

# THE LULLABY PROJECT:

## AREAS OF CHANGE AND MECHANISMS OF IMPACT



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NOVEMBER 2017

RESEARCH COMMISSIONED  
BY THE IRENE TAYLOR TRUST



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## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Special thanks to The Irene Taylor Trust, Sara Lee, Jake Tily, all the participants at Praxis Community Projects, Wandsworth Prison and the musicians, Emma Gardiner and the staff at Praxis, Emily Giles and HMP Wandsworth, Lisa Rodio and the RPO Resound team. Thanks also to Lúdia Fletcher and Bethany Brooks.

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Design: Lúdia Fletcher



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I really loved it. I had never heard about it, I didn't know something like this could exist [...] something personal, something yours, something very different! Has nothing to do with previous projects I've done! And it's directed at my child... It's something more...

**Isabel, Praxis Community Projects**

# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Community-based projects with music are widely expanding and their potential towards positive psychosocial change has been consistently evidenced. This has been particularly true with vulnerable groups. A highly innovative project developed by Carnegie Hall's Weill Music Institute, recently spreading across the United States with strong accounts of success, is the Lullaby Project. It pairs expectant and new mothers with professional musicians, to create a lullaby for their children. This project has now been implemented in the UK for the first time, through two pilot experiences that are the focus of this document. The Irene Taylor Trust led the initiative, bringing together musicians from the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra and two groups of participants: refugee and migrant mothers at Praxis Community Projects (an East London charity) and fathers at Wandsworth prison. The research aimed to understand how the Lullaby Project was experienced by all involved. Two sub-questions were of interest: what were the areas of change experienced through the project and which mechanisms were responsible for that change. Both the participants and the musicians provided research data (N=21). Staff from the partner institutions also took part in the assessment. The project adopted a qualitative methodology, aimed at an in-depth, comprehensive phenomenological understanding. Data were analysed through Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA).

Research findings point to:

1. The Lullaby Project impacting three key areas, for both groups of participants (refugee and migrant mothers, and fathers in prison):
  - i. wellbeing, through enabling a strong sense of accomplishment, meaning and connectedness, along with the experience of positive emotions;
  - ii. proactivity, through promoting behaviours of initiative, both musical and relational;
  - iii. reflection, through stimulating a richer perspective on life and positive coping mechanisms.

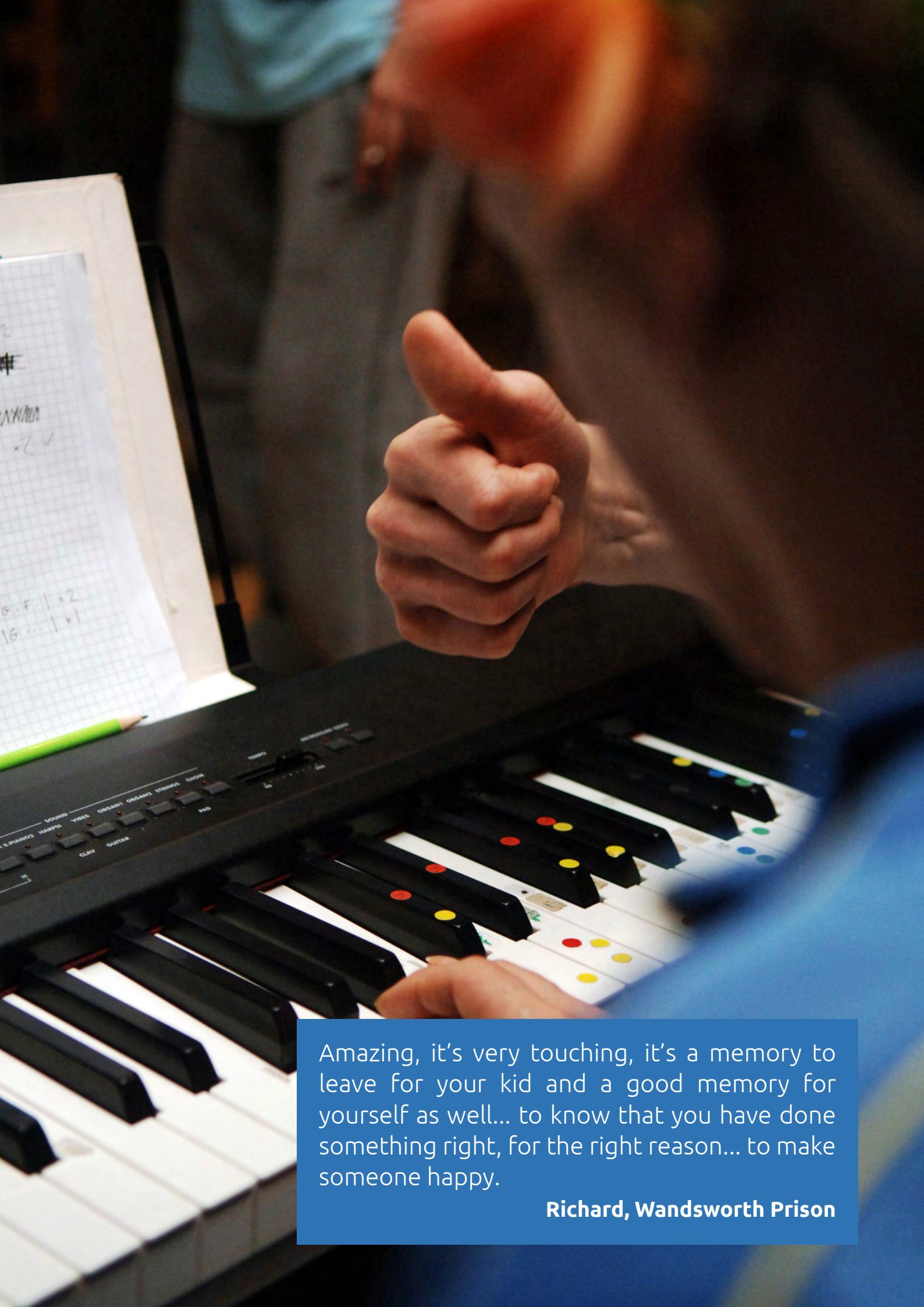
2. The Lullaby Project impacting three key areas for the group of musicians:

- i. skills, including musical, personal and interpersonal;
- ii. wellbeing, through promoting a sense of accomplishment, positive emotions, meaning, connectedness and a more sophisticated notion of occupational identity;
- iii. reflection, through functioning as an eye-opener and stimulating the development of stronger perspectives about the issues of migration and incarceration.

3. The Lullaby Project's impact being mediated by three main mechanisms, common for all groups:

- i. the project is motivating, offering both the right level of challenge to all involved and a highly valued goal;
- ii. the project is geared towards connecting at a very human level, placing centrality on individuality, a positive agenda, and maintaining two universals at its core, music and parental love;
- iii. the project is guided by a strong output, a tangible and high-quality product, very personal and long-lasting.

The Lullaby Project model stands as a highly relevant initiative towards meeting the needs of both participant groups and the musicians, and the results make a strong case for its implementation in the UK.



Amazing, it's very touching, it's a memory to leave for your kid and a good memory for yourself as well... to know that you have done something right, for the right reason... to make someone happy.

**Richard, Wandsworth Prison**

# BACKGROUND

## COMMUNITY MUSIC AND POSITIVE CHANGE

Community-based music projects have been significantly expanding over the years. Not only are they reaching a progressively wider set of contexts, they are accompanied by a promising body of research highlighting their potential to promote positive change across different domains. Findings have been unanimous in emphasising the role community music projects can have in increasing wellbeing-related components such as engagement and self-esteem (e.g. Cohen et al., 2006; Davidson, 2011), a heightened sense of accomplishment (Perkins and Williamon, 2014), purpose in life, control, autonomy, and social wellbeing (Creech et al., 2013) as well as reduced anxiety (e.g. Hars et al., 2014). This has been true both across general population samples and with vulnerable groups.

A recent study focused on community-based music-making through group drumming, with mental health service users, found significant positive change through qualitative accounts on areas such as agency, a sense of accomplishment (both general and specific to musical goals), engagement, self-concept and social wellbeing (Ascenso et al., under review) and an enhancement in quantitative indicators of wellbeing and social resilience, accompanied by reduction in depression and anxiety (Fancourt et al., 2016). These types of initiatives have also proven effective in the psychosocial rehabilitation of psychiatric in-patients (Tague, 2012). Other reports have emphasised community-based music projects as an effective complementary tool for addiction treatments, by fostering the reduction of alienation and self-centeredness, through connectedness with self and others (Winkelman, 2003). These activities have also shown high potential to create a sense of community in under-privileged neighbourhoods (Camillieri, 2002) and increase social learning outcomes for at-risk youth (Wood et al., 2013), and are now increasingly being documented as tools towards empowerment with diverse vulnerable populations.

## THE CASE OF PRISONS

Evidence on the potential of creative programmes to tackle the psychological challenges of incarceration is also growing. A review on the role of arts projects in prison settings highlighted a positive impact on key wellbeing components such as self-confidence and social cohesion. There has also been evidence of development of adaptive coping mechanisms and reduction in recidivism (Hughes,



2005). This added to previous reports on a positive impact on improved behaviour (Dawes, 1999) and stress reduction through music projects (Peaker et al., 1990). Crucially, mixed-methods research on The Irene Taylor Trust's own work (the commissioning organisation for the present report), has emphasised how prison-based music initiatives have the potential for fostering self-confidence, social competence and artistic skills (Cox and Gelsthorpe, 2008), hope, self-esteem, motivation and positive relationships (Cartwright, 2013).

Survey studies have consistently described higher rates of mental illness in prison groups than in general population samples

These findings meet some of the needs that have been evidenced across evaluations on processes of vulnerability in the prison context. Despite a lack of recent data, survey studies have consistently described higher rates of mental illness in prison groups than in general population samples (see Hiday and Ray (2017) for a recent review). Most of the findings quoted in research and policy documents are based on a 1998 account (Singleton et. al, 1998), pointing to a 90% rate of mental illness in the prison population. This study, besides being significantly dated, adopts a very broad definition of mental health and needs therefore to be considered with extra care. More recent studies have found rates of around 49% for risk of anxiety and depression (National Audit Office, 2017). Nevertheless, as Hiday and Ray (2017) have recently pointed out, even studies with a more restricted definition of mental illness find significantly higher prevalence of proneness to mental illness among prisoners when compared with general population samples, and this has increased in recent years.

Side-by-side with identifiable mental illness, a qualitative evaluation by Durcan (2008) highlights a wide array of concurrent, interwoven, issues that prison populations face, with a detrimental impact on psychological functioning, such as: learning difficulties, poor social skills, debt, diminished sense of self-worth and loss of identity, aggression, bullying, fear, psychological trauma and poor physical health. Additionally, being in prison can exacerbate pre-existing issues, particularly due to a reduced sense of agency, a lack of meaningful activity, insecurity about future prospects and high isolation and social withdrawal. Haney (2002) has also pointed out the prison setting as typically leading to the development of hypervigilance, interpersonal distrust and suspicion, emotional over-control, alienation, and psychological distancing, elements which function as barriers to optimal functioning.

An extensive recent qualitative investigation of a set of arts-based projects in prison settings in the UK, of which a substantial part were music initiatives, suggested there are strong foundations to assume arts in criminal justice as an area of considerable significance and innovation. Key areas of change enabled by such activities are emphasised, especially positive affect, social cohesion and relationships, engagement, achievement and the development of positive identities. All these are considered to be at the core of the desirable developments towards behavioural change and desistance from crime (Bilby et al., 2013).

## THE CASE OF MIGRATION

Migrant populations also experience extra vulnerability and challenge. Arts-based community projects, music initiatives in particular, have similarly proven valuable towards promoting integration, empowerment and psychological flourishing of migrants, especially refugees. A growing body of evidence is now being established with this group. A report by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees Policy Development and Evaluation Service, has presented a review establishing strong evidence on the promise of artistic engagement as a means for achieving holistic human development in refugee contexts (Andemicael, 2011).

Previous accounts have highlighted the expressive potential of the arts towards helping migrant groups build new narratives, develop a sense of continuity, enhance meaning and restore a sense of identity (Frater-Mathieson, 2004). These projects have also emerged as key tools towards inclusion and a sense of belonging (Saether, 2008), resilience (Harris, 2007), communication, lowering stress levels and stimulating a positive negotiation between a meaningful connection with the new country and a stronger bond with the country of origin (Lederach and Lederach, 2010; Jones, Baker and Day, 2004; Pesek, 2009). Musical engagement in particular, has been found to promote inclusion and growth of newly arrived migrants, through fostering a sense of belonging (Marsh, 2012).

Migration predisposes individuals to a higher degree of physical and psychological vulnerability both as a result of the pre-migration stressors and the challenges of acculturation and adaptation

that relocation (and eventually transit) can bring. Frequently, the migration process is also linked with trauma (Montgomery, 2011). All these processes may be exacerbated when there are additional major adaptations requiring extra psychological resources, in phases such as pregnancy or early motherhood.

Arts-based programmes provide opportunities for building new narratives, promoting a sense of belonging, meaning and positive identities

A recent report by the World Health Organization (Braby et al., 2015) reviewing evidence across a wide variety of sources, pointed to higher prevalence of mental distress among refugees compared with non-refugees, and greater risk for asylum seekers in relation to refugees. In the case of trauma, there is increased vulnerability for depression, anxiety, substance misuse, general distress, fear, deep sadness, guilt, anger and impaired cognitive and affective functioning (Murray et al., 2008). This is often linked with intrusive thoughts and emotions about the traumatic events, avoidance, emotional numbing and/or hyper-arousal. The same source reviews risk factors for poor resettlement. Crucially, the loss of meaningful social roles and important life projects, lower levels of daily activity and social isolation, are evidenced to determine worse outcomes when integrating in the new community (Murray et al., 2008).

With the intention to meet these needs, the European Commission has recently funded a wide variety of arts-based projects under the Creative Europe Support for Refugee Integration call, involving 62 organisations from 20 countries. The findings from these projects will soon add to the existing literature-base and help reflect on the optimisation of these types of initiatives.



## THE LULLABY PROJECT

An innovative and highly-successful arts-based programme that has been quickly expanding, with evidence of strong impact across several vulnerable populations (Wolf, 2017), is the Lullaby Project. The project invites expectant and new mothers to work with professional musicians towards creating and recording a personal lullaby for their children. It was launched at the Jacobi Medical Center in the Bronx (NYC), by Carnegie Hall's Musical Connections team, part of the Weill Music Institute, and has been running for approximately seven years. In New York City, the project has reached mothers in hospitals, homeless shelters, schools, and correctional facilities. It has now extended significantly across the United States and is beginning to spread internationally.

The Lullaby Project exposes mothers to a meaningful, highly creative musical experience. Through a focus on the parent-child bond, it intends to facilitate a safe and fruitful space for emotional processing and expression, and promote psychological wellbeing. The final recording provides ongoing stimulus towards the strengthening of the parent-child relationship, and a reminder of the experience, contributing to the participants' sense of achievement.

The role of music  
in optimising  
maternal  
wellbeing has  
received wide  
attention in recent  
research

The original project format typically includes three sessions. At the start, there is a creative workshop-like encounter, where the musician and the participant write the first draft of the lullaby. Next, each song is arranged and on a second session the participants receive the arrangement and work on editing towards creating the final version. This is typically followed by a final sharing session and performance, where the lullabies are presented to the groups and their children (where possible), along with high-quality recordings that are given to each participant to keep.

The specific case of the role of music in optimising the maternal relationship and wellbeing, at the core of the Lullaby Project, has also received wide attention in recent research. In particular, community-based projects focused on mother-child dyads have looked at the impact of singing on reduction of maternal stress, positive neonatal and infant behaviour, language development and mostly, the building of secure attachment. Attachment concerns a deep and enduring emotional bond that is known to be of central importance for healthy psychological development. Secure attachment styles are promoted in part by effective early bonding between mother

and child, implying adequate responses to the child's expressed needs. Healthy attachment is associated with a wide variety of positive outcomes including self-esteem, self-confidence, resilience and emotional regulation (Miller, 2016). Factors that inhibit the ability of mothers to bond with their children or to respond sensitively to their needs, including stress, can affect the child's attachment style (Ainsworth, 1973; Bowlby, 1969; Miller, 2016). Music can play a very important role in this context, both directly through strengthening emotional experiences, expression and communication, but also indirectly, through contributing to the mother's wellbeing. A recent meta-analysis has highlighted the effectiveness of music-based interventions in reducing stress levels and anxiety among pregnant women (Willenswaard et al., 2017).

Singing lullabies has a positive impact on bonding, neonatal behaviour and maternal wellbeing

Maternal singing has been especially emphasized as a unique source of communication between mother and child, and lullabies are of particular importance due to their repetitiveness, simplicity, slow tempo and soothing effects. The specific process of singing lullabies has also been evidenced to improve maternal-infant bonding, with positive effects on neonatal behaviour and maternal stress (Persico et al., 2017). A qualitative evaluation of a lullaby-based project (Baker et al., 2006), making use of familiar lullabies, highlighted how the process potentiated deeper understanding by the mothers of their babies' responses and enhanced feelings of motherhood. The Lullaby Project in the USA has also led to significant data over the years, pointing to a positive impact across key areas such as wellbeing, communication and connectedness (Wolf, 2017).

This document presents the qualitative research findings of the assessment of the first two pilot initiatives of the Lullaby Project in a UK context. These projects, led by The Irene Taylor Trust, brought together, as partners, a charity working with refugees and migrants in East London, one of the country's largest male prisons (HMP Wandsworth) and the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra. Given the challenges of migration and incarceration previously described, and the potential of music-based initiatives to tackle some of the major needs of these groups, this evaluation aimed to understand how participants experienced this new project model and assess its most prominent dimensions of impact.



Very moving... Amazing to meet and see the women and what they have composed alongside musicians. Excellent project! I hope the ladies enjoyed it as much as I did.

**Norah, Musician**

## THE TEAM

### THE IRENE TAYLOR TRUST

The Irene Taylor Trust was set up in 1995, in memory of Lady Irene Taylor, and is committed to fostering the use of music as part of the rehabilitative efforts within socially vulnerable populations, especially in the criminal justice system. The Trust's main focus of activity is to deliver high quality intensive music projects for groups of prisoners and people in other secure facilities throughout the UK, promoting positive growth, wellbeing and skill development. Since its beginning, the trust has delivered 318 projects across a very wide group of prisons and Young Offender Institutions, as well as a number of secure and medium secure hospital units and Youth Offending Teams, reaching a total of around 3814 participants and 20,000 audience members. It has enabled the creation of 1500 pieces of original music as outputs of these initiatives. The current pilots were developed through building on the ITT's highly successful past experience with co-delivering the Lullaby Project with the Chicago Symphony Orchestra in 2015 and 2016.

### PRAXIS COMMUNITY PROJECTS

Praxis Community Projects is a refugee and new migrant charity based in Bethnal Green, London, providing specialist advice, advocacy, housing, social support, food and access to healthcare to vulnerable migrants. At the core of the organisation, is a deep concern for the safety and wellbeing of refugees, asylum seekers, refused asylum seekers, people with limited or no recourse to public funds as a result of their immigration status, young unaccompanied asylum seekers, victims of human trafficking, foreign national offenders and others who find it difficult to settle in the UK. The provision of support for refugees and migrants prioritises meeting their essential human needs and overcoming barriers of integration, alongside stimulating personal development, community building, resilience and security. Praxis was founded in 1983 and has worked with people from a wide variety of backgrounds, including the Middle East, Latin America, Francophone Africa and the Horn of Africa.

### WANDSWORTH PRISON

Wandsworth Prison is one of the largest male prisons in the UK with capacity for 1877 prisoners. It is a Category B/C prison and accepts all suitable prisoners from courts in its catchment area.

## THE ROYAL PHILHARMONIC ORCHESTRA

The Royal Philharmonic Orchestra (RPO) was founded in 1946 and remains one of the world-class London-based orchestras, delivering more than 170 mainstream concerts per year. For over 25 years, it has maintained a highly-active community and education programme, RPO Resound, aiming at gaining a wider impact through music, outside the traditional concert hall format. RPO Resound seeks to transform the communities the Orchestra serves, through the use of inspiring musical experiences in a diverse range of settings, including prisons and primary schools. Each project is designed to meet the needs of the specific participant group it targets and optimise artistic, social and personal impact.





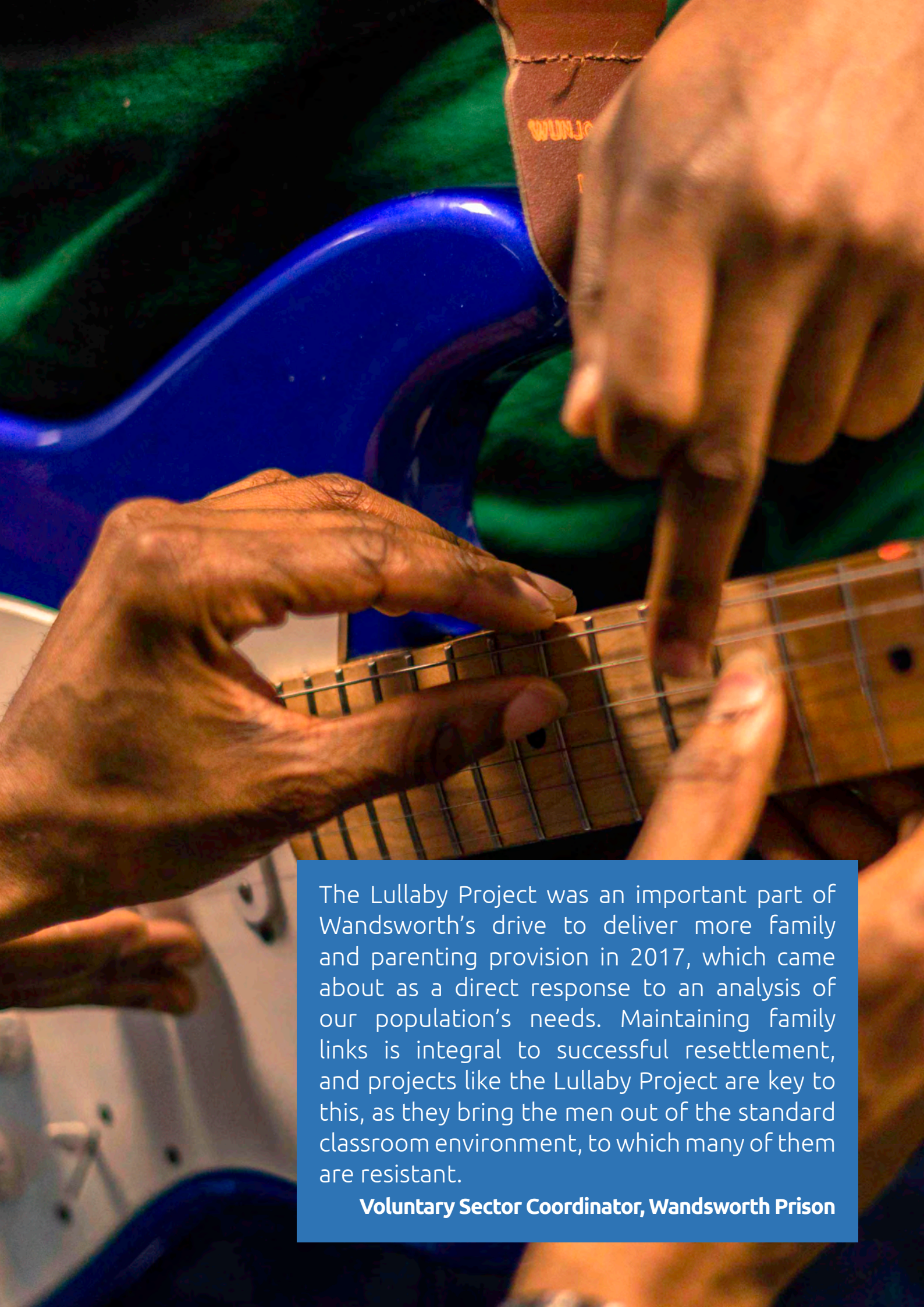
It was a massive experience for me and not just another thing to write down on the CV kind of experience... To describe the whole thing overall is too difficult.

**George, Musician**

## AIMS

This research project is guided by the overarching question of: “how do participants experience the Lullaby Project?” We are aiming to understand how participants make sense of the Lullaby Project’s process. There will be two sub-questions to answer. First, what are the areas of change elicited by project, if any, as perceived by the participants. This first question steers to the identification of domains which are transformed as a consequence of engagement in the project. Secondly, if there is reported change, how does the project lead to that change or, in other words, what are the mechanisms of impact behind its perceived effect? This will help to further understand both the ingredients behind the quality of the project and its value for use in the particular settings under examination. The main question and sub-questions steer us to an in-depth inquiry, prioritising subjective meanings and participants’ unique individual experiences, in context. It requires therefore, the use of a qualitative methodology. Because the evaluation focused on two pilot projects which represent a new model in the UK, and the goal was to explore how the participants made sense of an experience that hasn’t been previously evaluated in this context, the research design was established in a way that would prioritise an inductive approach. The main themes that will answer our questions will be fully drawn from the raw data provided by participants, as opposed to the data being analysed through the lenses of existing theories or categories of impact. After analysis, we aim to then bring in mainstream literature to situate the themes and aid interpretation.

This primary pilot evaluation is focused on adult participants only. Both groups, refugee and migrant mothers and fathers in prison, were included in the evaluation. Additionally, the musicians facilitating the work were also part of the research process. Previous reports have highlighted the key role of the facilitators in establishing positive relationships that provide a crucial context for participants’ meaningful change (Bilby et al., 2013). Given the typically highly collaborative nature of the tasks that build these projects, recent investigation has highlighted how they can bring equally crucial change for the musicians themselves (Ascenso, 2016). This is an area that remains largely under-researched and this project aims to further contribute to fill this gap.



The Lullaby Project was an important part of Wandsworth's drive to deliver more family and parenting provision in 2017, which came about as a direct response to an analysis of our population's needs. Maintaining family links is integral to successful resettlement, and projects like the Lullaby Project are key to this, as they bring the men out of the standard classroom environment, to which many of them are resistant.

**Voluntary Sector Coordinator, Wandsworth Prison**

## THE RESEARCH PROCESS

The main research question that guides this project is “how do participants experience the Lullaby Project?”<sup>1</sup> The overarching question will be answered through two threads: first the description of the perceived areas of change promoted by the project and second, the mechanisms that are thought to mediate that change.

In order to answer our guiding question with as much detail as possible, acknowledging both the idiosyncrasies of the contexts involved, the pilot nature of the project, and ensuring sensitivity to cultural diversity, a qualitative methodology was chosen, with an inductive in-depth approach. This prioritised the space for subjectivity and the individual voices of the participants, rather than focusing on an established set of indicators.

Participants were invited by The Irene Taylor Trust to take part in the research component of the project before the project started. This study adopted the research ethical guidelines suggested by the British Psychological Society (2010). These considerations were central to all phases of the research design and to the writing and dissemination of results. For both studies, participants were given a Participant Information Sheet containing a summary of the research project. Participants filled-in a consent form and were fully informed on the voluntary basis of their participation and on their right to withdraw at any time. All participants were aged 18 or above. Anonymity and confidentiality of the data were preserved.

## WHO TOOK PART

Initially, a total of twenty-five participants took part in the research process: nine mothers from Praxis Community Projects, eight men from Wandsworth Prison and eight musicians. Following the decision to make the evaluation as systemic as possible, feedback from two representatives of the partner organisations, the Group Work Coordinator at Praxis Community Projects and the Voluntary Sector Coordinator at Wandsworth prison, was also included. The musician group comprised six members of the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra

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<sup>1</sup> For the purposes of the research question, a “participant” is anyone actively involved in the sessions, including both the groups of migrant mothers and fathers in prison, and the musicians facilitating the sessions. However, given the different roles in the project, they will be referred to as “participants” and “musicians” throughout the report, for clarity.

(ranging between 2 and 27 years of orchestra membership), a singer who frequently collaborates with the orchestra as a guest artist, and a musician from the Irene Taylor Trust team. During the project, three of the men dropped-out, either due to transfer to a different prison or to release, as well as one of the women who was unable to attend the interview days, leading to a final total of twenty-one participants providing a full dataset (a total of twelve women and nine men).

All the mothers from Praxis Community Projects were migrants. A wide variety of countries of origin was represented: Bangladesh, Ethiopia, Eritrea, Ivory Coast, Nigeria and Portugal. One mother was pregnant and the remaining had young children. The group of men from Wandsworth prison were all British citizens and fathers. Ages for both groups together ranged from 22 to 56 years.

For the musicians, there were different levels of involvement in the project. Six musicians participated actively in both the sessions at Praxis Community Projects and the project at Wandsworth prison. One musician observed the mothers' project and participated in the prison sessions and performance, and one musician was only part of mothers' project. The age range of the musicians' group spanned from 33 to 61 years and all musicians were British citizens.

To preserve full anonymity, fictitious names will be used for all reports and musicians will not be identified in relation to their instrument.

## COLLECTING THE DATA

Data was collected at all phases of the Lullaby Project. With the participants, interviews were conducted before the first session and after the final performance of the respective projects. With the musicians, interviews took place after the end of the overall Lullaby Project, aiming the assessment of the experience of both pilots together. During the entire process, all participants and musicians were asked to maintain diary self-report notes after each session. This element functioned as a prompt for sharing the experience in the final interview and provided a complement to the retrospective recollection with a moment-by-moment recollection, reducing memory bias. For this purpose, a one-page note form was delivered after each session, with three prompts for open reflection comments: "Today's session was...; Before the session I felt...; After the session I felt...". The mothers were given the opportunity

to write their diary notes in their native languages. None chose to do this, however, and all reports were written in English. Finally, to complement the interview data and the diary reflection notes, the researcher was a non-participant observer in a sample of the project's sessions across both contexts as well as the performances, which allowed for detailed data of five full days of the project.

A semi-structured plan was chosen for all one-to-one interviews. There was a small set of broad, open-ended questions serving as a guide that were used with flexibility, allowing for the content introduced by the interviewee to drive the interview. In the case of the participants, the pre-interview targeted expectations about the project, relationship with music, parent-infant relationship and overall wellbeing. The post-interview was built upon an overall evaluation of the project (including highlights and challenges), parent-infant relationship during the project and wellbeing. The musicians' interview at the end of the project was aimed at an overall evaluation of both projects (with contextualisation of their previous engagement in community-based initiatives), and thoughts on the value of community work, and the Lullaby Project in particular, for each musician personally, and for musicians as a professional group. The interview with the partner organisation representative covered an overall assessment of the project, having a focus on both the specific needs of the group and a reflection on the Lullaby Project in comparison with previous initiatives at the centre. The Voluntary Sector Coordinator at Wandsworth Prison provided open-ended written feedback on her overall evaluation of the project.

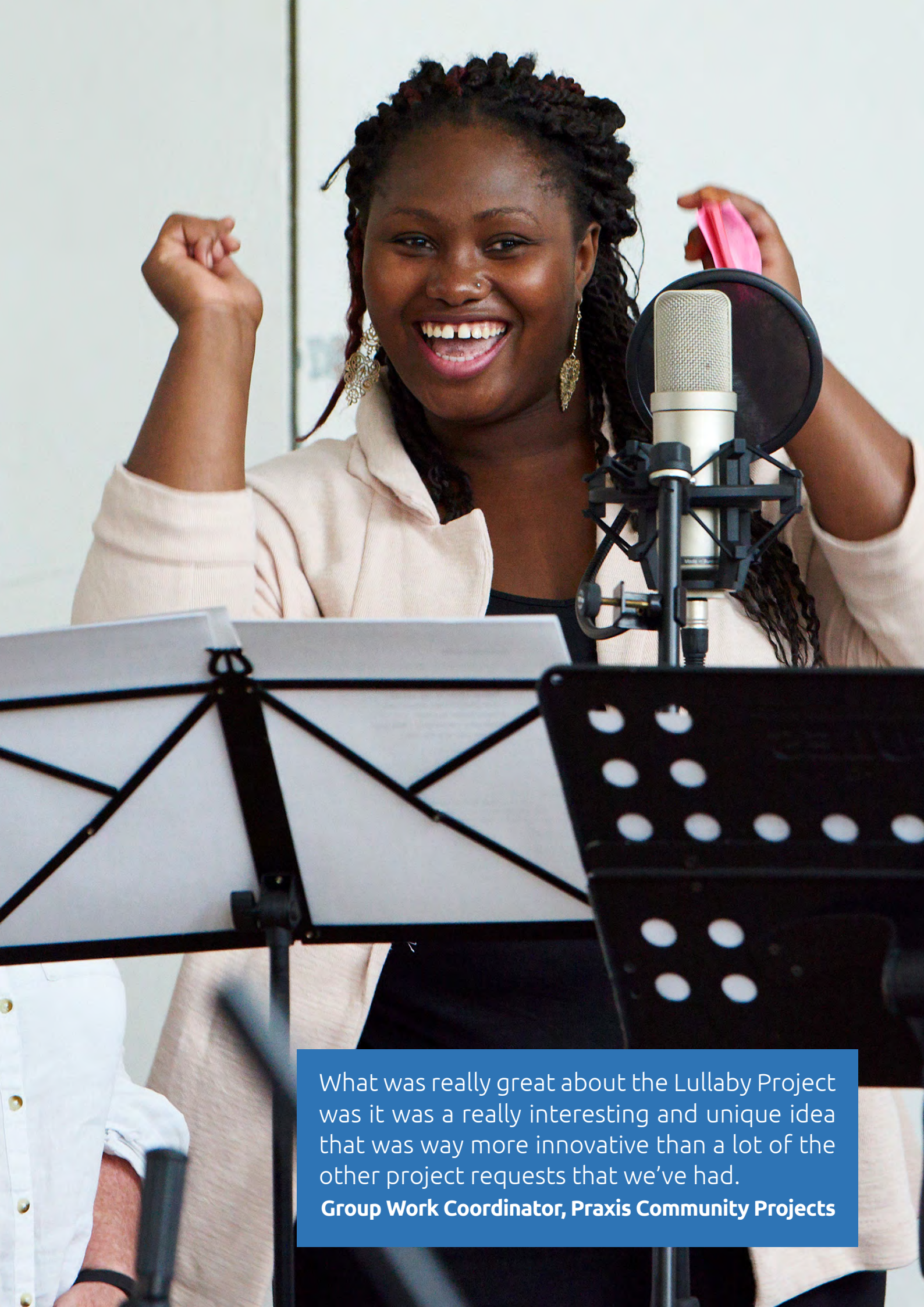
As the interviews were flexible and highly driven by the content brought by the interviewees, duration was also highly variable. The interviews lasted, on average, 35 minutes each per participant and around 45 minutes for each of the musicians.

In the mothers' group, as was the case with diary notes, the participants were offered the possibility of speaking in their native language in the interviews. Three mothers chose to do this partially, in some moments of the interview. The researcher was fluent in two of the languages chosen, Portuguese and French, and it was possible to conduct these interviews as expected. For another mother who chose to speak Amharic in her answer to two of the questions, the transcript was translated into English by an external translator, before analysis.

## ANALYSING THE RESEARCH MATERIAL

All material was fully transcribed and analysed through Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA). This is a process of research focused on a detailed examination of an individual's lived experience, in context, aiming to grasp the way people make sense of a given phenomenon and the subjective meanings that are attributed to it (Smith et al. 2009; Eatough and Smith, 2008). IPA has been used effectively across a wide variety of areas in psychological research (Reid et al., 2005; Brocki and Weardon 2006) and crucially, has been found highly relevant in recent studies exploring the experience of community-based projects with music (e.g. Perkins et al., 2016; Ascenso, 2016).

The analysis process followed six steps, making use of specialist analysis software (NVivo 11). First, all transcripts were closely read multiple times and points of interest were noted. This provided familiarity and a holistic perspective of the data. Second, emergent meaning units were identified and labelled in NVivo 11. Third, all the meaning units for each transcript identified in step two were clustered together based on similarity, to form emergent sub-themes. Fourth, for each individual, the sub-themes were integrated into tables and a description of each one and their interconnections was written down. At this point, two tables for each participant were built, representing the two research sub-questions: one table with the sub-themes relating to areas of change (what the Lullaby Project impacted) and one integrating the sub-themes pointing to mechanisms of impact (how the impact happened). Fifth, for both areas of change and mechanisms of impact, the individual tables were integrated into one overall table joining together the themes from all the participants of each of the groups (mothers from Praxis Community Projects, fathers from Wandsworth Prison or Musicians). Lastly, the overall tables were compared and integrated to develop a final table of themes and sub-themes that represent the identified features of the Lullaby Project. Here, for the areas of change there was high convergence between the mothers' and fathers' tables, and these were integrated into one table. The musicians' accounts were represented in a separate table. For mechanisms of impact, there was high convergence across all three groups, leading to one final table only. Data from the observation notes and the feedback from the two staff members was used as an aid for interpretation.



What was really great about the Lullaby Project was it was a really interesting and unique idea that was way more innovative than a lot of the other project requests that we've had.

**Group Work Coordinator, Praxis Community Projects**



# RESEARCH FINDINGS

The findings presented in this document include, in the first section, the results from the research with both participant groups (mothers from Praxis Community Projects and fathers from Wandsworth Prison) and in the second section, the results from the data collected with the musicians. The results are organised according to the two lenses of analysis: 1) what was impacted by the project (areas of change) and 2) how the project contributed to that change (mechanisms of impact). For each sub-section, a table representing the summary of results is presented, followed by a description of each theme, its constituent sub-themes and example quotes that capture their meaning. Fictitious names will be used to preserve anonymity. The order in which the themes and sub-themes are presented reflects their relative weight in the data, starting with the most prominent.

## AREAS OF CHANGE

This section includes the research findings on the impact of the Lullaby Project for both the group of mothers from Praxis Community Projects and the fathers from Wandsworth Prison. The areas of change perceived by both groups were highly convergent, leading to the same overarching themes and sub-themes. The idiosyncrasies of each group are highlighted when relevant. For all participants, the Lullaby Project’s impact was accounted for through three main areas: 1) wellbeing, 2) proactivity and 3) reflection.

## THE PARTICIPANTS’ EXPERIENCE

OVERARCHING THEME	SUB-THEME
<b>Wellbeing</b>	Accomplishment Meaning Positive Emotions Connectedness
<b>Proactivity</b>	Musical initiative Relational initiative
<b>Reflection</b>	Perspective Beyond the “tunnel-vision”

Table 1. The Lullaby Project’s areas of change for participants

## WELLBEING

Amazing, it's very touching! When I got back to the cell I was feeling I have done something right for the right reason... I feel like I have done something right, it's like ... yeah!! I could just always remember the smile of my little man...  
Richard,  
Wandsworth  
Prison

All participants reported experiencing the Lullaby Project in relation to higher wellbeing. Four components were highlighted in this context: 1) a sense of accomplishment, 2) meaning, 3) positive emotions and 4) connectedness.

The strongest theme for both groups was the experience of a high sense of **accomplishment** during the project, culminating in the moment of the performance. Linked with this, increased confidence was reported by all the women and by the majority of the men. This was often mentioned in relation to the process of getting out of one's comfort zone and overcoming mild self-doubt experienced at the start of the project. Several aspects were highlighted as key ingredients towards a high sense of accomplishment: the small timeframe of the project (allowing for quick results), the feedback from the audience after the performance and, in the case of most of the women and one of the men, the reaction of their children to the lullaby. In the women's group, there was additional strong positive feedback from peers within the project as well as from loved ones, including family member in the participants' countries of origin.

*This project gave me confidence. From the very beginning, I had no idea about music and didn't know how what we had discussed would change to music. [...] When it was recorded and I listened to it at home, I felt that I had given something from the inside to my children and I was very happy.* Fatimah, Praxis Community Projects

*I told my friends and I called back home in Bangladesh and I said "I wrote for my children!" They say, "oh, in Bengali?" I said "No! English!!!" I said... Yes, it's English". They say, "oh my God, you wrote an English song for your children? You are amazing!", "And I say, yes, English! One day I'll send you the CD!!!" [laughter] Preetha, Praxis Community Projects*

*Unfortunately, the thing with jail is, you're very restricted so even if you have the best intentions to read a lot of books or do whatever, you're restricted to your cell where there's not a lot. So that's very unfortunate because a lot of people, like myself, want to do stuff. We regret that we're here in the first place and then we want to come out with an improvement... You don't want to spend, for my case, it's 15 and a half months I'll be here, minimum, having made no progress or not accomplishing anything. So finding those opportunities to make progress are scarce in this jail. [...] I regret my mistakes. I accept my punishment, I'm not bitter or anything... I want*

*to plan ahead and make sure this is a life lesson which it already was for me, definitely. But to be able to come up with something productive in jail is difficult [...] I completely endorse the project because of those reasons. John, Wandsworth Prison*

For some participants, the high sense of achievement brought by the project was strong enough to influence the way they talked about themselves. When comparing self-concept assessments from the interviews before and after the programme (through answering the question “how would you describe yourself to someone who doesn’t know you?”), for four participants there was a clear shift on the content of self-descriptions. The answers given in the post-project interview included new positive attributes linked with the Lullaby experience that differed for men and women. In the case of two of the men, the shift was towards a more artistic self-concept, with the use of words such as “creative” or the description of musical attributes (e.g. “I’m good at listening”). In the case of the women, the responses in the second interview placed a much stronger emphasis on their identity as mothers and centrality on their motherhood skills, in comparison to the focus on their history, background and current needs that permeated the first interview.

Closely linked with the experience of achievement, was a high sense of **meaning**. The goal of the project - expressing a message to their children through music - was seen by all participants as highly meaningful and representing the establishment of significant positive memories. In the case of the women’s group, the theme of meaning was linked with the lullaby standing as a landmark for their resilience and a reminder of both their process of struggle and the hope they maintain.

*They will listen to it in the future, when our problems will be solved. Ah, then everything will be okay. Listening back to this music, we’ll be like: “wow... so, this is where I came from”, you know? This is the step I went through... And our children, as well, when they listen to that, they will know how much suffering mummy went through. Ella, Praxis Community Projects*

The majority of men also shared the project’s process as a high source of meaning. In this case, the theme was more often linked with the lullaby standing as a proof of care for their children, despite their absence. For the men who aren’t allowed to see their children, meaning was built primarily upon the idea of the song being a vehicle for communication. For one participant, who is allowed

regular contact with his son, giving him a lullaby was seen as a more significant way of connecting, beyond what is possible in the visits.

*Basically I am trying to do it more for my son to have memories. I see him every week, or every second week he comes up, but he doesn't get anything from me... just to sit there, he won't eat something... [...] and this is giving him more to remember, do you understand what I am saying? He could come in, "I saw daddy today" and it's a good memory for him [...] this is little memories that he can remember. Because he feels that daddy's left him and daddy doesn't come home. So what can you do?* Richard, Wandsworth Prison

Finally, besides providing a general sense of meaning, the project brought purpose to everyday routines. One inmate, for example, shared how the process of song-writing positively punctuated his schedule during the prison's lockdown day.

It's different if others sing... we are the ones singing for our baby here, this is something very different... More moving... you feel happy inside, you know? Yeah. I feel happy! Sophia, Praxis Community Projects

Besides bringing a sense of accomplishment and meaning, the project contributed to the participants' wellbeing through also eliciting **positive emotions**. Both groups mentioned experiencing joy, satisfaction, surprise, enthusiasm and awe throughout the project. Some participants also highlighted a sense of peace, freedom, gratitude and strength. The moment when the participants' heard their lullaby being played for the first time and the final performance were pointed as the emotional highlights of the project. The process of writing the song was emphasised as a fruitful space for both expressing and processing a wide range of emotions. This included negative emotions, such as sadness and regret, in a process which enabled a sense of relief.



The first time I talked to my baby in the writing... Oh... after that first time... I am singing... I am feeling good... and then, after the last time, I am feeling very good!! Fatimah, Praxis Community Projects

*I gained satisfaction from this project, to be honest with you!*  
Alexei, Wandsworth Prison

For the group of mothers, the experience of positive emotions was mentioned both in relation to the actual days of the sessions and performance, and linked with a sense of anticipation during the time leading up to them.

*I'm always excited before I come to the group at Praxis, but now I'm more excited because of the music! It helps me! Every week I wake up quick and get ready, my children come... I'm so excited to come. It makes me happy!* Preetha, Praxis Community Projects

The bonding effect of the project, stimulating an increased sense of **connectedness**, was another strong theme emerging from the research data. This theme appeared closely linked with the perception of the sessions as a fruitful space for emotional expression. Both groups of participants highlighted how, through encouraging emotional communication, the project strengthened their relationship with their children, contributing to the development of a stronger bond.

In the women's group, besides promoting a greater sense of connectedness with the babies, the lullabies also functioned as a means for deepening the bond among the mothers themselves, especially in the case of a sub-group who share the same house. They recorded each other's songs and sung them regularly to one another and to each other's children. The process of writing the songs also punctuated their interactions and led to meaningful sharing of personal narratives. The women's group also highlighted how the emotional expression leading to higher connection was fostered despite the barrier of language. The project allowed for effective and strong expression within a group of highly varied linguistic backgrounds and with an overall low proficiency in English.

*It helps in our connection a lot. Because with this lullaby, first I was using only his name when I sang to him, but now it's some words that come from my heart with the sound that I always make with his name... Yeah. My other son, David wasn't there, but I'm sure when he will listen, he will feel... he will recognise that... Sophia, Praxis Community Projects*

*And we know which song we should sing to our children, like, I mean, Preetha's song.... I'm very close to her so, her song touched me. Seriously,*

*I think it's the lady that helped her to blend those words. She did a fantastic job because, as a person who knows Preetha, when she starts singing, I feel... every word, I feel them inside me. I cried that day. So, when I see [Preetha's children], I always sing that song for them. And she sings my song to my children...* Ella, Praxis Community Projects

In the men's group, the theme of connectedness was particularly strong, as the contact of most participants with their children is highly restricted. For this group, the songs were often mentioned as a means for communicating an important message (linked with the sub-theme of meaning), and through that, functioning as a relational bridge in a situation where it is hard to develop the paternal bond.

*I am trying to do it more for my son to have memories, I haven't been in touch for a while... it's hard to stay in touch when being in prison. It's a powerful message, a powerful message to get across. [...] I haven't seen them in such a long time... hopefully if I can get this sent to their address or in some way hand it over to their mum, it would be a great thing for them to be able to know that I am still there you know? I'm constantly thinking about them and that they do still mean the world to me.* Adrian, Wandsworth Prison

*I thought it was a good way to connect with my kids, because it's been an up and down relationship between me and them, and their mum. Previously I used to be using a lot of drugs so... it sort of spiralled a bit, and this is something for me to try and gain a bit of... what's the word... relationship back...* Richard, Wandsworth Prison

For the men, the theme of connectedness was also linked with the positive relationships established between them and the musicians of the team. Most men mentioned how they valued the positive interactions with the musicians and how that contributed to a sense of belonging and connection throughout the project. In this context, one participant spoke of the project as representing the fruitful encounter of two highly separate worlds: the world of professional classical music and the world of incarceration.

*I think that the Lullaby Project with the professional musicians is really cool because it then mixes two worlds [...] they're quite polarised and not even just from a prison point of view but from a music point of view. You get a very certain type of person that is heavily involved in classical music as opposed to pop, pop modern culture music. That was really good, that was a good relationship as well.* James, Wandsworth Prison

## PROACTIVITY

The second theme on areas of change, evidenced across most of the accounts of both groups of participants, is proactivity. This theme often appeared linked with the higher sense of achievement and the experience of positive emotions. For the majority of participants, the project triggered new plans, general engagement, and proactive behaviours, manifested both within the sessions and beyond. The high commitment to the activities of the project itself was a first sign of agency, noticed by the staff of one of the partner institutions.

It makes you believe you can do a bit more... now that you've done this, you can probably do some more things... Ryan, Wandsworth Prison

*I was amazed at people coming on time and coming each week that they need to be there, which is a real testament to how much they enjoyed it.* Group Work Coordinator, Praxis Community Projects

The successful engagement throughout the project was highlighted by the participants as a starting point for a belief of competence that led to experimenting with other activities. For some, the enhanced autonomous initiative was music-related (**musical initiative**). This was particularly noted in the women's group, with participants sharing how they established new rituals involving music with their children and also started to intentionally share music with others. Two of the men (one, soon to be released), shared their wish to start learning an instrument. Another participant mentioned his plan towards starting to listen to classical music and three men suggested the lullabies would be showcased on the prison radio.

*Now, I sing for my children.* Preetha, Praxis Community Projects

*I always sing to her... I'm always singing, I'm always singing... I sing the chorus in Portuguese... "mummy's baby, mummy's baby"... I always sing it... Now with the CD, I'll have our own music to play for Maria... [smiles, proudly] I can give her a massage and listen to our song... every day.* Isabel, Praxis Community Projects

*I'm thinking of expanding my horizons... More so with the type of music, because I was born in the 70s so I've got this hip-hop/rap... so it's natural you know, but this type of music is beautiful, I'm expanding... yeah expanding...* James, Wandsworth Prison

For others, the experience of enhanced proactivity through the project was relationally-oriented (relational initiative). Two of the men highlighted further connection initiatives after the sessions,

such as writing to loved ones to whom they hadn't written for some time. One participant from the mothers' group reported journaling about her relationship with her child. Another mother mentioned her engagement in the project and the process of writing the lullaby as the starting point for re-connecting with family from her country of origin. One participant expressed how she has started to help charities, even if only with very small amounts of money, prompted by gratitude and the recognition of the impact of community work such as this. Another mother also expressed her wish to pay-it-forward, sharing her dream of being able to help others in the future through a similar project.

*I wrote to my ex-girlfriend!! I wrote to her! And I thought about what was happening... and I wrote to her! And talked to her about the concert, you know what I mean? And I sent my letter to her... And told her I that can't explain it and I said I didn't think I would be able to do something like this... And I'm surprised with myself.*  
Ryan, Wandsworth Prison

*And my feeling about it? Very happy, and as well, it gave me an idea for the future. Because me too in the future, I want to be helping people. I want to do a lot of things. So, it's very inspiring... it's an idea, as well. Something new that I see, and I'll keep it forever.*  
Ella, Praxis Community Projects

## REFLECTION

It was a very interesting, reflective process [...] the lullaby for your children naturally starts the reflection process. James, Wandsworth Prison

For both groups, experiencing the Lullaby Project led to enhanced reflection. For the group of mothers, this theme was mentioned in relation with the development of a richer perspective about their life, implying gratitude and hope. The reflection about their story and the narrative of their relationship with their child, brought insight on what they have received since coming to the UK and on their own sense of resilience, strengthening hope and optimism about future goals. This theme appeared strongly linked with the sub-theme of meaning already mentioned.

*I could be sleeping around but at least I'm fine, my baby is fine... she's very well, she's very happy! I have achieved so many things. I have an opportunity! [...] So many things I take for my baby, I know it's really hard but for me it's really easy because of my baby. [...] Later there will be joy!*  
Ade, Praxis Community Projects



For the group of men, the theme of reflection was geared towards a process of coping or, in the words of one participant, “overcoming the tunnel vision”. The “tunnel vision” was described as the tendency of trying to block thoughts about themselves or their stories that can bring suffering and regret. The reflection during the project served as a positive way of reconciling this tendency with the longing for a new identity and greater connection, through meeting the hard thoughts in a safe, constructive way.

*Sometimes when you are in these sort of places you try and block things out, like tunnel vision of yourself. But, yeah, this project has made me think about my kids a lot, and at the end it brought me a lot of strength. [...] Here in prison you try and block out the stress side of things, do you know what I mean? Just get on with your day-to-day life. That's how I deal with it... [...] Try and not think too much about your kids as well... [...] This project is a positive way of sort of solving that... of dealing with that. Alexei, Wandsworth Prison*

In summary, the Lullaby Project impacted both groups of participants through increasing their wellbeing, stimulating proactivity and fostering reflection. It brought a strong sense of accomplishment and meaning, along with the experience of positive emotions and connectedness, it triggered new initiatives, both musical and relational, and it allowed for a space of reflection, encouraging a richer perspective on life and the unblocking of avoidance mechanisms.

## THE MUSICIANS' EXPERIENCE

All musicians reported the Lullaby Project as a highly positive and desirable experience, emphasising its relevance, effectiveness and original design. The quality of the outputs was consistently stressed, especially in light of the short timeframe. As was the case with the participants' accounts, the musicians' descriptions of the experience also pointed to areas of change stimulated by the project. There was evidence of impact in three domains: 1) skills, 2) wellbeing and 3) reflection.

OVERARCHING THEME	SUB-THEME
<b>Skills</b>	Musical Skills Personal Skills Interpersonal Skills
<b>Wellbeing</b>	Accomplishment Positive Emotions Meaning Identity Connectedness
<b>Reflection</b>	Eye-opener Perspective

Table 2. The Lullaby Project’s areas of change for musicians

## SKILLS

I think being able to create something new with people... which we never do in an orchestra, was important. [...] I was stretched out of my comfort zone. Meryl, Musician

One of the strongest themes across all accounts referred to the Lullaby Project as a vehicle for, in the musicians’ words, “stretching” oneself, strengthening existing skills and developing new ones. Three areas were mentioned: 1) musical skills, 2) personal skills and 3) interpersonal skills.

Most musicians highlighted how the Lullaby Project allowed for them to develop **musical skills**, with the strongest threads being musical creativity, versatility and enhanced collaborative skills.

*There’s no way you will come away and not think “I’m a better player”.* Stephanie, Musician

*I mean just on the musical level, I think every musician should be made to do this kind of project to broaden their musical brain, if nothing else, and to just get away from looking at a score, turning up at five to ten in the morning, ten o’clock start learning, playing music that was written 300 years ago... right, okay, that’s fine. Now go and try and create something new, or do something that’s been written already but do it and change it, that’s one of the great things about music... there are few rules, just try different things, some things will work some things won’t, but don’t close your mind to doing that!* Steve, Musician

*I’m a massive believer in that every musician should try to be as versatile as possible and that includes playing different types of music, listening to different types of music, and also being able to push yourself a little*

*bit and work with lots of different people. The project kind of covers this and it's so good for you as a musician to do that. Unfortunately, a lot of people don't want to do that.* Meryl, Musician

It's very creative,  
it's a very  
different type of  
creativity. George,  
Musician

*There are two things that are being stretched there... in my engagement with other people in its educating form. I'm not necessarily there to educate the prisoners, I'm there to extract something from deep inside them and put that onto paper which is where the other bit comes in where I think my musicality is being stretched there, my musical... skills... another side of my musical personality which I don't exercise an awful lot. I don't sit down on a keyboard and workout chords to go along with a melodic line, that's not part of my everyday job, but that is what I was being asked to do on the project which did make me feel quite uncomfortable until I was doing it and then it was fine. [laughs] [...] It's very creative, it's a very different type of creativity. There is a different part of the brain probably using it.* George, Musician

*I think it makes you a better collaborative musician, I'm sure then you'll go back into a chamber music environment you would hopefully be able to remember that feeling of "it's not foolishly about me..."* Paul, Musician

Besides allowing for a stretching of musical skills, some musicians also highlighted how the project provided a fruitful space for developing **personal skills**, such as flexibility and sensitivity, in order to respond to the specific challenges brought by both contexts.

*You adapt and start being more flexible. [...] And you get there and you do not want to be too clinical about it but go, "right, this is what I've got to deal with, this is how I am going to get that, how am I going to get stuff done in this situation?"* Steve, Musician

*The fact that it was so different, just because of the environments [...] and the conversations you have with these people that it's just not normal chat because you sort of have to stop yourself saying things [...] you have to stop yourself and be really sensitive, so actually we end up talking about probably really interesting in-depth things because you can't... be artificial.* Meryl, Musician

The highly collaborative nature of the Lullaby Project was also highlighted as a means for strengthening musicians' interpersonal skills. Communication skills were the most predominant, followed

by empathy and tolerance. The context of the Praxis Community Projects centre, in particular, appeared to be a fruitful space for developing communication efficiency, as there were often language barriers due to most women not being fluent in English.

*I think in the projects where the people working don't have a voice or don't have a means of expression, you have to deal with the means of communicating, you have to find it... it's a really interesting thing to try and find the path [...] really fascinating to try and find a way in... and to try and find that means of communication with that person, and it could be something incredibly simple like, you know, an expression on someone's face or it could be a recognition of a rhythm or something really tiny... Julian, Musician*

*I gained a lot of personal stuff that's kind of along the lines of just the realisation that everybody has the same problems... I've got completely different problems than those mums and completely different problems from those guys in prison, but actually at the end of the day, they're all the same: you wish you saw your children more and you probably don't feel that you're doing a pretty good enough job... even if you are... and it's quite nice to sort of engage with other humans on that level, through something mutual, it's not like sitting around pretending to that lady that I've got everything in common with her when I don't, but actually... I do! [laughter] So... that was really good. Stephanie, Musician*

## WELLBEING

The musicians' accounts of the Lullaby Project experience also pointed to the project as a contributor to different components of wellbeing. Five sub-themes built this theme: 1) accomplishment, 2) positive emotions, 3) meaning, 4) identity and 5) connectedness.

Similarly to what happened with the participants, the strongest sub-theme was a sense of **accomplishment**. All musicians reported the project as a means of perceived achievement and fulfilment. This appeared both linked with one's personal accomplishments (through developing the skills mentioned) and also through witnessing the participants' achievements during the project. There were distinct elements contributing to this theme across the musicians' accounts. First, some musicians placed an emphasis on how it was rewarding to witness the power of music in a very direct way. This was

I definitely feel that, and I'll say from my personal point of view, I love playing, I absolutely love playing and I know how lucky I am to be doing that. But I would hand on heart say, that I actually get more satisfaction as a musician from doing these projects. Julian, Musician

developed at times as a contrast with the gap between musician and audience that is typical of the usual performance context. Also within this context, one musician stressed the fulfilment brought by observing how participants discovered their own personal, idiosyncratic songs. Secondly, the giving nature of the project was highlighted as an ingredient of the sense of success. Some musicians felt accomplished mainly through being able to share skills and ideas. One musician in particular, emphasised how the admiration expressed by the participants when listening to him play his instrument functioned as a confidence booster. And finally, all reports evidencing a sense of accomplishment linked it with a process of getting out of one's comfort zone either musically, socially, or both. This was particularly evident across the diary notes, where a slight, short-lived, apprehension about the first session was consistently shared.

*I could see that Richard was just amazed by it, and it was just... to see those men... Ryan! When he was doing the performance [...] you just sort of think "how did he suddenly get up on stage and have less inhibitions than he has had for the last few days?" I couldn't believe that... [...] You see the difference you're making... you could see it on the spot, you could see the impact. That is what brings fulfilment. Norah, Musician*

*So, for me, yeah definitely rewarding, sounds a bit cliché, but it really was... musically, you feel that you're giving something to them. Meryl, Musician*

*You also then go back to doing something else and you think you can do it! "I remember how to do this, I remember how to actually properly sing a song and not just let it come out of my mouth." Stephanie, Musician*

*When I get my instrument and I start playing, and they all go, "Wow, that sound is amazing!" That is quite confidence boosting for me, I would be daft to say that it wasn't because it definitely was. That was quite cool... really nice. It was nice that they were so interested and they took time to listen, I suppose. [...] And another thing is having somebody sort of realise something that they have inside them... that song... which again, is something I don't do a lot... That's really good. George, Musician*

*The fact that it is a bit intimidating and a bit different and scary means that there's more of a sense of achievement. Miriam, Musician*

It was fun  
there as well!  
Meryl, Musician

*After today's session I was impressed by how much had been achieved. [...] The ladies were all emotionally involved and engaged in the experience and lots of great stuff came out of it. Paul, Musician*

The Lullaby Project was highlighted by all musicians as a space for strong emotional experiences, with **positive emotions** at the core. Within this theme, two related but distinct threads of meaning emerged. First, specific moments in the sessions and performances were frequently mentioned as triggers of positive emotions such as satisfaction, joy and warmth. This was particularly evident across the diary self-report notes. Secondly, the overall process was often mentioned as a very emotionally charged and moving experience, allowing for easy opening-up of emotions which in turn had an uplifting effect.

*You can just impart something from yourself and see the enjoyment that they will receive from that little tiny moment experience, it can be a moment like a second or two seconds or ten seconds, or a minute. If you can just do that, then you feel... you do feel a sense satisfaction as a human being on a human level... [...] What I experienced from the first performance of that piece and the recording pieces was something incredibly warm, incredibly beautiful...a beautiful experience, for them and for us and very moving. Julian, Musician*

*I absolutely loved it and I really felt privileged to be involved to the extent that I sometimes thought that maybe I'm just enjoying it more than anyone else you know, which... given it wasn't set up for me to enjoy, I'm not sure if that's the expected result... [laughs] Miriam, Musician*

*I found it extremely moving. It was quite difficult not to cry. Actually when you're doing the pieces... because of the words that they've written... it is really, really moving and I was amazed at how different all the lullabies were. Norah, Musician*

*This performance was beyond my expectations... emotive, powerful, inspiring! I'm overwhelmed by how well it went, how the mothers embraced the experience, how supportive the audience were... The whole thing was incredibly moving and felt very worthwhile! Paul, Musician*

*I think that's such a way into people... right into the core of a person is talking about their kids and I think that allows them to open up... and I know I said some men at first weren't keen to open up but they all did without exception. Stephanie, Musician*

Similarly to what happened with the participants, the musicians also reported experiencing the project with a strong sense of **meaning**. Some musicians emphasised how the project functioned as a reminder of the influence musicians can have, reinforcing one's perception of the relevance of the profession. This was strongly linked with the sense of accomplishment, through observing the power of music in a very direct way, and emerged both from the interview data as well as across the diary notes. Other musicians highlighted how the human and compassionate nature of the project strengthened a general sense of belonging to something larger than the self.

*Being able to have an impact on others and do that as a musician as well, can be overwhelming... you're seeing that you can make a difference by doing something you are already good at. Julian, Musician*

*There are two levels, one level is like you could run the marathon and raise two grand of sponsorship to be a nice person and to do your good thing... and most people in their 30's engage in that at some point... decide to do some grand charity thing, but... you could just actually try and actually be... it's an opportunity to engage with the person that needs your help... through your profession! You usually don't get that opportunity, really... Stephanie, Musician*

*I think this project is different because the people were much more vulnerable. I suppose the projects that I would value the most have been with either special needs children, autistic children and then of course this, when you're sort of really hoping you can make a difference. And it did really... Norah, Musician*

*In this session, I felt rather emotional about the music, it felt so worthwhile to bring our skills to a community which I imagine rarely encounters classical musicians, and especially something written with them and for them. Miriam, Musician*

*I think it's like saying "yes, okay, you have got a long day and you are tired but actually look at what impact you are making to that person" and you want to make a difference to someone else because*

*we are all humans. I think it is a very positive thing actually trying to bridge that gap. Because I feel I'm using my skills, to help... to benefit, to nurture, to encourage, all these positive things. I think it's really an important part of being a human being, that you are able to do that with each other, and especially with people that don't have... and often I wish I could help more, I could do more to help people that are less fortunate, that don't have the opportunities that we have. Julian, Musician*

The theme of **identity** appeared strongly linked with the sub-theme of meaning and was built upon the idea that a project like this can have an important role in building the occupational identity in music, both individually and collectively. The project was identified as an example of the type of work that has the potential for widening the definition, beliefs and expressions of what it means to be a professional musician. Crucially, the need for going beyond the centrality of performance in defining the scope of the profession was frequently highlighted in this context.

*I think it's easy as an orchestra musician to isolate... I find the orchestra world quite an insular one anyway and I think it's very easy to be caught up in the importance of your concerts which, if you are really honest about it, only appeal to a very small percentage of the population anyway... I think it's a real shame, of course, but that's the truth of it. So, I think one thing is just to be put into an environment or engage people that aren't necessarily into what you do, but are maybe interested, just fascinated that you are so good at what you do but maybe wouldn't want to sit through one of your concerts and I think it's important to engage people like that. Why? Because, you get to see how music can be powerful in other ways than what we are used to seeing. Paul, Musician*

*It's very important for musicians to understand that they can use their skill, and their ability as musicians and as communicators, in many, many ways, in lots of ways, and you're still a musician, you're still a great communicator by doing projects like this, by doing work in your local community [...] you're still using your skill, you're still a musician... [...] there are many ways to utilise your experience as a musician. Julian, Musician*

*The reason why people don't all like doing community engagement is because they don't know actually what it is about. If people*



*understood that actually it's not pretending to be a jazz musician improvising, they would do it more. People don't realise what it is, otherwise they would participate more. And I think if they understood the sense of engagement with such different communities then they'd see why we like doing it because if we're sat on the stage, that is our job and the audience is over there, and we don't communicate with them as much as we should do anyway. Maybe not true for everybody, but some people just want to play their instrument and take the applause at the end of it... But a lot of musicians really benefit from seeing what good they can do on a much closer level and remind people that we're not doing our music just to teach other people to be musicians. It can just be something that you've done because it benefits people in general and it's great to sing as a group or to come up with a new song as a group and just hear the enjoyment which it gives to people, and it makes people feel special. Because they have a group of musicians going in there and doing it!* Miriam, Musician

Finally, within the theme of wellbeing, some musicians mentioned a greater sense of **connectedness** as a result of the project. This sub-theme appeared from two threads. First, through the highly collaborative work, and linked with the development of empathy, some musicians mentioned how they felt closer to the participants than they would expect.



*On the second day, I saw another prisoner and he can't have been much older than one of my kids. And I just thought, you know... what happened? What's gone so wrong in their lives to end up there? And it's just so sad, you know, how easy it is for things to go wrong... And they were all human. Nearly all personable people. [...] They seem quite close to us. Norah, Musician*

Within the theme of connectedness, a second aspect mentioned by one of the musicians was linked with the project as a vehicle for also increasing connection within the musicians group itself.

*Usually, it's very much we do this, you do that. So now in this type of work, it's together... there's a feeling of community about it. [...] For us as musicians, it's also nice that we work in a smaller group together. We're used to working in a group of 80. Suddenly, you get a quite diverse selection from the orchestra with people who you wouldn't necessarily talk to on a day to day basis because the orchestra is big and you kind of stick within your sections. You really do get to know people better, not only their playing, which you don't really get to hear individually... you get to know them as a person, and their playing better. For the orchestra... that brings a better sense of community as well. Miriam, Musician*

## REFLECTION

Really, really positive from my point of view. And I would say, it changed me because um it just made me think!  
Norah, Musician

The final overarching theme emerging from the musicians' accounts on the areas of impact of the project refers to the Lullaby Project as a stimulus to reflection and insight. Two sub-themes emerged in this context: the project as 1) an **eye-opener** and 2) a process which consolidated or challenged one's **perspective** and points of view on the issues of incarceration and migration, leading to a clearer position about them.

Some musicians mentioned the Lullaby Project as a wake-up call, for bringing greater understanding about the different realities met through the sessions. The exposure to the participants' personal narratives and their daily physical context (in the case of the prison participants) was at the core of this theme.

*I think it's been a real eye-opener. In terms of the people we were working with. It's an obvious thing to say but, I guess we just don't have any sort of association with people in prison, or people that*

*are struggling in such a way that a lot of those women were, sounds really obvious, but yeah they're not people that you encounter on a day-to-day basis. Just a little bit of insight I think is really good for us all.* Stephanie, Musician

*The aspect of this actually very thin slice of life that we got to witness on this project, was the thing that I'll take away from it. It's not that it's a secret because no one is telling you, but it's because nobody wants you to know about it... [...]. It's not that there's anything bad in it, it's just this whole world that we don't know about which is fascinating as well as quite... scary. To describe the whole thing overall is too difficult [...] I find it quite enlightening. Very much an eye-opener socially. [...] Just seeing their environment and learning a little bit about their lives and to have them learn a little bit about our life.* George, Musician

Strongly linked with the project functioning as an eye-opener, some musicians highlighted the development of stronger and more informed perspectives and overall understanding on the issues of migration and incarceration. This was at times accompanied by a process of discomfort and reconciliation of conflicting ideas.

*It's interesting talking to a few friends about this, they were saying... they'd never engaged with my idea of reform, or actually what it is to be in prison. For me, if you're in prison then that's your punishment because that's awful, so I don't feel that you therefore need to be punished by not having anything else, I don't see that prison has to be awful, you have already lost your fundamental freedom in prison, but I'm a bit lefty so... But it was interesting talking to this person who's quite a bit older and they've never engaged or ever thought about it, never thought "what do I think about people who are in prison?", like... they've done a bad thing, they go to prison. I think that's a good reason for the project as well, it makes you just engage with what you really think about these people in society, what do you really think about refugees? Because it's fine to just look at the TV and say "that's awful, that shouldn't happen", but if you're forced to spend a day in East London, then do you still feel the same? It's a good opportunity...* Stephanie, Musician

*So, I was particularly interested in doing the work in the prison, because there's a mentality... there's a line of thought that says, you know, "prisoners..." and when I mentioned I was doing this*

*project in the prison, a lot of people said this is a kind of overemotional, frivolous, overindulgent thing. Prisoners should be punished and they need to be in their cells and they shouldn't have any of this kind of activity, but I don't believe that and it's made me think a lot about the reasons for its justification. The message that they passed to us was that these are people that are really unfortunate in our society, these are people that have been dealt a very poor hand in our society and I think it was important for us to recognise that and to see that. I think doing these education projects has enabled me to view the parts of society that are hidden away... that we don't really talk about. That we don't particularly understand... So, I think what they've given to us is an understanding... an understanding of something that we try to keep out of our minds, and that has to be a good thing! I think that the more sharing and the more exposure and the more extremes that we allow ourselves to experience, it builds only a good thing. Julian, Musician*

I think it was obvious that me and the other musicians were getting so much out of it...

We've done a mix of hospices and prisons and schools, nursing homes and all sorts... but never anything quite like that! Miriam, Musician

*I feel really lucky to have done this and to get a perspective of how people's lives are, be it migrants or prisoners, something we possibly wouldn't have thought about without having done something like this... Paul, Musician*

In summary, the Lullaby Project impacted the group of musicians in three areas. First, it allowed to strengthen skills: musical, personal and interpersonal. Secondly, it enriched key components of well-being: a sense of accomplishment, positive emotions, meaning, connectedness and a more sophisticated notion of occupational identity. Lastly, it triggered reflection through functioning as an eye-opener and stimulating the development of stronger perspectives about the issues that the participants were experiencing.

Having looked at what was impacted by the project (areas of change), the second step of the analysis aimed to evaluate how that change happened, or in other words, specify the mechanisms responsible for the project's impact (mechanisms of impact).

## MECHANISMS OF IMPACT

For the three groups of participants (migrant mothers, fathers in prison and musicians), the accounts on how change happened through the Lullaby Project were highly convergent. Three ingredients at the core of the Lullaby Project were highlighted across

all groups as the main mechanisms for its impact: the project was 1) motivating, 2) ‘human’ and 3) guided by a strong output.

OVERARCHING THEME	SUB-THEME	
	Participants	Musicians
Motivating	Right level of challenge Highly valued goal	
‘Human’	Individuality	Positive agenda
	Mutuality	
Strong Output	Ownership	High-quality
	Longevity	Tangible

Table 3. Lullaby Project: Mechanisms of impact for participants and musicians

## MOTIVATING

One of the key mechanisms underlying the Lullaby Project’s impact, was the level of motivation of all involved, sustaining high engagement. There were two characteristics responsible for sustaining strong motivation emerging across all accounts: 1) the **right level of challenge** and 2) a **highly valued goal**.

Despite a wide diversity in levels of skill across the participant groups, everyone considered the level of challenge to be adequate. The participants felt they were stepping out of their comfort zone and, at the same time, described the experience as easy and smooth. This was true both for the participants who had previous experience with song-writing as well as for those expressing preliminary difficulties with that type of task. The perception of an appropriate level of challenge strengthened their belief that they could achieve, contributing to sustaining their motivation.

*Before, in my thinking, it was like “I can’t do this one”... singing is hard... but now all words are music, I learned... It was medium, not too easy and not too hard. Fatimah, Praxis Community Projects*

*I am dyslexic as well, so I find it hard to read and write. [...] I thought it was plain and simple, that’s it, it’s the main thing. It wasn’t too challenging, it wasn’t too easy... the amount of time you had as well... wasn’t too rushed. Richard, Wandsworth Prison*

*I didn’t know what it was going to be when I first heard about it, I thought it was going to be much more basic. It was great! Alexei, Wandsworth Prison [participant experienced in song-writing]*

Similarly, all musicians shared high motivation through being presented with the right level of challenge. The project was reported as not too difficult but challenging enough to stretch their skills, a balance that was mentioned as one of the highlights when comparing with previous experiences of community-based work.

*It's the best of both worlds, it's creative, and it's new, and it's created by, in my case, the mums. But the product is better because somebody professional has arranged it and they know what all our capabilities are on our instruments, it's more challenging and it makes for a more complex piece of music which closer to what we like to do. [...] From our point of view as a musician it was musically satisfying.* Miriam, Musician

*You might not be challenged by the actual music, although you probably will because it's proper... Everybody had difficult phrases or tricky bits to get together, so you'll be challenged musically and you'll be challenged to engage emotionally with music which, if you're playing repertoire that you play in day in day out, you don't get the chance to do really. [...] We could have sent our stuff off with me writing a melody and just playing block chords on the piano and it could have come back with it just being block chords on the instrument... that a school orchestra could have played... but it was something special. That shifted the whole thing!* Paul, Musician

Additionally, the goal of the project was highly valued by all groups. Both the mothers at Praxis Community Projects and the fathers at Wandsworth Prison felt drawn to this opportunity for valuing the possibility of strengthening their connection with their children. Furthermore, engagement with music and/or writing was an element already cherished and present in most participants' lives.

*I'm doing this for my little man, doing something special.* Richard, Wandsworth Prison.

*I want to do this because it's for my child... my singing... "please listen to my song"! [sings]* Fatimah, Praxis Community Projects

The whole project is about loving kids!  
Miriam, Musician

Similarly to what was expressed by the participants, the goal of the project was also highly valued by the musicians.

*They are parents as well, so what could be more beneficial than the idea of a prisoner writing a song for their child that they don't get to see... that they never have contact with?* Julian, Musician

## 'HUMAN'

I think it was moving for the people who were watching it because it was about a very human levelling relationship that people can understand and it really stripped back all... everything else... and allowed people to connect on a really human level. Group Work Coordinator, Praxis Community Projects

A second ingredient for impact highlighted across all groups was, in the participants' words, the 'human' nature of the Lullaby Project. The process stripped away socially constructed layers with the potential to distance individuals from one another, such as cultural background, personal history, language, status and position, having at its core the display of some of the best shared human qualities such as empathy, compassion and understanding. The two universals that were the building blocks for the experience - music and parental love - were responsible for breaking down barriers and triggering connectedness and very "raw emotion" (in the words of one musician).

Three threads built this theme: first, the participants emphasised, as a distinctive feature of the experience, how the project received everyone with high respect for **individuality**, valuing personal narratives and encouraging meaningful self-expression (or in the words of one participant, "soulful human expression"). The sense of contributing with something highly personal came as a contrast to the usual "receiver" position typical of previous educational projects the participants had been part of. One of the mothers, in particular, mentioned how she had forgotten she was a migrant in that space of fruitful collaboration.

*And the words are coming from you and the stuff you mean...* Ryan, Wandsworth Prison

*One of the mums said something in the session about forgetting that they were a refugee for a while... and it not being about why they need to be helped but the agenda being music and I thought that was quite powerful.* Julian, Musician

*See what it is, these outsource programmes especially the arts, they have a very supportive role in this whole prison system. [...] I personally think those are the more "soulful" rehabilitations. So I believe any form of human soulful expression is much more rewarding and beneficial than these paper courses that they need to tick their boxes of, because this is all run by bureaucracy. All done by papers so it's not human, to go deeper, it's almost artificial to what humans really are. You can't express love on a paper but you can express the love of a human, do you understand? So these are what I call - like human things to do, more soulful. Any system that is run by humans based on paper... is not going to be balanced.* James, Wandsworth Prison

*Here we've had concerts already, even recently we've had one, I think it was something to do with inclusion day... and we sang... I think it was two songs... so sometimes we sing. This is very different... how can I explain... [...] It is something personal, something ours... it's not the same, it's not like being in a choir... In the choir, you have a ready-made song. You just have to memorise it and sing it. Now, this music is something personal, something yours, something written by you... very different! Has nothing to do... And it's directed at my child... It's something more... personal, more our own. For example, the music I composed was based on my daughter's name! Isabel, Praxis Community Projects*

There is a really positive agenda. Miriam, Musician

For the musicians, the human nature of the project was also highlighted. In this case, the **positive agenda** was the strongest thread. The project did not aim to fix behaviours, nor did it focus on dealing with labels or participants' pasts, but rather maintained its full attention on the widely shared experiences of music as a language and on parental bonding.

*So, when we went into the prison, what I found very powerful about it was that we don't have any preconceived idea, we have no idea what they have done, we're not associated with their past or their reason for being there... everybody that comes into contact with those prisoners will be associated with their crime, their visitors would be associated with their crime, the other prisoners... [...] but we go in on a totally different level... we go in on a very, very human level, and we're able to communicate with them on a basis of respect, mutual respect, understanding, and we treat them as normal human beings, as they are. Julian, Musician*

*Say they come in and they do a choir or they do another piece of music. It's someone else's composition and also there is nobody in the world who doesn't sing a lullaby, it's such a specific thing, the connection with the child is so specific, and not every musician has children, but they've all got a parent so even as an adult musician you can connect on that level, feel a lot... And then of course music is an incredibly powerful medium that doesn't require language that doesn't require words, or explanation or reason it just is... It's a language that everybody understands on every level whether you are... you know... on every level. So, you also realise "my experience as a musician is very special..." it's a very special thing to have a means of connecting with people that maybe don't have the right voice or the right start in life*



*or the right background, [...] whatever circumstances, those guys are in there [prison]... music forgets all that. Forgets all those issues and just gets in on a very different level. Julian, Musician*

Musical lullabies  
can cross  
all divisions.  
Stephanie,  
Musician

Finally, another key, humanising, ingredient at the core of the project's impact is its highly relational nature. Both the participants and the musicians emphasised **mutuality** as a strong element of the experience. In this context, respect, trust and a sense of co-construction were frequently mentioned by all groups.

*We go in on a very, very human level, and we're able to communicate with them on a basis of respect, mutual respect and understanding. Julian, Musician*

*He said something which every parent can relate to... the holding of the hand of their child, when they are born... when he said that, of course he reminded me of my time when I experienced that with my child for the first time, so it was beneficial. You know, it was a highlight for me that there was some kind of recognition that this man had at that moment, and I had at that moment that connects us. Miriam, Musician*

*Just the mutual respect that underpinned the work that then followed on from that initial "I'm George the [instrument] player" kind of chat, which usually everybody is just like, "Oh great." But in there everybody was like, "Wow!" [...] There was one moment where we went through the prison, maybe on day one or day two... and we saw one of the inmates that we had been working with, and he just acknowledged us and you know "see you later". That was quite cool. That was quite meaningful. George, Musician*

*Today's session was inspiring... It was comforting to work with women with whom it might seem I would have nothing in common and yet, to find that musical lullabies can cross all divisions. It was wonderful to meet the children! Stephanie, Musician*

## STRONG OUTPUT

Finally, both the performance and the CD as outputs for the project stood out as main features thought to be responsible for its impact. The performance appeared strongly linked with the sense of accomplishment shared by all involved. The CD was also frequently

highlighted, linked with different characteristics for each group. For the participants, a sense of **ownership** was strongly emphasised: the CD as something highly personal that belongs to the dyad of parent and child. At the same time, recurrent accounts by both the mothers and the fathers stressed the importance of the output's **longevity**: the project living on through the CD, with one participant also mentioning the score itself as something he will keep as a reminder of the experience and his message.

*I'm very happy. Why? Because that CD we're going to have is going to be forever, for our children. Sophia, Praxis Community Projects*

*Because it's for our children. And they can have that CD. I'm waiting for that CD anyway to just take it!! [laughter] We are all crazy for it. [...] We see the lady and we're like "Oh my God, we are waiting for that", because when the man asked me and Ade if because of the time we could do it together, I said, "sorry, I don't want that". I don't want someone else to be in my lullaby because this one is going to be for the future, forever. I want... I need my own words, so that my children can listen. [...] So... yeah, at least I know that even if...let's say, when they grow up, they get teenager or adult, they forget about that CD, I can still keep it. I can still listen to that. My grandchildren can listen to that. [laughter] You know what I mean? And you never know the future. I can maybe have an idea to do it in another community. Ella, Praxis Community Projects*

*Hopefully, that disc could help me too... once it's done, afterwards, to be able to keep on the right track instead of driving myself in the wrong direction, you know? Yeah... Adrian, Wandsworth Prison*

The musicians also stressed the process of working towards a very strong output as a central mechanism of the project and, crucially, as one of its distinctive features. In the context of this theme, musicians stressed the **high quality** of the arrangements and the recording and also the importance of having something physical as a **tangible** result of the process, key for prolonging its impact.

*I've done lots of things before where it's about the process but what happens at the end is "Ah we had a good time" but this one is about the process and the product. So, you can walk away with something you are really proud of [...] hearing these things I ... hadn't given [the arranger] much to work on and it came back and I was like, "wow!" That was so amazing. Paul, Musician*

*To have the result especially when in this situation you get a CD of it... there is really something concrete to take away. A lot of the time with the music, be it concerts that we're doing all the time or projects, it's something in the moment and then a memory of it, but nothing actually to hold on to... whereas this project is nice, there's something to take home.... All of us who have got kids we're saying we would've loved to have done something like that actually, something individual! Miriam, Musician*

In summary, three distinctive elements of the Lullaby Project mediated its positive results for both participants and musicians: 1) the project is motivating, offering the right level of challenge to all involved, towards a shared, highly valued goal; 2) the project is geared towards connecting at a very human level, through placing centrality on one's individuality, having a positive agenda focused around two universals (music and parental love), and relying on mutuality; and 3) the project is guided by a strong output, a tangible and high quality product, that is perceived as very personal and long-lasting.



The Lullaby Project is an act of love... An act of care... It allows greater closeness to your child. It inspires you, it stimulates your imagination, your creativity... it gave me that sense of accomplishment!

**Isabel, Praxis Community Projects**

# CONCLUSIONS

This research stands as a starting point towards reflecting on the value of the Lullaby Project's model for the UK context, in particular with refugee and migrant mothers and fathers in prison. This assessment allowed to fully meet its guiding aims, with emergent themes describing both the areas of change stimulated by the project and the mechanisms of impact mediating the process. There were no unintended, negative results shared by any research participant. One of the most exciting features of the results was the high convergence of themes across the different sub-groups. Adding to the existing evidence-base applying the Lullaby Project model with mothers, this allows to equally consider positioning fathers as potential participants of future projects.

## AREAS OF CHANGE

For the participants, the Lullaby Project was experienced as a means to increased wellbeing. It triggered a strong sense of accomplishment, meaning, and connectedness, along with positive emotions. The project was also seen as responsible for stimulating proactivity, through encouraging behaviours of initiative, both musical and relational, across contexts. Finally, the Lullaby Project instilled reflection, contributing towards a richer perspective on life and positive coping mechanisms, through the overcoming of avoidance tendencies.

The project has effectively met key issues of vulnerability in both contexts. Through instilling a strong sense of accomplishment and meaning, which in some cases seemed to be powerful enough to promote changes in self-concept, it triggered a process of an identity re-definition that is strengths-based, rather than needs-based (Hilado and Lundy, 2017). This was further reinforced by increases in proactivity, which represents a starting point for a sense of strategic growth. The individual feels more in charge, in control and an architect of one's own future. The project provided a safe space for individual choices. This sense of agency, if generalizable to other contexts, is of key importance for positive growth.

In the particular case of refugee and migrant mothers, besides providing an alternative avenue for communication, when oral expression could be impaired by trauma or language difference, the sharing of music with others described by most participants,

served as facilitator of psychological, social, and musical points of entry into new identities, as well as stimulating crucial links with homeland traditions, as pointed in previous research (Reyes, 1999). This represents a positive negotiation between new and old contexts of being, particularly key for successful adaptation in a process of resettlement. Most of the components of change mentioned by migrant mothers through this project, also represent key ingredients highlighted in previous research as fundamental for effective adaptation (Murray et al., 2008). In particular, a sense of meaning, prospection and proactivity, adaptive engagement, connectedness and feelings of belonging.

In the case of the prison group, the reported high levels of engagement are considered particularly key, given the known struggle towards meaningful activity in prison contexts (Durcan, 2008). Crucially, the high level of motivation and sense of proactivity are likely to translate in further adherence to educational projects and work-related activities. Finally, some of the accounts evidenced a change in the way participants define themselves, towards a more positive self-concept, an important factor towards desistance from crime (Cox and Gelsthorpe, 2008).

For the group of musicians, there was also a shared perception of high impact. First, the project allowed to strengthen skills: musical, personal and interpersonal. Secondly, it enriched key components of wellbeing: a sense of accomplishment, positive emotions, meaning, connectedness and a more sophisticated notion of occupational identity. Lastly, it triggered reflection through functioning as an eye-opener and stimulating the development of stronger perspectives about the issues of migration and incarceration.

## MECHANISMS OF IMPACT

The three sub-groups were unanimous when reporting the potential mechanisms responsible for the project's impact. Both participants and musicians highlighted three distinctive features of the Lullaby Project model that mediate its positive results.

First, the project is highly **motivating**, offering the right level of challenge to all groups, towards a shared, relationally-driven goal, valued by all. Two central elements for human motivation, that have been strongly emphasised over decades of research, are precisely the value of the goal and the expectancy of meeting it successfully, in a theory known as Expectancy-value Theory of Motivation (e.g. Fishbein and Ajzen, 1973). This deserves special attention. Often the design of music-based interventions is driven by the characteristics of the typical "receiver" of the project, or the so-called target-populations. This frequently leads to both a top-down hierarchy in delivery, and a low level of stimulus for the facilitators, as the musical content is often simple. This project, however, allowed for a balanced level of challenge for all involved, despite extreme differences in music proficiency, while dissolving hierarchy and instilling a sense of artistic partnership between participants and musicians.

Second, the project is geared towards connecting at a very human level. It places centrality on individuality and a positive agenda, maintaining two universals at its core, music and parental love. It also relies strongly on mutuality. Through prioritising a sense of ownership, the project paves the way for the development of stronger agency, as described by most participants. Not only is the process highly creative, it is idiosyncratic as it fully encourages the expression of the individual's uniqueness. This appears as a distinctive feature, when comparing with previous lullaby-driven projects (Baker et al., 2006) which typically use pre-written songs.

Finally, the project is guided by a **strong output**, a tangible and high quality product, very personal and long-lasting. This was particularly stressed by the musicians as a distinctive feature of this project. Besides contributing to continued impact, it also functions as a key motivational element throughout the process, for all involved.

## DISTINCTIVE FEATURES

From our observation, several unique features of the project design stand out as possible contributors to the mechanisms of change emerging from the data, and as key elements for meeting the specific needs of the two populations in further projects. First, the project has a short time-span, potentiating quick feedback. The duration of the project was key for sustaining high motivation and crucially, seems to be long enough to allow the building of trust and connectedness. Short-term interventions are particularly relevant in these two contexts, considering the instability of the attendance potential of both groups, particularly in the case of the prison. It is typical for prisoners to move to different prisons, in and out of prison, or have conflicting appointments, making it difficult to implement more traditional, continuous programmes.

The centrality placed on ownership as a distinctive feature of the Lullaby Project, also deserves further attention. Both the experiences of migration and incarceration are of high risk towards a sense of hopelessness and a consequent passiveness. Even when participating in effective educational programmes, the participants are often placed in a position of 'receivers of help'. In contrast, the engagement in such a person-centred artistic initiative, where the participants function as highly active creative agents, leads to a crucial sense of contribution. This was particularly evident through the comments of one mother mentioning she forgot she was a refugee during the project. This also triggered some of the mothers towards a sense of wanting (and feeling ready) to deliver a similar project in the future.

There were also logistical features of the project contributing to its impact. First, it is relatively portable and easily embedded in each of the partners' pre-existing structures. Its organic integration was particularly evident in the women's project, where there was a previously established group of mothers and childcare provided. Another key aspect was the room for flexibility and adaptation to specific challenges inherent to each particular context (for example, language barriers and the change in the number of participants during the project).

Finally, the collaboration was deeply rewarding for all, representing high value to both the participant groups and the facilitators. The accounts of the musicians shed light into the relevance of including the needs of all involved, when planning for such



collaborative work. This represents an optimisation of resources, as these projects seem to address key areas of professional and personal development for musicians through also strengthening a positive occupational identity. More than just standing as a means to an end, in the sense that they lead to positive gains that can be of personal and professional value, projects such as this carry high intrinsic meaning, bringing to light the potential and purpose of the music profession and enabling a clearer, more complete picture of what professional musicianship can look like outside a performance context.

## THE PROMOTION OF POSITIVE GROWTH

Given the centrality on promotion of effective positive change of all of The Irene Taylor Trust's initiatives, it is of importance to look at the results of this assessment taking into consideration current psychological research. The areas emphasised throughout the data seem to be optimally understood in the light of two key constructs: basic psychological needs and resilience.

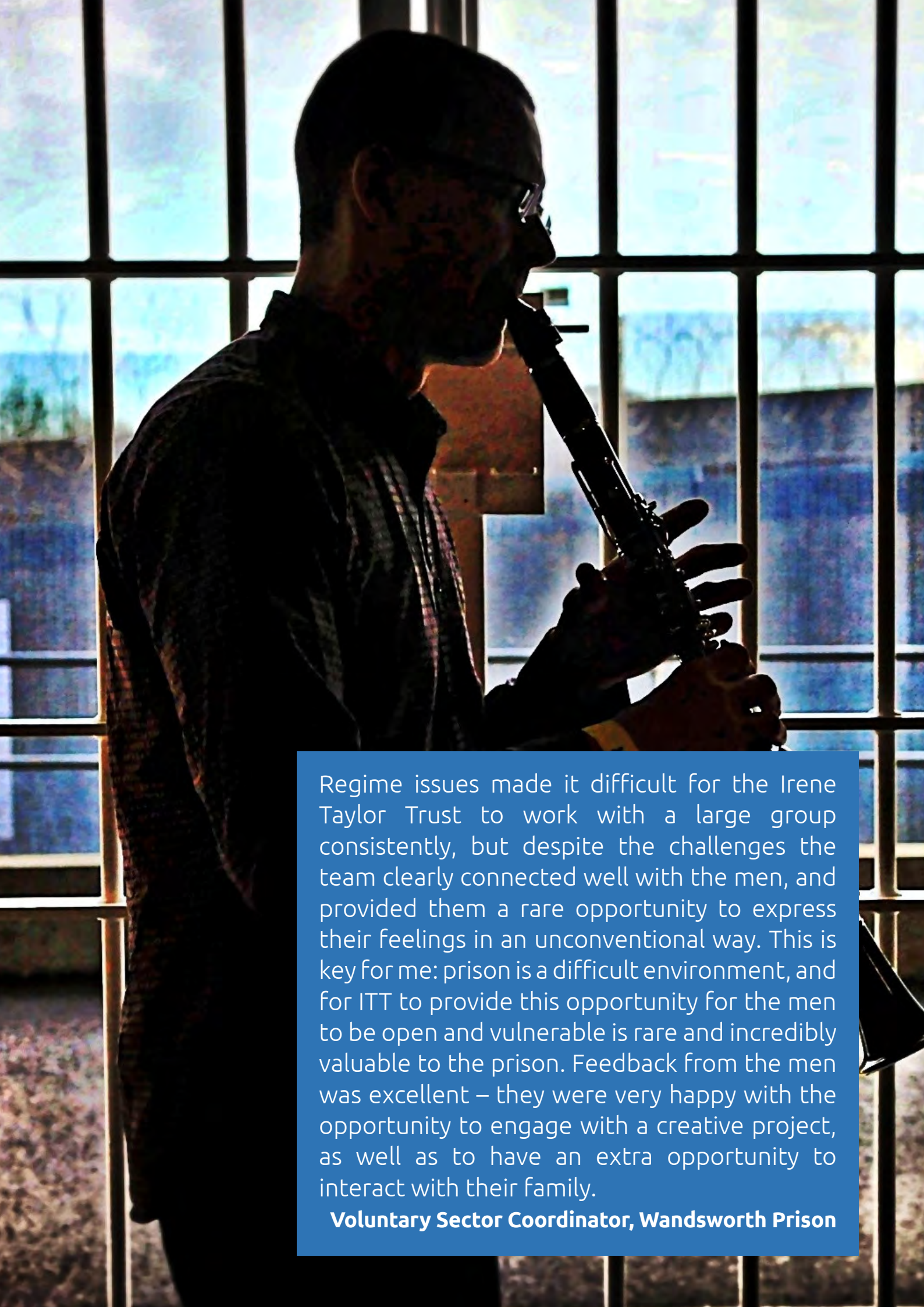
It has been proposed that there are three basic psychological needs. These are universal and crucial when considering well-being. Self-determination theory is the overarching theory of human motivation and personality integrating this proposal. In the context of this framework, the ultimate goal is to achieve levels of functioning where individuals are autonomous and living their potentialities to the fullest (Ryan et al. 2013). The three basic psychological needs proposed are: competence, relatedness and autonomy.

Competence refers to a sense of control towards an outcome and an experience of mastery. The need for relatedness represents the universal desire towards interaction, connection and care. And finally, autonomy, in the context of this model, concerns the urge to be causal agents of one's own life and act in harmony with one's integrated self (Ryan and Deci, 2002). Situations of vulnerability, may lead to numerous barriers towards the satisfaction of these needs, and consequent higher risk of ill-being. The areas of change emerging from this project seem to contribute to meet, to some extent, the three needs outlined. Competence was strongly developed, mainly through a high sense of accomplishment and

confidence. Relatedness was triggered through meaningful interaction, an environment of trust and enhanced connectedness. And autonomy emerged through a sense of ownership, self-direction and proactivity.

The construct of resilience is also useful towards interpreting the positive results of this project. Resilience refers to positive adaptation in a context of adversity. It is both a process and a capacity for successful adaptation, despite challenging or threatening circumstances (Masten et al., 1990). It concerns the ability to experience healthy levels of psychological and physical functioning despite highly disruptive events (Bonanno, 2004). Resilience implies both recovery (re-gaining previous levels of functioning that were disrupted) and sustainability over time. Several factors have been evidenced to potentiate resilience, such as: positive emotions, self-efficacy, self-esteem, active coping (involving proactivity and planning), optimism, social support, meaning and purpose in life (see Kent et al. (2013) for a review). Again, several of the areas of change emerging from the Lullaby Project relate to the identified ingredients for resilience. In particular, a high sense of meaning, proactivity and confidence.

In summary, not only does the project lead to perceived change by participants, it also meets key elements that have been widely identified as crucial building blocks towards positive functioning.



Regime issues made it difficult for the Irene Taylor Trust to work with a large group consistently, but despite the challenges the team clearly connected well with the men, and provided them a rare opportunity to express their feelings in an unconventional way. This is key for me: prison is a difficult environment, and for ITT to provide this opportunity for the men to be open and vulnerable is rare and incredibly valuable to the prison. Feedback from the men was excellent – they were very happy with the opportunity to engage with a creative project, as well as to have an extra opportunity to interact with their family.

**Voluntary Sector Coordinator, Wandsworth Prison**

## SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

Despite the unequivocal positive results of the current study, they stand only as a first step towards the understanding of the impact of the Lullaby Project. First, the sample was small, which, despite being desirable for an in-depth study, limits any conclusions on the generalisation of the findings. The study also didn't include a control or a comparative element. These stand as the first suggestions for further research. A mixed-methods approach is proposed, with the inclusion of quantitative indicators of change. Additionally, it will be highly relevant to assess the impact of the project longitudinally, checking for sustainability and transferability of change. Therefore, a follow-up assessment is encouraged.

The testing of different project durations to check variations on impact is also of relevance. Addressing a key limitation of the current research project, further investigation will also ideally include interpreters in the case of the refugee and migrant group. Despite all the mothers displaying a sufficient understanding of the English language for providing the data needed, language was indeed a barrier to optimal expression.

Furthermore, a focus on the children appears now as a natural next step towards a better understanding of the potential of this project, in particular given the known impact of social vulnerability on infants' language development (Hart, 2003) and attachment (Miller, 2016).

Finally, a key construct in psychological research, strongly developed in recent years, seems highly relevant for the context of an assessment of the Lullaby Project. It has been proposed (e.g. Calhoun and Tedeschi, 2004) that in vulnerable contexts, while some individuals may "bounce-back" to normal functioning (resilience), others may actually gain something new and obtain a higher level of functioning after a challenging event or trauma. This has been called Post-traumatic Growth and is characterised by a qualitative change across different life domains such as greater appreciation for life, closer relationships, seeing new opportunities in life and setting new life goals and a higher sense of personal strength. Not only do individuals go back to a normal functioning, they find a "new normal", that is better than their previous experiences before challenge. This may provide a useful lens when considering the gains and richness of the processes experienced in the Lullaby Project, applied to vulnerable contexts.

In summary, the two pilots of the Lullaby Project were highly successful in promoting positive change and represent a relevant model of community-based music interventions for the UK context, in particular for work with migrant and prison populations and for both mothers and fathers alike. Not only did the project demonstrate quality and effectiveness, meeting its initial aims, it also evidenced relevance in relation to the uniqueness of the needs of the groups involved and efficiency through short-term significant results. The team of facilitators and the fruitful partnership between the ITT and the RPO was a key element for the success of the project, through ensuring one of its main mechanisms of change: maintaining a highly positive relational context and prioritising the 'human' agenda of the project. The results drawn from the musicians' accounts strengthen the case for this model to be widely used with orchestral educational projects, as it allows for both a creative and innovative structure that, at the same time, meets crucial areas of development for professional musicians.



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