

## **ICES Webinar Provides Global Connection in a Local Setting**

Leading community sport practitioners from eight countries linked for the inaugural ICES Webinar held in July. The online seminar focused on the challenges of supporting and retaining volunteer coaching workforce in community sport. Three International experts based in South Africa, Botswana and Scotland shared examples of best practice and successful strategies in addressing these challenges.

The Webinars are a key strategy to link agencies across the International community Coach Education Systems (ICES) Initiative. These provide an opportunity to highlight good practice from across the network and a forum for discussion and interaction on selected issues affecting education and development in community sport.

ICES Project Manager Ollie Dudfield explained the importance of the Webinars within the ICES project.

“The ICES network literally extends from north to south and east to west, with agencies based in locations from Scotland to South Africa and Trinidad & Tobago to Fiji. Using an online system to connect these agencies helps to break down the barriers of distance and promote a vibrant community of practice in this area.”

The three experts who contributed to the first webinar demonstrated this potential. George Nange, the Training and Development Manager for the Kicking AIDS Out Network, works with over 28 agencies across his global network. He drew on this expertise alongside his own experience in programmes in Kenya and Botswana in presenting to the Network.

Hikabwa Chipande, himself a volunteer in his home country of Zambia and then a volunteer manager in Norway, spoke about the challenges in cross contextual volunteering and issues in volunteers going from Europe to Africa and vice versa. Currently, Hikabwa is co-ordinating the Supreme Council of Sport in Africa Zone VI Sport Education and Accreditation Systems project which is being implemented across ten countries in Southern Africa.

The final speaker, Deb Ball, is currently leading the Homeless World Cup Foundation’s education and development work. Deb detailed some successes the Foundation has had linking with other community agencies and providers, outside sport, to support volunteer coaches in particular those in at risk-groups.

Dudfield highlighted the potential of harnessing online technologies in supporting community sport.

“The opportunity for members of the ICES Network to connect with such experienced, world leading practitioners from the comfort of their own offices is both cost and time effective.

“A key strategy in the ICES project is further developing this element of the initiative both to provide an advocacy platform for network members and tap into the expertise and knowledge that exist across the multitude of contexts where community sport and community coaching take place.”

The next webinar is scheduled for 13 October 2010. The focus of this session is to explore coach education and development beyond the training course examining non-traditional, informal and on-going learning in community sport. For further information on the ICES Webinar programme please contact [ices@uksport.gov.uk](mailto:ices@uksport.gov.uk).