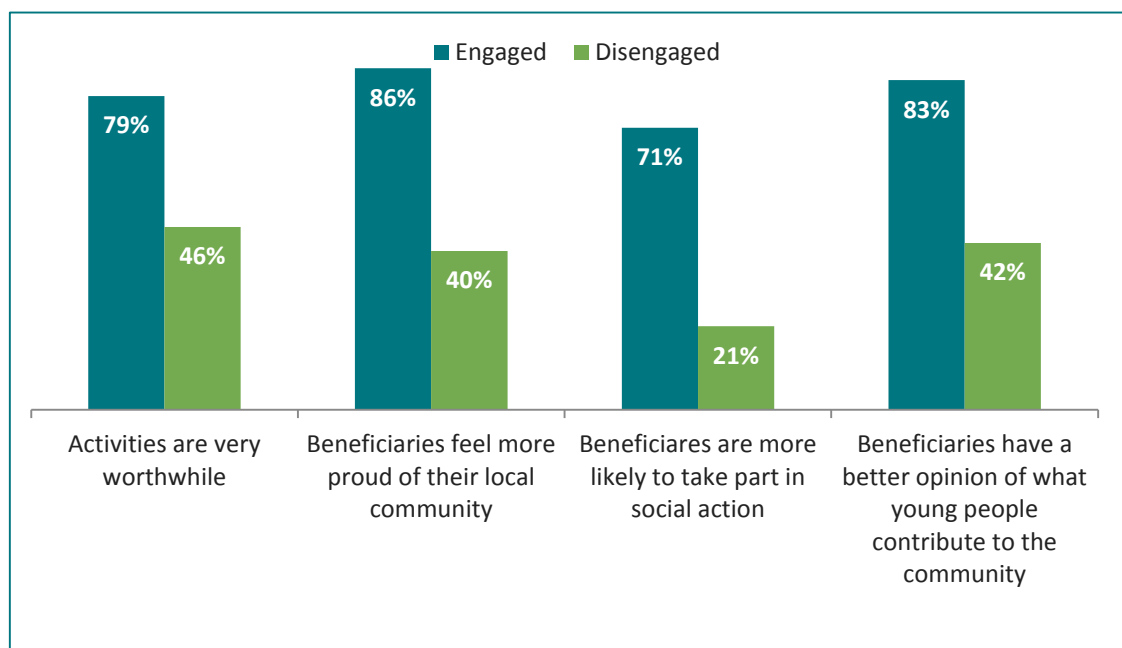
²⁶ Engaged beneficiaries are defined as proud of local area and volunteered in the last year.

²⁷ See, for example,

<http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20120919132719/http://communities.gov.uk/documents/communities/pdf/151525.pdf> Accessed 06/04/16

Beneficiaries defined as 'engaged' were more likely than others to report that activities had positively affected their feelings of pride in the area, their propensity to volunteer and their views of what young people contribute to communities when compared to beneficiaries defined as relatively 'disengaged'²⁸. For example, 86% of those engaged in their local community reported that youth social action increased their sense of pride in their area compared with only 40% of disengaged beneficiaries (Figure 3.4).

Figure 3.4 Impact of youth social action on 'engaged' and 'disengaged' beneficiaries



Base: Engaged beneficiaries (735-738); Disengaged beneficiaries (52) bases may vary as not all questions were answered by all respondents

Likewise, almost four in five (79%) engaged beneficiaries believe that the activity was very worthwhile compared to less than half (46%) of those who had not helped out in their community in the last two years and don't feel proud of their area. There appear to be greater challenges in changing the perceptions of those who do not take part in the community already, at least in the short term. There are many potential reasons for this, including the short-term nature of the activities and the reference period used by beneficiaries for reporting change.

3.3.3 Where can social action extend its reach?

The evaluation is limited in assessing the impact of social action on the most isolated and vulnerable groups in the community and, arguably, the most disengaged groups. The methodology was not suitable for surveying the most vulnerable groups and, as such, the findings do not provide an accurate assessment of the extent to which participating Uniformed Youth Groups did/did not reach vulnerable groups. Specific examples from the current evaluation included homeless adults – where the questions being asked were deemed inappropriate –, groups with low literacy levels, and children (because adults were not necessarily present to give consent for children to be approached to take part in the survey).

²⁸ Disengaged beneficiaries defined as not proud of their local area and have not volunteered in the last year.

However, the survey findings show the potential for youth social action to have a positive impact on relatively disengaged members of local communities. A substantial proportion of beneficiaries defined as relatively 'disengaged' reported that youth social action increased their pride in their local area and their views of young people's contribution to the community.

For example, among those who had not helped their community in the past two years, 63% reported feeling more proud of their local area and 58% reported their opinion of young people was improved. 50% of those who initially reported not feeling proud of their local area said they felt more proud as a result of the social action, and 20% said they were more likely to volunteer themselves in the future.

There was, however, a core disengaged group who appear to be unaffected by social action activities and whose perceptions of the community did not change. The disengaged tend to be younger than the engaged (92% are under 50 years old compared with 74% of those defined as relatively engaged) and male (58% are male compared to 39% of the engaged).²⁹ Among those defined as 'disengaged', 31% said that the social action they experienced had not affected their sense of pride in their area, 29% that it had not affected their views of what young people contribute, and 48% that it had not affected their likelihood of volunteering in the future. However, even among this group, almost all (96%) considered the activities to have been worthwhile.

The findings highlight the positive impressions of beneficiaries of social action, but also expose some of the limitations of using a quantitative method to assess the impact of social action, particularly in capturing the views of the most disengaged members of communities. Some of the most meaningful social action carried out by Uniformed Youth Groups was among the most vulnerable members of their communities, and it was not always possible for this evaluation to survey the beneficiaries of those activities. Qualitative research, which would allow more flexibility to tailor methods to the specific needs and circumstances of particular user groups, would help to understand the perceptions of groups that it may not be feasible to survey.

²⁹ Note this pattern of findings does not necessarily reflect surveys of the general population. For example, there were very few gender differences in the 2014-15 Community Life Survey: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/community-life-survey-2014-to-2015-data>. While there are some differences in rates of volunteering by age, feelings of community cohesion are fairly consistent by age group, as are feelings of pride in the local area.

4. Conclusions and implications

For funders and Uniformed Youth Groups

- It is possible to capture a measure of the impact of social action quantitatively. While this method has some limitations – for example, it is inappropriate for use with the most vulnerable beneficiaries, will not capture the full range of impacts of any given activity, and may lead to some over-claiming of impact – it provides a useful indication of the nature and scale of the impact of youth social action, and highlights the types of social action that may have the greatest impact on communities.
- Government funding for youth groups that is tied to commitments to carry out social action has the potential to improve inter-generational relationships and communities' feelings of pride in local areas. The evaluation shows that, in most cases, social action led to interactions between adult beneficiaries and the young people carrying out these activities, and that in most cases beneficiaries reported this contact had improved their opinion of what young people contribute to local communities. The current evaluation is not designed to assess how far youth social action reaches the most vulnerable groups (as this evaluation could not cover the most vulnerable) but demonstrates that even those who are not actively engaged in their communities experience positive benefits of youth social action.
- Volunteers in local Uniformed Youth Group units often discount activities they are doing as 'too small' to qualify as social action. However, the survey findings demonstrate that a wide range of activities – including relatively small actions – are reported as having a very positive impact on beneficiaries. Those organising social action activities for young people should be made aware of the potential for these activities to reach local residents and positively impact their impressions of their areas and communities. A large number of the activities covered by the evaluation occurred around Remembrance Day (e.g. parades) and over the Christmas period. To some degree, this may reflect that unit leaders do not consider smaller, 'everyday', activities as social action. However, there may be value in encouraging some Uniformed Youth Group units to engage in more regular activities throughout the year.
- Uniformed Youth Groups and those organising social action for young people should consider the opportunities that young people have to interact directly with beneficiaries during activities, as beneficiaries are more likely to report that activities had a strong impact where they spoke to participants.
- Newly established Uniformed Youth Group units can carry out social action activities. Project managers within Uniformed Youth Groups explained that it is relatively rare for newly-established units to carry out youth social action during their early months of operation. Typically, units start to engage in social action when they are well-established and adult volunteers have built up experience and confidence in leading activities. However, Uniformed Youth Groups were creative in finding ways to support new units involved in the evaluation to carry out activities (such as buddying with established units). Similar practices could help to establish social action within new units in future more quickly.

For those evaluating the impact of social action on beneficiaries

- Impact has been measured through post-activity measures that ask respondents to estimate the impact that activities had on them. More robust measures of impact were not practical within the survey budget, because beneficiaries could not be identified or surveyed before activities took place, and no single comparison group (or set of comparison groups) could be constructed. However, self-reported impact studies such as this provide valuable information about positive impact of youth social action on beneficiaries, and the type of activities that have the greatest impact.
- Identifying beneficiaries of youth social action is challenging. There is no centralised database available as beneficiaries are often only identifiable once the activity has taken place. Furthermore, there is often a 'chain' of beneficiaries, and it is not always appropriate or possible to survey the ultimate beneficiaries of social action (for example, because the ultimate beneficiaries will be unaware they are beneficiaries or be unaware of who is responsible for improvements they have witnessed).
- Engagement with the local units, youth groups and volunteers conducted social action is crucial to help identify where social action is taking place, to ensure that data is collected accurately and to ensure that the evaluation has their support.
- The activities carried out are diverse. Impact measures need to be suitable for any social action or type of beneficiary in order to provide a useful quantitative measure. For this reason, the questionnaire needs to follow a common framework and as such only top level impact can be assessed. This means that the survey and evaluation may not capture some of the biggest impacts of individual activities.
- The evaluation also identified challenges in reaching some more hard to reach groups in society such as children under 16 or the homeless. There are therefore limitations in assessing the impact of what could be considered the most meaningful social action on the most vulnerable beneficiaries.

4.1 Glossary of Terms

Beneficiary - a person or group that benefits from a youth social action activity either directly or indirectly. For example, beneficiaries may include the elderly at an old age home, members of the community who witnessed Uniformed Youth Groups collecting litter and staff working at a homeless shelter collecting food.

Regional development worker - individual responsible for co-ordinating units within a specific region, recruiting volunteers and running the group sessions.

Project manager - the senior member of staff within each Uniformed Youth organisation, responsible for operational management, and the development of new pilot schemes. Also responsible for the set-up and co-ordination of units and the recruitment and management of regional development workers.

Social action – defined as ‘practical action in the service of others’ that benefits those providing and receiving social action. Social action covers a wide range of activities that aim to help other people in the community or the environment, such as fundraising, campaigning (excluding political campaigning) and tutoring or mentoring.

Step Up to Serve (SUTS) - the charity coordinating the #iwill campaign, aimed at expanding existing opportunities for young people to take part in social action, develop new opportunities for participation, and help overcome the barriers that stop young people getting involved. The #iwill campaign aims to significantly increase the number of 10–20 year olds taking part in meaningful social action by 2020.

Uniformed Youth Social Action Fund (UYSAF) - a £10 million fund awarded by HM Treasury. The Funds are administered through Youth United Foundation in order to increase the number of new units across fourteen social action-oriented Uniformed Youth organisations around the UK. UYSAF 2 provided funding to five Uniformed Youth organisations to develop and pilot innovative approaches to engage young people who are not usually able to join Uniformed Youth Groups.

Unit - local youth groups that meet for regular (usually weekly) sessions. Often based in a school, church or village hall. Each unit is run by one or more adult volunteers. Adult volunteers are recruited and supported by regional development workers.

Youth United Foundation (Youth United) - a charity established in 2012. Youth United Foundation is a membership organisation that supports eleven of the fourteen Uniformed Youth organisations that received funding via UYSAF 1. It provides support for the uniformed youth sector, and co-develops and coordinates projects across the sector, including managing grants such as UYSAF 1 and 2.

The main focus on Youth United Foundation is to support its members to increase uniformed youth provision in areas that were previously underserved – such as immigrant communities or the socio-economically disadvantaged. The Youth United Network consists of Air Cadets; Army Cadet Force; The Boys' Brigade; Fire Cadets; The Girls' Brigade England & Wales; Girlguiding; Jewish Lads' and Girls' Brigade; The Scout Association; Sea Cadets; St John Ambulance and Volunteer Police Cadets.

Uniformed Youth Organisation – a youth organisation having a long-term common programme offer delivered by adult volunteers for young members that brings together members through a shared, required uniform.

Technical Annex

A. Technical annex

The following section provides further information about the development of the survey methodology used by the evaluation. Please refer to chapter 2 of the report for an overview.

A.1. Evaluation overview

The UYSAF 1 evaluation comprised the following elements:

- 1. A scoping stage** to explore how the impact of youth social action upon the community had been measured in previous research, identify the key issues that stakeholders wanted the UYSAF 1 evaluation to address, and to explore key methodological challenges in implementing a quantitative method of capturing beneficiary impact. This stage primarily involved desk research and consultations with a wide range of stakeholders to develop the evaluation team's initial proposals. Consultees included:
 - Office for Civil Society staff;
 - Youth United;
 - Project managers of Uniformed Youth Groups of all 14 uniformed groups;
 - the Data and Quality Assurance Group, a cross-sector special interest group tasked with improving the evidence base on youth social action
- 2. The development and testing of a questionnaire** and a methodology that could be used to administer the surveys. The questionnaire would need to be suitable for administration for any type of social action and allow all beneficiaries to respond. This stage included three visits to social action projects to cognitively test a draft questionnaire with beneficiaries of youth social action, consulting with the Data and Quality Group, and with project managers across the 14 participating Uniformed Youth Groups.
- 3. A pilot wave** of fieldwork surveying six Uniformed Youth Groups carrying out social action that tested two alternative methods of conducting the survey fieldwork.
- 4. The main phase** of fieldwork which involved surveying c.25 beneficiaries of youth social action for each of 40 selected units funded through UYSAF 1. The 40 participating units were selected by Youth United to give a spread of units across the 14 Uniformed Youth Groups receiving UYSAF 1 and a geographical spread. The evaluation team liaised with the staff at each unit to identify forthcoming social action and to prepare a set of questionnaires for each activity. Beneficiaries completed short pen and paper surveys, which were personalised with the name of the activity and Uniformed Youth Group. Volunteers at each unit returned the questionnaires when activities were complete. The evaluation team worked closely with adult volunteers across the 40 selected units to identify suitable activities for inclusion in the evaluation.

A.2 Development of survey methodology

A.2.1 Consultations

The evaluation team consulted a wide range of stakeholders in order to develop the evaluation and survey methodology and then to test the methods and draft materials. Initial scoping activity aimed to explore how the community impact of youth social action had been measured in previous research, key issues that stakeholders wanted the UYSAF 1 evaluation to address, and to explore key methodological challenges in implementing a quantitative method with this group. This stage primarily involved desk research and consultations with a wide range of stakeholders to develop and test the evaluation team's initial proposals for the evaluation.

Later consultations with these groups tested the content of the questionnaire to check that it covered measures seen to be appropriate to the full spectrum of social action activity and would capture details that the sector requires. Later consultations also sense-checked the methodology and materials provided for the survey administration.

Method

The evaluation team conducted a total of seven consultation interviews with senior users from the following Uniformed Youth groups: The Scouts Association, The Catholic Girl Guide of Northern Ireland, Volunteer Police Cadets, Fire Cadets, Jewish Lads and Girls Brigade, Boys' Brigade and Woodcraft Folk.

We asked each a variety of questions relating to the localisation of their curriculum and how this relate to the social action they conduct, the frequency of it and the type that they carry out.

After gaining an understanding of the social action that each unit undertakes, they provided us with details of some local units that would be able to assist with the cognitive testing.

A member of the evaluation team attended a series of Senior User Group meetings to discuss the evaluation aims and objectives, outline initial methodology proposals, discuss the questionnaire content, and discuss the methods of administering the survey.

The evaluation team also attended a session of the Data and Quality Group, a cross-sector special interest group tasked with improving the evidence base on youth social action. This group inputted into the design of the questionnaire and provided evidence from other relevant evaluations.

A.2.2 Cognitive testing of questionnaire with beneficiaries

Cognitive testing provided an opportunity to test the validity of the questions (i.e. that they measure the concepts and constructs we intend them to measure). Specifically, the method seeks to test comprehension, informed judgement, reporting an answer and relevance. The testing also allowed the evaluation team to check whether the questions asked would apply in a range of different settings, for different types of social action, and for a range of beneficiaries.

Method

Ipsos MORI spoke to 12 people during three events:

- The VPC in Northumbria conducted a litter pick in a community garden and researchers from Ipsos MORI were able to speak with 6 people at the event.
- A group of London Cub Scouts attended an elderly persons club and delivered entertainment in the form of befriending. 2 men and 2 women of those in attendance took part in the cognitive testing.
- The MSSC attended a Remembrance Day memorial event and 2 beneficiaries were tested with the questionnaire.

All testing was completed face to face, predominately one to one, with one pair, and one group of three taking part. The interviews were conducted on site, during or shortly after the social action had taken place. Respondents were asked to fill in the questionnaire, and then the interviewer talked through each question, probing to unpick respondents' understanding of the questions, ability to come to a judgement and views on the question's relevance. The profile of respondents is outlined below.

Table A.1 Profile of cognitive testing respondents

Demographic	Interview
Men	2
Women	10
Under 55	2
55 – 74	6
Over 75	4
Based in London	6
Based outside of London	6 (North East)
Children in household	0
No children in household	12

Ipsos MORI devised an initial questionnaire for testing which comprised newly devised questions which draw on previously tested questions from similar surveys conducted by Ipsos MORI and the National Statistics Social Capital Question Bank. All questions were adapted to be specific to this study, and were tested, noting that questions which worked in another context might not work in this context.

Researchers used a cognitive testing guide, designed by Ipsos MORI, which prompted them to test participant comprehension, judgement and views on relevance.

Key findings

Overall, participants found the questionnaire easy to navigate, and generally understood why they were being asked the questions. It was clear the questionnaire would work better if it was shorter (the version tested was 2-3 pages long). Following the testing, the questionnaire was shorter and made to fit on one side of A4 paper.

Immediate versus longer term involvement

The questionnaire was adapted to ask participants more specifically about the impact of longer term involvement with the Uniformed Youth Group. Many of the beneficiaries had been involved in projects over a longer period of time, or had interacted with the young people on a number of occasions in the past. Participants were unsure as to whether they should reflect on this in their answers, or whether they should answer the question as if they were reviewing that day only.

Understanding wider impact

Questions around the wider impact of the activities on participants were removed. Participants found it difficult to connect their experience that day with the wider impact on their relationship with their area or their local community. Additionally, some of the wider impact questions weren't deemed to be relevant to all participants.

Meeting new people

The questionnaire was adapted to specify that meeting new people referred directly to the uniformed group. Participants had different understandings of the word "meet". Participants felt that in order to "meet" someone you have to have spoken to them and there was inconsistency between responses about how much you have to talk to someone in order to "meet" them.

There were also some problems with comprehension and judgement. Some of the older people had met the young people, but didn't see this as "meeting new people". It could also be inferred from responses that there was a disparity of understanding around who people thought this question was referring to.

The role of young people

The questions were altered to allow people to reflect on the impact of the Uniformed Youth Group which can include seeing the impact in terms of the event or project. In some cases, participants did not know if they should answer the questions in reference to the uniformed youth group, or the overall project or event.

When prompted to think about the Uniformed Youth Group, participants found it difficult to differentiate between their experience of the young people volunteering from their experience of the event or project as a whole. Overall, respondents felt that they should reflect their wider experiences of the project or event.

A.2.3 Testing of questionnaire with stakeholders

Stakeholders were keen that the questionnaire reflected that meeting young people was a key component of meaningful and quality social action, and they therefore wanted a measure of how much personal interaction there was.

The questionnaire was adapted so that:

- There was a measure for how many young people beneficiaries spoke to on the day

- Rather than asking about whether the activities were 'fun' or that beneficiaries had 'enjoyed' them, the indicator should ask about whether activities were perceived as 'worthwhile' (a measure that would apply across all social action activities: asking about enjoyment may be inappropriate in some cases).
- To measure the impact of the Uniformed Youth Group in general rather than the event specifically.
- To keep the questionnaire short by limiting the number of demographic questions.

A.3 Piloting

A.3.1 Method

Six local units across six uniformed youth groups took part in a pilot study between April and May 2015.

1. Jewish Lads' and Girls' Brigade
2. St John Ambulance
3. The Boys' Brigade
4. The Church Lads' and Church Girls' Brigade
5. The Girls' Brigade
6. Woodcraft Folk

The pilot tested two methodologies in parallel in order to identify which works best (and in which circumstances/for which types of social action):

- **A paper self-completion survey** distributed to uniformed groups in advance of each planned activity during the pilot fieldwork window.
 - Ipsos MORI liaised with a key contact at each group about each event to understand how the questionnaires could be best distributed to respondents. In some instances, a box was provided so that respondents could post their completed questionnaires and feel confident that their responses are completely anonymous.
 - A pack of questionnaires based on the anticipated numbers of beneficiaries at each event was prepared for each group/activity: the name of the uniformed group and a brief description of the activity itself was mail merged into the questionnaire so that respondents can immediately understand what activities the questions refer to.
 - The uniformed group was briefed via telephone about how to administer the survey. They were then provided with a set of instructions detailing what was required of them and a leaflet to be handed to the participants about the nature of the research.

- Depending on the nature of the event, envelopes were provided with each questionnaire so that respondents can seal their response before handing back to a member of staff from the Uniformed Group.
- Ipsos MORI liaised with key contacts at each local unit to arrange for the return of the box of completed questionnaires.
- **A telephone methodology** that involves collecting beneficiary contact details as social action activities take place, and interviewing beneficiaries by telephone up to 14 days later.
 - A contact details sheet was provided to staff at each group to populate with contact details (telephone number(s) and email addresses) for each beneficiary that agrees to be contacted for a 2-3 minute survey.
 - Staff were also provided with a short leaflet to help explain the survey to potential respondents, and explain that details will be passed to Ipsos MORI for the purposes of this survey and will be destroyed afterwards.
 - Lists of contact details were then sent to Ipsos MORI's telephone centre, and trained interviewers will start to contact beneficiaries straight after the event.

The pilot aims were to understand all aspects of the survey process, including:

- The clarity of instructions and information provided to local units in advance of the survey to prepare them and explain their role in the process.
- The materials provided for potential respondents to explain the survey process.
- The survey process: what aspects worked well and what could be improved, to help identify which methods are better suited to different types of social action;
- The numbers of direct beneficiaries of different types of activity, and the numbers responding (response rates) to each survey methodology.
- How respondents react to the questionnaire, and how long they spend completing the survey (both on paper, and by telephone).
- Whether respondents can recall the social action up to two weeks after the event (for the telephone methodology only).

A pilot feedback form was provided to the adult volunteers who were administering the survey within local units so they could comment on any aspects of the survey process that worked well, and how the methodology could be improved.

Youth United provided Ipsos MORI with contact details for 10 units that would be conducting a social action activity during the fieldwork period. Piloting took place across six of these activities. The pilot activities covered a range of types of social action. Of the six activities covered by the pilot, four opted to use the paper method and two the telephone method. This resulted in 37 completed questionnaires.

A.3.2 Key findings and challenges

The pilot activities covered a range of types of social action.

Table A.2 Pilot activities and beneficiaries

Uniformed Youth Group	Activity	Beneficiaries surveyed	Mode
St Johns' Ambulance	The cadets attended the Chelsea Football Club grounds during a match. The cadets offered assistance to anyone visiting their tents that required medical attention.	People requiring/ receiving medical assistance during the football game.	Paper
The Boys' Brigade	Community clear-up	Members of the public who saw the Boy's Brigade collecting the litter.	Paper
The Church Lads' & Church Girls' Brigade	Litter-pick in the local area around the members' school	Members of the local community who saw the CLCGB litter picking	Paper
The Girls' Brigade	The members baked cakes and handed them into a homeless shelter for distribution to the homeless	Staff working at the homeless shelter ³⁰	Telephone
Woodcraft Folk	The members prepared a meal, with games and activities for Young Carers under the age of 11	Social workers responsible for the young carers group	Telephone
Jewish Lads' and Girls' Brigade	The unit made paper flowers and then distributed them to elderly clients at a local care home.	Elderly people at the home	Paper

As with all research, the pilot wave uncovered a number of challenges in administering the survey, including:

- **Difficulties contacting unit leads to arrange events.** Initially details for some youth groups were incomplete and missing contact information. This meant it was difficult to find the contact details of the relevant person, and we had to speak to a few people before receiving the correct details.
- **Unit contacts often have busy schedules** and found it difficult to make time for the research once contact had been made. We found that contacting them during working hours was not practical unless it was by appointment. In acknowledging the limited availability of participants, particularly volunteers, we allowed extra lead time for conversations. **Delays receiving completed questionnaires and telephone contact details from the event organisers.** For paper questionnaires, the delay meant it was difficult to ascertain how many responses each of the pilots achieved. Youth United's recommendation to contact Senior Users first has

³⁰ N.B no homeless people were surveyed due to the sensitivity of their circumstances

helped to reduce some of these issues. We also asked some of the group leaders to scan the completed questionnaires when possible and to email them directly to us to speed up the process.

- **Change in scope of the research** as events cancelled or changed at a late stage. We overcame the challenge of changes in the scope of the research by incorporating flexibility into our approach; for instance, we had to survey the beneficiaries from The Girls' Brigade retrospectively via telephone when we had originally intended to speak to them at the event.
- **The suitability of some activities for research.** In some cases, it proved challenging to identify beneficiaries and another set of intermediate beneficiaries were identified that could be surveyed. For example, at the Woodcraft Folk event in Twickenham, all of the direct beneficiaries were under the age of 11. This meant that the research was deemed inappropriate as: first, consent had not been given to approach young people, and; second, the content and language of the questionnaire would be unsuitable for children. To tackle these issues, social workers who were present at the event and were responsible for the young carers' group acted as the beneficiary.

A.4 Main survey approach

Having identified the issues raised in the pilot wave, there were three main implications for the main stage.

Liaising with local units

For the main stage, project managers were the first point of call with the organisations. The evaluation team then worked down the chain to the development worker and unit contacts to identify events that are scheduled and set up the surveys, The Senior Users and Youth United were copied into all email communication with volunteers to help monitor and encourage progress.

Surveying vulnerable groups

From the pilot surveys, we identified three specific vulnerable groups where it would have been inappropriate to administer the full questionnaire: the homeless, those using food banks, and those under the age of 18

For the main stage of this research, we excluded those under 18 from participating in the research as this would require parental consent. (Note that this had been anticipated for the pilot, and under 18s had been excluded throughout: however, this point needed reinforcing with those administering the surveys).

We also created a reduced questionnaire for other vulnerable groups such as homeless people to avoid any insensitive questions such as their opinions of their local communities. However, this version of the questionnaire was not required as vulnerable groups were not interviewed at any point

5.1.1 Method

The pilot wave identified that both telephone and face to face methods worked in practice. Therefore, the option of either a telephone or face to face approach was retained at the main stage of research. This allowed for interviewing retrospective of social action taking place.

As an additional failsafe option, digital copies of the questionnaire were sent out in the event that the paper materials sent by post did not arrive in time for the activity. This allowed the volunteers to print out the questionnaires themselves.

Each completed survey that was returned to Ipsos MORI was scanned and received a unique barcode. This meant that during the data processing responses could be attributed by uniformed group and type of social action. A set of unweighted³¹ data tables and an SPSS file were created following data processing. We were unable to calculate the response rates and the number of potential beneficiaries as we felt it was unrealistic to ask the units to monitor the number of those that did not want to take part, or did not complete the survey administered (and by definition the number of beneficiaries for some activities could never be accurately measured).

Figure A.1 Number of units across the UK



Map of UK showing where units participating in the evaluation carried out social action activities

³¹ Weighting was not applied as the sample was not representative of a specific population

General annex

B. General Annex

B.1 Uniformed Youth Groups funded through UYSAF 1

- Catholic Guides of Ireland Northern Region
- Church Lads' and Church Girls' Brigade
- Combined Cadet Force Association
- Fire Cadets
- Girlguiding
- Jewish Lads' & Girls' Brigade
- Marine Society & Sea Cadets
- Reserve Forces and Cadets Association (RFCA)/Army Cadet Force (ACF)/Air Cadets
- St John Ambulance
- The Boys' Brigade
- The Girls' Brigade England and Wales
- The Scout Association
- Volunteer Police Cadets
- Woodcraft Folk

B.2 Description of logic model (inputs, activities, outcomes and impacts)

The logic model sets out the different types of social action, the intended immediate beneficiaries and the desired outcomes and impacts. Social action among these beneficiaries will lead to outcomes, which in turn lead to impacts.

The grey shading in the diagram above indicates that the area is common to most or all types of social action (and therefore which the questionnaire focuses on capturing). The colour codes indicate that they are specific to that particular type of social action (and which are therefore less appropriate for a generic questionnaire covering all types of social action). The commentary below describes the model in more detail.

Figure B.1 UYSAF 1 Logic Model



Types of social action

Five broad types of social action can be identified³² in this logic model.

Improving the local area/ environment

Improving the local area can involve local environmental and wildlife improvements. Examples of this include weeding a garden, litter picking, graffiti removal, recycling, river patrol, clearing forests etc. This may also include crime prevention activities (e.g. raising awareness of safety measures residents can take to improve their safety), and awareness raising about recycling.

Fundraising/ sponsored activity

Fundraising/ sponsored activity may include giving time to specific charities and causes, such as local or community charities and concerns, national charities, and international charities. Typical examples include raising donations for food banks, selling poppies, organising community events such as coffee mornings or bake sales, sponsored run/walk, shoe box appeals, recycling unwanted clothing.

Campaigning for a (non-political) cause

Campaigning in the social action context is always non-political. The causes which are campaigned for may be a local, national or international cause. Examples include fire safety campaigns, recycling campaigns, and raising awareness of specific issues such as the media portrayal of young women and its impact on girls' self-esteem or the decline of hedgehogs in the UK.

Tutoring, coaching and mentoring

Tutoring, coaching and mentoring includes social action to help provide education courses, guided reading, peer group mentoring, designing/delivering bespoke training sessions, teaching music lessons, organising guest speakers to educate the community among other things.

Supporting people/ groups in the community

Supporting people/ groups in the community includes activities such as running a soup kitchen, setting up a food bank (rather than donating to an existing food bank), visiting and befriending people etc.

Immediate beneficiaries

The immediate beneficiaries will be getting some sort of benefit from the social action or made aware of a campaign. It may also include local spaces, charities or causes.

³² The different types of social action included in the logic model are taken from the Ipsos MORI Youth Social Action in the UK report. The research included a survey with 2,000 10-20 year olds. The social action categories were developed in close consultation with the SUTS Data Quality and Assurance group, Cabinet Office, SUTS and other sector stakeholders. <https://www.ipsos-mori.com/Assets/Docs/Publications/sri-ecf-youth-social-action-in-the-uk-2014.pdf>

Improving the local area/ environment

The immediate beneficiary under this category is the local environment as well as local communities and users of the spaces.

Fundraising/ sponsored activity

Activities cover a range of international, national and local causes but seem to be mainly focussed on local causes³³. The nature of much of the fundraising activities (e.g. fundraising events, coffee mornings) means that family and friends of participants may be cited as beneficiaries.

The end beneficiaries of the charity or the cause may also be seen as the beneficiaries of the social action, even though they may be removed from the situation or the young people carrying out the social action.

Campaigning for a (non-political) cause

The primary beneficiaries of campaigning for a non-political cause is the cause itself and those primarily targeted for awareness-raising activities. The profile of individuals targeted will vary depending on the type of activity, but may often include vulnerable people (e.g. preventative health and safety advice).

Tutoring, coaching and mentoring

The beneficiaries for social action involving tutoring, coaching and mentoring will be those receiving the social action. The recipients may be low-skilled or unemployed young people/adults or anyone else in the community.

Supporting people/ groups in the community

Activities often focus on helping the disadvantaged and vulnerable, as well as elderly residents. Food banks/ soup kitchens and disadvantaged families are often beneficiaries. Local voluntary sector organisations may also benefit if the social action is in cooperation with these organisations.

Intended outcomes

The intended outcomes outline the desired outputs from the five types of social action activities.

Improving the local area/ environment

Environmental improvements help to regenerate local spaces, providing cleaner, safer local spaces for residents to use. The intention is that residents feel more satisfied with their local areas, more safe and are more likely to use these improved spaces. The spaces intend to support increased socialising, community mixing and engagement and stronger communities.

³³ Findings from the Social Action in the UK report 2014 <https://www.ipsos-mori.com/Assets/Docs/Publications/sri-ecf-youth-social-action-in-the-uk-2014.pdf>

Fundraising/ sponsored activity

Money is raised for causes and charities which members of Uniformed Groups have chosen to lend support. Activities to raise money help to raise awareness of specific causes (and the charities supporting them) within local communities.

Campaigning for a (non-political) cause

Local communities are more aware of issues/causes, and how they can help to tackle domestic/local/national/international issues. Some campaigns may help to support or protect the environment, health and/or well-being of local communities.

Tutoring, coaching and mentoring

Activities will help to impart new skills and knowledge to those receiving tutoring and to improve their educational and employment opportunities.

Supporting people/ groups in the community

Social action aimed at supporting people and groups in the community hope to provide activities which impart new skills and knowledge to those receiving support. This in turn will help to improve their educational and employment opportunities.

Intended impacts

Impact refers to longer term changes in the beneficiary or in the local community. Impact is often very difficult to estimate or measure as it might not be obvious to the beneficiary that this impact has happened. It can also be difficult to attribute impact to the social action directly.

Improving the local area/ environment

The intended impact of improving the local environment is that this will lead to people enjoying the targeted area more, use it more and feel safer in the area.

Fundraising/ sponsored activity

The intended impact is to improve the capacity of the charity or to enable the target group to improve their operation or improve their life in some way.

Campaigning for a (non-political) cause

The intended impact is to get more people involved in the cause and to better address the issue the campaign is focused on.

Tutoring, coaching and mentoring

The intended impact is to lead those receiving the tutoring, coaching and mentoring to be fitter, more employable or have new opportunities.

Supporting people/ groups in the community

The aim is to decrease inequalities among disadvantaged groups and other groups and improve their lives. This is often aimed specifically at vulnerable people. These include e.g., the homeless, low income residents and disadvantages families, the elderly, disabled.

B.3 Paper Questionnaire



Thank you for your help with this survey. The findings will be used by local youth groups across the UK to understand how they are making a difference in their local areas.

ABOUT YOU

Q1 How proud do you feel of your local community, or do you not feel proud of it at all?

- Very proud
 Fairly proud
 Not that proud
 Not at all proud

Q2 How much, if at all, do you think young people contribute to your local community?

- A lot
 A little
 Nothing at all

Q3 Roughly how often, if at all, do you take part in activities to help your local community? This includes things like volunteering or helping neighbours.

- Every month
 Every few months
 Every year
 Not in the past 2 years

Q4 Do you have any children under 18 years old?

- Yes No

Q5 What is your age?

- 18-30 31-50
 51-70 71 or older

Q6 Are you...?

- Male Female

Q7 How many young people from the [INSERT NAME OF UNIFORMED GROUP] did you speak to today?

- None 1-5
 6-10 11 or more

ABOUT [INSERT UNIFORMED GROUP NAME]

Q8 How worthwhile do you think [TEXT FILL DESCRIPTION OF ACTIVITY FROM SAMPLE FILE] has been, if at all?

- Very worthwhile
 Fairly worthwhile
 Not that worthwhile
 Not at all worthwhile

Q9 Do you feel any more or less proud of your local area as a result of the things [INSERT NAME OF UNIFORMED GROUP] have done, or have they made no difference?

- More proud
 Less proud
 No difference
 Not sure

Q10 Is your opinion of what young people contribute to your local community any better or worse as a result of the things [INSERT NAME OF UNIFORMED GROUP] have done, or have they made no difference?

- Better
 Worse
 No difference
 Not sure

Q11 Would you say you are more or less likely to take part in activities to help your local community in the future as a result of the things [INSERT NAME OF UNIFORMED GROUP] have done, or have they made no difference?

- More likely
 Less likely
 No difference
 Not sure

Q12 Is there anything else you'd like to tell us about today?

Serial Number:

B.4 Leaflet for participants (beneficiaries)



Youth groups and the community

What is the research and why is it being done?

Ipsos MORI is working with Youth United on behalf of the Cabinet Office to find out how you feel about the activities local youth groups are running. The research findings will help to plan the types of activities that youth groups run in their local communities in the future.

What will taking part involve?

If you are happy to take part, you will be asked to complete a short multiple choice questionnaire, which will take only a few minutes to complete. When you have completed the questionnaire, place this in the envelope provided and return this to the Youth United volunteer or place it in the marked box. Whilst it is not compulsory to take part, we would really appreciate your feedback.

Is what I say confidential?

Yes. No-one will know what answers you've provided. You won't be asked to write your name on the questionnaire. You should be provided with an envelope as well as the questionnaire: you can seal up your completed questionnaire in the envelope before handing it back to the volunteer or placing it in the box so no-one can see your answers.

What will happen to my answers?

The questionnaires will be posted back to Ipsos MORI (an independent research agency which is not part of the government) who will analyse the responses from around 1,000 adults. Ipsos MORI will write a report for the Cabinet Office based on all 1,000 responses. They will not name anyone who has taken part, or say who has said what. No one will be able to tell who has taken part in our research from reading the report.

Thank you for taking part!

B.5 Briefing note for unit leaders (paper method)

Volunteer briefing_UYSAF_Final_v2_10.6.15

Youth groups and the community

Thanks very much for agreeing to take part in the main stage of this research! In this note we have explained why we're doing the research, and how we'd like you to be involved. It may be useful to keep this note with you and refer to the pointers overleaf during the day. If you have any questions please contact Fiona Vallance at Ipsos MORI (0207 347 3958; Fiona.vallance@ipsos.com).

What is the research and why is it being done?

Ipsos MORI is working with Youth United on behalf of the Cabinet Office to research the impact that youth groups have on their local communities. The research will help us to understand the impact young people have when they take part in activities which help their community. While lots of previous research has looked at how volunteering improves the lives of volunteers, very little research has explored how much this activity contributes to the local communities that benefit.

We know that a lot of groups do lots of social action during the summer holiday period, while others do more in term-time. We're keen to survey beneficiaries between now and the end of the year, so we can reflect all the work you're doing to help local communities. Whilst we will be conducting our research up until December 2015, we are eager to start as soon as possible so if you have any events in the near future we would love to hear about them.

Who do we want to speak to?

We are interested in hearing the views of adult beneficiaries—those on the receiving end of social action. Social action is defined as 'practical action in the service of others' that provides a benefit for those providing and receiving social action.

There are many ways that one can qualify as a beneficiary, and outlined below are a few examples:

- Members of the community who use local parks that your Uniformed Youth Group has cleaned up
- Attendees at an event your group has organised
- Residents at sites that your group visits
- Recipients of bag packing/baking events

The following types of activities that youth groups often take part in to help their local communities:

- Improving the local area/ environment (e.g. clearing a local park; clearing graffiti)
- Fundraising/ sponsored activities (e.g. bag packs or bake sales to raise money);
- Campaigning for causes (e.g. raising awareness of local or national issues);
- Tutoring, coaching, mentoring; and,
- Supporting individuals or groups in the local community (e.g. befriending, visiting people).

Volunteer briefing_UYSAF_Final_v2_10.6.15

Please note that we are not intending to speak to anyone under the age of 18. We will also need to be mindful when vulnerable groups are beneficiaries of the activities as they may find it difficult to answer the questions, or may deem them inappropriate. We can review this with you once we know what types of activities you are organising.

We are looking for you to administer the survey at a maximum of 4 of your Social Action events by November 2015.

Materials you have received from us

You will receive the following materials from Ipsos MORI to help with the survey:

- A set of paper questionnaires (please see example attached) to hand out to adults who may have benefited from the activities your youth group has done ;
- A soft copy of the paper questionnaire sent via email (in the instance that extra questionnaires are required)
- Envelopes for adults who filled out the questionnaires to seal their completed questionnaires;
- Leaflets for participants which give more information about the research;
- A stamped addressed envelope to send back the set of completed questionnaires; and,
- Clipboards and pens for participants.

What we'd like you to do

We need your help to administer the survey. We'd like you to do the following on the day:

1. Identify adults who can take part in the survey

- Adults can complete the survey if they may have benefited from a community activity that was organised/ run by your youth group
- Please make sure that you only approach those who are aged 18+. If in doubt, please check that participants are 18 or older before handing them a questionnaire

2. Explaining the survey

To persuade adults to take part, it might help to explain that:

- The survey is being done for the Cabinet Office and Youth United Fund
- The survey is short – 12 questions – and should take just a few minutes to fill in
- All the findings are anonymous - no-one will know who has given what answers
- The findings will help youth groups to plan the types of activities they do in the future to make sure they help their local areas
- The research is being carried out nationally, with up to 1,000 adults expected to complete surveys about the activities of many youth groups
- Findings will be analysed by independent research company Ipsos MORI, and the report will be published early in 2016

3. Administering the survey

- Please give those willing to complete the survey a copy of the questionnaire, and an envelope; they can seal their responses in the envelope when they've completed the questionnaire so that no-one sees their answers

Volunteer briefing_UYSAF_Final_v2_10.6.15

- Respondents should hand back the completed surveys to you; if they want to know more please hand out the leaflet we've provided which tells them more about why we're doing this research

4. Returning the completed surveys to Ipsos MORI in the stamped envelope provided

- If participants have sealed their questionnaires in an envelope before giving the completed questionnaires back to you, you don't need to remove the questionnaires from the envelopes – just put everything in the stamped envelope and send it back to us.
- We would like you to collate up to 25 questionnaires per Social Action event where possible.

Some more information about the research

What do we mean by 'social action'?

For the purposes of this research, social action is defined as 'practical action in the service of others' that provides a benefit for those providing and receiving social action. Types of social action may include:

- Helping to improve the local environment (e.g. cleaning a local park)
- Fundraising and campaigning (e.g. bake sales to raise money)
- Coaching, tutoring and mentoring
- Supporting people in the community (e.g. befriending or visiting people)

What does the research involve?

We would like the participating units to survey adults who benefit from their social action activities, by asking these adults to answer a few questions about their views of the social action.

Depending on the type of activity, the survey can either be conducted by handing out paper questionnaires or by collecting telephone numbers so that Ipsos MORI interviewers can call adults at a later date. Ipsos MORI will support units to administer the surveys but will not be attending the social action events.

What happens next?

We will be using the findings as part of the main evaluation of the community impact of youth groups. We will let you know the findings once it's completed in 2016. If you have any questions please ring or email Fiona Vallance on 0207 347 3958; Fiona.vallance@ipsos.com

Thank you!

Julia Pye

Research Director
Ipsos MORI Social Research Institute
julia.pye@ipsos.com

Ilana Tyler-Rubinstein

Research Manager
Ipsos MORI Social Research Institute
ilana.tyler-rubinstein@ipsos.com

Fiona Vallance

Researcher
Ipsos MORI Social Research Institute
fiona.vallance@ipsos.com

Olivia Michelmore

Researcher
Ipsos MORI Social Research Institute
olivia.michelmore@ipsos.com