

BAMBISANANI PARTNERSHIP INSPIRES DOWN UNDER

David Geldart [afPE Honoured Member]

On behalf of the Bambisanani Partnership, I was recently invited to speak at the Australian Council for Health and Physical Education and Recreation (ACHPER)

International Conference at the Australian Institute of Sport in Canberra. The conference, one the biggest of its kind in the southern hemisphere, attracted delegates from over 40 nations. At the conference, I explained the foundation, development and impact of the charity's work in South Africa, using sport as a catalyst to promote education, health, global citizenship and leadership in one of the country's most deprived rural areas. The presentation highlighted the pioneering work of St. Mary's School, Menston, the University of Leeds and Leeds Trinity University in the partnership and encouraged other schools, colleges and universities from around the world to become involved in similar projects, stressing the mutual benefits for all concerned.

ACHPER Chief Executive Officer, John Stokes said:

"The 2019 ACHPER International Conference was a showcase where contemporary and innovative physical education, health and sport practices were presented to over 300 professionals from Australia and overseas. The conference provided an excellent opportunity for international presenters to highlight their work in many different settings. One of the outstanding international presentations was made by David Geldart from the Bambisanani Partnership. David's unique insights on a project that uses sport to change the lives of children in one of South Africa's poorest regions struck a chord with all attendees. It demonstrated the vision, commitment and dedication of the partnership in truly making a difference to the lives of children in another country. Attendees had many take-aways from the presentation including the power of working together (partnership), the importance of the teaching profession to inspire, motivate and lead and the impact of global leadership and citizenship in influencing young lives in a positive long-term way. The Bambisanani Partnership is an inspirational story with an inspirational message."

Dr Sue Whatman, Conference Co-Chair added:

"With the conference theme of 'Enriching Communities' the inspirational Bambisanani Partnership was a perfect fit. Teachers and other educators... could see that something that is now a long-term arrangement and making such a positive impact upon so many lives could start with a decision that they too could make, to join together with an under-served or impoverished community."

Dr Helen Butler, Australian Education Adviser commented:

"I was touched and inspired by the presentation. The proactive values of community development and building capacity for action and learning of the young people and their adult supporters, both in the UK and South Africa, were admirable. Powerful stories were told of the real differences this made in the lives of the participants and in their communities. David's presentation highlighted the need for rigorous planning and preparation for the experience. It also illustrated the power of learning in the partnership of which the impacts were evident. It would be great to see further research systematically capturing these powerful stories of change and the impact on attitudes, life outcomes and community wellbeing."

Dr Jo Harris, Loughborough University and keynote speaker at the ACHPER Conference said:

"I was delighted that David recently presented at the conference on the topic of the Bambisanani Partnership which represents a truly authentic approach to educating children about health, global citizenship and leadership. St Mary's School, Menston, the University of Leeds and Leeds Trinity University should be applauded for creating and developing this inspiring project which uses sport to positively connect pupils from different

cultures. It is a clear win-win innovation with boundless benefits for children in the UK as well as those in a deprived region of South Africa. The partnership clearly has the power to change lives for the good and develop long-standing friendships across nations. Many schools around the world would benefit from knowing more about this partnership and adopting similar innovative approaches to genuinely enhancing children's lives."

The ACHPER International Conference has a worldwide reputation for its influence and it was a tremendous honour and privilege to be invited to speak at the iconic Australian Institute of Sport. It is great to be able to celebrate the tremendous work of the Bambisanani team members and my hope is always that someone in the audience will see the potential in themselves or in their own institution and 'pick up the baton'. The potential for genuine two-way learning through such programmes is limitless. Some great connections have been made in Australia and I cannot thank the ACPHER organising committee enough for the opportunity.



Copies of the book *Bambisanani: Ten Years of Working Together and Learning Together* were presented at the conference to ACPHER President Dr Shane Pill and to Pierre Comis from Sport Australia.

Find out more at:

<https://www.bambisananipartnership.org/> ■

David Geldart is the founder and Chairman of the Bambisanani Partnership.