

Executive Summary

This book identifies how staging international events works as a trigger for local development, and what hosting cities and nations can do to ensure that a positive local legacy and wider benefits are realised. It reviews experience from more than 30 cities/nations and it looks forwards to future events yet to be hosted. Staging international events works as a catalyst for local development, but hosting cities and nations have to take precise and dedicated steps to ensure that a positive local legacy is realised. Whilst the hosting of major international events can be seen as an end in itself, it is also an unrivalled opportunity to get other things done by a nation or a city. It is not a reason for putting them off. Events bring:

- Immovable deadlines and the disciplines that come from them.
- A global audience and professional evaluators.
- Additional investment from external sources.
- Increased visitors who will pass judgement, including intense media exposure.
- Intensified local engagement with citizens, firms, and institutions.
- A chance to celebrate human skills and endeavour.

We often use the word ‘legacy’ to describe the post event benefits, but it is important to stress that local benefits can come before the event is actually hosted, or even just through bidding. Such benefits can also be economic, social, and environmental, as well as in infrastructure and amenity. So, in this book we refer to local development ‘benefits’ and by this we mean:

- Economic, social, and environmental improvements.
- Physical facilities and infrastructures.
- Brand, Image, Reputation, and Identity.
- Positive results that happen before, during, and after the event, or just from bidding.
- Wider multipliers effects that occur as consequence of direct benefits.

- Civic, institutional, governance, self confidence, and related progress that may occur.

In this book, all of these are considered to be ‘local development benefits’, but we will also refer to them as ‘legacy and leverage’.

The local development benefits of the event provide an additional spur to make the event a major success. It helps to justify the investment required for the event, and to ensure that the wider purpose is well defined and executed. The local development benefits are a key justification for the event itself, for the investment and the effort made. Too many events have left places worse off, with expensive facilities that have no post event use, and a big bill to pay into the future.

It is for these reasons that awarding bodies of international events have laid ever increasing stress on the importance of a durable legacy from the events. It is bad business to encourage cities, regions and nations to host such events but to leave them impoverished by the process of doing so. That is why the ICC, FIFA, IOC, BIE, and many others now insist upon active legacy plans for all candidate hosts, and why the scope of the legacy and the sustainability of the event, is seen as key to the attractiveness of any bid or candidature.

Hosting major events is an important means to accelerate existing plans and policies and deliver enhanced investment. Major events are a tool or catalyst to implement existing priorities, not an alternative to doing so.

Major events can also offer exceptional opportunities to define the identity, values, unique assets, and long term contribution of a nation or city to the global realm (in economy, society, and environment). It is important to have a clear and compelling story about the nation and its future to communicate through the hosting of such an event.

Because such events bring a ‘global audience’ to a nation or city for a period of time, there is a unique opportunity to brand and communicate. However, the presence (both real and virtual) of such an audience, and the world’s media, will also uncover and highlight weaknesses or confusions in the character of the hosts. Therefore, getting the message clear and distilling the values and identity is an essential task.

A legacy and local benefits programme should be driven by robust leadership and implemented with dedicated resources and skills which are distinct from the efforts required to host the event, but co-ordinated effectively with them.

There are also risks to manage. A successful outcome relies upon both realising benefits and also upon reducing risks and costs. As we shall see, there are many dimensions to both.

These local benefits include improved environment, infrastructure and amenities, global exposure, increased visitor economy and tourism, trade and investment promotion, employment and social/business development. They can also include increased self confidence, national pride, civic engagement, and an enlarged ambition to embrace globalisation, and make the necessary adjustments and interventions to succeed. Capturing local benefits from global events does not happen automatically or by accident.

Benefits may be characterised as ‘primary’ and ‘secondary’ to indicate the time frame within which they occur, rather than overall significance. Primary benefits may well overlap temporarily with secondary benefits if they are longer-term in nature.

Primary benefits:

1. Alignment of the event with sector and business growth strategies in the city or nation.
2. Private-public investment partnerships.
3. Image and identity impacts attracting increased population, investment, or trade.
4. Structural expansion of visitor economy and supply chain development and expansion.
5. Environmental impacts, both in built and natural environments.

Secondary benefits:

1. Post event usages of improved land and buildings.
2. Connectivity and infrastructure legacies.
3. Labour market impacts and social/economic inclusion.
4. Secondary impacts in the property market.
5. Global positioning, events strategy going forwards, and project management capability.

The most successful host countries and cities have a long term plan that the event helps them to implement, and a dedicated management effort aimed at securing the benefits and the legacy for some time before the event

is staged, and for several years afterwards. Put simply, when international events are hosted well, they become a catalyst for urban development and global reach, famously in Barcelona and Turin, and perhaps shortly in Beijing and Shanghai.

Who has benefited?

Understanding the urban development benefits that come from global events is best illustrated by what has been achieved by selected cities in the past and what is planned for the future. A table is presented at the end of Chapter 1 which assesses the chief urban development impacts of previous events that have been hosted. The events are grouped into four categories:

1. Trade fairs and exhibition events, *e.g.* The EXPO and others.
2. Cultural events, *e.g.* The Capital of Culture and others.
3. Sports events, *e.g.* The Olympics and others.
4. Political summits and conference events, *e.g.* G8, Earth Summits and others.

These four groups represent the broad range of events that cities and nations now seek to host, although there is great diversity within each group and substantial differences between them.

This book reviews the international experiences, explains how a local benefits and legacy programme can be developed, and identifies the key factors of success and failure in ensuring that global events produce long term local benefits. Understanding how a global event can be so effective in promoting local development and recognising the factors of success and failure is the focus of this book.

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