

# SIMPACT SOCIAL INNOVATION BUSINESS CASE STUDY

Case Study **2016** No **4**

## **BeatBullying**

### **Preventing Bullying by Empowering Peer-to-Peer Mentoring**

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## **SIMPACT Social Innovation Business Case Study**

Covers research on the «Economic Foundation of Social Innovation» related to the components, objectives and principles of the social innovation process and measurement of social innovations at micro-level to inform policymakers, investors and other interested stakeholders.

## **SIMPACT**

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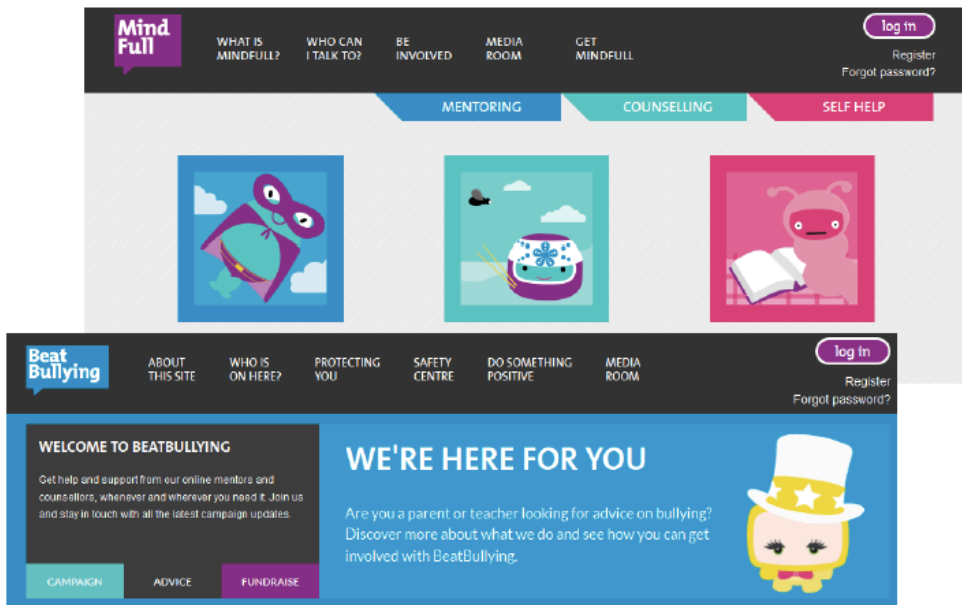
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# BEATBULLYING



# 1

## OVERVIEW

<b>City, Country</b>	Great Britain
<b>Addressed theme(s)</b>	Bullying, social cohesion
<b>Target Group</b>	Youth
<b>Development Stage</b>	Scaled and failed
<b>Established in</b>	2002
<b>Type of Organisation</b>	Charity Organization
<b>Size of Organisation</b>	Large (>=250)

A lot of British pupils suffer from bullying and the main consequence is that they miss school and therefore become more likely to have several issues later such as unemployment.

The *BeatBullying* charity, that was founded in 2002 and suspended its services in October 2014, empowered young people to lead anti bullying campaigns in their schools and local communities and sustained their work with specifically developed online tools. The charity's activities focused on training groups of young people so that they were able to help some classmates suffering from bullying. The organization also developed an on line platform where the pupils can talk to each other and find some help. To increase its effectiveness *BeatBullying* got parents, government, students and schools involved to work on bullying and find solutions to stop it.

The social innovation enhances the concept of having a peer to peer support for bullying issues and introduced online services as a way to extend its reach, achieving the scalability of the solution.

# 2

## PROBLEM TO BE ADDRESSED AND IDEA

*Despite improvements in research, diagnosis and treatment, securing the wellbeing of children is still an elusive goal. In the UK alone, depression affects almost 80,000 children and self-harm rates are the highest in Europe. Bullying has reached epidemic proportions, with almost half of young people reportedly bullied in school. One in ten children under the age of 16 suffers from a diagnosable mental health issue, but 75% of them get no professional support. (Ashoka, 2013).*

Children require intensive one-on-one support for a variety of psychosocial challenges, but the scale of the above problems cannot be solved by the medical system alone because a scarcity of resources available. This resource gap is only expected to worsen in the current economic climate, with a 26% budget cut last year for youth services provided by the UK's Department for Education.

Too often problems are not identified and treated until a child's wellbeing has reached a crisis point. In the online sphere, dozens of websites offer generic info-sheets and advice about mental health, bullying and abuse, but the format lacks any personalized interaction, fails to engage young people, and again relies on the assumption that children can diagnose and help themselves.

Current statistics show that 12-15 year olds are increasingly online and using social media in their homes for an average of 17 hours a week. Children often turn to the anonymity and perceived safety of chat rooms and social networking sites to open up for the first time. But the peer advice offered on these forums is not provided by experts and can in fact do more harm than good; these spaces are prime targets for psychological abuse, with nearly a third of all 11-16 year olds falling victim to cyberbullying. In the 21st century, the landscape for protecting

child wellbeing has been transformed, but services have failed to adapt, meaning many children fall through the cracks. (ibid.)

In Britain, 1/3 of children missing school do so because they are afraid of bullying. The phenomenon involves 170,000 pupils who are playing truant every day. This figure represents 36% of the total absences every day and enhances the risk of academic failure for the children.

The *BeatBullying's* Bullying and Truancy Report 2006 showed that almost 2/3 of pupils were bullied. A questionnaire was given to pupils who suffered at least once from bullying and the results showed the following:

- 43% are female / 54% are male / 3% are undetermined;
- 68% are white British people.

A third of these children miss school 40 times a year because of bullying. But the most alarming issue is that some of these bullied pupils think about suicide because they can't think about another way out.

On one hand, there can be consequences also for the parents, who eventually go to jail if their children don't attend school for a very long time. Usually the main issue is that even when the problem is explained to the school's members nothing happens, which explains why children prefer to stay home because they feel much safer than at school. On the other hand, truancy appears to be costly for society; indeed children who are truant frequently are more likely to commit offences. A third of prisoners have been truant to school.

Overall, the anti-bullying policies and strategies of the United Kingdom are concrete, and fix security standards and criteria of good conduct for all members of the school community. All schools are required by law to have a policy of behavior, defined by each school, which should include measures for the prevention of school bullying. The UK school system is regulated by legal requirements for behavior at school, establishing clear responsibilities regarding bullying issues in order to prevent and combat the phenomenon. The Department of Education provides online resources and practical materials for teachers and schools to develop effective strategies. In addition, several national programs promote health and good behavior, and adopt a global approach to education to promote social, emotional and behavioural skills. In all nations of the United Kingdom a set of anti-bullying interventions is adopted (European Antybullying Network, 2014).



**Figure 1.** The Ashoka fellow Emma-Jane Cross initiator of *BeatBullying*

Emma-Jane, the funder of the initiative, began to realize the that way to have wider impact was to bring support services online where children feel most comfortable. She pioneered an intervention method called Socially Mediated Support which fuses both peer-to-peer and professional counseling online, to dramatically increase the capacity for entry-level support services to be accessed by young people in need. Emma-Jane Cross set up *BeatBullying* (lately transformed into the *BB Group*) to house already existing online communities connecting 40,000 children, volunteers and professionals for personalized and real-time mentoring. These platforms were easily accessible by young people 24h a day. Emma-Jane's online platform then offers the match of children to appropriate mentors, from trained young volunteers in their own peer group to psychologists, depending on risk level and a child's personal preference, giving kids the opportunity to choose the what help they need. The *BB Group's* platform pays particular attention to safety, ensuring that the children are not exposed and for this reason it is the only networking website that was endorsed by the Child Exploitation and Online Protection Centre. The funder's idea was to create a youth-led movement for social action to face the scale of today's challenges by engaging wide youth networks (Ashoka, 2013).

# 3

## CORE SOLUTION AND MOTIVATIONS

*BeatBullying (BB)* was a multi-award winning international charity established in 2002 in UK aiming to empower young people to lead anti-bullying campaigns in their schools and local communities, and to build the capacity of local communities to sustain the work. *BB* devised bullying prevention strategies for young people by young people, focusing on «peer to peer» education and empowering young people to take action against incidents of bullying and help others combat the problem, both online and offline. In schools where *BB* has worked, their internal evaluation suggests that incidents of bullying have been reduced on average by 39%.

*BB* addressed young people, parents and guardians, teachers and professionals who want training, resources, or to host a mentorship program. It provided training to young people, teachers and professionals who work with young people to prevent bullying and also training to mentors in schools and youth organizations. It aimed to develop strategies to prevent bullying designed for young people and by young people.

In order to do so, the organization used a range of techniques to deliver its bullying prevention model and engage with young people. As well as the core *BB* mentoring that took place in schools, the charity provided an online social networking and mentoring service called *CyberMentors* (between 11-18 year olds) and a derived one called *MiniMentors* (for primary school kids, 5-11 year olds) through the [www.beatbullying.org](http://www.beatbullying.org) website where young people mentored other young people about bullying and issues surrounding bullying and had access to specialized counselors online.

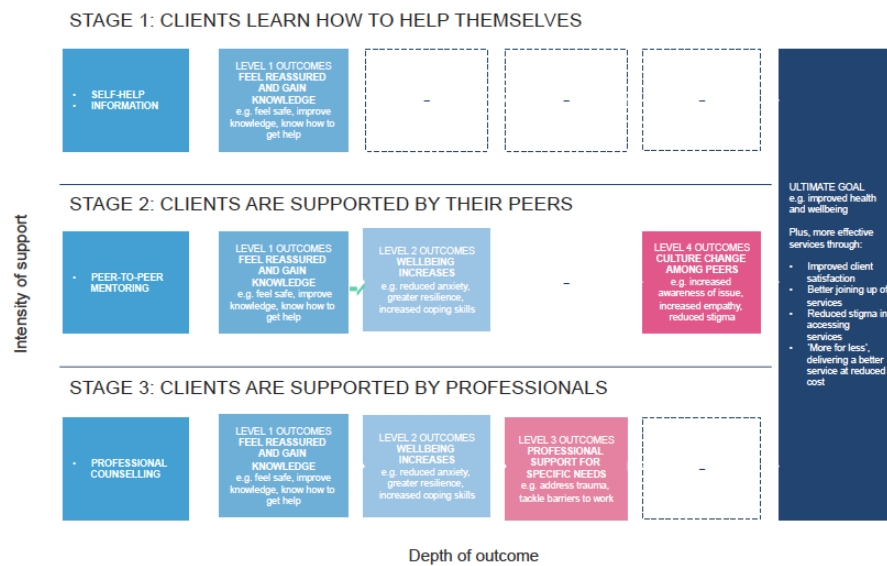


Figure 2. BeatBully's three stages model (Coppes, O'Brien, n.d.)

The charity provided three levels of support to its clients (Figure 3-1):

- stage 1: clients learn how to help themselves
- stage 2: clients are supported by their peers
- stage 3: clients are supported by professionals

outcomes → culture change among peers e.g. Increased awareness of issue, increased empathy, reduced stigma

Emma-Jane Cross, the founder, attended a traditional Catholic school, where her younger brother was consistently bullied, including by a senior teacher. She carried out a PhD into family violence, then her work brought her into women's refuges where she faced again children struggling to cope through abuse and bullying. She set out to find help for these children but could not find any appropriate services for them. From her personal and work experience she became determined to fill this gap herself, making the fight against bullying her personal mission. During the years she developed the idea of a new youth-led bullying prevention model, and started working on this vision full-time founding *BeatBullying* charity.

Emma-Jane's aim is to change how first support to children is delivered, increasing services' reach and capacity using the power of the Internet. To fulfil this objective, Emma-Jane developed a three-fold approach: increasing the number of trained experts available, organizing a widespread movement against bullying and adapting her model into different spheres, across the spectrum of child wellbeing.

As the scale of challenges faced by children in the UK far exceeds the availability of professional resources, the first step taken by Emma-Jane was to train a generation of young mentors who became part of a bottom-up solution. Through an intensive two-day training, youths became peer mentors both online and offline in their schools where they led lunchtime drop-in clinics. Training was delivered both free of charge and through ongoing commissioning partnerships with local councils, schools, youth groups and membership organizations, like Scouts.

The success of the initiative was supported by the fact that its resources and tools to fight bullying were available online and were published by the Ministry of Public Instruction and recommended by various UK schools.

# 4

## DEVELOPMENT PROCESS AND VALUE CHAIN

*BeatBullying (BB)* activities started in 1999 by Emma-Jane Cross and the organization became a registered charity in 2002. Since then its work against bullying has gained significant recognition. This response is based on knowledge, research and evaluation gained through providing a programme of work and support to schools, local authorities, and communities. *BB* also had a dedicated Child Protection and Safeguarding Team responsible for ensuring that all policy, protocol and procedure was effectively implemented throughout all the work that the charity did, and ensured the welfare and safety of all the young people that it worked with. During the first six years from the foundation, the charity worked mainly in presence, providing training, mentoring and other forms of support to fight bullying, just in 2008-09 it started to introduce new programmes specifically aimed at offering digital services in order to reach a wider audience and amplify its impact.

Due to the accountability gained during these years of operation where the charity was economically supported by grants and public and private founding, in 2009 the Cabinet Office Social Action Fund, the Department of Education, Nesta, Nominet Trust, BBC Children in Need, the Dulverton Trust, Hedge Funds Care and the Venture Philanthropy Foundation funded the *CyberMentors* service provided by *BB*. In particular the Cabinet Office has continued to invest during the years in the transition of the charity from a single programme to a group structure. Grants, loans and investments allowed the group to scale its impact, diversify its provision, re-structure its services and seed-fund and invest in its technology build.

*CyberMentors* was an online peer mentoring service for 11-18 year olds delivered via a social networking site. This service extended the charity reach by using Internet and new technologies to engage the children and to support them. The service was underpinned by cutting-edge technology, which in itself acts as an engagement tool, and was a safe and appealing website where young people could turn to other young people for help and advice.

Nesta was a funder and investor for some 5 years, and in 2010 seed-funded and invested also in *FutureYou*, a social networking platform which delivers information, advice, guidance and well-being support to young people 14-24 year olds not in education, employment, training (NEET) but want to improve their prospects of getting back into work or learning. This programme evolved from *CyberMentors*. The initial work focused on adapt the already existing digital platform to meet the target needs.

In 2013 a new online support programme called *MindFull* was launched. This is a mental health support site offering free counseling and peer support to people aged 11–17. During the years, over 10,000 *CyberMentors*, age 11-17, have been accredited to advise the bullied or excluded, thousands of trained adult volunteers supported this community online, and a specific *MiniMentors* programme had been rolled out to primary schools across the country. The accounts said the latter employed 44 people and had more than 5,000 volunteers.

The charity was well known and its reputation was high when in 2011 it changed its name in *BB Group* and was awarded £1.3m by the Office for Civil Society to expand its work. Part of the money received in 2011 was used to create *MindFull* and to help develop *Cosmo*, which is its software platform for Internet chat forums that the charity wanted to offer to other

charities as a powerful tool to reach the youth in need. This project was initially founded by Nesta and the Social Investment Business, which gave the charity money from the Office for Civil Society's Social Action Fund to build the *Cosmo* framework and extend its work beyond anti-bullying advice. The charity also received funding from the Cabinet Office, and a £850,000 donation from ITV's Text Santa Appeal.

In 2012, *BeatBullying's* websites received more than 1.7 million visits and counselors ran almost 5,870 sessions with beneficiaries. From the beginning the charity attracted a wide range of funders and by 2012 its income was almost £2.4m (Hillier, 2014). The following year the *BB Group* tried to scale up in Spain, Portugal, Italy, Poland, Czech Republic and Romania thanks to the Daphne III EU fund. Unfortunately in these years the organization already started to be insolvent and this process was not completed.

When the charity digitalized its services in 2009, building up a set of tools for online public service delivery many charities were struggling with outsourcing to developers that were expensive and unaccustomed to collaborating with charities and their users. To face this new challenge the *BB Group* reconfigured its staffing structure to include a dedicated technical team. CEO Emma-Jane Cross said: *«the high cost of outsourcing meant we had no alternative but to bring technology development in-house. It's kept us on a quicker, better road to impact, at two thirds of the cost.»* She adds, *«what we really need are specialist tech agencies that are dedicated to the Third Sector including charities and their funders.»*

([www.nesta.org.uk/news/charities-need-more-support-innovate-using-new-technology](http://www.nesta.org.uk/news/charities-need-more-support-innovate-using-new-technology)).

*BeatBullying* had been widely acclaimed since it was established as a charity in 2002, winning numerous awards for its innovative support services for young people in distress, so it was unexpected when the *BB Group* announced at the end of October 2014 that it had closed its websites and was looking for a buyer – the charity was also a company limited by guarantee. But no one came to the rescue and the charity was put into voluntary liquidation by the trustees on 7 November owing about £1m after it failed to secure grants worth about £2.3m from Department of Health and the European Commission.

The circumstances that led to its sudden demise are not clear but it seems its financial difficulties have arisen as a result of its recent

expansion and a failure to attract funding for the future (Hillier, 2014; Cook, 2014). The expansion appears to have accelerated in early 2011, when the charity received £285,500 from the Cabinet Office's Transition Fund to help it adapt for the future. The same year the charity created *We're Altogether Better*, a group that included *BeatBullying*, its employment project *Future You*, the befriending scheme *MiniMentors* and *CyberMentors*, a project in which young people received advice on bullying from their peers. Afterwards the group changed its name into *BB Group*.

The broadcaster ITV, which gave the charity almost £700,000 from its Text Santa appeal has said it is taking legal advice after realising that the charity had planned to use the grant to pay its debts.

The charity lost out on major sources of funding in 2013. According to the anti-bullying charity's latest accounts, for the year up to December 2012, it had an income of £2.4m and a loss of £281,000. In 2012, it spent £399,000 on generating voluntary income, but raised only £353,000. Its accounts identified an overspending on technology as one reason of the deficit (Weakley, 2014).

On 10 March 2015, the Charity Commission published an Operational Case Report setting out the findings of its review of the circumstances leading to the insolvent liquidation of The *BB Group*. The charity had been experiencing financial difficulties for some time as a result of its reliance on grant funding and its lack of reserves.

31 December 2013 showed that the cumulative loss for 2013 was £417,814. In 2014 two key expected grants, from Daphne EU and Public Health England, were not received, a total of £1,444,608. As a consequence the Department for Education, had to reconsider its funding arrangements. Another funder also shared information within or the funding community and advised the charity should not be invested in or funded at the present time (Charity Commission, 2015).

The report states that «*The trustees appear to have actively attempted to manage the charity's finances throughout, and were confident that they had made decisions to the best of their ability and in the charity's best interests.*» (ibid.).

Media was an important support in the development of the initiative. In fact, Emma-Jane Cross succeeded in developing media partnerships with the most widely-read newspapers in the UK, running public campaigns

on bullying and internet safety with an estimated advertising value of £20 million. This has achieved tangible outcomes from both the public and private sectors: the Department for Education has pledged over £6 million in anti-bullying work; policy changes were inputted into all of the major political parties' agendas; large online players such as Facebook and Youtube signed up to the campaign and improve take-down times and safety information. The *BB Group* then leveraged nation-wide reach of major telecoms companies to run campaigns and sell branded merchandise, for a sustainable income stream as well as increased credibility in the eyes of the youth. Emma-Jane also worked with marketing experts MediaCom and M & C Saatchi to help ensure her digital platforms are cutting-edge, accessible, and appealing for children. Crucially, they are also helping Emma-Jane and the young people she works with create a new narrative: establishing social action and changemaking as a cool, emerging norm and movement for young people (Ashoka, 2013). Moreover *BB* was advertised using online resources, the set of documents submitted by *BB*, its Youtube channel and guides and learning resources available online.

*BB* programmes had been fully evaluated and peer reviewed by academic organisations and institutions such as the University of Sussex, Goldsmiths University of London, New Philanthropy Capital (NPC), the Centre for Excellence and Outcomes for Children's and Young People's Services (C4EO) and the Education Department. The organization's flagship *CyberMentors* programme was awarded as an example of «fully validated» practice under the C4EO early intervention theme.

Research on *Cybermentors* and *MiniMentors* include «Evaluation of the program of peer mentoring BeatBullying» (Brighton University of Sussex and University of Brighton 2010), and «The use and effectiveness of anti-bullying strategies in schools» (London: Department of Education 2011).

# 5

## EVIDENCE FROM THE CASES

### Problem to be Addressed and Idea

### 5.1

In the UK context, where child depression rates are one of the highest in Europe, bullying has reached epidemic proportions, with almost half of young people reportedly bullied in school. Moreover children suffering from mental distress are often unable to identify what they are experiencing and why. As the current system relies on children actively seeking help from schools, parents or online platforms, currently diagnosis, treatment, and the consequent wellbeing of children are still difficult objectives to reach.

**BB provides support to children by anticipating the problem** involving the school community as well as by treating the already existing bullying cases. This way children recognize the problem when occurs and are more prepared to ask for support. This change of perspective is one of the key feature of BB compared to other initiatives against bullying.

There are two context elements that «enlarge» the bullying issue and concur to determine the *BB* area of action. The statistical research shows that teenagers are dramatically increasing **the use of social media** at home and most prevention systems are failing to protect youth in this context. Another crucial point is represented by **truancy** and its connection with bullying as a third of bullied children miss school 40 times a year also because of the inefficiency of the school in solving bullying even once declared.

Currently, the way services are conceived and delivered act as a deterrent: religious services in schools immediately alert children's parents (who may be part of the problem), children have no choice in the type of support they are given, and admitting to self-harm results in

getting sent home. Too often, therefore, problems are not identified and treated until a child's wellbeing has reached a crisis point. In the online sphere, dozens of websites offer generic info-sheets and advice about mental health, bullying and abuse, but the format lacks any personalized interaction, fails to engage young people, and again relies on the assumption that children can diagnose and help themselves.

The idea to use peer to peer support for helping bullied kids is a strategy that allows to identify the problem more efficiently and as a consequence to tackle it on time. Moreover the idea to use social media eases the engagement and the interaction between volunteers and bullied children.

The scale of the problem, and the inadequate answers of the actual medical/social system, emphasize an already relevant resource gap that is only expected to worsen due to the budget cut. The case highlights the existence of a **gap in the current UK welfare system**, which relies on the third sector to provide a proper answer and provides grants to assure its operation.

## 5.2

### Core Solution and Motivations

*BB* was a charity aiming to empower young people to lead anti-bullying campaigns in their schools and local communities, and to build the capacity of local communities to sustain the work. *BB* devised bullying prevention strategies for young people by young people, focusing on «peer to peer» education and empowering young people to take action against incidents of bullying and help others combat the problem, both online and off.

*BB* used a range of techniques to deliver its bullying prevention model and engage with young people. The three-fold approach (self-help, peer mentoring, professional support) massively increased the number of trained experts available, organizing a widespread movement taking action against bullying.

Moreover, the initiator - realizing that the way to have wider impact was to bring support services online - had pioneered an intervention method called Socially Mediated Support. *BB* had provided an online social networking and mentoring service through the [www.beatbullying.org](http://www.beatbullying.org) website where young people mentored other young people about bullying and issues surrounding bullying and had access to specialist counselors online.

BB's offering is well articulated on **three levels of support** and uses **different communication channels** to provide its services. These features showed to be the key of its success and reveal a **deep knowledge of the problem by its founder**. A SI case that born out of a direct experience of the problem by its founder has more chance to provide a proper answer to real problems.



Figure 3. Cyber mentor on-line service

## Development Process and Value Chain

## 5.3

*BB*, established in 1999 by Emma-Jane Cross, became a registered charity in 2002 and after seven years of activity in schools, launched the *BB* website in 2009. As an online peer mentoring service for 11-18 year olds, *BB* has worked directly and indirectly with more than 700,000 young people across the UK. In 2013, the *BB* group added to its online services *MindFull*, a mental health support site offering free counseling and peer support to people aged 11–17. The scaling of the initiative throughout the years is quite impressive. As of 2012 *BB* may count on:

- 150 employees (Seingier, n.d.)
- 10,000 *CyberMentors*,
- 5,000 volunteers
- An income of £2.4m.

This growth was achieved thanks to two main features of the solution: the peer to peer collaboration between kids, which increased the number of trained volunteers providing counseling, and the digitalization of the

social innovation, which extends its reach thanks to the ease of access to the services and appeal of the mean itself to the youth.

The circumstances that led to its sudden demise are not clear but it seems its financial difficulties had arisen as a result of its recent expansion and a **failure to attract funding** for the future. Probably, also the **excessive diversification of activities** and the consequent spread of resources contributed to this outcome.

Moreover the scaling process and the growth of the charity organization structure probably required more **management competences** that were **not properly integrated**. This is valid also for the process of digitalization of the services, whose management require specific **skills not owned by the charity members**.

The Report by the Charity Commission (2015) however highlights that the BB Group relied on two grants from Daphne EU and the organisation Funders and Public Health England that were not achieved. The decision of the trustees to anticipate the successful receipt, and to make financial and operational decisions on this basis, was probably at the origin of the organization bankrupt.

A charity that relies exclusively on grants when decides to scale increase its **dependency on uncertain economic sources**. Especially in a period of crisis or when a reduction of public founding availability occurs, these organizations are at **high risk of sustainability** as the more they growth the higher funds are needed.

This shows that an economic sustainability strategy is needed for these organizations when scaling. If a solution relies exclusively on grants it seems it cannot scale without risk.

Institutions and founders apparently underestimated the risk of failure and provided grants without having a **proper evaluation of the economic performance**.

Media was an important support in the development of the initiative: most widely-read newspapers in the UK had run public campaigns on bullying and internet safety with an estimated advertising value of £20 million.

*BeatBullying's* accountability achieved during the years operating in schools and with the institutions was probably at the origin of these high level relations with various media that surely extended the BB reach.

# 6

## DISCUSSION OF EVIDENCES IN SIMPACT'S THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

### Social Innovation Components

6.1

#### Actors

6.1.1

Emma-Jane, initiator and Ashoka (2013) fellow, due to her personal path, was strongly determined to identify and pursue a bullying prevention model. Her strength was represented by a profound knowledge of the issue, her intuition of using peer-to-peer help and moreover, her capacity of identifying the power of the internet as an important scaling factor. Unfortunately, the lack of specific competences (by her or other members of *BB*), the high costs of technology development and the subsequent need to internalize this capacity had helped to determine an unsustainable scaling.

#### Formal and political actors

Several other actors cooperated with *BeatBullying* giving them practical support to foster the initiative. New Philanthropy Capital (NPC) provided rigorous analysis, practical advice and innovative thinking and The Centre for Excellence and Outcomes in Children and Young People's Services (C4EO) also offered its expertise through a range of products and services to support the children's services sector. Moreover, three

different Universities – Centre For Charity Effectiveness of Cass Business School, CRESS research lab of University of Sussex, Unit for School and Family studies of Goldsmiths University – have considered *BB* as an interesting case, providing independent evaluation and giving the charity feed-back on their work and contributing to boost its reputation. In particular, the University of Sussex and the University of Brighton (Banerie et al., 2009) did a comprehensive survey of over 1,000 pupils from 11 middle/secondary schools to assess the Bullying level and subsequently a combination of follow-up surveys (all within a one-year period) of approximately 350 pupils, peer mentors, and staff leads at five of the above schools, together with a retrospective survey of 117 peer mentors from 67 other schools.

*BB* has been able to raise funding from a wide range of funders. Economical supports were provided since the beginning from the government, associations, Cabinet Office, the European Commission and other institutions and NGOs. Despite its broad attractiveness, the main co-actor of *BB's* success can be considered the UK Government. Since bullying was affecting daily absences and consequently producing a serious detrimental effect on the educational attainment, the government has considered reliable and effective the combined strategy of bullying/truancy prevention proposed by the *BB Group*. Considering that one-third of young people truant to escape being bullied and many of them persistently, bullying prevention means, for UK Government, more chances to fulfill children/youth potential and avoid the social cost of school drop out.

### **Peer to peer help**

All programmes were based on peer-to-peer education, encouraging young people to take action against incidents of bullying and help others combat the problem (BB GROUP, 2009). In particular, *CyberMentors* reproduce a traditional school-based peer mentoring system delivered via a social networking site mechanism. The result is a peer-to-peer website in which young people experiencing bullying, online or offline, can be assisted by people their own age. By allowing children to talk to someone who understand what they are going through, *CyberMentors* reduces the stigma of speaking out about bullying and empowers young people to put an end to bullying in all its forms.

This solution highlight the interplay between SI and the welfare system as in this case volunteers' work and peer to peer relations completely substitute institutions in facing a rising social problem.

### Knowledge

Despite the specific knowledge of the problem that the initiator possessed, universities delivered independent research and evaluation of the *BB* methodology measured its effectiveness and provided new knowledge for the charity. In particular, the research carried out in collaboration with the University of Sussex and the University of Brighton (Banerie et al., 2010) measured reductions in the number of bullying episodes and a number of other negative indicators in schools that have joined the program *CyberMentors*. The report has identified a critical point of the process showing that despite the fact that schools have evaluated the training of *BB* as good or very good, the staff has felt marginalized on some occasions and often it was not possible to participate in some laboratories.

The Government has moreover commissioned Goldsmith University a research on The Use and Effectiveness of Anti-Bullying Strategies in Schools (Thompson & Smith, 2010) where *BB* was involved. The final report has translated into the research in policy and good practice suggestions.

The *BB* charity has been working with NPC and others that provide rigorous analysis and practical advice. As a result, it produced innovative thinking and challenged the charity to improve its impact.

### Capital

*BeatBullying*, as already mentioned, has been financed through different projects by several organizations: Jubelee Mentors, Cabinet Office, Social Action Fund, Nominet Trust, NESTA, Children in Need, Ajahma Charitable Trust, Dulverton Trust, The Worshipful Company of Leathersellers, Venture Partnership Foundation and Hedge Funds Care. In particular, huge investments were done to help the initiative in scaling from: the Cabinet Office's Transition Fund (2011), the Office for Civil Society (late 2011) and an important donation from the Text Santa Appeal of ITV broadcaster. All along *BB*'s path, the donations and the public funding provided by Public Health England via the Department for Education (DFE) had a primary role.

### Human-social capital

*BB Group*, considered the nature and effects of persistent bullying and cyberbullying as a peer-to-peer problem amongst young people. Instead of proposing a top-down solution, they decided to use self-help and peer-to-peer help recognizing so an important asset for the charity.

### Capacity & Failure

When the charity digitalized its services in 2009, building up a set of tools for online public service delivery, the *BB Group* reconfigured its staffing structure to include a dedicated tech team. CEO Emma-Jane Cross says: *«the high cost of outsourcing meant we had no alternative but to bring technology development in-house. It's kept us on a quicker, better road to impact, at two thirds of the cost.»* She adds, *«what we really need are specialist tech agencies that are dedicated to the Third Sector including charities and their funder»*(Nesta, 2014). The dramatic request for special capacities arisen by the social networking activity required by the scaling wasn't estimated when *Beatbullying* was born. The charity wasn't able to deal with this change.

*BB* was not in compliance with its own reserves policy and had no reserves. It was therefore quickly affected by the cancellation of anticipated funding. The trustees had recognised they needed to build up reserves and had plans to do this, which could have helped tie the charity over until more funding applications could be made and granted.

### 6.1.3

#### Institutions

The institutions, as already seen (see Actors, Resources), play an important role in fostering the development of *BeatBullying*. The UK Government in particular have multiple roles in *BB* History:

They were one of the major founders,

They were promoters of the initiative providing endorsement and publicity, throughout the communication campaign but also big public events that provide the institutionalization of the charity

Unfortunately the UK Government provided a scarce control on financial management verifying the institution's difficulties when it was already too late.

The Charity Commission report (2015) says that «anonymous concern» was raised about the charity's financial situation in June 2013 but that the Commission was satisfied of their plan to get new funds. The second signal came from creditors at the end of the same year, but the Commission recognized the problem only when they received an incident report from the charity itself on the very serious financial difficulties. *BB* was a high profile Charity and its closure had a significant, and highly distressing, impact on beneficiaries, volunteers, staff and the wider public. The Commission ascertained how the situation had occurred only when it was too late.

## Social Innovation Objectives

6.2

Everyone has a role to play in empowering children to stay safe: schools, parents, associations, and institutions. *BB* had the ability to convey the different efforts of the actors to keep children safe in both the non-digital world and also in the digital environment. One strong point of the *BB Group* in reaching its objectives was in recognizing that its programmes required not a top-down approach but a peer-to-peer one where children and young people are empowered to keep themselves safe (Faccio, 2013). This approach provided an increased social cohesion inside the communities participating the project and produced inclusion of bullied children.

Considering that bullying was affecting daily absences and consequently producing a negative effect on the educational results, the government endorsed and institutionalized the *BB* strategy of bullying/truancy prevention. Bullying prevention means, for the UK Government, more chances to fulfill children/youth potential and avoid the social cost of school drop out.

## Social Innovation Principles

6.3

### Modes of Efficiency

6.3.1

All along *BeatBullying's* path, the donations and the public funding provided were mainly by Public Health England via the Department for Education (DFE), which had always been the sole economic resources that the organization managed. With the parallel strategy of bullyism-truancy prevention, in particular, the charity was able to intercept much

of the money (£500,000,000) that the UK Government had, since 2006, intended for anti-bullying campaigns and their connection with truancy (BB Group, 2006).

Charities which rely on grants are unfortunately always going to be vulnerable due to the 'hand-to-mouth' nature of such funding, along with the fact that some grants are given with conditions attached relating to when the funds must be spent by. According to the Charity Commission (2015) evaluation of BB failure, the trustees conviction of achieving the funding was reasonable since they were based also on encouraging information from Funders and Public Health England. Even if the trustees only failed to receive Daphne EU funding (£853,000) by a score of 1% in their application - they achieved 85%, the cut-off for funding was 86%- it was improvident to make financial and operational decisions on the basis of still unallocated funds. There is an inherent risk in any application for funding that it will not be successful, and this is something that trustees need to manage.

There was a lack of capacity in planning activities and correspondent resources; probably the scale that the *BB* initiative had reached required a more complex structure and a different business model.

In terms of visibility, it benefited greatly from the commitment of important national newspapers, social networks such as Facebook and from the large number of testimonials.

### 6.3.2

#### **Modes of Governance**

This case shows that even experienced charities with conscientious trustees at the helm can suffer and find themselves in a position where the charity has no choice but to close. The UK Government endorsement of *BB* can be defined as a public adoption of the initiative.

Charities which have no reserves and which rely heavily on a single method of funding (such as grants) are always going to face a serious risk to their viability. Trustees should identify their reliance on grants as a risk and build this risk management into their business plan. Trustees should cost realistically what grants they need and build this into their business plans, seek additional forms of funding and reach the point where they are able to build up some reserves (Charity Commission, 2015).

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