

# HARNESSING THE POWER OF SPORT FOR DEVELOPMENT AND PEACE:

RECOMMENDATIONS TO GOVERNMENTS



Sport for Development & Peace  
INTERNATIONAL WORKING GROUP

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# **HARNESSING THE POWER OF SPORT FOR DEVELOPMENT AND PEACE:**

**RECOMMENDATIONS TO GOVERNMENTS**

# NAVIGATIONAL MAP





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## FOREWORD

On behalf of the Sport for Development and Peace International Working Group (SDP IWG), we are pleased to present this publication, *Harnessing the Power of Sport for Development and Peace: Recommendations to Governments*, to national government policy-makers and the international Sport for Development and Peace community on the occasion of the 2008 Beijing Summer Olympic Games.

The SDP IWG was established in 2004 to articulate and promote the adoption of policy recommendations to governments for the integration of sport and physical activity into their domestic and international development strategies and programs. *Harnessing the Power of Sport for Development and Peace: Recommendations to Governments* fulfills the mandate of the SDP IWG to deliver comprehensive policy recommendations to national governments and represents the culmination of a four-year initiative.

The SDP IWG emerged from the work of the United Nations Inter-Agency Task Force on Sport for Development and Peace. It was conceived at a roundtable forum during the 2004 Athens Summer Olympic Games by pioneer governments of Sport for Development and Peace and representatives from the UN. Since that time, participation in the initiative has grown to include more than 50 national governments, nine United Nations agencies, programs and funds, and numerous inter-governmental bodies, sport federations and civil society organizations (please see Appendix 1 for a complete list of SDP IWG members and participants).

*Harnessing the Power of Sport for Development and Peace: Recommendations to Governments* has benefited from the involvement of diverse stakeholders: SDP IWG members contributed their expertise and input – both at regular meetings and through

targeted consultations. Representatives from 35 governments and 40 NGOs participated in personal interviews;<sup>1</sup> and countless stakeholders from key UN agencies, civil society organizations, and the private sector participated in informal consultations on the margins of pertinent international forums and events.

The thematic chapters of this report (chapters 2 – 6), and the recommendations they contain, have benefited from research evidence presented in a series of literature reviews on Sport for Development and Peace,<sup>2</sup> as well as from the sound knowledge of various subject-matter experts. As this report has been informed by the participation of the above-mentioned stakeholders, the information it contains provides a compelling and comprehensive overview of how sport can be harnessed to support the attainment of key international development objectives.

The process of developing a report of this magnitude, however, was not without challenges. Although the SDP IWG Secretariat was able to draw on staff, consultants and volunteers to conduct research in a variety of languages (English, French, German, Italian, Mandarin, Portuguese, Russian, and Spanish), some language barriers may have resulted in the unintended exclusion of some evidence. Similarly, limitations on available research and best practices from Sport for Development and Peace initiatives in the developing world may have resulted in a reliance on resources from a developed-country context.<sup>3</sup> The SDP IWG Steering Group anticipates, however, that as more governments of developing nations recognize the development potential of sport, a more equitable distribution of evidence will emerge over time.

Despite these challenges, we are confident that *Harnessing the Power of Sport for Development and Peace: Recommendations to Governments* will: 1) increase awareness amongst governments about the development and peace potential of sport, and 2) provide government policy-makers with a solid foundation on which to build their own policies, programs and initiatives.

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1 For more information on what governments and NGOs are doing in the field of Sport for Development and Peace, see other documents published by the SDP IWG: *Sport for Development and Peace: Governments in Action* (2008), and *From the Field: Sport for Development and Peace* (2007), respectively.

2 Literature Reviews on Sport for Development and Peace were prepared by the Centre for International Health and Centre for Sport Policy Studies at the University of Toronto and are available on the International Platform on Sport and Development, <<http://iwg.sportanddev.org/data/htmleditor/file/Lit.%20Reviews/literature%20review%20SDP.pdf>>.

3 Readers should note that in some sections of the report, the application of this evidence to other contexts is not advisable without due consideration.

While international momentum around Sport for Development and Peace is growing, more meaningful advances can still be made. We hope that national governments will embrace the power of Sport for Development and Peace and seize the opportunity to make true policy change that will contribute to attaining the Millennium Development Goals.

### **The SDP IWG Steering Group**

*Federal Chancellery, Sport Division, Government of Austria*

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*Canadian Heritage, Government of Canada*

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*Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Government of Norway*

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*Ministry of Youth and Sport, Government of Sierra Leone*

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*Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation & Federal Office for Sport,  
Government of Switzerland*

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*Right To Play*

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*UN Office on Sport for Development and Peace*





## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

*Harnessing the Power of Sport for Development and Peace: Recommendations to Governments* is the final report of the Sport for Development and Peace International Working Group (SDP IWG). The SDP IWG initiative has been made possible by the generous contributions of Austria's Federal Chancellery, the Department of Canadian Heritage, the Royal Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation, and Right To Play.

On behalf of the SDP IWG, the Secretariat would like to acknowledge all those who have contributed to the SDP IWG initiative over the past four years. We would like to begin by thanking former Norwegian Prime Minister Mr. Kjell Magne Bondevik who called upon governments to come forward to support an international policy initiative on Sport for Development and Peace. Thanks to his passion, the SDP IWG was created at the 2004 Athens Summer Olympic Games.

As advocates and practitioners within the Sport for Development and Peace community, we are grateful to Mr. Adolf Ogi, former Special Adviser to the UN Secretary-General on Sport for Development and Peace (2001 - 2007). His leadership has been at the forefront of the Sport for Development and Peace movement and has contributed greatly to the momentum gained over the last number of years. We are also pleased to welcome Mr. Wilfried Lemke as the incoming Special Adviser to the UN Secretary-General on Sport for Development and Peace. We are certain that the Sport for Development and Peace movement will benefit under his leadership.

The work of the SDP IWG could not have been accomplished without the participation and involvement of the diverse members of the Bureau and Executive Committees. We would like to thank all these champions for helping advance Sport for Development

and Peace globally. We would also like to recognize the members of the Steering Group who have been incredibly dedicated and have provided ongoing guidance, insight and support to the Secretariat and the initiative over the past four years. (Please see Appendix 1 for a list of SDP IWG Steering Group members and SDP IWG participants.)

Gratitude is extended to Mr. Bruce Jenks, UNDP Assistant Administrator, for providing sound direction to the SDP IWG in his role as chair. Moreover, we would like to acknowledge the UN Office on Sport for Development and Peace, the UN Group of Friends, and the UN Office for Partnerships for their ongoing collaboration and support. We would also like to thank the International Olympic Committee and International Paralympic Committee, as well as the various national Olympic committees, namely the Athens Organizing Committee for the Olympic Games (AOCOG), the Torino Organizing Committee for the Games (TOROG), and the Beijing Organizing Committee for the Olympic Games (BOCOG). Their support was instrumental in facilitating SDP IWG meetings and related events. Finally, we would like to recognize our private sector partner, Johnson & Johnson, for their contribution.

*Harnessing the Power of Sport for Development and Peace: Recommendations to Governments* was developed in consultation with various government departments, multilateral bodies, sport federations, non-governmental organizations and private sector representatives. Special thanks are extended to the many individuals and entities who participated in these consultations. We would like to acknowledge, in particular, the organizers of the 2007 Next Step Conference; the 2008 World Economic Forum in Davos; and the International Business Leadership Forum for providing us with the opportunity and support needed to host these consultations on the margins of their events.

Creating a report of this magnitude requires subject-matter expertise, research and writing. We would like to recognize Elizabeth Mulholland for playing a pivotal role in developing the final report, as well as for her ongoing policy-related advice to the Secretariat. We would also like to acknowledge Judy Kent, Ken Lodewyk, Jonathan Somer and Elise C. Roy for their individual contributions. Similar thanks are extended to our academic partners at the Centre for International Health and Centre for Sport Policy Studies, University of Toronto, for conducting literature reviews on Sport for Development and Peace, which were used to inform the thematic chapters of this report.

*Harnessing the Power of Sport for Development and Peace: Recommendations to Governments* has been influenced by other publications produced by the SDP IWG Secretariat. These publications include: *Preliminary Report: From Practice to Policy*; *From the Field: Sport for Development and Peace in Action*; and *Sport for Development*

*and Peace: Governments in Action*. Special thanks are extended to the many individuals from governments and the international NGO community who participated in interviews to inform these publications. Their experiences and insights have enriched the policy recommendations presented herein.

Finally, as head of the SDP IWG Secretariat, I want to express my sincere appreciation to my team – the SDP IWG Secretariat (please see Appendix 1 for list of names). Without their commitment, creativity, and expertise this initiative would not have been possible.

I would also like to convey my appreciation to you, the reader, for expressing an interest in Sport for Development and Peace. The efforts of individuals cannot be underestimated in driving the Sport for Development and Peace movement forward. I believe that your unique perspective, insight and dedication, coupled with the information provided in this report, will ensure you are well-positioned to advocate for local, national, and global action in support of Sport for Development and Peace.



**Johann Olav Koss**  
Head of the SDP IWG Secretariat  
President & CEO, Right To Play



A hand holding a yellow ball with the number 203 on it. The background is a blurred outdoor setting with other people in the distance.

# INTRODUCTION TO SPORT FOR DEVELOPMENT AND PEACE







# CHAPTER 1

## 3 WHAT IS SPORT FOR DEVELOPMENT AND PEACE?

### 3 Setting the Stage

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Left:

Local primary school students participate in a sports festival organized by young leaders. Activities are designed to be inclusive and to teach teamwork and communication skills.

Dreams and Team Poland

Previous page:

A Zambian boy participates in a “play day”. Play days, which are held regularly during the school year, bring children together to play and learn in a positive and fun environment.

Right To Play/Melania Spitzer

# 1 WHAT IS SPORT FOR DEVELOPMENT AND PEACE?

## 1.1 SETTING THE STAGE

Sport for Development and Peace refers to the intentional use of sport, physical activity and play to attain specific development and peace objectives, including, most notably, the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).

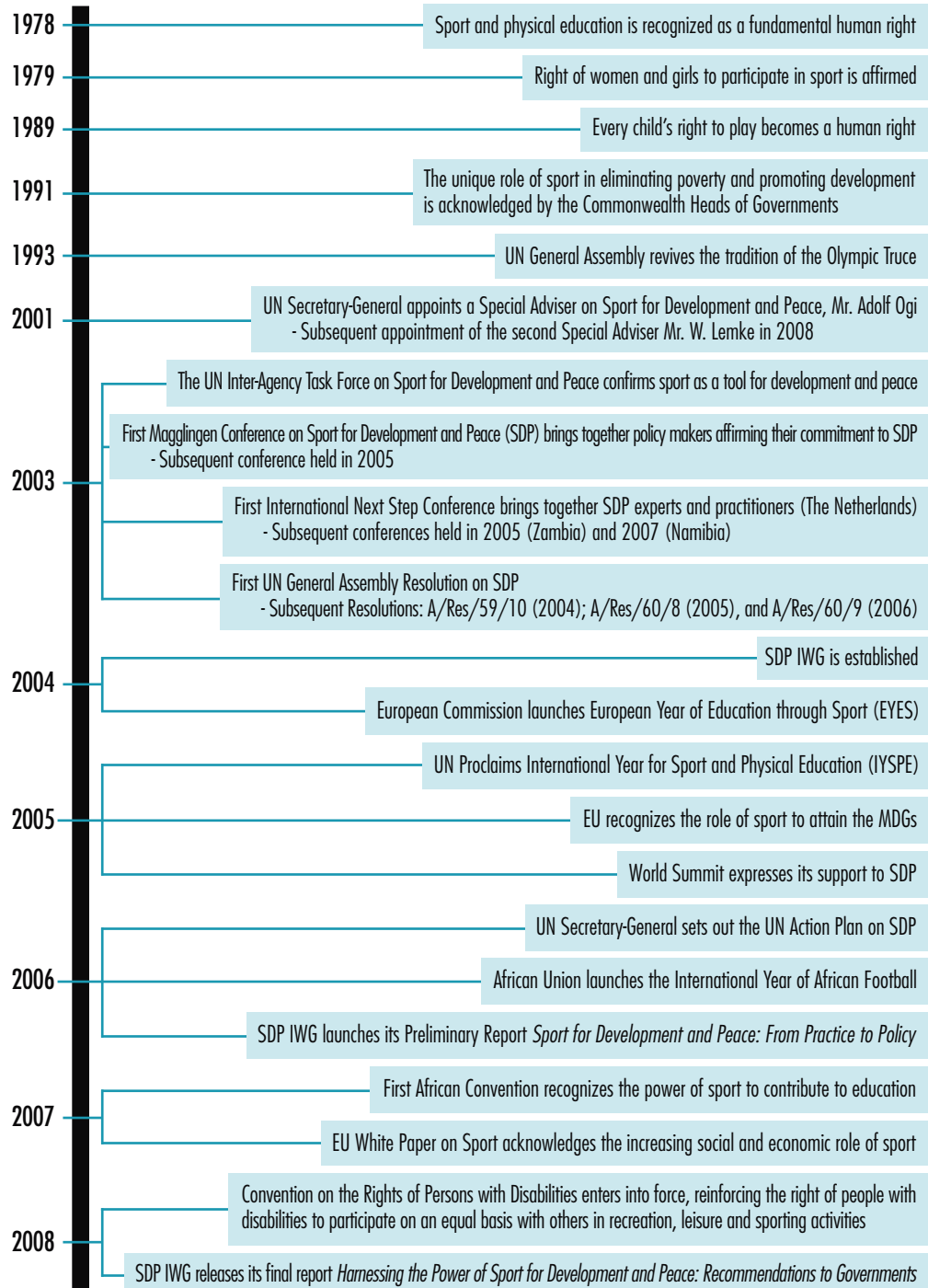
Successful Sport for Development and Peace programs work to realize the right of all members of society to participate in sport and leisure activities. Effective programs intentionally give priority to development objectives and are carefully designed to be inclusive. These programs embody the best values of sport while upholding the quality and integrity of the sport experience. Strong Sport for Development and Peace programs combine sport and play with other non-sport components to enhance their effectiveness. They are delivered in an integrated manner with other local, regional and national development and peace initiatives so that they are mutually reinforcing. Programs seek to empower participants and communities by engaging them in the design and delivery of activities, building local capacity, adhering to generally accepted principles of transparency and accountability, and pursuing sustainability through collaboration, partnerships and coordinated action.

While Sport for Development and Peace is widely seen as an emerging field in the area of development, its antecedents can be traced back to antiquity when the Olympic Truce was first used to establish temporary peace between warring states, to allow for competition among their athletes.

There is no doubt that sport has historically played an important and diverse role in virtually every society. However, formal recognition of the value of sport with regard to development and peace is far more recent. The timeline in Figure 1.1 illustrates the

advancement of Sport for Development and Peace from the post-World War II period to the present, demonstrating growing international momentum in support of sport's development potential. A more detailed outline of key Sport for Development and Peace milestones, highlighting the progression in thinking about sport and its value to society, is presented in Appendix 2.

**Figure 1.1 SPORT FOR DEVELOPMENT AND PEACE TIMELINE**



## 1.2 DEFINING "SPORT" IN THE DEVELOPMENT CONTEXT

Definitions of the term "sport" vary. In a development context the definition of sport usually includes a broad and inclusive spectrum of activities suitable to people of all ages and abilities, with an emphasis on the positive values of sport. In 2003, the UN Inter-Agency Task Force on Sport for Development and Peace defined sport, for the purposes of development, as "all forms of physical activity that contribute to physical fitness, mental well-being and social interaction, such as play, recreation, organized or competitive sport, and indigenous sports and games."<sup>1</sup> This definition has been accepted by many proponents of Sport for Development and Peace and is the working definition of sport for the purposes of this report.

## 1.3 SPORT'S UNIQUE CONTRIBUTION TO DEVELOPMENT AND PEACE

Support for Sport for Development and Peace is rooted in the recognition that sport possesses unique attributes that enable it to bring particular value to development and peace processes. These attributes are discussed in greater detail below.

### **Sport's universal popularity**

As participants, spectators, or volunteers, people are attracted to sport — arguably more than to any other activity. This popularity transcends national, cultural, socio-economic and political boundaries and can be invoked with success in virtually any community in the world. Sport's popularity derives in large part from the fact that, when done right, it is fun and enjoyable for everyone — participants and spectators alike. In contexts where people are faced with difficult and unrelenting challenges in their day-to-day lives, the value of this dimension of sport should not be underestimated.

### **Sport's ability to connect people and communities**

Sport's value as a social connector is one of its most powerful development attributes. Sport is an inherently social process bringing together players, teams, coaches, volunteers and spectators. Sport creates extensive horizontal webs of relationships at the community level, and vertical links to national governments, sport federations, and international organizations for funding and other forms of support. These community sport networks, when inclusive, are an important source of social networking, helping to combat exclusion and fostering community capacity to work collectively to realize opportunities and address challenges. Programs that reflect the best values of sport — fair play, teamwork, cooperation, respect for opponents, and inclusion — reinforce this process by helping participants to acquire values and life skills consistent with positive social relationships, collaborative action, and mutual support. If the population involved is broadly inclusive, sport's connecting dimension can help to unify people from diverse backgrounds and

perspectives, establishing a shared bond that contributes positively to social cohesion. For this reason, sport has long been used as a means to promote national unity and harmony within and across nations.

### **Sport as a communications platform**

Over the past few decades, sport has emerged as global mass entertainment, and has become one of the most powerful and far-reaching communications platforms in the world. Because global sport events offer the capacity to reach vast numbers of people worldwide, they are effective platforms for public education and social mobilization. By extension, high-performance athletes have become global celebrities in their own right, enabling them to serve as powerful ambassadors, spokespeople and role-models for development and peace initiatives.

### **Sport's cross-cutting nature**

Sport is one of the most cross-cutting of all development and peace tools. It is increasingly being used to promote health and prevent disease, strengthen child and youth development and education, foster social inclusion, prevent conflict and build peace, foster gender equity, enhance inclusion of persons with disabilities, and promote employment and economic development. There are few areas of development where sport cannot be used as a platform for public education and social mobilization, or as a program vehicle to strengthen individual capacity and improve lives. In this respect, Sport for Development and Peace initiatives can play a powerful role in both preventing and helping to address a broad range of social and economic challenges. They can be a highly effective and low-cost means of reducing the individual and public costs associated with development challenges — costs which can be extremely high in some contexts and can significantly impede development.

### **Sport's potential to empower, motivate and inspire**

Sport is inherently about drawing on, developing and showcasing people's strengths and capacities. By shining a light on what people can do, rather than what they cannot do, sport consistently empowers, motivates and inspires individuals and their communities in a way that promotes hope and a positive outlook for the future — ingredients that are essential to the success of all development and peace endeavours. For this reason, sport is also an extremely powerful means of promoting physical and mental health. Sport can be used to encourage people of all ages to become more physically active, providing opportunities for enjoyment and personal development, building self-esteem, and fostering positive social connection with others — all important factors in promoting and maintaining health and well-being.

## 1.4 SPORT AND THE INTERNATIONAL HUMAN RIGHTS FRAMEWORK

In the modern era, Sport for Development and Peace's more recent foundations can be traced to the international human rights framework that emerged post-World War II under the auspices of the United Nations.

In 1948, the UN Universal Declaration of Human Rights asserted that all persons have the right to: rest and leisure,<sup>2</sup> a standard of living adequate to their health and well-being and that of their family,<sup>3</sup> free and compulsory primary education,<sup>4</sup> and participation in the cultural life of the community.<sup>5</sup> Nine subsequent international covenants and treaties (see Table 1.1) have affirmed and expanded on these rights, defining them more specifically, and establishing their limitations. Governments that are party to these treaties must respect, protect and fulfill the rights they set out.

**TABLE 1.1 INTERNATIONAL HUMAN RIGHTS COVENANTS AND TREATIES**

INTERNATIONAL HUMAN RIGHTS COVENANTS AND TREATIES	DATE	MONITORING BODY
International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination	21 Dec 1965	Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (CERD)
International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights	16 Dec 1966	Human Rights Committee (HRC)
International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights	16 Dec 1966	Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (CESCR)
Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women	18 Dec 1979	Committee on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW)
Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment	10 Dec 1984	Committee Against Torture (CAT)
Convention on the Rights of the Child	20 Nov 1989	Committee on the Rights of the Child (CRC)
International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of their Families	18 Dec 1990	Committee on Migrant Workers (CMW)
International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance	Not in force	Committee on Enforced Disappearances (Not in force)
Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities	3 May 2008	Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities

While none of the above conventions explicitly defines the “right to sport,” sport in its broadest sense can be linked to the following human rights as set out in the above treaties and covenants:

- Right to the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health;<sup>6</sup>
- Right to education directed at the fullest development of human personality;<sup>7</sup>
- Right to take part in cultural life;<sup>8</sup>
- Right to rest and leisure;<sup>9</sup>
- Right for children to engage in play and recreational activities;<sup>10</sup>
- Women’s right to participate in recreational activities and sports;<sup>11</sup> and
- Right of persons with disabilities to participate in sport on an equal basis with others.<sup>12</sup>

In addition, UNESCO’s International Charter of Physical Education and Sport, referencing the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, states that “access to physical education and sport should be assured and guaranteed for all human beings.”<sup>13</sup>

The Committee on the Rights of the Child, which monitors compliance with the Convention on the Rights of the Child, advises governments to consider the development of a child’s “physical abilities to their fullest potential”<sup>14</sup> when reporting to the Committee on education. The CRC also advises that physical education is an essential component of a balanced and holistic approach to education.<sup>15</sup> In providing advice on the observance of early childhood rights, the Committee highlights the need to pay more attention to the right to leisure and play activities outlined in Article 31 of the Convention,<sup>16</sup> and calls upon governments to pay special attention to girls’ right to play, encouraging them to allocate adequate resources for this purpose.

The international Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities,<sup>17</sup> the most recent of the human rights instruments referenced above, requires State Parties to encourage and promote the participation of persons with disabilities “to the fullest extent possible” in mainstream sporting activities at all levels and to ensure that they have access, on an equal basis with others, to training, resources, and venues. The Convention specifically addresses the needs of children with disabilities, mandating State Parties to ensure that children with disabilities “have equal access with other children to participation in play, recreation and leisure and sporting activities, including those activities in the school system.”<sup>18</sup>

It is clear that without access to sport and play a number of human rights are not fully attainable. The explicit mention of sport, play and physical activity in so many human rights instruments underscores the centrality of these activities to human health, development and well-being, and establishes a strong and compelling foundation for Sport for Development and Peace.

## 1.5 SPORT AND THE MILLENNIUM DEVELOPMENT GOALS

Building on the international human rights framework and the unique attributes of sport, sport programs represent a significant, yet largely untapped, source of potential for enhancing and even accelerating development and peace efforts worldwide, particularly those related to attaining the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). The MDGs were established by the international community at the UN Millennium Summit in September 2000<sup>19</sup> in an effort to focus world attention and resources on the eradication of global poverty. The MDGs comprise eight benchmarks with supporting targets that aim to eradicate or reduce poverty, hunger, child mortality, and disease, and to promote education, maternal health, gender equality, environmental sustainability and global partnerships (see Table 1.2). The target date for achieving the MDGs is 2015.

In its landmark 2003 report, *Sport for Development and Peace: Towards Achieving the Millennium Development Goals*,<sup>20</sup> the United Nations Inter-Agency Task Force on Sport for Development and Peace, concluded that: "...well-designed sport-based initiatives are practical and cost-effective tools to achieve objectives in development and peace. Sport is a powerful vehicle that should be increasingly considered by the UN as complementary to existing activities."<sup>21</sup> The report also specifically notes that: the fundamental elements of sport make it a viable and practical tool to support the achievement of the MDGs.<sup>22</sup>

The MDGs have been widely accepted as the primary framework for measuring development progress and they now guide the international assistance system. While progress toward the MDGs is uneven and the goals will be difficult for some countries to achieve by 2015 without increased efforts, much can be done in a short period of time if there is collaboration and commitment, and if adequate resources and support are provided.<sup>23</sup>



Children with and without disabilities gain confidence and improve their health by participating in inclusive sport programs.

Handicap International -  
Sport and Leisure Activities  
for Children with Disabilities,  
Bangladesh



TABLE 1.2 THE MILLENNIUM DEVELOPMENT GOALS<sup>24</sup>

THE MILLENNIUM DEVELOPMENT GOALS	
1. Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reduce by half the proportion of people living on less than a dollar a day</li> <li>• Achieve full and productive employment and decent work for all, including women and young people</li> <li>• Reduce by half the proportion of people who suffer from hunger</li> </ul>
2. Achieve universal primary education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure that all boys and girls complete a full course of primary schooling</li> </ul>
3. Promote gender equality and empower women	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Eliminate gender disparity in primary and secondary education preferably by 2005, and at all levels by 2015</li> </ul>
4. Reduce child mortality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reduce by two thirds the mortality rate among children under five years of age</li> </ul>
5. Improve maternal health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reduce by three quarters the maternal mortality ratio</li> <li>• Achieve, by 2015, universal access to reproductive health</li> </ul>
6. Combat HIV and AIDS, malaria, and other diseases	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Halt and begin to reverse the spread of HIV and AIDS</li> <li>• Achieve, by 2010, universal access to treatment for HIV and AIDS for all those who need it</li> <li>• Halt and begin to reverse the incidence of malaria and other major diseases</li> </ul>
7. Ensure environmental sustainability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Integrate the principles of sustainable development into country policies and programs; reverse loss of environmental resources</li> <li>• Reduce biodiversity loss, achieving, by 2010, a significant reduction in the rate of loss</li> <li>• Reduce by half the proportion of people without sustainable access to safe drinking water</li> <li>• Achieve significant improvement in the lives of at least 100 million slum dwellers by 2020</li> </ul>
8. Develop a global partnership for development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop further an open trading and financial system that is rule-based, predictable and non-discriminatory, and includes a commitment to good governance, development, and poverty reduction — nationally and internationally</li> <li>• Address the least developed countries' special needs. This includes tariff- and quota-free access for their exports; enhanced debt relief for heavily indebted poor countries; cancellation of official bilateral debt; and more generous official development assistance for countries committed to poverty reduction</li> <li>• Address the special needs of landlocked and small island developing States</li> <li>• Deal comprehensively with developing countries' debt problems through national and international measures to make debt sustainable in the long term</li> <li>• In cooperation with the developing countries, develop decent and productive work for youth</li> <li>• In cooperation with pharmaceutical companies, provide access to affordable essential drugs in developing countries</li> <li>• In cooperation with the private sector, make available the benefits of new technologies — especially information communications technologies</li> </ul>

While sport's impact on the specific themes outlined in the MDGs is explored more fully in the chapters that follow, Table 1.3 sets out some of the key contributions that sport can make. Sport alone will not enable the international community to achieve the MDGs, but sport's unique attributes make it a valuable component of broader, holistic approaches to addressing each of the millennium challenges. The potential contribution that sport can make, combined with the fundamental urgency underlying the MDG targets, unites Sport for Development and Peace proponents in their efforts to engage and mobilize governments in developing nations to include Sport for Development and Peace in their national development frameworks and strategies, and to encourage governments in donor nations to integrate sport into their international assistance strategies.

For low-income countries, national Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers (PRSPs) provide the guiding framework for efforts to attain the MDGs, describing programs to promote growth and reduce poverty and outlining associated needs for external financing.<sup>25</sup> Policies and programs embedded by national governments in these strategies receive high priority on their agendas. A growing number of countries (including Cape Verde, Mozambique, Sierra Leone, Tanzania, and Uganda)<sup>26</sup> have integrated sport into their PRSPs. Many developing countries, however, are still unaware of the ways in which Sport for Development and Peace can be used to advance their development objectives. In these cases, advocacy is needed to position Sport for Development and Peace as a valuable cross-cutting tool for achieving the MDGs.

**TABLE 1.3 CONTRIBUTION OF SPORT TO THE MILLENNIUM DEVELOPMENT GOALS**

MILLENNIUM DEVELOPMENT GOAL	CONTRIBUTION OF SPORT
1. Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Participants, volunteers and coaches acquire transferable life skills which increase their employability</li> <li>• Vulnerable individuals are connected to community services and supports through sport-based outreach programs</li> <li>• Sport programs and sport equipment production provide jobs and skills development</li> <li>• Sport can help prevent diseases that impede people from working and impose health care costs on individuals and communities</li> <li>• Sport can help reduce stigma and increase self-esteem, self-confidence and social skills, leading to increased employability</li> </ul>
2. Achieve universal primary education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• School sport programs motivate children to enroll in and attend school and can help improve academic achievement</li> <li>• Sport-based community education programs provide alternative education opportunities for children who cannot attend school</li> <li>• Sport can help erode stigma preventing children with disabilities from attending school</li> </ul>

MILLENNIUM DEVELOPMENT GOAL	CONTRIBUTION OF SPORT
3. Promote gender equality and empower women	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sport helps improve female physical and mental health and offers opportunities for social interaction and friendship</li> <li>• Sport participation leads to increased self-esteem, self-confidence, and enhanced sense of control over one's body</li> <li>• Girls and women access leadership opportunities and experience</li> <li>• Sport can cause positive shifts in gender norms that afford girls and women greater safety and control over their lives</li> <li>• Women and girls with disabilities are empowered by sport-based opportunities to acquire health information, skills, social networks, and leadership experience</li> </ul>
4. Reduce child mortality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sport can be used to educate and deliver health information to young mothers, resulting in healthier children</li> <li>• Increased physical fitness improves children's resistance to some diseases</li> <li>• Sport can help reduce the rate of higher-risk adolescent pregnancies</li> <li>• Sport-based vaccination and prevention campaigns help reduce child deaths and disability from measles, malaria and polio</li> <li>• Inclusive sport programs help lower the likelihood of infanticide by promoting greater acceptance of children with disabilities</li> </ul>
5. Improve maternal health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sport for health programs offer girls and women greater access to reproductive health information and services</li> <li>• Increased fitness levels help speed post-natal recovery</li> </ul>
6. Combat HIV and AIDS, malaria, and other diseases	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sport programs can be used to reduce stigma and increase social and economic integration of people living with HIV and AIDS</li> <li>• Sport programs are associated with lower rates of health risk behaviour that contributes to HIV infection</li> <li>• Programs providing HIV prevention education and empowerment can further reduce HIV infection rates</li> <li>• Sport can be used to increase measles, polio and other vaccination rates</li> <li>• Involvement of celebrity athletes and use of mass sport events can increase reach and impact of malaria, tuberculosis and other education and prevention campaigns</li> </ul>
7. Ensure environmental sustainability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sport-based public education campaigns can raise awareness of importance of environmental protection and sustainability</li> <li>• Sport-based social mobilization initiatives can enhance participation in community action to improve local environment</li> </ul>
8. Develop a global partnership for development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sport for Development and Peace efforts catalyze global partnerships and increase networking among governments, donors, NGOs and sport organizations worldwide</li> </ul>

## 1.6 LIMITATIONS AND RISKS ASSOCIATED WITH SPORT

While well-designed Sport for Development and Peace programs hold significant potential to help drive the attainment of the MDGs and related development goals, sport alone cannot ensure peace or solve complex social problems. Sport should be positioned, instead, as a highly effective tool in a broader toolkit of development practices,

and should be applied in a holistic and integrated manner with other interventions and programs to achieve optimal results.

It is important to note that not all sport programs are suitable for all development and peace purposes. Commercial sport programs, while potentially positive economic generators, are not necessarily conducive to social development because their primary objective is usually commercial gain. Other high-performance sport programs are equally unsuited for broad-based use as a development tool, due to restrictions in who is allowed to participate (e.g. only elite athletes). This does not mean, however, that professional and high-performance sport events, federations, clubs, teams and athletes cannot play an active role in Sport for Development and Peace. In fact, they have historically played a critical and highly valuable role (e.g., by mobilizing athletes and teams as advocates and role models, establishing sport events as public education platforms, and providing resources for community-based programs) and they will continue to do so.

Society's ills can be found in sport environments, as in all other social domains. As a result, sport brings with it particular risks. These risks can have a negative impact on development and peace aims and must be guarded against if the full positive power of sport is to be realized. Examples include the unfair exploitation of talent from developing countries for commercial gain, aggression and violent rivalry among opposing teams and their supporters, and an emphasis on winning at any cost that encourages unethical and unhealthy behaviours (like aggression, doping and other forms of cheating). Risks such as these can undermine the positive values of sport and offer negative role models to young people. Sport programs and events that exhibit these attributes are not suitable for Sport for Development and Peace purposes.

The specific risks associated with the use of sport for diverse development objectives are explored and addressed in greater detail in the chapters that follow. In general, however, these risks can be minimized by ensuring that Sport for Development and Peace initiatives are driven first and foremost by development objectives and are delivered according to the principles of transparency, accountability, and sustainability, thereby protecting the integrity, inherent joyfulness and positive social value of the sport experience.

## 2 SPORT FOR DEVELOPMENT AND PEACE STAKEHOLDERS

Sport for Development and Peace is an international movement that embraces a broad cross-section of stakeholders from government, local and international non-governmental

organizations (NGOs), the sport community, multilateral institutions, business and academia. Through the combined efforts of all these actors, Sport for Development and Peace has emerged as a significant new development field and demonstrates growing momentum around the world. Few Sport for Development and Peace initiatives involve just one sector. Most involve cross-sectoral collaborations and partnerships designed to harness critical expertise, leverage resources, deepen impact, develop local capacity and foster long-term sustainability.

Cross-sectoral collaboration is evident within the Sport for Development and Peace community. For example, resource-sharing facilitated by the online web resource on Sport for Development and Peace (the International Platform on Sport and Development) features contributions and news from all sectors, while the Magglingen and Next Step conferences have brought together highly diverse stakeholders to share experiences and knowledge within and across sectors related to Sport for Development and Peace issues.

## 2.1 THE LEADING ROLE OF NATIONAL GOVERNMENTS

To fully harness sport's potential, appropriate national government policies, investment, and capacity are needed to support programs and, where appropriate, to scale-up these programs on a nationwide basis.

This process involves a broad range of government actors. At the national level, international development agencies must be aware of, and open to, the use of sport as a tool for development and peace, and integrate it into their international assistance policies and programs. At the same time, governments need to be aware of the power of sport to help them meet their domestic development goals, and the importance of integrating sport into their development strategies and approaches. In developing nations, this may mean including Sport for Development and Peace initiatives in a Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper or a National Development Framework. Finance departments are usually key stakeholders in this process because they are the primary architects of economic development and poverty reduction strategies and act as primary liaisons with multilateral donors like the World Bank and regional development banks.

Sport departments also play a critical role, given their unique understanding, expertise, and networks in sport. In some cases, international sport units have been the first movers within governments, integrating development objectives into their international sport development programs. In other cases, sport departments may work with their counterparts in departments responsible for education, health, youth, persons with disabilities, women, economic development, and labour to help design, implement and support sport-based programs aimed at achieving development objectives.

Provincial, state and local governments all have important roles to play in supporting the development and scale up of Sport for Development and Peace policies and programs. In some cases, they may have more direct jurisdiction over education and sport infrastructure and programs than national governments. They can help to leverage resources and foster participation in Sport for Development and Peace programs.

Due to the broad array of Sport for Development and Peace international, national and sub-national stakeholders that may be active in a given country, national governments can play an important role in convening key players to encourage knowledge exchange, networking, collaboration, partnerships, and coordinated participation in national Sport for Development and Peace policy and program development and implementation.<sup>27</sup>

## 2.2 FROM THE FIELD: THE CONTRIBUTION OF NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS

Non-governmental organizations were among the first to recognize sport's development and peace potential and have been at the forefront of the Sport for Development and Peace movement since its inception. They range from large, international NGOs focused on humanitarian action and development through sport, to grassroots organizations that make use of sport to realize local development and peace objectives. Some of these organizations are primarily focused on Sport for Development and Peace. An increasing number, however, are more generalist in their approach and see sport as an additional valuable tool for furthering their development and peace efforts.

NGOs bring unique attributes to Sport for Development and Peace that make them essential partners to governments and other stakeholders. In many cases, NGOs act as intermediaries between governments and the people and communities they are assisting, providing a critical conduit for information and feedback on community and target population needs, as well as policy and program impacts in the field. They also serve as the primary delivery agent for many Sport for Development and Peace initiatives offered in the community, outside of schools and workplaces. Because their missions tend to be highly targeted, they are often deep wells of community and development knowledge, expertise, and leadership, and are trusted and respected by their members and stakeholders. As such, they are necessary and central partners when it comes to Sport for Development and Peace policy and program advocacy, development and implementation.<sup>28</sup>

Many local and international NGOs have played leadership roles in advancing the practical integration of sport and development in the field. They have contributed to the development of shared knowledge and resources, including: the Next Step Toolkit (a compendium of best practices from the field); program profiles developed by the Commonwealth

Advisory Body on Sport and the SDP IWG; and the Magglingen and Next Step conferences (organized to promote knowledge exchange among international Sport for Development and Peace stakeholders). For more information on these organizations and initiatives, readers are encouraged to visit the International Platform on Sport and Development.<sup>29</sup>

## 2.3 MOBILIZING THE SPORT COMMUNITY: THE CONTRIBUTION OF SPORT ORGANIZATIONS

Like NGOs, international sport federations, organizations and clubs from the national to local level have been at the forefront of the Sport for Development and Peace movement since its inception.

International sport federations implement and support Sport for Development and Peace projects, participate in disaster-relief efforts, promote peaceful international relations, lend their infrastructure to other development efforts, and work to strengthen mainstream sport capacity in developing nations. They are also increasingly making use of their large-scale international sport events to communicate important development and peace messages and to provide platforms for more sustained international social mobilization efforts.

The recognition of the development potential of sport has also been adopted by the Olympic movement. From an initial focus on the role of sport in the development of critical life skills and the strengthening of the social fabric within nations, Olympic and Paralympic values have evolved to include a broader focus on advancing more sustainable futures for all those touched by the Games. This has introduced new legacy dimensions to the Olympic movement, including the improvement of social and economic conditions in host communities, innovation in conservation and management of natural resources related to the delivery of the Games, and increased inclusion of youth, women and indigenous peoples in the benefits created by the Games. In the case of the London 2012 Olympic Games, this legacy is being extended internationally by the United Kingdom, which has committed to a Sport for Development legacy program, *International Inspiration*, aimed at engaging and inspiring the youth of the world through sport.<sup>30</sup>

The International Olympic Committee has also worked actively with the United Nations to develop joint programs to promote education, health care (particularly the prevention of HIV and AIDS), environmental issues, and the role of women in sport and society.

At the national, regional and local level, sport federations, organizations and clubs undertake their own Sport for Development and Peace programs, and also partner with governments, development NGOs, grassroots organizations and multilateral agencies such as the United Nations, contributing sport expertise, equipment, and training to other Sport for Development and Peace initiatives.

While Sport for Development and Peace does not include a focus on developing high-performance sport, it benefits greatly from the expertise, infrastructure and support that this community brings to bear on development issues in communities around the world.

High-performance sport teams and athletes are perhaps the most visible champions of Sport for Development and Peace. Through their achievements and celebrity, they serve as powerful role models, effective advocates, and ambassadors of hope to disadvantaged communities. Sport's exceptional popularity also makes athletes among the most effective spokespeople when it comes to disseminating public health and education messages to hard-to-reach groups. Athletes have been particularly active in the fight against HIV and AIDS — delivering critical prevention information and encouraging people to speak openly about HIV and AIDS issues.

Athletes do not have to be international celebrities to contribute to Sport for Development and Peace efforts. Athletes who are well-known locally, regionally and nationally can be equally effective as role models, ambassadors and champions in their own communities.

## 2.4 SUPPORTING NATIONAL GOVERNMENTS: THE CONTRIBUTION OF THE UNITED NATIONS

United Nations' agencies possess significant expertise and knowledge and actively work to promote Sport for Development and Peace internationally.

Much of this support is offered at the country level by agencies participating as partners in Sport for Development and Peace initiatives. UN agencies also facilitate networking and coordination and are important sources of knowledge development — actively investigating how sport can be used to advance development and peace goals and synthesizing impact evidence and lessons learned from the field. In keeping with this role, a number of UN agencies, programs and funds<sup>31</sup> have been active participants in the SDP IWG process from its inception.

The UN Office on Sport for Development and Peace (UNOSDP) has primary responsibility for promoting Sport for Development and Peace throughout the UN community and with national governments. Most recently, in 2005, this included promoting the largest international Sport for Development and Peace initiative to date, the International Year of Sport and Physical Education (IYSPE 2005).

Through its work with the UN Group of Friends of Sport for Development and Peace (an informal group of UN Ambassadors supportive of Sport for Development and Peace, and working closely with UN agencies, programs and funds, as well as civil society actors)



the UNOSDP successfully led the November 3, 2006 adoption of UN General Assembly Resolution 61/10 on Sport for Development and Peace.<sup>32</sup> An accompanying Action Plan was also adopted which laid out a three-year plan for expanding and strengthening Sport for Development and Peace partnerships, programs, projects advocacy and communication activities.<sup>34</sup> The UNOSDP now has primary responsibility for driving the implementation of this plan within the UN system.

## 2.5 MORE THAN JUST FUNDING: THE CONTRIBUTION OF THE PRIVATE SECTOR

The private sector brings a wide range of unique skills, expertise, resources and relationships to Sport for Development and Peace partnerships. According to recent research undertaken by the International Business Leaders Forum,<sup>35</sup> these resources extend well beyond funding and include the following contributions:

- Technical, IT, and project management skills;
- Branding, communications and marketing expertise and services;
- Global relationships and networks;
- Management support; and
- Employee volunteering and fundraising activity.

Workplaces are also important delivery sites for some Sport for Development and Peace initiatives. Many companies are already engaged in sport, for business or philanthropic purposes, through sponsorships, support for community-level sport, production of sport-related goods and services, and employee involvement in competitive and community sport. In many cases, there are opportunities to make creative links between these activities and Sport for Development and Peace objectives. Companies benefit from these partnerships which help them to achieve their social investment objectives, reach new target markets, engage and motivate their employees, and improve their relations with governments.

Effective partnerships in this area are limited, however, and there remains a great deal of untapped potential. Because a series of high-profile sporting events will be hosted over the next few years in developing countries (e.g., the 2008 Beijing Olympics, 2010 Delhi Commonwealth Games, 2010 FIFA World Cup in South Africa), private sector interest in Sport for Development and Peace is likely to increase, offering more opportunities for governments and other stakeholders to engage private sector partners in helping them meet their development objectives.

## 2.6 BUILDING THE EVIDENCE BASE: THE CONTRIBUTION OF RESEARCH

Because Sport for Development and Peace is an emerging movement, there is still much to be learned about the full potential of sport to advance development and peace goals and the best ways to do this. Monitoring, evaluation and research play a critical role in this process. While the lack of widely available evaluation tools specific to Sport for

Development and Peace remains a challenge, skilled researchers from around the world have begun to build a credible base of evidence in support of sport's use as a development tool. This work, together with expanded research and knowledge exchange networks and processes for translating research into practical policy and program advice, will play a critical role in strengthening Sport for Development and Peace efforts in future.

### 3 LOOKING AHEAD

This report builds on the premise that sport and development are natural and complementary processes that can enable governments and their partners to build a better world. Although sport alone cannot resolve complex social and economic challenges, it can serve as an education platform, a mobilization process, a way to strengthen individuals and communities, and a source of joy, inspiration and hope.

The information in this report aims to provide Sport for Development and Peace stakeholders with the foundation they need to build policies, programs and initiatives that will drive development goals forward.

Given the complexity of the issues, Chapters 2 through 6 of this report are intended as useful resources for policy-makers interested in establishing sport-based initiatives to:

- Prevent disease and promote health;
- Strengthen child and youth development and education;
- Promote gender equity and empower girls and women;
- Foster the inclusion and well-being of persons with disabilities; and
- Prevent conflict and build peace.

Chapters 2-6 address each of these development objectives respectively and provide readers with information on relevant global trends, information on how sport can be used to advance the objective in question, evidence of sport's impact, policy and program recommendations to governments based on best practices (where available), and examples from governments, NGOs and other partners already using sport to this end.

Chapter 7 summarizes the SDP IWG's key findings with regard to national government approaches to harnessing Sport for Development and Peace and offers high-level recommendations designed to help governments develop and implement effective Sport for Development and Peace policies and programs. These recommendations address

diverse questions related to mobilizing government support and action, policy development, program design and implementation, and resource mobilization, partnerships and collaboration.

## ENDNOTES

1-30

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- 2 United Nations, *Universal Declaration of Human Rights*, 10 December 1948, A/Res/217/A (III), at article 24. [UN, *Universal Declaration of Human Rights*].
- 3 *Ibid.* at Article 25 (1).
- 4 *Ibid.*, at Article 26 (1, 2).
- 5 *Ibid.*, at Article 27 (1).
- 6 United Nations, *International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights* (16 December 1966) A/ResS/2200 (A) XXI, entered into force 3 January 1976, at Article 12 (1).
- 7 *Ibid.* at Article 13 (1).
- 8 *Ibid.* at Article 15 (a).
- 9 *Universal Declaration of Human Rights* at Article 24.
- 10 United Nations, *Convention on the Rights of the Child* (20 November 1989) A/Res/44/25 entered into force 2 September 1990, at Article 31, online: UNHCHR <<http://www.unhcr.ch/html/menu2/6/crc/treaties/crc.htm>>. [*Convention on the Rights of the Child*].
- 11 United Nations, *Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women* (18 December 1979) A/Res/34/180, entered into force 3 September 1981, at Article 13 (c), online: United Nations <<http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/cedaw/text/econvention.htm>>. [CEDAW].
- 12 United Nations, *Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities* (18 March 2008) A/Res/62/170, entered into force online: UN <<http://www.un.org/depts/dhl/resguide/r58.htm>> at Article 30. [*Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities*].
- 13 UNESCO, *International Charter of Physical Education and Sport*, adopted by the General Conference on 21 November 1978, online UNESCO <[http://www.unesco.org/education/information/nfsunesco/pdf/SPORT\\_E.PDF](http://www.unesco.org/education/information/nfsunesco/pdf/SPORT_E.PDF)>.
- 14 Committee on the Rights of the Child, General Comment No. 1, “The Aims of Education”, CRC/GC/2001/1 (April 17, 2001), online: Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights <<http://www2.ohchr.org/english/bodies/crc/comments.htm>> [CRC, General Comment No. 1]
- 15 CRC, General Comment No. 1, 12.
- 16 Committee on the Rights of the Child, General Comment No. 7, “Implementing Child Rights in Early Childhood”, CRC/C/GC/7.Rev.1 (September 20, 2006), online: Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights <<http://www2.ohchr.org/english/bodies/crc/comments.htm>>.
- 17 *Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities* at Article 30.
- 18 *Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities* at Article 30 (5).
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- 20 UN, *Towards Achieving*.
- 21 *Ibid.* at v.
- 22 *Ibid.* at v.
- 23 United Nations Millennium Project, *Investing in Development, A Practical Plan to Achieve the Millennium Development Goals*, (UN Millennium Project, 2005) at 29.
- 24 UN Millennium Development Goals, online: United Nations <<http://www.un.org/millenniumgoals/index.html>>. [UN, Millennium Development Goals].
- 25 World Bank, *Poverty Reduction Strategies*, online: World Bank <<http://web.worldbank.org/WBSITE/EXTERNAL/TOPICS/EXTPOVERTY/EXTPRS/0,,menuPK:384207~pagePK:149018~piPK:149093~theSitePK:384201,00.html>>.
- 26 These examples have been taken from an analysis of the Sport for Development and Peace activities of 34 national governments by the SDP IWG Secretariat, and should therefore not be considered a comprehensive list.
- 27 For more information on what governments are currently doing in the area of Sport for Development and Peace, see the SDP IWG’s compendium report *Sport for Development and Peace: Governments in Action* (Toronto: SDP IWG Secretariat, 2008).
- 28 For more information on the specific Sport for Development and Peace projects and programs of various NGOs and sport organizations, refer to the SDP IWG’s compendium publication, *From the Field: Sport for Development and Peace in Action* (Toronto: SDP IWG Secretariat, 2007).
- 29 For more information, see the International Platform on Sport and Development, online: <http://www.sportanddev.org>
- 30 For more information on *International Inspiration*, please see: UK Sport, online: <[http://www.uk-sport.gov.uk/news/uk\\_leads\\_international\\_inspiration/](http://www.uk-sport.gov.uk/news/uk_leads_international_inspiration/)>.

**ENDNOTES**

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- 31 ILO, UNDP, UNEP, UNESCO, UNFIP, UN HABITAT, UNHCR, UNICEF, UNOP, UNOSDP.
- 32 United Nations, *Sport as a Means to Promote Education, Health, Development and Peace*, (3 November 2006) A/Res/61/10, online: UN Documentation: Research Guide , <<http://157.150.195.10/depts/dhl/resguide/r61.htm>>
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# SPORT AND HEALTH

PREVENTING DISEASE AND  
PROMOTING HEALTH





# CHAPTER 2

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Left:

Fight for Peace participants receive training in boxing, wrestling and capoeira (a Brazilian martial art). These sports contribute to the health of young people and provide them with opportunities to earn respect from their peers in a safe and constructive environment, discouraging them from becoming involved in street gangs.

Fight for Peace, Brazil

Previous page:

School girls participate in a stretching game designed to ensure physical activity is healthy, safe and enjoyable.

Right To Play

# 1 CONTEXT: HEALTH, DEVELOPMENT AND SPORT

*“Health is a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity. The enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of health is one of the fundamental rights of every human being without distinction of race, religion, political belief, economic or social condition.”<sup>1</sup>*

– Constitution of the World Health Organization (WHO), 1946

## 1.1 HEALTH AND DEVELOPMENT

The fundamental right to health articulated by the World Health Organization (WHO) in 1946 remains integral to development today. This right is strongly reflected in the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), the guiding international development framework adopted by the United Nations (UN) in 2000, and the Human Development Index used to measure the progress of all nations against universal human development goals.

Healthy human development is a necessary foundation for all development progress. Without healthy populations, the achievement of development objectives will be out of reach. Good health is fundamental to the ability of individuals to realize their full human potential. It is also a crucially important economic asset. Low levels of health impede people’s ability to work and earn a living for themselves and their families. When someone becomes ill, an entire family can become trapped in a downward spiral of lost income and high health-care costs.<sup>2</sup> On a national scale, poor population health diminishes productivity and impedes economic growth, while investment in better health outcomes is generally seen as an investment in economic growth.



The close relationship between health and development is responsible for the prominence given to health in the MDGs. Health is represented in three of the eight MDGs:

- MDG 4: Reduce child mortality;
- MDG 5: Improve maternal health; and
- MDG 6: Combat HIV and AIDS, malaria and other diseases.

Health is also understood to be a contributing factor to achieving the remaining five MDGs, particularly those related to education, gender equality and the eradication of extreme poverty and hunger. Achieving the MDGs, however, remains a daunting challenge. If the trends observed since 2000 continue, most low-income countries will require additional resources and assistance to meet their health-related MDGs.

As Table 2.1 shows, the key health issues affecting low- and middle-income countries include, but also extend beyond, those set out in the MDGs. Efforts to address non-communicable diseases, violence, and injuries — and their determinants — are also urgently needed.

**TABLE 2.1 LEADING CAUSES OF MORTALITY AND DISEASE BURDEN (IN DISABILITY-ADJUSTED LIFE YEARS) AMONG ADULTS WORLDWIDE, 2002**

MORTALITY – ADULTS AGED 15-59			MORTALITY – ADULTS AGED 60+		
Rank	Cause	Deaths (000)	Rank	Cause	Deaths (000)
1	HIV/AIDS	2279	1	Ischaemic heart disease	5825
2	Ischaemic heart disease	1332	2	Cerebrovascular disease	4689
3	Tuberculosis	1036	3	Chronic obstructive pulmonary disease	2399
4	Road traffic injuries	814	4	Lower respiratory infections	1396
5	Cerebrovascular disease	783	5	Trachea, bronchus, lung cancers	928
6	Self-inflicted injuries	672	6	Diabetes mellitus	754
7	Violence	473	7	Hypertensive heart disease	735
8	Cirrhosis of the liver	382	8	Stomach cancer	605
9	Lower respiratory infections	352	9	Tuberculosis	495
10	Chronic obstructive pulmonary disease	343	10	Colon and rectum cancers	477
DISEASE BURDEN – ADULTS AGED 15-59			DISEASE BURDEN – ADULTS AGED 60+		
Rank	Cause	DALYs (000)	Rank	Cause	DALYs (000)
1	HIV/AIDS	68 661	1	Ischaemic heart disease	31 481
2	Unipolar depressive disorders	57 843	2	Cerebrovascular disease	29 595
3	Tuberculosis	28 380	3	Chronic obstructive pulmonary disease	14 380
4	Road traffic injuries	27 264	4	Alzheimer and other dementias	8569
5	Ischaemic heart disease	26 155	5	Cataracts	7384
6	Alcohol use disorders	19 567	6	Lower respiratory infections	6597
7	Hearing loss, adult onset	19 486	7	Hearing loss, adult onset	6548
8	Violence	18 962	8	Trachea, bronchus, lung cancers	5952
9	Cerebrovascular disease	18 749	9	Diabetes mellitus	5882
10	Self-inflicted injuries	18 522	10	Vision disorders, age-related and other	4766

Source: World Health Organization, World Health Report 2003 – Shaping the Future<sup>3</sup>

Many countries are working to improve their health-care services, but better health services alone will not improve health outcomes. The health of individuals and populations is determined to a significant degree by social factors such as poverty, income inequality, education, employment, housing, gender and social connectedness. These social determinants of health produce widespread inequities in health within and between societies.<sup>4</sup> The poor and the disadvantaged experience worse health than the rich and powerful, have less access to services and die younger in all societies.<sup>5</sup> Social factors have a direct impact on health status and must be addressed as part of any comprehensive health strategy. Strategies also need to be tailored to the diverse and evolving needs of each country and its specific social, economic and cultural contexts. This includes giving attention to the conditions that account for the greatest current and anticipated burden of disease and mobilizing resources to confront them.

## 1.2 SPORT AS A TOOL TO PROMOTE HEALTH AND PREVENT DISEASE

Sport's unique and universal power to attract, motivate and inspire makes it a highly effective tool for engaging and empowering individuals, communities and even countries to take action to improve their health. Sport can also be a powerful means of mobilizing more resources in the global fight against disease, but this potential is only just beginning to be realized.

According to the WHO, experience and scientific evidence show that regular participation in appropriate physical activity and sport provides people of both sexes and all ages and conditions, including persons with disabilities, with a wide range of physical, social and mental health benefits. Physical activity and sport support strategies to improve diet and discourage the use of tobacco, alcohol and drugs. As well, physical activity and sport help reduce violence, enhance functional capacity, and promote social interaction and integration.<sup>6</sup>

Sport generates health benefits in two primary ways — through direct participation in sport itself, and through the use of participatory and spectator sport as a platform for communication, education and social mobilization. Well-designed sport for health initiatives often work on both levels.

### **Increasing physical activity levels**

Because physical inactivity is a primary risk factor driving the global increase in chronic disease, sport can play a critical role in slowing the spread of chronic diseases, reducing their social and economic burden, and saving lives. While physical activity includes a broader range of activities than sport alone (people can be physically active at work or engaged in domestic tasks at home), direct participation in sport is one of the most enjoyable, and therefore powerful, means of motivating and mobilizing people to

become physically active. In addition to enhancing overall physical fitness, regular physical activity, active play and sports can have a positive impact on other major health risk factors, such as high blood pressure, high cholesterol, obesity, tobacco use and stress.<sup>7</sup>

### **Fostering social connection**

A powerful social connector, sport can bring people together, expand and strengthen social ties and networks, link people to resources and provide them with a sense of belonging. These social relationships are a fundamental determinant of health but are often lacking for people who are marginalized by poverty, disease, discrimination or conflict. (Please see Chapter 6 for a more in-depth discussion of sport's role in promoting greater social inclusion of disadvantaged populations.)

Sport can also be used to reduce the social stigma experienced by marginalized groups, such as persons with disabilities, people with HIV and AIDS, and former child combatants. By engaging these individuals in sport activities with other community members, sport creates a shared space and experience that helps break down negative perceptions and enables people to focus on what they have in common. This is an important step in enhancing these individuals' self-concept and emotional health. (This idea is explored further in Chapter 5 in relation to persons with disabilities and in Chapter 6 in with regard to post-conflict reconciliation processes.)

### **Promoting healthy attitudes and behaviours**

In disadvantaged communities and populations, where people are often defined in terms of their needs and deficits, sport provides a powerful counter-balance to these perceptions. Participating in sport draws on people's strengths and assets — energy, enthusiasm, natural and acquired skills, the desire to excel — and the universal capacity for fun and enjoyment. In this way, well-designed sport programs that are inclusive, fair, fun and promote excellence at all skill levels — help to empower participants and build self-esteem.

Self-esteem can be defined as a person's overall self-appraisal and feeling of self-worth. Self-esteem is critical to health because it motivates self-care and can contribute to healthy lifestyle behaviours. The acquisition of sport skills and life skills, the acceptance and friendship of others, the attention and guidance of coaches, and the examples set by them and other positive sport role models, all encourage sport participants to believe in themselves, in others, and in their future. For individuals deeply affected by poverty, disease, disability or conflict, the development of self-esteem can be a profound psychological shift that enables and motivates them to adopt healthier lifestyle behaviours.

### **Sport as a platform for communication, education and social mobilization**

Sport can play a valuable role as a communication, education and social mobilization vehicle. Sport's entertainment appeal, amplified by global telecommunications, has made it one of the most powerful communication platforms in the world. By engaging and mobilizing high-profile elite athletes and professional sport clubs and federations, this communication's power can be harnessed to deliver critical health information and messages, to model healthy lifestyle behaviours, and to marshal resources for health initiatives. At the community level, popular sport events offer local platforms to deliver health information and education, and can serve as a starting point for community mobilization to support health promotion, vaccination, and disease prevention and control efforts.

### 1.3 LIMITATIONS OF SPORT IN ACHIEVING HEALTH OUTCOMES

The positive values, physical activity, social connection and communication dimensions of sport, and their careful application in well-designed programs, hold enormous potential to help achieve health goals. However, sport alone cannot prevent or treat disease. Instead, sport is a highly effective tool in a broader kit of development practices. Only when it is applied in a holistic and integrated manner can sport achieve development results.

It is important to recognize that society's ills can be found in sport environments, as in all other social domains. Behaviours such as exclusion, tolerance of violent rivalry among opposing teams and their supporters, and emphasizing winning at any cost, can discourage sport participation. These behaviours can also undermine the positive values of sport, offer negative role models to young people, rob sport of its power to connect and strengthen individuals and communities, and undermine attempts to use sport to communicate important health messages. Sport for health programs must therefore be carefully designed to guard against these risks.

Sport and physical activity can have associated health risks. These risks can include injury from overexertion, unsafe playing conditions, lack of appropriate training and safety equipment, sport violence on the field, and violence at mass sport events. In high-performance sport, the use of illegal performance-enhancing substances (doping) poses additional health risks. Prolonged exercise can also increase risk of upper respiratory tract infections and negatively affect people who are not accustomed to such activity.<sup>8</sup> Risk from exercise arises when people of all fitness levels engage in heavy exertion, but is greatest when inactive people suddenly become highly active.<sup>9</sup> In some cases, therefore, additional physical activity may not be recommended and may even prove detrimental to health.

These risks can be minimized by ensuring that sport for health initiatives are driven by health objectives, and are informed by an in-depth knowledge of the participants and

their socio-cultural context. Sport and physical activity-based health initiatives should take into account participants' access to adequate nutrition, their health status, and the degree to which they may already be engaged in physically demanding activities associated with work and domestic responsibilities. Sport initiatives must also be carefully incorporated with other program components in a combined, holistic approach, to elicit the best that sport can offer.

#### 1.4 SPORT, HEALTH AND THE MILLENNIUM DEVELOPMENT GOALS

Health and development are fundamentally linked and mutually reinforcing. As the leading framework for all development efforts, the Millennium Development Goals explicitly outline a number of important health objectives. Table 2.2 summarizes the contribution that sport can make to the health objectives outlined in the MDGs.



Initiated by the Secretary of Sport in 2007, Community Sports Days are organized by individual towns to promote the health benefits of physical activity. The town with the largest number of participants receives a prize from the Secretary.

Deportes Argentina -  
National Social Sport Program

**TABLE 2.2 SPORT, HEALTH AND THE MILLENNIUM DEVELOPMENT GOALS**

MILLENNIUM DEVELOPMENT GOAL	CONTRIBUTION OF SPORT
1. Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reduced risk of diseases that can cause or aggravate poverty by preventing people from working and/or imposing health care costs, through:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Increased physical activity levels</li> <li>- Sport-based public education and social mobilization campaigns in support of prevention and vaccination initiatives</li> <li>- Sport programs successful in reducing health risk behaviours</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
2. Achieve universal primary education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increased health and physical fitness of primary school children, reducing school absenteeism through:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Increased physical activity</li> <li>- Sport-based health and disease prevention education for children and families</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
3. Promote gender equality and empower women	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improved health and well-being for girls and women through physical activity and access to health information through sport-based programs</li> </ul>
4. Reduce child mortality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reduction in child deaths and disability from measles, malaria and polio as a result of sport-based vaccination and prevention campaigns</li> </ul>
5. Improve maternal health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increased access to reproductive and sexual health information, discussion and services for women and girls</li> <li>• Reduced risk of adolescent pregnancy in sport participants in some contexts</li> </ul>
6. Combat HIV and AIDS, malaria, and other diseases	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reduced risk of HIV infection as a result of sport programs aimed at prevention education and improving health risk behaviours</li> <li>• Reduced stigma and improved health for some people living with HIV and AIDS, contributing to their increased social and economic inclusion</li> <li>• Increased vaccination rates for measles and polio</li> <li>• Increased reach and effectiveness of malaria, TB and other education and prevention campaigns</li> </ul>
7. Develop a global partnership for development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Global partnerships to leverage elite and mass sport events and high-profile athletes to promote positive health messages</li> </ul>

## 1.5 INTERNATIONAL FRAMEWORKS FOR SPORT AND HEALTH

Article 12 of the UN Convention on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights<sup>10</sup> sets out the fundamental right of all peoples to “the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health.”<sup>11</sup> This is the basis for all UN efforts to advance health.

There are no UN conventions, however, that explicitly recognize the use of sport as a tool for health and no UN instruments such as the *Millennium Declaration*<sup>12</sup> and the *Declaration of Commitment on HIV and AIDS*<sup>13</sup> that explicitly reference sport and physical activity. However, in 2003, the WHO report *Health and Development Through Physical Activity and Sport* highlighted the important role that sport, as well as

physical activity, can play in advancing health goals. This was followed, in 2004, by the 57th World Health Assembly's endorsement of the World Health Organization *Global Strategy on Diet, Physical Activity and Health*,<sup>14</sup> which addresses physical inactivity as one of the two major risk factors for non-communicable diseases.

Despite the lack of formal international frameworks advancing the use of sport to attain health goals, regional inter-governmental bodies have begun to focus on this objective. The Commonwealth Advisory Body on Sport (CABOS) report, presented to Ministers of Sport in 2006, demonstrated how sport can help “promote health by tackling obesity, increasing awareness of HIV and AIDS, and promoting healthy diets, well-being and quality life expectancy.”<sup>15</sup>

More recently, the European Commission released its White Paper on Sport,<sup>16</sup> explicitly referencing the role of sport in advancing public health, stating that:

*“As a tool for health-enhancing physical activity, the sport movement has a greater influence than any other social movement. Sport is attractive to people and has a positive image. However, the recognized potential of the sport movement to foster health-enhancing physical activity often remains under-utilized and needs to be developed.”<sup>17</sup>*

This view is consistent with the mission of the Americas Council of Sports (*Consejo Americano del Deporte*). The Council, comprising Sport Ministers from participating governments, aims to “support projects and programs fostering sport as an effective instrument that contributes to physical, psychological and social health in the Americas.”

These statements underscore the growing recognition among governments of sport's potential to advance national and international health goals. The following sections further explore sport's benefits in relation to the key global challenges of non-communicable disease, infectious disease, and mental illness, and provide recommendations to governments based on evidence gleaned from sport for health efforts to date.

## 2 EVIDENCE: USING SPORT TO PROMOTE HEALTH AND PREVENT DISEASE

### 2.1 PREVENTING AND MANAGING NON-COMMUNICABLE DISEASE

#### **Non-communicable disease — global challenges**

Globally, the most prevalent non-communicable or chronic diseases include heart disease and stroke, cancer, chronic respiratory disease, and diabetes.<sup>18</sup> These and other chronic diseases are the major cause of death (60%) and disability worldwide, taking the lives of



over 35 million people in 2005, including many young people and those in middle age. The total number of people dying from chronic diseases is double that of all infectious diseases, including HIV and AIDS, tuberculosis and malaria.<sup>19</sup>

Contrary to the perception that chronic diseases primarily affect high-income countries, 80% of chronic disease deaths occur in low- and middle-income countries. These countries are experiencing a rapid upsurge, especially in urban settings. Cardiovascular disease alone will kill five times as many people as HIV and AIDS in these countries. Without action to address the causes, deaths from chronic disease will increase a further 17% between 2005 and 2015.<sup>20</sup>

New estimates from the World Health Organization indicate that chronic disease place a grave economic burden on countries. In 2005, the estimated losses in national income from heart disease, stroke and diabetes (reported in international dollars)<sup>21</sup> were \$18 billion in China, \$11 billion in the Russian Federation, \$9 billion in India, and \$3 billion in Brazil. These losses will continue to accumulate if no action is taken.<sup>21</sup> Investment in chronic disease prevention programs is therefore essential for many low- and middle-income countries struggling to reduce poverty. In response to these challenges, several countries have already adapted their MDG targets and indicators to include chronic disease.<sup>23</sup>

The global increase in chronic disease is driven largely by globalization, urbanization, and the rapid aging of populations. These determinants contribute to the three primary risk factors common to most chronic disease — unhealthy diet, physical inactivity, and tobacco use. These risk factors are the same around the world and they are modifiable.<sup>24</sup> The WHO estimates that 80% of all cardiovascular disease and type 2 diabetes, and 40% of all cancer cases can be prevented by eliminating these risk factors.<sup>25</sup>

### **Physical activity — effective prevention**

Because developing countries have relatively limited resources to devote to health care for people with chronic disease, prevention is the most cost-effective and sustainable way to address this health challenge.<sup>26</sup>

Physical inactivity is the most common of all cardiovascular risk factors across countries. After tobacco use, inactivity is the greatest contributor to mortality and morbidity from all causes.<sup>27</sup> Physical activity is, therefore, increasingly viewed as the least expensive and most effective preventive “medicine” for combating the increasing worldwide problem of obesity<sup>28</sup> and, with physical fitness, may represent the most effective strategy to prevent chronic disease.<sup>29</sup>

The benefits of physical activity in relation to non-communicable disease are irrefutable. These include the primary and secondary prevention of chronic diseases, such as cardiovascular disease, diabetes, cancer, hypertension, obesity, depression and osteoporosis,<sup>30</sup> as well as individual and societal economic benefits such as reduced



health-care costs and increased productivity.<sup>31</sup> This is reflected in the WHO's 2004 *Global Strategy for Diet, Physical Activity and Health*,<sup>32</sup> which aims to "encourage the development, strengthening and implementation of...policies and action plans to improve diets and increase physical activity..."<sup>33</sup>

Despite this and other efforts, more than 60% of adults and over two-thirds of young people globally are not sufficiently active to protect their health.<sup>34</sup> This trend is exacerbated by diminishing levels of physical activity and education in schools worldwide.<sup>35</sup> Governments are gradually moving to address this issue. In 2003, Argentina's Ministry of Health conducted a national survey and found that 46% of the population was physically inactive (i.e., engaged in less than 150 minutes of moderate activity per week).<sup>36</sup> In response, the Government of Argentina established the National Social Sport Program to boost physical activity, particularly among children and youth. The program is based on the premise that young people who build sport and physical activity into their daily lives will be more likely to grow into active adults at lower risk for chronic illnesses such as diabetes, obesity and heart disease. The Ministry also views sport as a vehicle for social change and the promotion of social inclusion — another fundamental determinant of health. The Ministry works closely with schools and Argentina's system of almost 8,000 local sport clubs. The program has helped to build the capacity of thousands of primary and secondary school teachers and sport club staff members and to reawaken awareness and interest in sport for youth on a national basis.<sup>37</sup>

### **What kind of physical activity and how much?**

As more governments start to work on increasing physical activity levels, the question of what constitutes an appropriate level of physical activity arises. Providing simple recommendations to the public is difficult because of the variety of exercise that can be undertaken and the number of possible health outcomes. Prescriptions are further complicated by genetic differences between individuals which affect their physiological response to exercise and yield substantial variations in fitness-related benefits.

Scientific evidence indicates that physical activity of moderate intensity (e.g., brisk walking) is sufficient to produce many health benefits in large portions of populations.<sup>38</sup>

Experts suggest that 30–60 minutes of moderate-intensity activity, 3–5 times a week benefits blood pressure and hypertension, blood lipids and lipoproteins, blood coagulation, cancer, depression and anxiety. More activity is necessary to reduce all-cause mortality,<sup>39</sup> cardiovascular disease, obesity, and type 2 diabetes. Optimal benefits for diabetes, overweight and obesity require 50–80 minutes of daily moderate-intensity activity.<sup>40</sup>

A physical activity "prescription" can be divided into three categories. *Activation* involves getting people moving on a regular basis, accumulating at least 30 minutes of any

activity in minimum ten-minute blocks most days of the week. This results in the greatest health benefit for time spent to individuals and populations overall, reducing mortality in males from 64 to 25 deaths per 10,000 persons/year.<sup>41</sup> Additional health gains can be obtained through *fitness exercise*, daily moderate to vigorous physical activity of longer duration, used to maintain cardiovascular fitness. For children and young people, this requires an additional 20 minutes of vigorous physical activity three times a week. For weight control, individuals require at least 60 minutes every day of moderate to vigorous physical activity.<sup>42</sup> *Competition training* is for maximizing athletic performance for one's age. It is more than what is necessary for health purposes and it increases the risk of injury. In addition to cardiovascular exercise,<sup>43</sup> strength training,<sup>44</sup> done every other day with progressively increasing loads, helps to improve balance, fitness and health.

### **Reducing health-care costs and improving workplace productivity**

Physical activity can also help reduce health-care costs and increase productivity, key issues in emerging economies.<sup>45</sup> Workplace physical activity programs in the United States have been shown to reduce short-term sick leave by 6%–32%, reduce health care costs by 20%–55%, and increase productivity by 2%–52%. In Canada, companies with employee physical activity programs and initiatives have been shown to save US\$513 per worker annually through improvements in productivity, absenteeism, turnover and injury.<sup>46</sup>

Similarly, data from developed countries indicates that the direct costs of inactivity are enormous. Inactivity was estimated to contribute as much as US\$75 billion to the United States' medical costs in 2000 and to be responsible for 6% of Canada's total health care costs.<sup>47</sup> While there is limited data available on these costs from the developing world, it is likely that they are lower. However, they are anticipated to be increasing and, given limited resources, reducing these kinds of avoidable costs is a highly desirable goal.<sup>48</sup>

### **Preventing and managing cardiovascular disease**

Cardiovascular diseases (CVD) are diseases of the heart and blood vessels and the number one cause of death globally. An estimated 17.5 million people died from CVD in 2005, representing 30% of all deaths globally. Over 80% of these deaths were in low- and middle-income countries, affecting men and women equally.<sup>49</sup>

Even small incremental increases in physical fitness can reduce an individual's risk of cardiovascular-related death.<sup>50</sup> According to a 1996 report by the US Surgeon General,<sup>51</sup> cardiovascular health benefits occur at moderate levels of physical activity and increase at

higher levels of physical activity and fitness. People who participate in regular physical activity are at much less risk of suffering a major coronary event such as a heart attack.<sup>52</sup> Similarly, people with established cardiovascular disease can reduce their risk of negative outcomes by over 60% by participating in regular physical activity.<sup>53</sup> Evidence also suggests that physical activity benefits children's cardiovascular health and can help to lower blood pressure in children and adolescents.<sup>54</sup> Epidemiological research suggests there may be a direct relationship between physical activity and HDL-C levels (levels of beneficial cholesterol) in children, and that children at high risk of developing coronary heart disease may benefit from physical activity.<sup>55</sup>

### **Preventing and managing diabetes**

Worldwide, over 180 million people live with diabetes.<sup>56</sup> In 2005, an estimated 1.1 million people died from it.<sup>57</sup> Almost 80% of these deaths occurred in low- and middle-income countries and almost half involved people below 70 years of age.<sup>58</sup> Seven of the ten countries with the highest levels of diabetes are low- and middle-income countries.<sup>59</sup>

Current research indicates that both aerobic and resistance (strength) exercise are associated with a decreased risk of type 2 diabetes,<sup>60</sup> which affects an estimated 5.9% of the world's adult population.<sup>61</sup> Exercise helps to reduce the likelihood of developing the disease among populations at high risk due to being overweight.<sup>62</sup> Exercise interventions also help manage diabetes by stabilizing blood sugar levels,<sup>63</sup> however this protective effect is more pronounced for those with type 1 diabetes.<sup>64</sup> While both aerobic and resistance training help to control diabetes, resistance training provides greater benefits for blood sugar control than aerobic training.

Appropriate physical exercise, combined with diet or drug therapy, can be the most effective means of controlling type 2 diabetes in persons who have a mild form of the disease.<sup>65</sup> However, patients with diabetes can also experience adverse effects from participating in sport and physical activity, such as hypoglycemic (low blood sugar) and hyperglycemic (high blood sugar) episodes. More research is needed to understand why these effects sometimes occur, so that involvement in sport and physical activity can remain healthy and enjoyable.<sup>66</sup>

### **Preventing cancer**

Cancer includes over 100 diseases involving the rapid growth of abnormal cells that invade the body and spread to other organs, causing death.<sup>67</sup> The WHO estimates that 7.6 million people died from cancer worldwide in 2005, with 70% of these deaths occurring in low- and middle-income countries.<sup>68</sup> It is estimated that 40% of all cancers can be prevented by a healthy diet, physical activity, and not using tobacco.<sup>69</sup> Physical inactivity is a distinct risk factor,<sup>70</sup> while routine physical activity can help reduce the risk of specific types of cancer,

such as breast and colon cancer.<sup>71</sup> Physically active men and women exhibit a 30%–40% reduction in the risk of developing cancer, relative to those less active.<sup>72</sup> Moderate levels of activity offer a greater protective effect than lower levels of activity.<sup>73</sup> There is little published evidence regarding the effectiveness of exercise as a means of improving the health of patients with cancer, therefore it is difficult to draw any conclusions about physical activity's value as a secondary form of prevention.

### **Tackling obesity and reducing accompanying health risks**

Obesity is defined as the abnormal and excessive accumulation of fat that may impair an individual's health.<sup>74</sup> In 2005, it was estimated that 400 million people in the world were obese. By 2015, this figure is expected to rise to 700 million.<sup>75</sup> This trend is largely due to a shift in diet (to energy dense foods low in vitamins) and decreased physical activity.<sup>76</sup>

While the measurement of obesity is the subject of ongoing scientific debate, there is strong evidence that excessive weight increases the relative risk of several chronic diseases. Obesity and inactivity have similar links with health risk indicators such as elevated blood pressure, fasting plasma glucose levels, and inflammatory markers. However, the majority of studies examining obesity and health have not adequately taken into account physical activity.<sup>77</sup> Research has found that obese individuals with moderate cardio-respiratory fitness have lower rates of cardiovascular disease than normal-weight unfit peers, and an all-cause death rate 50% lower than the individuals in the unfit category.<sup>78</sup>

Social factors, such as limited access to highly nutritional foods and a sedentary lifestyle, make addressing obesity particularly challenging.<sup>79</sup> However, the above finding reinforces the beneficial effects of an active lifestyle in individuals who otherwise might be at relatively higher risk for chronic diseases due to excessive weight.

### **Preventing osteoporosis and improving bone health**

Osteoporosis is the deterioration of bone tissue leading to loss of bone mass and a higher risk of bone fractures. Women are at higher risk for osteoporosis than men. The global lifetime risk of bone fracture in 50-year-old women is 40%, similar to the risk of coronary heart disease.<sup>80</sup> In 1990, 1.7 million people worldwide experienced hip fractures. This number is expected to increase to six million by 2025.<sup>81</sup>

Physical activity, in combination with calcium and vitamin D, helps build bone mass. Physical activity increases force on bones and bones respond by increasing their mass so that the force is spread over a larger area. Physical activity has a positive effect on bone

health across the age spectrum, but this effect is greatest in previously inactive individuals. Weight-bearing exercise, particularly resistance exercise, is the most effective form of physical activity for achieving this effect.<sup>82</sup>

Regular physical activity is also an effective secondary prevention strategy.<sup>83</sup> Research indicates that exercise training is effective in improving bone density in older women (75–85 years) with low bone mineral density and slowing the rate of bone loss (osteopenia) in early post-menopausal women.<sup>84</sup>

Physical activity also helps to improve balance and coordination. Several studies<sup>85</sup> have found that exercise training significantly reduces the risk and number of falls. Improved strength, flexibility and posture also help reduce pain and allow older individuals to carry out daily tasks more easily.

## 2.2 PREVENTING AND MANAGING INFECTIOUS DISEASE

### **Infectious disease — global challenges**

Despite medical advances in prevention and treatment, infectious diseases remain a pressing health challenge in developing nations. As well, the advent of multi-drug resistant strains of infectious pathogens (such as staphylococcus, tuberculosis, pneumonia and others) has created a resurgent health challenge for developed countries.

More than 90% of deaths from infectious diseases worldwide are caused by a handful of diseases such as lower respiratory tract infections, HIV and AIDS, diarrheal diseases, tuberculosis, malaria and measles. Beyond the natural causes present in many developing countries, a number of social and economic factors contribute to high rates of infectious disease.<sup>86</sup> Poverty, lack of access to health care, antibiotic resistance, evolving human migration patterns, new infectious agents, and changing environmental and development activities, are all contributing factors.<sup>87</sup> Overcrowded living conditions, poor nutrition and compromised immune systems make those living in poverty more susceptible to infectious disease. In addition, their limited access to drugs and health care mean that treatable diseases like HIV and AIDS, malaria and tuberculosis are often fatal.<sup>88</sup>

Developing countries face a range of infectious disease challenges — HIV is one of the most pressing. Globally, 33.2 million people are estimated to be living with HIV, most of them in developing countries.<sup>89</sup> An estimated 68% percent of those affected live in sub-Saharan Africa.<sup>90</sup> HIV and AIDS are often accompanied by tuberculosis (TB), which kills nearly two million people every year — more than 90% of whom live in

developing countries.<sup>91</sup> Even more widespread than HIV and AIDS, malaria poses a serious health threat to approximately 40% of the world's population, mostly people living in the poorest countries, with over 500 million people affected annually. Among young children, measles remains a leading cause of death. An estimated 345,000 people, the majority of them children, died from measles in 2005.<sup>92</sup> Polio also remains a significant threat in a handful of countries and millions of people still suffer illness and disability caused by the disease. Routine polio immunization and associated health care cost an estimated US\$1.5 billion a year worldwide.<sup>93</sup>

Infectious diseases present an ongoing challenge to development efforts, afflicting children and young adults, causing severe illness, depleting scarce health-care resources, and undermining productivity and economic growth. While sport represents a new and emerging approach to combating infectious disease, its popularity is spreading rapidly as new initiatives spring up around the globe.

### **The role of sport in preventing infectious disease**

Sport's universal popularity, its power and reach as a communication platform, and its particular appeal to children and youth make it an ideal vehicle to inform, educate and mobilize populations to fight disease. While research has not yet caught up with current practice, and while evidence of sport's impacts on health outcomes is only just emerging, sport's capacity to attract and engage is undisputed, as is its communication power.

While sport is equally well-positioned to inform and educate people about infectious and non-infectious disease, it is currently used most often in connection with infectious disease. The discussion that follows highlights the different ways in which sport is being used to this end and some of the early lessons emerging from the field.

### **Using elite sport as an educational platform**

Moving beyond its traditional entertainment role, sport is now recognized as having enormous potential as an informational and educational platform for health and development messages targeted to youth and adults alike.<sup>94</sup>

Sport is unusually powerful in this regard. No other activity approaches the popularity sport enjoys, receives more intense media attention, or reaches more people on a global, regional or local level.<sup>95</sup> Sport's advantages as a communication medium stem from the fact that it appeals to people on an emotional and personal level in a largely positive way (there are exceptions — sport-based racism, hooliganism and violence).<sup>96</sup> Sport also possesses an unsurpassed ability to reach broad sectors of populations, including marginalized groups which are difficult to reach by other means.<sup>97</sup>

High-performance sport events have the ability to attract huge audiences. In 2002, more than one billion people worldwide were transfixed by a live broadcast of the final match of the FIFA World Cup between Brazil and Germany — the largest audience for a single event at that point in time.<sup>98</sup>

Because of their global celebrity, high-performance athletes also wield enormous influence. Celebrated football player, Pél , middle-distance runners Maria Mutola and Haile Gebrselassie, tennis stars Roger Federer and Boris Becker, and many other athletes are increasingly using their popularity to advance development causes, as goodwill ambassadors or through their own aid activities. Regardless of where they live — in Brazil, Kenya, Bhutan or the Ukraine — children, in particular, identify with local and national sport heroes and strive to be like international stars such as Ronaldinho, David Beckham and Michael Jordan, whose popularity transcends cultural and political borders.<sup>99</sup>

The potential health impact of involving such athletes is perhaps best illustrated by the case of Earvin “Magic” Johnson, one of the world’s top basketball players and a hero to millions of youth worldwide. On November 7, 1991, Johnson told a news conference in Los Angeles that he had HIV and that he was withdrawing from active sport. Johnson’s announcement was a milestone in the fight against HIV and AIDS because it was the first time a sport superstar admitted openly to having HIV. The effects of Johnson’s announcement were profound. He helped break the taboo in sport against speaking openly about HIV and AIDS. He also helped to challenge the stigma surrounding HIV and AIDS, which can feed discrimination and impede prevention efforts.<sup>100</sup> Perhaps most importantly, his actions changed peoples’ perceptions about HIV and its prevention.

As a result of Johnson’s announcement, awareness and accurate knowledge of HIV increased,<sup>100,102,103</sup> as did people’s desire to obtain more information about HIV and AIDS<sup>104,105</sup> Calls to AIDS hotlines,<sup>106</sup> and the number of people getting tested for HIV also increased.<sup>107,108,109</sup> In addition, studies showed an increased understanding of vulnerability to HIV among adults<sup>110</sup> and changes in high-risk behaviours.<sup>111</sup> In a survey administered to adolescent clinic attendees aged 12–19 in four U.S. cities, 60% of respondents reported that Magic Johnson’s announcement had increased their awareness of AIDS, 65.4% reported increased self-efficacy in a sexual situation, 37.2% reported that they had changed their perceptions around AIDS risks, and 37.8% described increased resistance to peer pressure for sexual intercourse.<sup>112</sup>

This is just one example of the potential impact of celebrity athletes who serve as health spokespeople and role models. Fortunately, many athletes today are participating in international and national programs to help communicate health messages and combat stigma.

### **Using sport as an educational platform at the community level**

Sport can be an equally powerful medium for education at the community level, particularly when used to reach out to children and youth.

The calamitous effects of HIV in Africa and elsewhere demand new approaches to early prevention that focus on youth. For example, the Grassroot Soccer Foundation (GRSF) launched an HIV and AIDS education program in Bulawayo, Zimbabwe, using trained adult soccer players to help prevent the spread of HIV and AIDS among at-risk youth. The program was implemented in nine schools, targeting seventh grade students. Fourteen local and nationally known soccer players were trained and helped to educate approximately 3,000 students who completed the program.<sup>113</sup>

Independent research<sup>114</sup> by the GRSF showed that students in intervention classrooms demonstrated significant increases in knowledge and attitudes concerning HIV and AIDS relative to non-participants. Participants also demonstrated significantly higher understanding of the stigma around HIV and AIDS and of prevention methods.<sup>115</sup> As a result of the program, the percentage of students who:<sup>116</sup>

- Could list three people they could talk to about HIV increased from 33% to 72%;
- Knew where to go for help for HIV-related problems increased from 47% to 76%;
- Said they would feel comfortable providing emotional support for an HIV-positive classmate increased from 52% to 73%; and
- Believed condoms were effective in HIV prevention increased from 49% to 71%.

Despite this and other compelling examples of sport for health initiatives, research on what makes these efforts effective is relatively rare. Experience shows that communications through sport have the greatest impact when used in the context of comprehensive development and communication strategies and are complemented by social, economic and political measures. Because media play a decisive role as partners and disseminators in these efforts, programs and initiatives must be designed with media needs in mind. Finally, in developing sport-related information programs, special attention must be paid to communication with women and girls, because sport typically addresses men and boys.<sup>117</sup>

### **Using sport to reduce health risk behaviours**

Sport can be an effective way to reach out to people, especially youth, and to encourage healthy lifestyle behaviours that will help protect them against HIV and other diseases. Sport can be used to empower children and youth by conveying appropriate prevention messages, teaching the skills necessary to establish and sustain healthy behaviour patterns, and increasing their resilience in the face of life challenges.



Prominent athletes and local coaches can be powerful role models in this respect, exerting a strong positive influence on the children and youth they reach. Research has shown that regular interaction with a caring, non-related adult can help to protect youth against risk factors that might otherwise negatively influence their health and their future.<sup>118</sup> This is particularly important in communities where war, disease, or the need for parents to leave to find work, have left few positive adult role models in place. Caring, well-trained coaches can help fill a critical gap in this respect.

Well-designed sport programs that educate, support and empower youth can also encourage positive behaviour change by enhancing self-perception, imparting self-esteem,<sup>119</sup> and promoting more conscious care and respect among youth for their own bodies.<sup>120</sup> These critical dimensions of properly designed sport programs with health education components can help reduce the vulnerability of young people to substance abuse; premature, unprotected, or unwanted sexual activity; and the transmission of infectious disease through these activities.

For more than ten years, the Center for Communication Programs at Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health has designed, implemented, and evaluated behaviour change interventions centred around soccer programs, first under the *Caring Understanding Partners* (CUP) initiative and now under the *Sports for Life* program.<sup>121</sup> *Sports for Life* has been implemented in various communities in Ethiopia, Namibia, Lesotho, and the Ivory Coast with exciting outcomes. Program administrators report success in breaking down barriers between generations, enhancing youth self-efficacy with regard to safe sex, developing leadership among youth, and challenging social norms. For instance, while soccer was once considered “boys’ business,” girls are also now participating — even in more traditional communities in rural Africa where girls are expected to remain in the home.<sup>122</sup>

While empirical research pertaining to behaviour change is limited, in general, youth who are active in sports are less susceptible to the consumption of legal and illegal drugs, although this varies by sport activity.<sup>123</sup> US research on the links between sport participation and adolescent sexual activity and pregnancy shows that adolescent girls who participate in sport are less likely than their non-athletic peers to participate in sexual activity and/or report a pregnancy.<sup>124</sup> In a broader study of health risk behaviours of adolescents in organized sports, athletes and non-athletes differed in specific health risk behaviours.<sup>125</sup> While athletes were more likely to put themselves at risk for accidental injuries, they were less likely to smoke cigarettes or marijuana, more likely to eat a healthy diet, and less likely to feel bored or hopeless. At a psychological level, young people’s confidence levels and their tendency to behave in more sexually responsible

ways are closely linked. Sport may, therefore, be used as a tool to build confidence, thereby helping to reduce sexual risk behaviour.<sup>126</sup>

These results cannot automatically be generalized across cultures and development contexts, but they do indicate the potential for sport to have a positive effect in reducing youth health risk behaviour. This is important because there is strong evidence to suggest that, where the spread of HIV and AIDS is subsiding or even declining, it is primarily because young people are becoming equipped with the information and skills they need to adopt safer behaviours.<sup>127</sup> In designing programs and interventions to maximize sport's potential in this respect, governments can draw on more general lessons from the broader research literature on health behaviour change and building resilience in youth.

Resilience is the inner strength, responsiveness, and flexibility that individuals possess that enables them to withstand stress and to recover quickly to a healthy level of functioning after a traumatic event.<sup>128</sup> Research on resilience has identified key protective factors that help to reduce the effects of risk factors in the lives of children and youth. These protective factors include:<sup>129</sup>

- Community support in the form of caring interactions between adults and children who are not related;
- Unconditional acceptance of a young person by an older person;
- The development and promotion of healthy peer relationships; and
- Youth opportunities to help others and make a contribution to their community.

Organizations using sport to advance child and youth health should seek ways to build these dimensions into their programs to further reduce health risk behaviour. This can be done through the coach-child relationship, peer-to-peer teaching and support, youth leadership and coach training, and child-centred approaches that place the development needs of participating children and youth ahead of winning.

### **Preventing the spread of HIV and AIDS**

Countering the spread and impact of HIV and AIDS has become a significant focus of the Sport for Development movement worldwide. Due to poverty, the consequences of HIV and AIDS in developing countries are more serious than in the developed world. Although prices have gone down considerably in the last ten years, the average cost for life-extending antiretroviral (ARV) treatments for AIDS patients can be up to \$400 a year per patient. As a result, treatment is out of reach for all but a minority in many developing nations.<sup>130</sup> In December 2006, it was estimated that only 28% of people living with HIV and AIDS in low- and middle-income countries were receiving ARV medication.<sup>131</sup> Among children, this rate was only 15%.<sup>132</sup> While this represents a significant increase from prior years,

it means that over 70% of people in need of life-saving treatment are not receiving it. As a result of adult deaths, an estimated 15 million children have lost one or both parents to AIDS.<sup>133</sup> Thanks to all-out efforts to stop the virus globally, new HIV infection rates appear to be falling.<sup>134</sup> Still, UNAIDS predicts that the epidemic will continue to grow, as the global number of persons living with HIV continues to increase due to ongoing accumulation of infections, coupled with longer survival times, measured over a continuously growing general population.<sup>135</sup>

Sport is particularly well suited to HIV and AIDS education and prevention because it:

- Is popular, enabling it to connect with and engage hard to reach groups;
- Is fun and appealing to youth — a primary prevention target group;
- Attracts public and media attention through the use of elite athletes and major sport events;
- Provides a safe environment to discuss sensitive issues and information with trusted adults (coaches or teachers);
- Can be used to build protective factors into the lives of youth through the coach-child relationship, provision of social support, sport skill acquisition, and leadership development opportunities; and
- Possesses a natural convening power that can bring together different groups within communities and help to mobilize shared prevention efforts.

Sport, by itself, however, cannot effectively address HIV and AIDS. Sport-based initiatives should never be stand-alone, but integrated with other prevention strategies and efforts to ensure they are mutually reinforcing and do not deplete scarce resources through overlapping or competing efforts.

Integrated approaches that combine sport training with life skills and HIV education are becoming more common in all parts of the world. The Caribbean *Healthy Lifestyle Project*, developed in cooperation by Commonwealth Games Canada, the Organization of Caribbean Administrators of Sport and Physical Education, and the Caribbean Netball Association, combines sport and personal development to encourage healthy lifestyle choices. The program is based on three principles:

- Participation in sport and physical activity gives young people positive and empowering experiences;
- Mentors/trainers can help young people, especially girls, to recognize the benefits of healthy lifestyles; and
- Leadership attitudes and capacity can be shaped through sport.

The program identifies and trains youth leaders to implement *Healthy Lifestyle* workshops in their communities. The workshops help youth acquire the skills to make healthy choices

through interactive presentations and group activities on topics such as HIV and AIDS education and prevention, self-esteem, conflict resolution, decision-making, leadership, nutrition, substance abuse, sexuality, and teenage pregnancy. Young people are involved in planning and delivering all aspects of the program.

Sport's popularity and convening power means it can be used to bring people together to talk openly about sensitive issues such as safer sex, stigma, and discrimination. In Africa, the Mathare Youth Sport Association (MYSA), based in Nairobi, Kenya, has been training coaches and leaders to share HIV and AIDS education in sport event forums, while building a community engagement model centred on sport. In 1992, MYSA developed a girls' program to address the vulnerability of young Kenyan women to poverty, illiteracy, and HIV and AIDS. Since then, the program has grown to encompass 3,500 girls playing on 250 teams in 40 MYSA girls' leagues with access to coaches trained in HIV and AIDS peer education.

By involving people living with HIV and AIDS in sport-based prevention initiatives, sport for health programs are helping to reduce HIV-related stigma and discrimination. Sport-based initiatives can also play a broader role in improving the health of people living with HIV and AIDS. Several literature reviews on exercise training and HIV infection undertaken before the introduction of highly active antiretroviral therapy (HAART), found exercise to be beneficial.<sup>136</sup> The reviews found that engaging in physical activity three or more times per week is associated with slower progression of AIDS.<sup>137</sup> An inverse relationship between viral load and physical activity level has also been shown.<sup>138</sup> Later research indicates that aerobic exercise is safe and improves cardiopulmonary fitness in adults living with HIV and AIDS.<sup>139</sup> Research also shows that progressive resistance exercise, or a combination of progressive resistance exercise and aerobic exercise, appear to be safe and may be beneficial for adults living with HIV and AIDS.<sup>140</sup>

Because people living with HIV in developing nations, however, may also be experiencing poverty, insufficient diet, and additional health issues, interventions must be sensitive to individual capacity to participate in activities and adapt where necessary to make activities truly inclusive.

### **Enrolling footballers to fight malaria**

The enormous popularity of sport events makes them a powerful communication and mobilization platform for raising awareness, promoting prevention and strengthening vaccination campaigns targeting infectious diseases.

Malaria is caused by a parasite transmitted through the bite of an infected mosquito. The disease afflicts 300 million people annually, and is fatal in over one million of these cases.<sup>141</sup> Children and pregnant women are less likely to recover than adults who have built up some immunity to the disease.<sup>142</sup> Malaria disproportionately affects people living in poverty. Most cases are in sub-Saharan Africa where malaria is a leading cause of death for children under five and a major contributor to adult morbidity.<sup>143</sup> Adults who survive malarial attacks face significant social and economic consequences, including low productivity and depression.<sup>144</sup>

In many parts of the world, in particular Africa, endemic malaria poses an ongoing health threat to millions of people. Because of this, combating malaria is an important poverty reduction strategy. Malarial disease can be prevented with prophylactic anti-malarial drugs and those infected with the malaria parasite can be treated with relatively inexpensive anti-malarial drugs, where available and affordable. However, drug resistance to key anti-malarial drugs has rendered them virtually ineffective in some regions.<sup>145</sup> Transmission may still be prevented, however, through the use of insecticide-treated nets and indoor spraying with insecticides. Promotion of these prevention measures is required.

In October 2006, the Roll Back Malaria Partnership, with The Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria, and Sumitomo Chemical, manufacturer of anti-mosquito bed nets, announced an Africa-wide public information campaign about the risks of malaria, the benefits of prevention and the proper use of insecticide-treated nets. Building on the broad-based appeal of sport — football in particular — this television campaign, broadcast free across Africa, featured 12 top international African footballers. Participating athletes — including Chelsea striker Ivorian Didier Drogba and Marseille's Nigerian player Wilson Oruma — urged immediate malaria protection for young children and pregnant women, the most vulnerable groups. Each TV spot combined action packed clips from Premier League matches and strong messages in French, English, and several African languages. Public service clips were available free of charge for unlimited television and radio broadcast all over Africa. Each clip contained an eight-second space at the end for the addition of local malaria campaign messages.<sup>146</sup>

### **Running to raise global tuberculosis awareness**

As previously noted, high-profile sport events can provide ready-made and highly visible platforms for health awareness and education. As such, they can help to raise awareness and dispel myths surrounding diseases such as tuberculosis.

Pulmonary tuberculosis, the most common and infectious form of TB, causes progressive and irreversible lung destruction. HIV-positive individuals with compromised immune systems and other risk factors have more than a 30% risk of catching TB.<sup>147</sup> Tuberculosis can be treated effectively through widely available drugs, but 50% of people left untreated will die of the disease.<sup>148</sup> Despite this, TB prevention and control efforts typically suffer from low visibility in donor countries and a lack of mobilization in high-burden developing countries. The emergence of multi-drug resistant TB has raised concern in expert circles, and more visibility and action is still needed.

The potential for sporting events to serve as a platform for health education was not lost on TBTV.org, a global TB-patient NGO that took advantage of the high-profile Paris Marathon to deliver its awareness-raising messages around the globe. In 2004, TBTV.org created the *Run for Life* campaign, entering runners in the April 2005 Paris Marathon, while initiating simultaneous mini-marathons in two developing countries, involving about 300 runners in each. Twelve runners with tuberculosis and their supporters ran the Paris Marathon in a relay, while one runner ran the entire race. Their participation was recorded by the Stop TB Partnership Secretariat and a French television crew. The result was extensive media coverage including a five-minute program the following day on Cinquième, a state TV broadcaster; one-on-one interviews with journalists; and transmission on TV and radio programs in France and francophone African countries through Radio France International. In countries that sent participants to the race, other TB patients acted as focal points for communications and advocacy work, using the event in Paris to mobilize support in their communities.

The success of the Paris Marathon initiative led the Stop TB Partnership to initiate a co-production with TBTV to further develop this strategic tool. The *Run for Life* team plans to participate in marathons in each of the G8 capital cities, leveraging the millions of spectators and tens of millions of television spectators for these events to raise awareness, resources and support along the way.<sup>149</sup>

### **Sport heroes combating measles**

Measles is a highly contagious viral infection that kills more children than any other vaccine-preventable disease. In 1999, measles killed an estimated 873,000 people globally. Most of these deaths — 791,000 — were among children under the age of five. Children who survive measles can have permanent disabilities, including brain damage, blindness and deafness.<sup>150</sup>

Mass vaccination campaigns are critical to reducing measles deaths in countries where routine immunization campaigns do not succeed in reaching their goal of 90% of the

target population (the percentage needed to stop transmission of the disease). Focusing on children in the targeted age range in hard-to-reach communities, campaigns are carried out for several days. Follow-up campaigns occur three to four years after the initial mass campaigns to reach children who were born after the first mass campaign.<sup>151</sup>

From 2000 to 2005, more than 360 million children globally received measles vaccines through supplementary immunization activities. These efforts have had a major impact on measles deaths, reducing mortality by 60% between 1999 and 2005. The largest gains occurred in Africa where measles cases and deaths decreased by nearly 75%. Despite these advances, however, and the availability of a safe and effective vaccine for the past 40 years, measles remains a leading cause of death among young children. An estimated 345,000 people, mostly children, died from measles in 2005.<sup>152</sup>

In Zambia, measles is one of the five major causes of childhood illness and is a leading cause of childhood mortality. In the period leading up to Zambia's decision to mount a major vaccination campaign in 2003, sporadic outbreaks had resulted in an estimated 40,000 deaths.<sup>153</sup> The 2003 campaign aimed to vaccinate five million Zambian children between the ages of six months and 15 years.

International humanitarian organization Right To Play was invited to participate in the 2003 measles campaign through the Global Measles Initiative. Its approach was to use the convening and influencing power of sport to reach and mobilize children and communities not yet reached by the campaign. Right To Play organized one-day *Sport Festivals* in three districts of Zambia to attract children and their families. Vaccination stations were also set up at the festival sites to educate community members about the importance of vaccinations and to immunize the children.

Thousands of posters featuring Zambian football star and Right To Play Athlete Ambassador, Kalusha Bwalya, were distributed beforehand to promote the week-long National Measles Campaign. Oversized ten-metre high posters dotted billboards throughout the capital city of Lusaka, reminding parents and caregivers across the country to have their children vaccinated.

A star team of Zambian sport heroes including Kalusha Bwalya (football), Ellen Hight (swimmer), Samuel Matete (hurdler), Lango Sinkamba (wheelchair marathoner), and Kennedy Kanyanta (boxer) helped attract children to the events. During the festivals, thousands of children gathered to play sports and games specifically designed to teach

health messages. Children rotated through different sport and play stations, ending up at vaccination stations where they received their shot and collector-style “Kalusha Cards,” with “Fight Measles, Get Vaccinated” inscribed on the back.

Local volunteers from Edusport, Right To Play, Sport In Action, and the YMCA were trained to facilitate the festivals. They were also responsible for running workshops to train local community leaders and members of the District Health Management Team on the use of sport for social mobilization. These partnerships were key to the success of the sport festivals, which resulted in the vaccination of nearly 18,000 children in one week. These events proved that sport is a simple way of mobilizing communities for mass vaccination purposes and can be used as a tool for conveying key health messages.

### **Eradicating polio**

Poliomyelitis (polio) is a highly infectious viral disease that mainly affects children under five years of age. The virus invades the nervous system, causing paralysis and sometimes death.<sup>154</sup> There is no cure for polio but it can be prevented through vaccination.

The *Global Polio Eradication Initiative* was launched in 1988. Since then polio cases have decreased by over 99%, from over 350,000 cases in more than 125 endemic countries, to 1,997 reported cases in 2006.<sup>155</sup> In 2005, more than 400 million children were immunized in 49 countries.<sup>156</sup> While the world is now only a few years away from eliminating polio altogether, the wild poliovirus is still present in a handful of countries, mainly in Africa, including Angola, Egypt, Ethiopia, Niger, Nigeria, and Sudan.<sup>157</sup>

In 2002, the WHO and UNICEF Somalia joined forces in an ongoing nationwide polio eradication campaign. In an effort to raise awareness of this effort, Peace Runs were organized in Mogadishu and Merkah promoting the campaign.<sup>158</sup> Building on the success of these efforts, in 2004, Right To Play established the GAVI Cup,<sup>159</sup> a tournament that made use of football’s popularity to increase vaccination rates in Ghana. Previous polio vaccination efforts in Ghana’s capital city, Accra, had identified a number of districts with low participation rates. The first GAVI Cup was promoted as a competition in sport and knowledge to reach out to these districts and promote awareness of the 2004 National Immunization Days.

The event was attended by sport heroes such as Ghanaian Olympians Vida Anim and Eric Nkansah and cyclist Emmanuel Yeboah. Special guests included representatives from UNICEF, the WHO, Ghana’s Ministry of Health, and the President of the Association of Sports Broadcasters of Ghana. Youth sported T-shirts proclaiming “Let’s Kick Polio out of Ghana,” a clear message that was repeated on tournament handouts and banners.



Thousands of children took home health-related paraphernalia (provided by UNICEF) to their parents, and hundreds of community members showed up to watch the grand finale. The story of the GAVI Cup was also reported throughout Ghana in the media, allowing others to learn from the event and its messages. In total, the tournament equipped almost 5,000 youth and their families with knowledge about the importance and safety of vaccinations and immunizations, creating fertile ground for the actual vaccination campaign that followed.

## 2.3 ENHANCING MENTAL HEALTH

### **Global mental health challenges**<sup>160</sup>

Mental health is defined by the WHO as a state of well-being in which every individual realizes his or her own potential, can cope with the normal stresses of life, can work productively and fruitfully, and is able to contribute to her or his community.

Mental, neurological and behavioural disorders are common to all countries and cause immense suffering. In 2002, the WHO estimated that globally 154 million people suffered from depression, 25 million from schizophrenia, 91 million from alcohol use disorders, and 15 million from drug use disorders. A more recent WHO report shows that 24 million people suffer from Alzheimer's disease and other dementias. A further 877,000 people die by suicide every year, 86% of these in low- and middle-income countries. More than half of those who kill themselves are aged 15–44. Mental disorders are one of the most prominent and treatable causes of suicide and are among the risk factors for communicable and non-communicable diseases. They can also contribute to unintentional and intentional injury and can affect, and are affected by, chronic conditions such as cancer, heart and cardiovascular diseases, diabetes and HIV and AIDS.

People with mental health disorders often experience social isolation, poor quality of life and increased mortality. These disorders are also the cause of enormous economic and social costs. Cost-effective treatments exist for most disorders and, correctly applied, could enable most of those affected to become functioning members of society. However, most middle- and low-income countries devote less than 1% of their health expenditure to mental health.

In emergencies (war, genocide, terrorism, disaster, and population displacement), the number of people with mental disorders is estimated to increase 6%–11%. Beyond mental disorders, people in emergency situations also often experience psychosocial problems that cannot be quantified. Many humanitarian agencies now assert that well-designed sport programs can address such problems.

### **Links between sport and mental well-being**

Exercise and, by extension, sport have long been known to produce beneficial effects on mental health,<sup>161</sup> enhance self-esteem,<sup>162</sup> help to manage stress and anxiety,<sup>163</sup> and alleviate depression.<sup>164</sup> In patients with psychiatric disorders, physical exercise has been shown to diminish clinical symptoms, especially for depression.<sup>165</sup> More recently, breakthrough research has shown that exercise may also improve brain functions such as memory and learning<sup>166</sup> and reduce the risk of cognitive loss through Alzheimer's and small strokes.<sup>167</sup>

It is not surprising, given its clear benefits, that sport is also increasingly being used as a tool to reduce trauma in post-conflict and post-disaster settings. While there is not yet any scientific evidence on the impact of these efforts, qualitative examinations of current practices and results indicate that this is a fruitful new direction. Research is required to determine what impact sport can have and how best to achieve it. (This topic is addressed more fully with respect to children and youth in Chapter 3.) The following sections explore the mental health and cognitive benefits of sport and exercise in greater detail.

### **Improving self-concept, self-esteem and self-confidence**

Regular participation in sport and exercise programs can play an important role in supporting the formation of self-concept in adolescents<sup>168</sup> and building self-esteem and self-confidence in people of all ages.<sup>169</sup> While investigations of the short-term effects of sport show that it largely results in positive mood changes, ongoing physical activity results in the same improvements to well-being, and improved perception of one's health status and a higher satisfaction with one's health.<sup>170</sup> All these effects are important determinants of health because they influence individuals' perceptions of their self-worth and their ability to respond to life's challenges.

Regardless of cultural context, adolescence involves developmental risks and opportunities. Successful development largely depends on whether youth have access to personal and social resources and on the quality of the supports available to them.<sup>171</sup> Multiple studies show positive associations between sport and diverse aspects of adolescent development.<sup>172</sup> In particular, sport has been shown to give adolescents greater self-confidence,<sup>173</sup> and to build self-esteem in girls.<sup>174</sup> Age-specific analysis has also shown a striking stability of self-concept (personal identity) in youth who are physically active throughout their adolescence. Analysis also shows that the physical self or "body image" is important in developing self-concept, especially in early adolescence, although this diminishes over time in the process of development.<sup>175</sup>

Sport can also negatively affect adolescent self-esteem and self-confidence for youth who are overweight, unfit or lack sport ability, and consequently feel excluded or even

humiliated by their sport experience. Properly designed sport programs that prioritize child and youth development over competition and emphasize personal progress in skill and fitness development can prevent these negative effects. (The role of sport in adolescent development and risk behaviour is explored more fully in Chapter 3.)

Regular participation in an exercise program is also associated with measurable increases in self-esteem in children and adults<sup>176</sup> and with the maintenance of positive self-esteem in older age.<sup>177</sup> There are few studies examining the impact of sport and exercise on the mental well-being of persons with disabilities. However, one study of wheelchair-mobile individuals participating in tennis found that they were more confident about performing tennis skills and general wheelchair mobility tasks than non-participants.<sup>178</sup> Self-esteem and self-confidence are believed to arise from the accomplishment of maintaining a long-term exercise or sport habit and the mastery of related skills.

### **Coping with stress and reducing anxiety**

The role of physical activity as a therapeutic treatment for stress and anxiety has received considerable research attention in recent years. The concepts of stress and anxiety are often used interchangeably in exercise research literature. The notion of stress, however, places more emphasis on the role of the environment in creating physiological arousal and emotional distress. Anxiety refers more to an individual's predispositions or enduring personality characteristics in response to perceived stresses.<sup>179</sup>

A 1998 report defines stress as "a relationship between the person and the environment that is appraised by the person as taxing or exceeding his or her resources and endangering his or her well-being."<sup>180</sup> Coping means using different strategies and behaviour to manage specific demands that a person feels are taxing or exceeding their resources.<sup>181</sup>

A review of 45 studies conducted over 15 years strongly supports the benefits of physical activity as a coping strategy for stress.<sup>182</sup> Most of the studies used aerobic exercise programs involving vigorous activities of 20–60 minutes, three or more times a week, over an 8- to 10-week period. Results from all studies, regardless of their design, were positive, demonstrating psychological improvement and fitness gains. Significant associations linking fitness with decreases in life stress were also apparent. However, exercise does not need to be aerobic to provide psychological benefits. Other activities providing positive results included yoga, flexibility, and light resistance training.

Besides acting as a coping strategy, physical activity may help to prevent anxiety in the first place. One expert has proposed that "the benefits of regular exercise may reside in its ability to reduce anxiety on a daily basis and, hence, prevent the development of

chronic anxiety.”<sup>183</sup> Separate analyses of the exercise-anxiety literature for state anxiety, trait anxiety, and other physical and psychological markers of anxiety, support the claim that exercise is linked to reductions in anxiety.<sup>184</sup> This is true regardless of participants’ age and health status.

The mechanisms by which exercise reduces anxiety are unclear. However, it is likely it works in a number of ways:

- Promoting relaxation;
- Acting as a time out;
- Providing a psychological distraction;
- Changing mood;
- Enhancing personal resources such as self-esteem and self-efficacy;
- Providing time and an opportunity to work through a problem (as when running for example); and
- Generally regulating emotional and physiological reactions to a stressful event.

Research on anxiety suggests that engaging in aerobic sessions lasting 20–40 minutes can result in reduced anxiety lasting 2–4 hours.<sup>185</sup> Programs lasting at least ten weeks and preferably longer than 15 weeks lead to the greatest reductions in anxiety.<sup>186</sup> Exercise may not have to be highly vigorous to provide benefits. A number of studies have shown significant reductions in anxiety with low-intensity activities like walking. In some instances, moderate-intensity activities reduced anxiety levels more than vigorous activities.<sup>187</sup>

To get the most relaxation and stress relief out of exercise, individuals should be active several times a week, choosing activities they enjoy and that fit comfortably into their daily life. These activities should continue over the long term. Programs promoting exercise are encouraged to ensure that the types of sport or exercise offered are appealing to the target population, designed to fit into their lifestyles, and can be run frequently and long enough to offer real benefits to participants.

### **Preventing and managing depression**

Depression is characterized by sustained sadness along with psychological, behavioural and physical symptoms. It is ranked as the seventh most important cause of disease burden in low- and middle-income countries, as it tends to be disabling, recurring or long-lasting, and often remains untreated. Depression is the leading cause of disease burden in Brazil and the second leading cause among women in Chile.<sup>189</sup>

Research has shown a positive association between exercise and decreased levels of mild to moderate depression.<sup>190</sup> Adolescents with higher levels of sports involvement have

lower levels of depression, while physical activity and lifelong physical exercise prevent symptoms of depression in older age as well.<sup>191</sup> Symptom relief achieved by chronic exercise is comparable to psychotherapy and, in some cases, may offer an even better prognosis.<sup>192</sup> Exercise can also be a useful accompaniment to professional treatment for severe depression.<sup>193</sup>

As with other mental health effects, studies have shown a positive association between exercise and alleviating depression, but not the nature of the causal relationship. As a result, it is difficult to quantify an effective “dosage” or the most appropriate types of exercise. In the absence of more specific prescriptions, the current physiologic guidelines of the American College of Sports Medicine — large muscle rhythmic activity for 20–60 minutes, 3–5 days per week at 60%–80% of age-adjusted maximal heart rate or a weekly caloric use of 2,000 kcal — are generally believed to be effective with little medical risk.<sup>194</sup>

### **Improving brain function**

While sport and exercise have long been linked to improved mental health, only recently have researchers realized that the mental effects of exercise are far more profound and complex than they once thought.

Aerobic exercise helps the heart pump more blood to the brain, increasing the flow of oxygen and nourishment to brain cells. At the same time, as muscles work, they send chemical signals to the brain that trigger the production of brain-derived neurotrophic factor (BDNF). With regular exercise, the body builds up BDNF and the brain’s nerve cells start to branch out, join together and communicate with each other in new ways. This is the fundamental physiological process underlying all learning — every added connection between brain cells signifies a new fact or skill that has been learned and saved for future use. BDNF makes this learning process possible. Consequently, brains with more BDNF have a greater capacity for knowledge, while brains that are low in BDNF have difficulty absorbing new information.<sup>195</sup>

BDNF levels remain fairly constant in adulthood but, as people begin to age, their individual neurons slowly start to die off. Scientists used to think this loss was permanent, but animal studies over the last decade have shown that the replacement of nerve cells can be triggered quite easily by exercise. A study published in March 2007 in the Proceedings of the US National Academy of Sciences,<sup>196</sup> extended this finding to humans for the first time, showing that it is possible to grow new nerve cells in the brain through exercise. After placing participants on a three-month aerobic exercise program, researchers found that all the subjects appeared to grow new neurons in the brain, with those who experienced the greatest cardiovascular fitness gains showing the most nerve cell growth.<sup>197</sup>

Other experiments have shown that this growth is concentrated in the brain's hippocampus, in the area that controls learning and memory, as well as the frontal lobes where executive functioning — higher-order thought such as decision-making, multi-tasking, and planning — resides.<sup>198</sup> Exercise has been found to restore the hippocampus to “a healthier, younger state” and to cause the frontal lobes of the brain to increase in size. In numerous studies of men and women in their 60s and 70s, brisk walking and other aerobic workouts have yielded improvements in executive functioning. Subjects have fared better on psychological tests, answering questions more accurately and quickly. According to one study, “It’s not just a matter of slowing down the aging process. It’s a matter of reversing it.”<sup>199</sup> Early studies also suggest that people who exercise at least a few times a week tend to develop Alzheimer’s less often, and later in life, than their more sedentary counterparts.<sup>200</sup>

As far as scientists know, new neurons cannot grow in other parts of the brain, but these regions benefit from exercise in other ways. Blood volume, like brain volume, increases with exercise. As a result, active adults have less inflammation in the brain. They also have fewer small, barely perceptible cerebrovascular strokes that can impair cognition without the person even knowing.<sup>201</sup> Dopamine, serotonin, and norepinephrine levels in the brain are also all elevated after exercise, creating greater focus and calm and reducing impulsivity.<sup>202</sup>

The effects of physical exertion on the brain are even more potent when it comes to children, because their brains are still developing. Until about the age of 20, children and youth don’t have fully developed frontal lobes, so they engage other parts of the brain to perform necessary functions, including those involved in learning. In a study of third- and fifth-grade physical education students, exercise accelerated not just executive functioning, but a broad variety of skills ranging from math to logic to reading.<sup>203</sup> Based on this research, many educators are now advocating for strengthened physical education in public schools, arguing that longer physical education classes can help to ensure students’ success in other subjects.<sup>204</sup> This is consistent with a number of studies conducted over the past half century that show that significant periods of daily physical activity in school do not impair academic achievement and, in fact, can improve it.<sup>205</sup>

Questions remain about why some forms of exercise affect the brain far more than others. Most researchers have focused on aerobic exercise. The few studies that have examined stretching, toning and weightlifting have found little or no effect on cognition.<sup>206</sup> Researchers also don’t have a clear idea of how much exercise is too much. Caution is recommended with children, because they are generally not developmentally ready to engage in extended periods of high-intensity exercise. (For more information on exercise guidelines for children and youth, please see Chapter 3.)

**Alleviating trauma in post-conflict and post-disaster situations**

Sport can play an important role in restoring and sustaining mental health. In regions affected by natural disasters or war, where trauma is widespread, sport can be a highly effective means of helping to normalize life. Through regularly scheduled activity, children and adults can begin to regain a sense of security and normalcy and enjoy periods of respite from the often overwhelming challenge of reconstruction. Sport and play have proven extremely therapeutic in helping children overcome trauma.<sup>207</sup> Recognizing this, UNICEF developed a kit of materials for children displaced by war and natural disaster. The kit allows children to participate in team sport in a supportive, non-competitive environment under the guidance of a teacher or trained volunteer.<sup>208</sup> (For more information on this topic, readers are referred to the discussion of children and youth in post-conflict and post-disaster settings in Chapter 3.)

## 3 RECOMMENDATIONS TO GOVERNMENTS

Global trends reflect some key health challenges shared by many countries. The reality is that these challenges are often experienced in very different ways in different places due to the diverse social, economic, demographic, political and environmental contexts in which they unfold. Even within countries, different populations may experience unique health challenges or experience the same challenges but with very different levels of individual and societal resources to meet them.

As a result, Sport for Development policies and programs aimed at influencing health outcomes are most effective when they are firmly rooted in an empirical, gender and culturally sensitive analysis. This analysis should consider the challenges that the policies and programs intend to address, the ways in which these challenges can be addressed, and how key efforts can reinforce other governments, as well as external parties, to achieve the same goals.

Individual and population health is strongly influenced by social determinants such as poverty, income inequality, employment, housing, education and social connectedness. Investments aimed at reducing social and economic inequality, by helping individuals and groups to enhance their human capital, are highly effective in improving health outcomes at a population level. The recommendations that follow, while quite general, are not intended to supersede such efforts, but to complement and reinforce them.

While quite general, specific recommendations may not be appropriate to every context. Governments must weigh sport's potential to advance health objectives against their own in-depth understanding of the opportunities and challenges involved.

### 3.1 POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

#### Implement comprehensive strategies to increase physical activity levels in populations.

Given the growing global burden of non-communicable diseases, and the proven benefits of physical activity in reducing this burden and improving mental health, governments and concerned stakeholders have a strong incentive to work together to integrate sport and physical activity into broader health and development strategies, policies, and programs.

#### Develop evidence-based strategies and take a holistic approach to understanding and promoting physical activity.

Increasing physical activity levels requires more than simply convincing individuals to become more active. Physical activity is conditioned by a broad range of individual, societal and environmental factors. Many of these factors are beyond the individuals' control but will influence whether or not they become active. Changing physical activity levels in populations requires a comprehensive analysis of these factors and broad-based, multisectoral strategies involving policy, legislative, and regulatory change. Changing activity levels also requires public education and investments in workplace, school-based and community-level physical activity programs.

#### Incorporate clear goals and targets in all strategies.

National physical activity initiatives should be planned and coordinated with clear and realistic objectives (short- and long-term). Initiatives should target increased population participation in physical activity and sport over specific periods of time. Planning should be integrated with other national efforts to prevent chronic diseases, promote health, and advance sustainable social and economic development.<sup>209</sup>

#### Collaborate with key stakeholders to assess current physical activity and sport participation levels, trends and determinants when developing strategies.

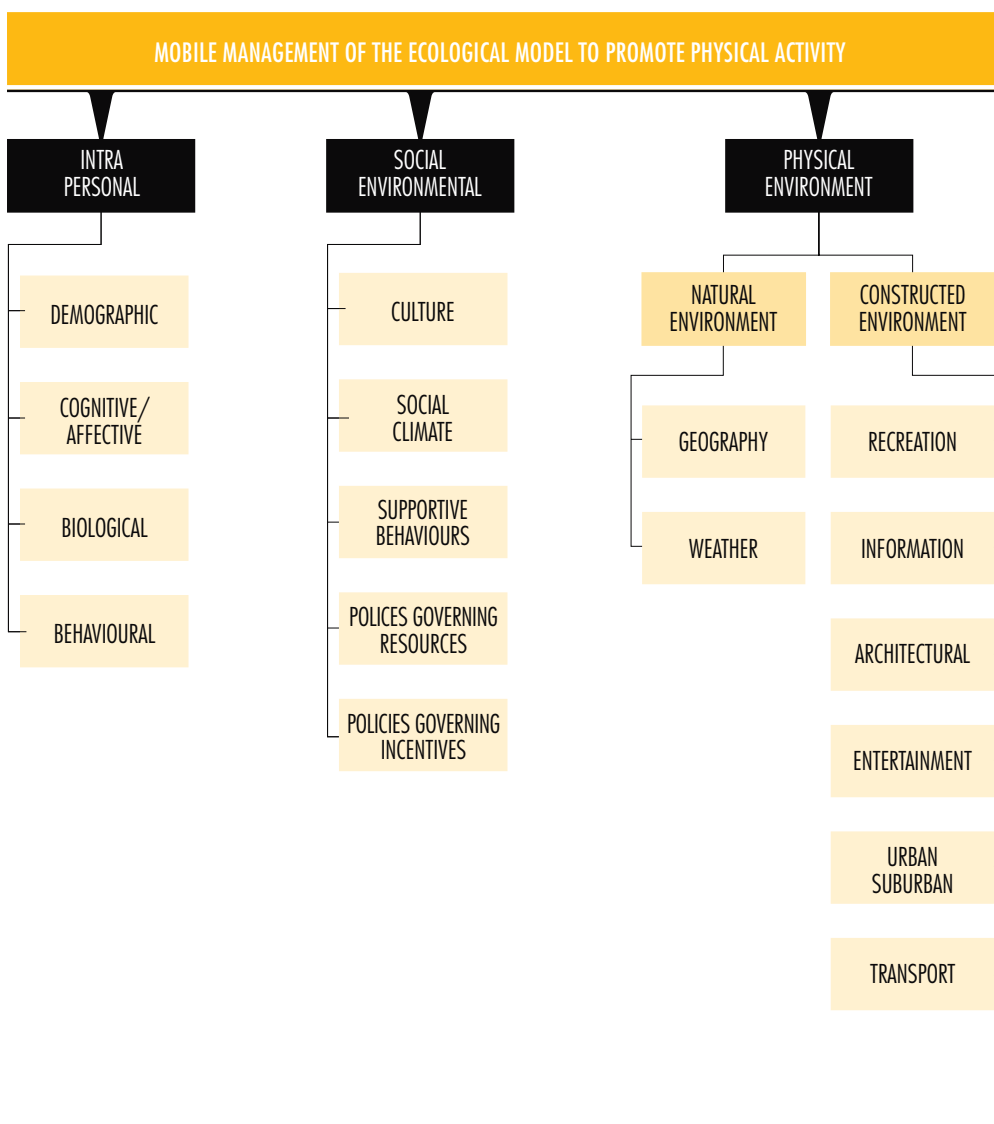
Effective strategies require general and population-specific baseline data on physical activity levels, trends, and the factors influencing them. This information is critical to the initial design of effective strategies and to measuring their impact. Supportive coalitions and partnerships can be formed within government and with relevant external sport, health, media and other organizations. These partnerships can help ministries to collect relevant data, contribute diverse perspectives and expertise to the strategy design process, and enable governments to leverage national and local resources (information, human, financial and logistical) for their implementation.<sup>210</sup>



**Incorporate lessons learned from successful experiences elsewhere.**

The *Agita São Paulo* program in Brazil provides an example of a successful sport for health initiative. *Agita São Paulo* was launched in December 1996 as a program to promote physical activity among the 40 million inhabitants of the state of São Paulo. The “mobile management” ecological model<sup>211</sup> in Figure 2.1, based on a similar model developed by *Agita São Paulo*, identifies a range of intra-personal, social and environmental factors that affect physical activity levels.

**FIGURE 2.1 “MOBILE MANAGEMENT” ECOLOGICAL MODEL OF FACTORS INFLUENCING PHYSICAL ACTIVITY**



Adapted from source: V. Matsudo et al., “Policy Intervention: The Experience of *Agita Sao Paulo* in Using ‘Mobile Management’ of the Ecological Model to Promote Physical Activity” (2004).

By systematically taking into account each of these factors, and working to change factors where necessary, *Agita São Paulo* successfully decreased the number of sedentary São Paulo inhabitants from 14.9% of the population in 1999 to 11.2% in 2004.<sup>212</sup> Strategic partnerships were critical to this success, with over 350 organizations from all sectors engaged in coordinated and integrated action to address each of the areas identified in the model.

There is only limited evidence about what works when it comes to changing the physical activity levels of populations, particularly in low- and middle-income countries. However, the *Agita São Paulo* example offers important lessons, in part because a rigorous approach was taken to evaluating all of its initiatives.

*Agita São Paulo's* success was due in part to the close attention given to understanding different local conditions and their impact on physical activity levels. Because each city or locale is unique in this respect and approaches must be rooted in, and address, local circumstances, there is no single optimal formula for increasing physical activity.

Cost-effectiveness studies undertaken by the US Centers for Disease Control and the World Bank (2005) concluded that the program resulted in public cost savings of US\$310 million.<sup>213</sup> *Agita's* success has inspired the creation of a similar program nationally, *Agita Brasil*, and the Physical Activity Network of the Americas. Internationally, an *Agita Mundo* Network has been established, linking over 200 institutions from 58 countries, to build capacity, support research and evaluation, and undertake social mobilization through over 2,000 events worldwide celebrating the annual *World Day for Physical Activity* (*Agita Mundo's Move for Health Day*).

### Make coordinated use of the full range of instruments available to promote physical activity.

Knowledge alone is not enough to produce desired changes in individual behaviour when it comes to physical activity. In general, successful approaches to increasing population physical activity levels are likely to include some, or all of, the following:

- Laws and regulations;
- Tax and price interventions (e.g., to influence the use of transport, access to sport activities);
- Improvement of the built environment (e.g., to enable or cause greater everyday physical activity);
- Specific community-based initiatives (e.g., workplace and school-based physical activity programs); and
- Use of mass-media campaigns (to help raise awareness and generate support for other measures).

### Give priority to strengthening national policies for physical education, physical activity and sport for all in schools.

One of the most effective means of promoting physical activity is by integrating it into universal public education systems. Schools have unique opportunities to provide adequate physical activity for all young people through compulsory physical education programs, school sport programs, and after-school leisure-time physical activity initiatives.<sup>214</sup>

There is conflicting evidence as to whether physical activity levels in childhood and youth predict physical activity throughout life.<sup>215</sup> However, ample participation in play, games and other physical activities, in school and during free time, is essential for the healthy development of every young person. Access to safe places, opportunities and time, and positive examples set by teachers, parents and friends are all part of ensuring that children and young people move for health.<sup>216</sup>

Despite evidence of its value, school-based physical education is declining worldwide.<sup>217</sup> Strengthening national policies related to physical education, physical activity and sport for all in schools is critical. This means integrating physical education and activity into the school curriculum so that children are active on a daily basis, ensuring adequately trained teachers, and providing access to safe, adequate playgrounds and sport facilities.

The MDGs call for universal primary education in all countries. Where this goal has not yet been achieved, complementary community-based sport and physical activity programs and opportunities need to be made available to out-of-school children and youth.

### Target physical activity policies and initiatives to specific populations and tailor initiatives to respond to population needs.

Relevant multisectoral policies and initiatives are needed to motivate and involve people in appropriate sport and physical activities within supportive environments. These policies need to specifically target populations that are not sufficiently physically active, particularly those in urban areas. They should give high priority to children and young people, boys and girls, in and out of school, and aim to develop a lifelong habit of physical activity as the basis for healthy and independent living.<sup>218</sup> Policies and initiatives must be culturally sensitive and take into account other factors such as socio-economic circumstances, gender norms, education levels, etc. that can influence their design and ultimate impact.

### Develop strategies that address physical, social and environmental barriers to greater physical activity.

The physical and social environments of cities have a major impact on physical

activity levels. Crowding, crime, traffic, and poor air quality, coupled with a lack of parks, sidewalks, and sports and recreational facilities make physical activity and sports a difficult choice for many people. The challenge for governments is to foster sustainable environments that encourage the regular practice of physical activity and sport in the community.<sup>219</sup> Key issues include access to open spaces, playgrounds, gymnasiums, stairwells and road networks, as well as social factors such as levels of crime and the local sense of community.<sup>220</sup>

Successful examples of urban planning and policy choices include:<sup>221</sup>

- Developing parks and open space where people can practice enjoyable physical activities in clean and safe environments;
- Facilitating public/community use of existing sport facilities;
- Promoting active transport initiatives (walking, cycling, greater use of public transport, etc.), including ensuring plenty of safe sidewalks and cycling paths;
- Strengthening efforts to reduce traffic speed, congestion, and pollution in cities; and
- Providing support to municipal/local authorities to implement these choices.

Evidence from São Paulo shows that these approaches result in increased physical activity. In small cities, construction of walking and biking paths resulted in a 33% increase in physical activity among those using them. Walking has increased 2% per year in the population, with 520,000 adults starting to walk on a regular basis (30 minutes, five times a week).<sup>222</sup> In one city with a large network of recently constructed walking paths, hospitalizations due to type 2 diabetes declined by 57% and hospitalizations due to stroke declined by 50%.<sup>223</sup> Similarly, a community that introduced an open-school program on weekends experienced a 46% decline in incidents of physical aggression and a 34% decline in robberies, among other benefits.<sup>224</sup>

### 3.2 PROGRAM RECOMMENDATIONS

**Take specific measures to raise awareness — within the government itself, among key sectors, and in the population — of the diverse benefits of physical activity and the risks and costs of inactivity.**

One of the main problems in promoting physical activity is the low priority health, education, and sport authorities assign to this issue. To get the attention of all parties, an increased social understanding of the risks of physical inactivity, from both an epidemiological and community perspective is required.<sup>225</sup> *Agita São Paulo* attributes its success, in part, to improved societal awareness of its aim (63% of the population could recall the program and 31% demonstrated knowledge of its purpose).<sup>226</sup>

There is an equally crucial need to raise societal awareness of the broad range of health, social and economic benefits of physical activity and well-designed sport programs.

Disseminating information to policy-makers and opinion leaders in the health, education, social and sport sectors is crucial. Fostering cross-sectoral debates on this issue can improve collective awareness and facilitate policy support.<sup>227</sup> This requires an ongoing, concerted effort to generate, update and disseminate knowledge about the benefits of physical activity and sport, and best practices.

Evidence of program effectiveness alone, however, is insufficient to drive public health policy and programs. Public leaders must allocate scarce resources to address a wide range of competing health priorities, particularly in developing countries with a double burden of infectious and chronic diseases. Reallocating resources to new issues such as physical inactivity may be difficult in these circumstances. Cost-effectiveness analysis can contribute additional information to aid in making these decisions.<sup>228</sup>

With support from the World Bank, the US Centers for Disease Control and CELAFISCS, *Agita São Paulo* developed a model to assess the cost-effectiveness of its community campaign targeting adults. Employing a decision analysis framework and a societal perspective, the model found the intervention cost of the *Agita São Paulo* program to be approximately US\$300 per year, with a resulting increase in physical activity of 132 MET-minutes<sup>229</sup> per week, per person for each year of program delivery.<sup>230</sup>

Interventions with cost-effectiveness ratios less than \$50,000/QALY (quality adjusted life year<sup>231</sup>) are considered especially good public health investments. Many widely accepted public health interventions have cost-effectiveness ratios of up to \$200,000/QALY.<sup>232</sup> Comprehensive community campaigns to promote physical activity appear to be generally cost effective and may be especially well suited for large cities in developing countries. A combination of proven intervention strategies adapted to the culture and conditions of São Paulo, economies of scale, creative management, extensive use of partnerships and volunteer networks, and the relatively low cost of materials and labour in Brazil may explain the cost effectiveness of *Agita São Paulo*.

### Develop guidelines on optimal physical activity levels and communicate them publicly.

Current public health guidelines suggest that a minimum of 30 minutes per day of moderate physical activity (at 50%–70 % of maximum heart rate) is optimal. These guidelines are broadly endorsed by the biomedical community but are less popular in the broader health community where they are seen as unrealistic for many people. There is a strong consensus, however, that any activity is better than no activity<sup>233</sup> and community programs should include a strong activation focus for this reason.

### Facilitate and invest in the development of culturally relevant, community-level, physical activity and sport programs as an important means of encouraging more active healthy living.

Programs and activities (e.g., periodic walking, cycling and leisure sport campaigns, support for indigenous sport and games, etc.) should involve population groups of all ages. Special targeted efforts are needed to ensure the equal participation of women, older adults, persons with disabilities, indigenous peoples and other socially excluded groups.<sup>234</sup>

### Provide persons with disabilities with opportunities and support to participate in sport and physical activities adapted to their physical and mental condition.

The goal is to help persons with disabilities improve their physical health, psychological well-being and quality of life. This can be achieved by increasing their ability to perform daily living activities, giving them opportunities to acquire life skills and leadership experiences, and enhancing their social inclusion.<sup>235</sup> Providing such opportunities requires training sport and education personnel in adaptive sports, making adapted sport equipment available at low cost, and removing barriers preventing persons with disabilities from accessing, and travelling to and from, public sport and recreation facilities.

### Ensure that initiatives are sensitive to relevant local beliefs, in particular those on diet, physical activity, and body shape.

In many parts of the world, what is medically defined as overweight or obese is considered a sign of good health, and walking or cycling can be viewed negatively as a sign of poverty.<sup>236</sup> These and other perceptions can impede physical activity promotion unless they are identified and adequately addressed.

### Be aware of cultural norms with regard to gender that may, in some cases, prevent women and girls from being more active.

Programs must also be designed with the specific interests and needs of girls and women in mind, and involve them in decisions concerning the kinds of programs offered and how they are delivered. Remember that in rural and low income peri-urban areas of developing countries, women and girls may already be engaging in physically demanding occupational activities in and outside the home. These women may need a balanced set of supports such as adequate nutrition, income generating initiatives, advice on physical activities appropriate to their context, and possibly adapted leisure pursuits.<sup>237</sup>

**Incorporate monitoring and evaluation processes into all initiatives from the outset to assess their effectiveness, continuously improve them, and help make resource allocation decisions.**

The evaluation of *Agita São Paulo* shows that it is possible to evaluate the process and the impact of diverse strategies used to increase physical activity in populations. Planning and implementation of evaluation measures will be more successful if built into the program at the initial strategic planning stage, with a budget set aside for this purpose. Partners and stakeholders should be involved in the evaluation process. Evaluation should be an essential part of all program components and should be designed to obtain feedback and improve interventions.<sup>238</sup>

**Maximize the effectiveness of programs to increase sport and physical activity participation by observing guidelines derived from successful programs:<sup>239</sup>**

- Make it fun (e.g., ensure enjoyable group activities with a social atmosphere);
- Make it effective (provide supervision, training and feedback);
- Use sports that are culturally relevant and require fewer resources (such as running, soccer, basketball, baseball and other activities) to promote lifelong fitness;<sup>240</sup>
- Address obstacles to sport and exercise (e.g., need for safe areas, timing, darkness, extreme temperatures, need for child care, cultural mores); and
- Promote physical activity and related healthy behaviours in the workplace.

**Target public messages aimed at increasing physical activity levels and tailor them for specific audiences.**

Targeted public education messages are more effective than general messages. Targeted messages are culturally specific and emphasize consistency (focusing on accumulated exercise). Messages can foster inclusion through the use of terms like “active” instead of using fitness and sport terminology that can be off-putting to groups who do not see themselves in these terms.<sup>241</sup> Messages focused on moderate activity and walking are particularly effective with older adults.<sup>242</sup>

**Make use of sport’s potential as a communication and public education platform to influence health risk behaviour and prevent disease and in doing so, build on the lessons learned from programs to date.**

While the systematic assessment of experiences and guidelines for successful projects is still in its infancy, a few preliminary guidelines can be drawn from program experiences to date:<sup>243</sup>

**Use sport to launch social mobilization efforts:** Sport is an ideal launch site when it comes to appealing to people on an emotional level and mobilizing them for specific development goals.

**Provide positive role models:** Studies show that athletes are seen as positive role models and can favourably influence youth behaviour. In choosing athletes for information and mobilization campaigns, governments and their partners must ensure that selected athletes embody the values they are meant to communicate.

**Develop a coherent strategy:** Sport-based health initiatives work best when they are integrated into a broader, coherent overall strategy. HIV and AIDS prevention messages communicated by athletes, for example, will only have a sustained impact if they are supported by other measures such as widely available counselling services, provision of additional information, and integration of the issue into school instruction. Without coordinated supports, isolated actions are likely to have little effect.

**Deliver clear messages:** Sport is a neutral vehicle that can convey any kind of message. Because of its nature, sport is particularly well suited to communicating health information and reinforcing social values such as teamwork and integration of outsiders. Messages must be clear, simple, aimed at specific target groups, and tailored to resonate with these audiences.

**Encourage media involvement:** Close cooperation with the media can help ensure that awareness-building campaigns get wide exposure. When choosing athletes and preparing messages, keep media opportunities, requirements and appeal in mind. Whenever possible, a wide range of communications avenues should be used (TV, radio, print, Internet).

**Include women and girls:** Sport institutions, practices and communication are traditionally more oriented to men than women in most societies. Consider this when planning an information campaign and take additional measures to reach women and girls and to sensitize male participants (athletes, coaches, teachers and community members) to gender issues and their relationship to women's health and well-being.

### **Increase the impact of sport programs aimed at HIV and AIDS prevention by ensuring that they incorporate existing best practices.** <sup>244</sup>

These may include:

- Actively engage community members in planning, design, delivery and evaluation;
- Include sports and games that offer opportunities for everyone to play;



- Focus on prevention for the uninfected;
- Reduce stigma against those affected by HIV and AIDS and invite their participation;
- Convey accurate, up-to-date HIV and other health information in mutually agreed on age-appropriate and culturally appropriate ways;
- Deliver a quality sport experience that builds skills, self-confidence, and mutual support among participants;
- Provide appropriate referrals for HIV testing and counselling and other sexual and reproductive health issues; and
- Work closely with NGO, government, and private sector HIV prevention efforts.

### 3.3 HARNESSING THE CONTRIBUTION OF ALL SECTORS OF GOVERNMENT AND SOCIETY

#### Take advantage of existing events, partnerships and networks to leverage public attention and resources for promoting physical activity.

Institutional and intellectual partnerships are a significant contributing factor in successful large-scale programs promoting physical activity.<sup>245</sup> The annual Global Move for Health Day initiative provides an ideal opportunity to develop and strengthen global, national and local partnerships in support of physical activity and sport. This global, high profile initiative provides a platform on which to build cross-sectoral activities and events in communities.

#### Work with health care providers to integrate physical activity promotion into health services.

Research has shown that motivation and encouragement from physicians and health workers improves compliance with physical activity prescriptions.<sup>246</sup> Health care providers can play an active role in increasing physical activity by:<sup>247</sup>

- Designing and integrating regular physical activity programs into health services and interventions that include healthy diet and lifestyle guidance as part of prevention and rehabilitation measures;
- Educating health professionals on physical activity counselling and program development; and
- Organizing specific physical activity programs in health services.

#### Engage as many sectors as possible in developing and implementing physical activity promotion strategies.

The WHO has identified actions that a broad range of sectors (including health) can take to promote participation in regular physical activity and healthy sports, ensure equitable access to these activities, and foster supportive environments. The list of sectors below is not exhaustive, but is offered as a starting point for institutions and communities interested in cross-sectoral partnerships to increase physical activity.<sup>248</sup>

### **The health sector can:**

- Undertake nationwide evidence-based advocacy to inform the public and policy-makers of the health, social and economic benefits of physical activity.
- Develop action-oriented networks with other relevant sectors and stakeholders on physical activity.
- Promote integrated, cross-sectoral, public policy development.
- Promote community-based physical activity programs with family-based activities.
- Support the teaching of basic sport skills to children in schools and community programs.
- Address barriers to providing a safe and welcoming environment for sport participants (e.g., abuse, harassment, racism, sexism).
- Secure start-up investment and mobilize resources for physical activity initiatives.
- Participate in global actions to promote physical activity.

### **The sport sector can:**

- Initiate and strengthen programs for physical activity and sport for all, promoting the concept that sport is a human right for all individuals regardless of race, social class, gender and disability.
- Make community use of local sport facilities easy and convenient.
- Allocate a proportion of sport funds to promoting physical activity.
- Include education on the benefits of physical activity in sport sector training programs.
- Advocate for physical activity and sport for all at professional, amateur and school sporting events.
- Organize physical activity events in the community.
- Support the use of physical activity and sport to promote healthy lifestyles, reduce violence and foster social integration, development and peace.

### **The education and culture sectors can:**

- Make school sport facilities available for public use when not in use by students.
- Commit to physical education as an integral part of the school curriculum.
- Ensure all schools have one teacher trained in physical education.
- Provide opportunities for students to engage in sport and physical activity during and after school.
- Increase physical activity in cultural and leisure programs and events.
- Contribute significantly (through colleges, universities and research institutes) to the data collection, research, evaluation, knowledge dissemination, and training dimensions of broad-based strategies to improve physical activity levels and mobilize sport as a communication and public education platform.

**The media can:**

- Disseminate positive messages/information about the benefits of physical activity.
- Organize regular programs to promote physical activity.
- Ensure journalists (e.g., sports, health or science journalists) are knowledgeable about, and can advocate for, physical activity.

**Local governments can:**

- Develop local legislation and policy to support physical activity.
- Allocate safe indoor and outdoor spaces for physical activity, play and sports.
- Organize community programs.
- Support physical activity initiatives initiated by various sectors and actors.
- Help strengthen national public policy in support of physical activity through local action.

**National financial/economic policy-makers can:**

- Look seriously at the health, social and economic benefits of physical activity.
- Take measures to allocate resources to relevant sectors and initiatives.
- Encourage public and private sectors to invest in physical activity.
- Support physical activity programs.
- Earmark funds through dedicated taxes (e.g., tobacco, alcohol, soft drinks, etc.) for physical activity and other health promotion programs.

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- 248 WHO, *Physical Activity* at 7-8.



# SPORT FOR CHILDREN AND YOUTH

FOSTERING DEVELOPMENT  
AND STRENGTHENING EDUCATION



# CHAPTER 3

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# 1 CONTEXT: SPORT, DEVELOPMENT, CHILDREN AND YOUTH

## 1.1 DEVELOPMENT, CHILDREN AND YOUTH

Today's children and youth represent the single largest cohort of young people in history. There are 2.2 billion children<sup>1</sup> and 1.5 billion youth<sup>2</sup> in the world today.<sup>3</sup> Of these, 1.9 billion<sup>4</sup> and 1.3 billion<sup>5</sup> respectively live in developing countries. Together, these young people represent an unprecedented opportunity to reduce global poverty and advance development.

In most developing nations today, young people make up the largest segment of the population — in some cases more than 50%. In most cases, the number of young people will peak in the next 10 years, in some cases in the next 20 years.<sup>6</sup> This means that countries will be facing significant fiscal pressures to fund secondary education and the prevention of non-communicable and infectious diseases such as HIV and AIDS. The large number of young people also offers an historic opportunity. The emerging workforce is young, and the overall population contains relatively few elderly individuals and children to support. For governments, this can free up resources to invest in things like human capital that yield high development returns.<sup>7</sup>

To maximize the opportunity this young cohort presents, it is important to invest in and support today's children and youth. Investing in children and youth today will ensure that they are healthy and well equipped to manage the critical life transitions ahead of them.

Thanks to the development achievements of past decades, more young people are completing primary education than ever before and surviving childhood diseases.<sup>8</sup>



However, they are confronting new health challenges, such as HIV and AIDS and obesity, and must possess more advanced skills than simple literacy to succeed in increasingly globalized labour markets. Early childhood and adolescence are critical periods in a young person's life and their experiences in these formative phases can have a lasting impact on their life prospects.

Ensuring optimal conditions for a child's early years is one of the best investments a government can make. Investing in children increases a nation's capacity to compete and grow in a global economy. A child's brain develops dramatically after birth — much of it during the early years, before the age of six. The experiences children have in these years shape their brain development and have lifelong effects on their learning, behaviour, and health.<sup>9</sup> The early years are a period of opportunity to establish a solid neural foundation for later development. The early years are also a period of increased risk that can compromise a child's development for life.<sup>10</sup> Children's readiness to learn, their ability to develop secure relationships, and their general resilience all depend on the early care they receive from parents, pre-school teachers and caregivers.<sup>11</sup> Children living in poverty, in disadvantaged families and communities, outside a secure family structure, or in regions affected by conflict or natural disaster, are at higher risk of negative outcomes during this period.

Prevention is the best and least costly strategy where children are concerned. By providing children with adequate nurturing, nutrition, and health care we can reduce social and economic disparities and promote social inclusion. Over time, we can raise the adult standard of living and increase lifetime productivity by saving public funds that would otherwise be needed for remedial education, health care and rehabilitation. Prevention also enables parents and caregivers to realize higher earnings through more rapid return to the labour force.<sup>12</sup>

Unfortunately, the early childhood years tend to receive the least attention and investment from governments.<sup>13</sup> Of every 100 children born in 2000, 30 likely suffered malnutrition in their first five years, 26 were not immunized against childhood diseases, 19 lacked access to safe drinking water, 40 lacked access to adequate sanitation, and 17 never entered school. In developing countries, 25% of children live in poor families with incomes of less than \$1 per day.<sup>14</sup> As a result of these factors, 11 million children each year die before their fifth birthday.<sup>15</sup> Of those that survive, 10% experience some form of intellectual or physical disability or developmental delay.<sup>16</sup> Others experience learning difficulties due to inadequate stimulation during the critical first three years of life.<sup>17</sup> High rates of maternal morbidity and mortality (due to inadequate nutrition, poor health, lack of access to reproductive health services, and poverty arising from gender discrimination), lead to low birth weight children, orphans, and mothers with disabilities who may be limited in their ability to care for their children.

It is never too late for a child to learn, change their beliefs or overcome fears. However, the longer a child's needs go unmet, the more difficult and costly this becomes. In communities where children do not have an optimal start in life, community programs can provide positive experiences for children and support for parents. Community programs can help move children away from negative life paths onto positive life trajectories that offer hope, opportunity, and the chance for a better life.

While the early years are an important determinant of a child's future, adolescence is also critical because it involves multiple transitions that set the stage for adult life. The World Bank has identified five components of youth development, or transitions, that have a major impact on how each young person's human capital is safeguarded, developed and deployed:<sup>18</sup>

- Continuing to learn;
- Starting to work;
- Developing a healthy lifestyle;
- Beginning a family; and
- Exercising citizenship.

While the timing of these transitions varies across countries and cultures, the journey from puberty to economic independence largely covers the period between ages 12–24.

Policy-makers can support youth through these transitions in three ways.<sup>19</sup>

- *Provide opportunities* — Expand access to quality education and health services, facilitate youth transition into the labour market, and give youth a chance to articulate what they need and to have a role in delivering it.
- *Expand capabilities* — Develop young people's ability to make effective life choices by recognizing them as decision-makers and helping to ensure their decisions are well informed, adequately resourced and judicious.
- *Provide second chances* — Provide an effective system of second chances through targeted programs that give young people the hope and incentive to recover from bad luck, adverse circumstances, or poor choices made earlier in their lives.

Helping people living in poverty to become more highly skilled and productive is one of the primary means of helping them and their families to improve their economic situation. Basic education and health care — especially for children — are essential to this strategy.

While primary school enrollment rates have increased substantially over the past 40 years,<sup>20</sup> new challenges are emerging. Many countries struggle to find the resources to provide adequate universal secondary schooling, leaving many children — particularly girls — behind.<sup>21</sup> Advances in technology and labour market changes have changed the skills needed, with more industries requiring advanced skills and problem-solving abilities beyond basic literacy.<sup>22</sup>

Youth are also confronting new health threats just as they are initiating sexual activity and entering the age of identity development and risk-taking. In 2005, more than half of the five million people who contracted HIV were youth 15–24, the majority of them young women and girls.<sup>23</sup> HIV and AIDS is currently the leading cause of death among youth in sub-Saharan Africa.<sup>24</sup> In other regions, non-communicable diseases are now the leading cause of death for young women, while injuries caused by accidents and violence are the leading cause of death for young men.<sup>25</sup>

The Millennium Development Goals and related targets reflect the importance and value of addressing the challenges confronting children and youth. The MDGs emphasize:

- Reducing child mortality;
- Eradicating extreme poverty and hunger, which severely limit children's development and life chances;
- Achieving universal primary education, for boys and girls;
- Promoting gender equality, particularly in primary and secondary education;
- Combating HIV and AIDS, one of the leading killers of young people, as well as malaria and other major diseases;
- Ensuring environmental sustainability, critical to the well-being of the next generation; and
- Developing global partnerships, including those that can help develop decent and productive employment for youth.

By investing and targeting policies to meet these challenges, governments can reduce poverty and advance development. Because capacity to learn is greatest at a young age, investments in helping young people to acquire an education, skills, good health habits, and a desire to participate in community and society are likely to yield a far greater return than later attempts to build these capacities. Additionally, the extent to which young people acquire these capacities significantly affects the life chances of their children. Better educated parents have fewer, healthier and better educated children. These inter-generational effects can help to move families out of poverty over the longer term.

## 1.2 SPORT AS A TOOL TO PROMOTE CHILD AND YOUTH DEVELOPMENT

Sport can contribute significantly to international, national and local efforts to give children a healthy start. Sport can help those who haven't received a good start, and equip youth with the information, skills, personal and social resources, and support needed to make key life transitions successfully.

It is important to note, however, that much of the evidence supporting sport's potential comes from developed countries. More focused research and evaluation of policies and programs is needed in developing nations, to generate knowledge and inform initiatives undertaken in these contexts. However, sport is already being used worldwide to advance child and youth development and education, suggesting that its benefits are already appreciated, if not yet fully understood or explained.

Existing evidence shows that developmentally appropriate programs for very young children can help ensure they receive the positive experiences and stimulation through play that they need to take advantage of critical developmental windows and establish a foundation for success. Involving parents and caregivers allows programs to pass on simple and enjoyable ways for them to help their children develop and grow through play.

Integrating physical education and sport experiences into the school day will make sport accessible to all children who attend school (regardless of their physical ability, gender, socio-economic or ethno-cultural background). This integration can build on children's early experiences by:

- Ensuring children develop their physical and motor capacities to lead active, healthy lives — a major protective factor in preventing non-communicable disease;
- Providing children with opportunities to have fun and be active, reinforcing their desire to make physical activity a lifelong habit;
- Helping children understand and overcome barriers to physical activity;
- Informing, equipping and motivating children to make healthy lifestyle choices by integrating sport and physical activity with health education courses;
- Improving children's relaxation, concentration and mood state in school—helping them focus and learn; and
- Attracting more children to enroll and stay in school to take advantage of opportunities for sport and play that they may not otherwise have.

Many children do not receive an optimal start in life, and may not have an opportunity to attend school. Community sport programs provide children marginalized by poverty, gender, disability, family dissolution, ethno-cultural background, and conflict with:

- Positive adult role models to inform and guide their choices;
- Learning and skill-building opportunities that build the self-esteem and self-confidence necessary to their mental health;
- Sport training and team experiences to help develop effective social and communication skills, build positive relationships, make friends, and find social support;



- Opportunities to express their needs and interests and exercise leadership on the sport field and in their communities;
- Life skills that increase their employability and chances of successfully transitioning into the labour market with opportunities for advancement; and
- Second chances for those engaged in delinquency, criminal gangs and armed conflict by offering a path to a positive alternative lifestyle.

### 1.3 LIMITATIONS OF SPORT TO CHILD AND YOUTH DEVELOPMENT

Well-designed sport-based programs focused on healthy development, integrated with other community level interventions, and involving parents, teachers and peers, can positively affect the lives of children and youth. Participation in sport activities alone, however, will not necessarily deliver the benefits outlined above. In fact, sport that is overly focused on competition and winning at all costs, or that fails to place the healthy development of children and youth at the centre of the experience, can create negative experiences. These experiences can also undermine young people's self-esteem, involve them in negative relationships, encourage poor sportsmanship, foster poor body image and unhealthy eating behaviour, permit aggression and violence, allow racism, perpetuate gender discrimination, or expose them to psychological, sexual and commercial exploitation and abuse. The selection and development of coaches and teachers is therefore one of the most important factors in ensuring that programs offer a positive development experience for children and youth.

Government policies also play a critical role. While more governments are attempting to increase participation in sport,<sup>26</sup> more effective national and local policies are needed to reduce inequalities in sport. These efforts are particularly important when it comes to vulnerable populations like children and youth, women, persons with disabilities, and people living in poverty. Policies and investments to harness sport's potential to benefit children and youth are desirable. They are relatively low-cost interventions with the potential to yield long-lasting benefits for individuals and countries.

### 1.4 SPORT, CHILD AND YOUTH DEVELOPMENT, AND THE MILLENNIUM DEVELOPMENT GOALS

There are still questions about how sport can best deliver positive benefits. The information presented in Table 3.1 can help governments and communities to better understand sport's potential and how it can contribute to advancing the Millennium Development Goals, in particular those that relate to the healthy development and education of children and youth.

**TABLE 3.1 SPORT, CHILD AND YOUTH DEVELOPMENT, AND THE MILLENNIUM DEVELOPMENT GOALS**

MILLENNIUM DEVELOPMENT GOAL	CONTRIBUTION OF SPORT
1. Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Connection to services and supports for vulnerable children and youth (e.g., orphans, former combatants, street children, unemployed and out-of-school youth)</li> <li>• Opportunities for youth to develop transferable life skills and increase their employability</li> <li>• Access to employment and small business supports, and jobs, through sport</li> </ul>
2. Achieve universal primary education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Encouragement and support for vulnerable children to enroll in school</li> <li>• Enhanced school attendance and academic achievement</li> <li>• Alternative education opportunities for children who cannot attend school</li> </ul>
3. Promote gender equality and empower women	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improved physical and mental health for girls</li> <li>• More opportunities for social interaction and friendship</li> <li>• Opportunities to develop self-esteem, self-confidence, and a sense of control over their bodies</li> <li>• Enhanced access to health information</li> <li>• Access to leadership opportunities</li> <li>• Positive changes in gender norms giving girls and women greater safety and control over their lives</li> </ul>
4. Reduce child mortality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improved education and access to health information for young mothers, leading to improved health and well-being of their children</li> </ul>
5. Improve maternal health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improved access for girls to reproductive health information and services</li> <li>• Delayed onset of sexual activity and higher-risk adolescent pregnancies (in some contexts)</li> </ul>
6. Combat HIV and AIDS, malaria, and other diseases	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Access to information on HIV and AIDS and its prevention</li> <li>• Positive role models and experiences that discourage high-risk health behaviours</li> <li>• Reduced stigma and increased social integration of children and youth living with HIV and AIDS</li> </ul>
7. Ensure environmental sustainability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increased awareness of importance of environmental protection and sustainability</li> <li>• Child and youth participation in community action to improve their local environment</li> </ul>
8. Develop a global partnership for development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Global sport and development partnerships on behalf of children and youth, and increased networking among governments, donors, NGOs and sport organizations worldwide to advance sport for children and youth development knowledge, policies and programs</li> </ul>

1.5  
**INTERNATIONAL  
 FRAMEWORKS FOR  
 SPORT AND CHILD  
 AND YOUTH  
 DEVELOPMENT**

The link between sport, child and youth development, and education was first formalized on the international stage in 1952. The United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) recognized sport as a tool for education and incorporated sport into its program at the seventh session of its General Conference in Paris.<sup>27</sup>

Then, in 1959, the UN *Declaration of the Rights of the Child* recognized every child's right to play and recreation, stating that: "...The child shall have full opportunity for play and recreation" and "...society and the public authorities shall endeavour to promote the enjoyment of this right."<sup>28</sup>

In 1978, UNESCO echoed this sentiment, declaring sport and physical education a fundamental right for all in its *International Charter of Physical Education and Sport*, adopted by the General Conference at its twentieth session in Paris.<sup>29</sup> This right was reinforced by the UN General Assembly's adoption of the Convention on the Rights of the Child in 1989.<sup>30</sup> Article 31 of the Convention recognized the right of every child to "rest and leisure, to engage in play and recreational activities appropriate to the age of the child and to participate freely in cultural life and the arts." The Convention states that "parties shall respect and promote the right of the child to participate fully in cultural and artistic life and shall encourage the provision of appropriate and equal opportunities for cultural, artistic, recreational, and leisure activity."

In the last two decades, numerous intergovernmental processes have acknowledged the need to ensure child and youth access to play, physical activity, sport and recreation opportunities. In 1999, the third International Conference of Ministers and Senior Officials Responsible for Physical Education and Sport (MINEPS III) put forward the *Declaration of Punta Del Este*, which committed to a focus on sport for all, with particular attention to the participation of children and women.<sup>31</sup>

Governments again acknowledged the right of children and youth to sport and recreation in 2002 when the UN General Assembly adopted *A World Fit for Children*. This resolution called for governments, multilateral agencies, civil society, the private sector and the media to ensure children's enjoyment of all human rights and fundamental freedoms. The resolution articulated the need for equal access to educational and recreational services, and accessible sport and recreational facilities in schools and communities worldwide.<sup>32</sup>

Following the report of the UN Inter-Agency Task Force on Sport for Development and Peace in 2003, the UN General Assembly passed a series of resolutions entitled *Sport as a Means to Promote Education, Health, Development and Peace* in 2003, 2004 and 2006.<sup>33</sup>

To encourage greater use of sport as a tool for education, the European Commission launched the *European Year of Education Through Sport 2004 (EYES)*. EYES aimed to sensitize Europeans to the importance of sport as a tool for education, with the European Commission co-funding 185 local, regional, national, and EU sport and education projects.<sup>34</sup>

In 2005, the United Nations proclaimed 2005 the *International Year for Sport and Physical Education (IYSPE)*<sup>35</sup> and called on decision-makers to come together to support sport and physical education activities and sport-based development. Worldwide, initiatives highlighted the vital contribution of sport and physical education to achieving the Millennium Development Goals, many of these targeting children and youth.

In 2005, the European Parliament adopted a *Resolution on Development and Sport*, confirming its support for sport as a low-cost, high-impact tool for development. The Resolution specifically acknowledges sport's positive contribution to the reintegration of children in post-conflict situations.<sup>36</sup>

These commitments reinforce the importance of sport and play as a basic human right for all children and youth. They also support the understanding that sport can contribute to advancing a broad range of development goals pertaining to the development and education of children and youth worldwide.

## 2 EVIDENCE: USING SPORT TO STRENGTHEN CHILD AND YOUTH DEVELOPMENT

### 2.1 ENHANCING PHYSICAL HEALTH AND DEVELOPMENT

The number of children and youth participating in sport worldwide has increased over the past decade.<sup>37</sup> It may be surprising, however, to note that some data indicates that sport participation rates among children (ages 10–18 specifically) have decreased significantly in some countries.<sup>38</sup> In a review of child and youth fitness levels in 11 countries, it was revealed that out of 151 fitness performance changes evaluated, 106 of those changes were negative.<sup>39</sup> This information, coupled with growing child obesity rates in developing and developed nations, suggests that physical activity levels may be declining. In the absence of global baseline data, it is difficult to know whether this is true.<sup>40</sup> Nonetheless, the declining rates of physical activity have important implications because physical activity is important to the overall physical development of children and youth, and helps reduce a range of health risks such as obesity.

#### **Developing physical capacity and motor skills**

Early to mid-childhood is a critical period in child development because this is when children learn to use their senses to explore and make sense of their surroundings.

This period of development helps to build connections in the brain that foster the confidence, independence and physical capacity needed to lead active healthy lives.

One fundamental goal of healthy child development is to enable children to develop the capacity and willingness to move with expression, poise, efficiency, and confidence in a wide variety of physically challenging situations. This allows them to participate fully in, enjoy, and contribute to their life and the lives of others.<sup>41</sup> Sport and physical activity can help foster a general base of motor abilities — including body coordination, strength and fitness — and help children understand age-appropriate concepts about how their bodies move.<sup>42</sup> If motor abilities are not achieved, children are less likely to experience cardio-respiratory fitness, master sport skills, participate in organized physical activity, and adopt healthy leisure activities.<sup>43,44</sup>

As children tend to develop their gross motor skills (those using larger muscles) before their fine motor skills (those using smaller muscles), they need to learn general movement concepts about how their body can and should move before learning specialized sport skills.<sup>45</sup> Sport programs for children and youth should take into account physical maturity and its impact on children's ability to perform various sports and physical activities. Physical maturity is influenced by age, gender, heredity and the context children find themselves in.<sup>46</sup> Despite having a more efficient system for using oxygen in their active muscles, pre-pubescent children cannot handle long periods of exercise as well as adults can. Children do not relieve heat (sweat) as efficiently, have less mature systems for changing stored energy to usable energy, have smaller heart and blood vessel size, and move in a less coordinated way than adults.

The onset of puberty brings significant physical and social-emotional changes (e.g., sexual maturation, growth and weight spurt) and can vary by several years among groups of children.<sup>47</sup> Girls tend to be more physically mature than boys of the same age by approximately one year in early childhood and by two years at puberty. The physical benefits of sport depend on how appropriately teachers and coaches respond to these differences in physical maturation.

Caution must be exercised when introducing young children to competitive sport. Children are not born with the ability to compete and cooperate, nor can they automatically mentally visualize the complex sets of relationships between teammates and opponents that are involved in sport. Children do not begin to develop the cognitive and social abilities they need to understand these relationships until they are about eight years of age. These abilities are not fully developed until about 12 years of age.<sup>48</sup> This learning

occurs as children advance from only being able to look at the world from their own point of view, to a stage when they can see the world from the perspective of others.

While sport and games that involve physical activity are an ideal means of helping children under 12 to develop their movement and motor skills, activities need to be age appropriate and should focus on skills and expression, rather than competition and team strategies.<sup>49</sup> Young children may not understand losing and may believe that losing implies something negative about them personally. Children below the age of 10–12 also tend to misunderstand how factors like effort, luck, difficulty, ability, opponent strength, and weather influence sport performance, and this can hinder their sport motivation and self-confidence.<sup>50</sup>

Coaches and teachers should encourage and praise effort, rather than winning.<sup>51</sup> To encourage learning, they should provide encouragement and direction about specific skills.<sup>52</sup> Pre-school and elementary school activities should help children develop basic skills such as running, jumping, kicking, and throwing.<sup>53</sup> Special attention should be given to accommodating the emerging ability of children to see things from others' perspectives, developing their basic cooperation skills,<sup>54</sup> exploring skills and talents, and building a sense of success.<sup>55</sup> As children get older, team strategies and competition can be introduced.<sup>56</sup> Sport can then be used to enhance the development of specialized motor skills and to improve creativity, attention, balance, coordination, agility, strength, endurance, and knowledge.

As children mature, the influence of peers on their sport behaviours and preferences increases.<sup>57</sup> If youth perceive that they are accepted and valued by their peers in sport settings, they tend to be more satisfied, self-confident, and motivated to participate.<sup>58</sup> Youth enjoyment of sport is greatly reduced when peer interactions are negative and divisive and coaches or teachers try to improve sport performance by using social pressure (e.g., making their abilities highly noticeable to peers and others).

In addition to peers, organizations, parents, teachers and coaches play a major role in determining whether children enjoy their physical activity and sport experiences. Too much emphasis on winning can be harmful to developing children and youth. Equally harmful is exposing children to repeated failure and criticism without useful feedback. Excessive pressure to perform should be avoided. Few children possess the talent to become high-performance athletes. While youth should be encouraged to try different sports and physical activities, they should never be forced to engage in activities they do not enjoy. The goal of youth sports should be to foster the development of general physical competence and promote physical activity, fun, life skills, sportsmanship, and good health.<sup>59</sup>

### **Promoting physical health and preventing disease**

As discussed in Chapter 2, the physical activity dimension of sport offers significant health benefits. These benefits include reduced risk of non-communicable disease and improved mental health. The use of sport as an education and social mobilization platform can also play an important role in preventing the spread of infectious disease. While links between physical activity and the prevention of non-communicable disease among children and youth are not as strong as they are for adults,<sup>60</sup> research has generally found that regular participation in physical activity during childhood and adolescence:<sup>61</sup>

- Helps build and maintain healthy bones, muscles and joints;
- Helps control weight, build lean muscle and reduce fat;
- Prevents or delays the development of high blood pressure and helps reduce blood pressure in adolescents with hypertension;
- Lowers risk of cardiovascular disease;<sup>62</sup> and
- Reduces feelings of anxiety and depression.

Research also shows that children and youth who are less physically active tend to be at higher risk for obesity, type 2 diabetes, disease, disability, and motor skill deficiencies.<sup>63,64</sup>

Chapter 2 explores the role that sport can play in educating young people about HIV and AIDS and other infectious diseases and equipping them with information, skills and role models that, together, can help reduce their vulnerability to health risks. It is worth emphasizing, however, that sport for health programs aimed at youth can only succeed when they support and empower the youth they are seeking to help. Equipping youth with new information and skills, engaging them in decision-making about the programs they participate in, offering them leadership roles and responsibilities, and encouraging and supporting them to contribute to their communities in other ways all increase their resilience and ability to manage the risks and stresses in their lives.<sup>65</sup>

During adolescence, youth tend to be extremely peer-oriented. Effective sport for health programs can capitalize on this tendency by training and mobilizing older youth as peer educators and coaches. Encouraging the participation of peer educators increases a program's ability to reach hard-to-reach youth and builds on the capacity of youth to understand, and effectively communicate with other youth. The Government of Tanzania's *Peer Coaching Program* is a compelling example of this approach. Focused on HIV and AIDS prevention, the program recruits male and female youth from rural areas. The youth are trained in a range of sports (soccer, netball, volleyball, and traditional games), coaching techniques, environmental issues, health awareness, and HIV and AIDS prevention, care, and treatment. After training, peer coaches return to their villages.

Equipped with sports equipment, they organize community sport events supplemented with health education and training for participating youth and other community members. To date, the program has trained and mobilized over 1,000 previously unemployed youth who are providing HIV and health education to thousands of their peers.<sup>66</sup>

Strong programs engage youth in dialogue, encouraging them to grapple openly with new information and ideas, the choices available to them, and their implications. Because well-designed sport and health programs offer a safe and neutral environment, they provide ideal forums to talk about sensitive topics like safer sex, gender discrimination, and racism. Coaches, in positions of trust and responsibility, may also be called on to respond to issues that youth feel they cannot discuss with family or friends. These issues may involve questions about sexuality, HIV and AIDS, or disclosures of sexual and other forms of abuse. These discussions can have a significant impact on the youth involved and the life and health choices they make. It is important that coaches are provided with sufficient counselling training and accurate information on health issues and referrals to ensure youth are receiving sensitive, accurate, and age-appropriate information and guidance.



A child from the Chumphon province of Thailand participates in a sporting activity designed to deliver messages about disease prevention and the importance of a healthy lifestyle.

Right To Play



**Recommended physical activity levels for children and adolescents**

Children and youth differ from adults and each other in their physical development and needs and require age-appropriate guidelines for physical activity levels. In Chapter 2, it was noted that scientific opinion generally suggests 30 minutes of cumulative moderate physical activity per day to attain health benefits.<sup>67</sup> Children and youth, however, generally require more activity, and different kinds of activity, than adults.

The World Health Organization recommends that children and young people engage in an additional 20 minutes of vigorous physical activity three times a week.<sup>68</sup> However, young children, while often vigorously active, are rarely active for long periods of time, preferring to alternate shorter periods of activity and rest. While all children may gain health benefits from longer periods of vigorous activity, younger children are unlikely to appreciate these benefits and may lose interest in the activity. Consequently, high-intensity training for young children is not recommended.

Based on rigorous scientific reviews, more detailed, age-specific guidelines have been developed for elementary school-age children and for adolescents. Regarding elementary school-age children, the National Association for Sports and Physical Education in the United States suggests:<sup>69</sup>

- Elementary school-aged children should accumulate at least 30–60 minutes of age-appropriate and developmentally appropriate physical activity from a variety of activities on all, or most, days of the week;
- An accumulation of more than 60 minutes, and up to several hours per day, of age-appropriate and developmentally-appropriate activity is encouraged;
- Some of the child's activity each day should be in periods lasting 10–15 minutes or more and include moderate to vigorous activity (this will typically be intermittent, involving alternating moderate to vigorous activity with brief periods of rest and recovery); and
- Children should not have extended periods of inactivity.

High-intensity training to improve performance is more appropriate and successful with adolescents. The International Consensus Conference on Physical Activity Guidelines for Adolescents advises that:<sup>70</sup>

- All adolescents should be physically active daily, or nearly every day, as part of play, games, sports, work, transportation, recreation, physical education, or planned exercise, in the context of family, school, and community activities; and
- Adolescents should engage in three or more additional sessions per week of activities that last 20 minutes or more and that require moderate to vigorous levels of exertion.

In all cases, activities to meet the minimum guidelines for both groups should be enjoyable and involve a variety of muscle groups.<sup>71</sup>

### **Motivating and supporting children and youth to be active**

Motivating and supporting children and youth is the key to ensuring they are active. Knowing the key motivation “triggers” can help in this process. A review of 54 studies reveals that children’s physical activity levels are positively affected by: their intention to be physically active, their preference for physical activity, a healthy diet, previous participation in physical activity, access to facilities and equipment, and time spent outdoors.<sup>72</sup> The most consistent factor hindering their participation was perceived barriers to activity.

A comparable review of factors that positively influence adolescent physical activity levels demonstrated that the most important modifiable variables were: achievement orientation, perceived competence, intention to be active, “sensation seeking,” previous physical activity, and participation in community sports. Social, cultural and environmental factors with a positive influence included: parental support, support from close peers, physically active siblings, and opportunities to exercise. Negative factors that discouraged activity included depression and being sedentary after school and on weekends.

As these factors are likely affected by culture and context, governments and their partners would benefit from investing in research to determine the most important factors influencing activity in their countries. With this knowledge, they can design programs to address specific contexts.

Other non-modifiable factors such as age, gender, and ethnicity, play an important role in influencing activity levels. In many countries, girls are far less active than boys due to gender and cultural norms (issues concerning girls’ participation in sport and activity are discussed in detail in Chapter 4). As well, children and youth from marginalized ethno-cultural groups may have fewer opportunities to participate in sport and activity. Effective programs identify groups at risk of lower activity and take measures to reduce barriers to their participation.

Early adolescence is a critical period when physical activity levels tend to decline. There is a growing understanding that children and youth are more likely to continue participating in sport when they:

- Value and enjoy it;
- Choose to participate rather than being forced to;
- Have supportive and active parents and siblings;
- Perceive themselves to have ability in sport;
- Are accepted by their peers;
- Do not experience regular pressure and stress from unrealistically high-performance standards; and
- Have coaches who are relational, caring, and encouraging.

Of the 15% of children who leave organized sport for negative reasons, most cite lack of playing time, over-emphasis on winning, chronic anxiety, not having enough fun, requiring too much time and commitment, and unpleasant memories of past experiences in physical education and sport as reasons for leaving.<sup>73</sup>

Having negative experiences in sport and/or physical education can increase feelings of anxiety. When participants become unsure about how to cope with the challenges they face, this can diminish their willingness to participate and their confidence to succeed in sport.<sup>74</sup> Other less emotionally negative reasons for discontinuing sport included the desire to participate in other sports or interests, having a change in priorities, not feeling sufficiently skilled to continue, and lacking the money or other resources (e.g., transportation or equipment) to continue.<sup>75</sup>

In general, school and community efforts need to strongly support physical activity for children and youth. They can provide support by:<sup>76</sup>

- Promoting lifetime physical activities in school programs, particularly those that can be done alone or with one other person;
- Providing safe, clean, accessible outdoor play spaces in the community for younger children and accessible, enjoyable activity programs for youth;
- Encouraging parents to make sure their children are physically active for at least one hour a day;
- Providing developmentally appropriate activities for children that enable all participants to experience success and reduce competition to lessen anxiety about participating;
- Verbally encouraging children to participate in physical activity (“You can do it!”);
- Emphasizing to adolescents the benefits of physical activity — fun and time with friends — and providing activities that reflect their interests and needs; and
- Creating opportunities for youth to observe influential role models (e.g., teachers, coaches, parents and peers) engaged in physical activity.

## 2.2 STRENGTHENING PSYCHOSOCIAL HEALTH AND DEVELOPMENT

Sport and play have an equally critical role to play in the psychosocial development of children and youth, beginning in a child’s first years and extending through adolescence. Unstructured and structured play is important for children to learn about themselves and the world and to develop their capacities. Participation in sport can also help adolescents navigate the challenging process of identity formation, help them build life skills and healthy lifestyle behaviours, and offer them adult role models to guide them through this challenging period in their lives. In post-conflict and post-disaster contexts, sport can also play a valuable role in trauma recovery. Acquiring self-esteem and self-confidence, described in Chapter 2, is a critical dimension of child and youth development and is integral to all these processes.

### **Early development through play**

During the first six years of a child's life, play is one of the primary ways they explore and experience the world and develop their physical, cognitive and social-emotional capacities. These years, particularly from 0 to 3, are critical to a child's brain development. At this time, specific windows of opportunity exist for developing key capacities that enable individuals to learn and function later in life. Inadequate stimulation and opportunities to develop during this period can mean closing these developmental windows with lasting consequences for a child's capacities.<sup>77</sup>

Orphans and young children in disadvantaged families and communities are more likely than others to lack the stimulation and play opportunities that make the most of these developmental windows, however, children in all socio-economic contexts may suffer from this absence. At the same time, however, some sport and play opportunities can be overly complex for very young children to grasp. Age-appropriate games and physical activity designed to help mobility, coordination, knowledge about the world and themselves, self-confidence, and initial social skills can help optimize development. Age-appropriate activity can also compensate for stimulation that parents or caregivers may not know about or have the opportunity to provide.

Ideally, games and physical activity would involve parents and caregivers and help them learn how to stimulate their child. Strengthening the bond between young children and their primary caregiver is important to developing a child's capacity for attachment and creating a sense of stability and security necessary to their well-being.

### **Helping adolescent identity formation**

Forming a strong and coherent sense of identity is a crucial developmental step in the transition from adolescence to adulthood. Developing identity is achieved through the dual processes of individuation (the process of becoming an individual) and social relatedness (the process of relating to others). Identity achievement is accomplished when youth have fully explored their options and have reached a relatively stable commitment to a particular sense of themselves.<sup>78</sup>

Leisure activities can facilitate or complicate this process. Developmentally beneficial activities involve challenge, effort, and concentration.<sup>79</sup> As sport and physical activity possess these characteristics, it is believed they can be an important transitional activity for youth. Studies of recreation have found that it benefits the process of adolescent self-exploration by reinforcing self-esteem and self-concept, and by creating a feeling of being in control.<sup>80</sup>

A review of studies on the links between physical activity and self-esteem found that 71% of pre-experimental<sup>81</sup> studies, 74% of quasi-experimental<sup>82</sup> studies and 58% of experimental

studies<sup>83</sup> reported increased self-esteem in all age groups.<sup>84</sup> One large US study identified an even greater effect on self-esteem among children and youth with disabilities.<sup>85</sup> Additional research identified an association between participation in physical activity and positive self-image for all age groups.<sup>86</sup> Self-esteem is the subject of many psychosocial youth studies because low self-esteem is often associated with young people thought to be at-risk of developing anti-social behaviour.<sup>87</sup>

With identity formation, results vary by the kind of activity and gender. Physical activity does not seem to significantly affect identity development levels in boys. However, girls who participate in sport are more likely to have a higher identity development than inactive girls.<sup>88</sup> Girls, unlike boys, do not see sport as an integral part of their identity. Instead, sport participation acts indirectly by helping them acquire a greater sense of independence.<sup>89</sup> For young women whose socialization tends to encourage caring, fitting in, and concern for others, rather than strength and independence, sport may allow them to explore experiences outside the realm of female stereotypes.<sup>90</sup> Gender equity and empowerment through sport is discussed further in Chapter 4.

Age-specific analysis shows a striking stability in self-concept among youth who are physically active throughout adolescence. Their physical self-concept is a highly significant part of their overall self-concept, especially in early adolescence, although this diminishes as development progresses.<sup>91</sup> Young people who participate in organized sport score significantly higher on self-concept than those who do not, with evidence that girls benefit more than boys in this respect.<sup>92</sup> There are few studies on involvement in physical activity and sport by young people from minority ethno-cultural groups and those with physical and intellectual disabilities. Studies that do exist, however, show a positive association between sport participation and self-concept.<sup>93</sup>

Throughout adolescence, friendship plays an important role in identity development by generating a sense of belonging and influencing youth self-image.<sup>94</sup> Sport can facilitate this process because it offers youth the opportunity to build positive relationships with each other.

Negative sport and physical activity experiences can damage self-esteem. In certain cases (largely in developed-country contexts) physical activity can be associated with distorted body image, an unrealistic desire to lose weight, overexertion, and a harmful lifestyle.<sup>95</sup> The omnipresent images of athletic, fit people and preferential treatment of such people can undermine the self-esteem of youth whose body types do not match these images, are overweight, or lack motor and athletic skills. More research is needed to understand the circumstances where physical activity presents risks, rather than opportunities, for healthy adolescent identity development.

### **Building life skills and positive values**

Sport and physical activity programs are widely believed to be powerful vehicles for teaching children and youth social and life skills and acquiring positive attitudes, values and morals.<sup>96,97</sup> Adolescence marks a departure from the egocentricity of childhood, as youth develop a greater ability to put themselves in another's position. This improved ability to empathize enables youth to display and assume responsibility for behaviour that reflects social awareness and has a moral and ethical dimension.<sup>98</sup> There is some evidence to suggest that sport and physical education programs can promote a broad spectrum of life skills and values that build on this capacity,<sup>99</sup> including:

- Team-building skills;<sup>100</sup>
- Communication skills;<sup>101</sup>
- Decision-making skills;<sup>102</sup>
- Problem-solving skills;<sup>103</sup>
- Sense of community;<sup>104</sup>
- Self-esteem;<sup>105</sup>
- Personal responsibility;<sup>106</sup>
- Empathy;<sup>107</sup>
- Moral development;<sup>108,109</sup>
- Resiliency;<sup>110,111</sup> and
- Improved inclination for educational achievement.<sup>112</sup>

Sport's ability to contribute to these skills and values is linked to a number of factors. The most obvious is sport's significance and popularity among children and youth, particularly boys.<sup>113</sup> Participation in sport provides youth with opportunities to gain confidence from skill development and caring relations with peers, coaches and program staff. These activities foster a sense of belonging, establish supportive social networks, and provide young people with routines and structure in their lives.<sup>114</sup> Sport's capacity to provide educational opportunities for social development is attributed to the many social and moral requirements for sport participation, which parallel those of participating in a law-abiding society.<sup>115</sup>

Acquiring positive values is likely due to the sport environment itself. Highly emotional and interactive, this environment provides opportunities to demonstrate personal and social qualities.<sup>116</sup> The sport environment fosters holistic development because participants are challenged cognitively, emotionally, socially, and physically. Individuals are also often required to make decisions with a moral dimension. Because the results of participants' efforts to meet these challenges are immediate and visible to participants and fans, those who cheat are likely to be seen. The sports arena therefore has the potential to reward virtuous actions such as fairness and justice.<sup>117</sup>

Sport participants must also achieve some level of ability to cooperate, as all activities involve interaction with other people (e.g., teammate, opponent, referee, coach). Those who participate in team sports are responsible for particular roles and must coordinate their efforts with others to achieve the team's overall goal.<sup>118</sup>

Other virtues can be learned in sport as well. Those who believe that sport builds character point out that participants "must overcome difficult obstacles, persist in the face of opposition, develop self-control, cooperate with teammates, and learn to live with both victory and defeat."<sup>119</sup>

Despite the many claims made for sport, and the suggestions of how sport confers life skills and builds positive values, some believe the supporting evidence to be inconclusive. A number of significant reports and literature reviews have been conducted, examining whether sport can be an effective tool for supporting young people and improving their life chances.<sup>120</sup> The degree to which sport can contribute to moral development, in particular, remains unresolved.<sup>121</sup>

Despite divergent views, the majority of researchers agree that there are potential benefits to youth when they participate in sport and physical activities.<sup>122</sup> While the physical act of performing sport skills alone will not teach moral action, and the experiences that children and youth have in sports are far from uniform, the potential exists to enhance moral development through the social interactions associated with involvement in sport.<sup>123</sup>

The broader elements of social and emotional youth development can only be achieved through sport that fosters positive experiences and minimizes negative experiences.<sup>124</sup> There is a difference between sport that builds character and sport that undermines positive social and moral attitudes, judgments and behaviours. The difference has less to do with the act of playing sports and more to do with the philosophy of the sport organization, the quality of the coaching, the nature of parental involvement, and participants' individual experiences and resources.<sup>125</sup> Sport can enhance moral development in children and youth when fair play, sportsmanship and moral development information is systematically and consistently taught.<sup>126</sup>

Research provides insights into the conditions that make sport conducive to positive youth development:

- Behaviour, attitudes and decisions all draw attention to considerations of a moral nature. Moral issues play a role and adults in charge inform the young people that the issue at hand and its resolution are of a moral nature. Coaches play a crucial role in providing this moral atmosphere.<sup>127</sup>
- Youth feel personally empowered<sup>128</sup> and are involved in decision-making.<sup>129</sup>

- The development of individual life and social skills is the primary objective of the program, not winning.<sup>130,131</sup>
- Relationships between individuals are conducive to promoting a positive social environment.<sup>132</sup>
- The intervention is considered in relation to other areas of the young people's lives.<sup>133</sup>
- Activities are tailored to the needs of individual youth participants.<sup>134</sup>

### **The importance of positive adult role models**

Parents are critical in providing support and guidance to young people, however, extended family members, teachers and other individuals also have a role to play. Most successful Sport for Development and Peace projects point to the influential role of skilled, enthusiastic sport teachers, coaches and athlete role models. Through their actions and words, these people inspire and guide the children and youth around them. Where children and youth are orphaned, separated from their families, or experience family abuse, this role becomes even more important. Consistent, positive emotional relations with a caring adult is a significant protective factor and helps build resilience, enabling children and youth to better manage the challenges in their lives.<sup>135</sup>

Research on youth participation in criminal gangs has shown that lack of a positive adult role model is the best predictor of gang membership<sup>136</sup> and a key differentiating factor between gang and non-gang members.<sup>137</sup> This highlights the critical importance of positive adult role models in the lives of youth.

Play is one of the most important ways that young people learn how to interact socially and to resolve differences among peers fairly.<sup>138</sup> Adults — coaches, teachers, mentors or others in authority — play a key role in this process, because children learn by copying their actions and behaviour. The actions of adults carry greater significance than the words they speak. Character, notions of fair play, and morals are learned by youth when the goals, attitudes and behaviour of the coach or teacher, and therefore the sport program, are moral.<sup>139</sup>

Coaches and physical education teachers need to embrace the best values of sport and consciously work to instill these in the children and youth they work with. To do this effectively, they need to understand the different developmental stages of children and youth. Then activities, discussions and teaching methods can be age-appropriate and responsive to the participants. Sound sport knowledge and good teaching skills are also important to ensure the quality of the sport and the learning experience. Most importantly, instructors must respect the individuality of participants, include everyone, engage in self-reflection and improvement and, above all, care for them.<sup>140</sup>



High-profile athletes — local or international — can have a strong influence on youth who admire and often wish to emulate them. Not all high-profile athletes, however, are positive role models. Violence, doping, cheating and other forms of poor sportsmanship send the wrong messages to children and youth and undermine sport's potential to foster healthy psychosocial development. However, for every poor athlete role model, there are many more who embody the best of sport and, conscious of their influence, actively put it to use on behalf of children and youth and other public causes. These athletes draw attention to global and regional needs and help to mobilize resources to address them.

These role models often represent sport organizations or humanitarian projects, appeal for resources to provide enhanced sport opportunities for children and youth, and make public appearances at schools and agencies. Their goal is to communicate important messages about health, motivation, and life skills. UNICEF's use of elite athletes — like Italy's Francesco Totti and Liberia's George Weah, and well-known sport teams such as A.C. Milan, Manchester United, and Real Madrid — as Goodwill Ambassadors is an example of this practice. UNICEF is far from alone, as many more groups are also turning to athletes to help carry messages to young people.

Athletes often relay a more profound message to young people — that they are important and valued as individuals and that they are part of a larger sport community that cares what happens to them. For an orphaned youth forced to leave school to look after younger siblings, or a former child combatant struggling to find acceptance in their community, this message, more than any other, may give them the hope they need to persevere and make positive choices.

### **Fostering active citizenship**

The sense of connectedness to others and the need to be a part of a broader community is one of the key characteristics that emerges during adolescence. During childhood, social relationships gravitate around family members. During adolescence individuals become aware that they belong to a much wider community.<sup>141</sup> Their sense of belonging to a community is then expressed by becoming involved socially or politically.

Sport can play an important role in enabling youth to develop these broader social networks and predisposing youth to greater civic involvement. Statistics Canada's National Survey of Giving, Volunteering and Participating (1997, 2000) sampled people 15 years of age and older and asked them about their participation in recreational activities as children, their current level of civic participation, and their involvement in their community.

The survey also asked adults about their participation in team sports and youth groups. Findings indicated that adults who participated in organized sports as children were much more likely to have performed volunteer work and participated in student government as children compared to those who did not participate in organized sports.<sup>142</sup>

In developing nations, where norms around volunteerism vary and where school-based opportunities for civic engagement may be more limited than in industrialized countries, sport can be a means for youth to acquire the sport and leadership skills to become coaches for their younger peers. From there, many youth go on to take other community leadership roles.

### **Preventing and addressing youth delinquency and crime**

Many youth live in circumstances where disadvantage places them at risk of involvement in delinquency and crime. Low self-esteem and self-worth, lack of companionship, support and social interaction with family and peers, poor school performance or non-attendance, and the absence of caring adult guidance can all contribute to the choice to engage in delinquent or criminal behaviour.<sup>143</sup> In the case of youth living in extreme poverty or armed conflict situations, coercion and/or lack of an alternative means of survival may be the primary driver.

There is considerable evidence to suggest that youth who participate in sport are less likely than non-participants to engage in delinquent behaviour.<sup>144</sup> Youth active in sport also have reduced rates of criminal arrest and anti-social behaviour.<sup>145</sup> This relationship between sport participation and reduced delinquency tends to be stronger among disadvantaged youth<sup>146</sup> and athletes in minor sport.<sup>147</sup>

International research demonstrates that after-school activities, like sport, and graduation incentives for at-risk youth encourage disadvantaged teens to complete high school, reduce youth arrests by 71%, and increase attendance at post-secondary education by 26%.<sup>148</sup> London England's Youth Inclusion Program targets the 50 most at-risk youth aged 13–16 living in high-crime neighbourhoods. It provides activities ranging from sport and recreational opportunities to skills training (literacy, anger management, dealing with gangs and drugs). A 2003 evaluation found that the program reduced school expulsions by 27%, reduced youth arrests by 65% and reduced overall crime in neighbourhoods by 16%–27%.<sup>149</sup>

Sport programs use different approaches to divert young people from crime and anti-social behaviour, including:<sup>150</sup>

- Offering attractive and positive activities for young people;
- Building resilience in young people so that they can better resist pressure to take part in harmful or anti-social behaviour;

- Increasing young people’s self-esteem and organizational and social skills;
- Providing positive role models through the coaches and local organizers leading the activities; and
- Decreasing the perception and fear of crime and anti-social behaviour in the community.

Programs are often specifically offered at local meeting places for youth — and often target young people who display anti-social behaviour or are at risk of offending. Others are more broadly based. Programs can also be roughly divided into two types: “Diversionary” programs seek to occupy youth with positive activities, preventing them from using their time for delinquency and crime, or associating with peers that might encourage such behaviour. Other programs focus consciously on providing “protective” factors that build resilience and help youth to make more informed and positive choices. Protective factors can include:<sup>151</sup>

- The promotion of healthy standards;
- Social bonding;
- Adults who lead by example and have clearly stated expectations about young people’s behaviour;
- Opportunities for involvement;
- Social skills; and
- Recognition and due praise.

Sport projects that enhance these factors in young people are generally delivered as part of a wider series of activities in partnership with renewal agencies and local groups, in an environment that emphasizes positive values.<sup>152</sup>

Sport programs offer significant value as alternatives to membership in criminal gangs. Gangs fill the void in a youth’s life created by the environmental, interpersonal, and intrapersonal conflicts discussed earlier. Membership provides affiliation, self-worth, companionship, and excitement.<sup>153</sup> Once in a gang, youth develop a responsibility to other members and a duty to help the gang prosper. The gang also provides a self-identity or valued role that is reinforced by the group, such as “the provider,” whose “job” is to obtain money for gang use by burglary or drug dealing.<sup>154</sup>

Initiation into sports at a young age can fill a void in the lives of vulnerable youth at a critical stage — which may prevent them from becoming involved in delinquent or criminal activity. Through early intervention, sport programs can help to move youth onto a positive life trajectory. This reduces the risk of future involvement in delinquency which, if not prevented, can continue over a lifetime.<sup>155</sup> Continued intervention is crucial in the lives of youth facing a pivotal choice about whether or not to join a gang. Short-term interventions may not be sufficient.

Youth who are already in gangs may wish to leave them, but leaving can be difficult. US research on gang separation has shown that peer pressure is the most important factor preventing a person from leaving a gang. Sport programs that offer many of the same psychosocial benefits as gang membership, but without the anti-social or criminal behaviour, can be one means of helping youth to make this positive transition.

Participation in sport has been used to treat delinquency with some success. A US study matched 34 delinquent teenage boys on age, socio-economic background and test scores for aggression and personality adjustment and then divided the youth into three groups. One group received traditional Tae Kwon Do training combining philosophical reflection, meditation, and physical practice of martial arts techniques. The second group received “modern” martial arts training, only emphasizing fighting and self-defense techniques. The third group ran and played basketball and football.<sup>156</sup>

After six months, members of the traditional Tae Kwon Do group were classified as normal rather than delinquent, demonstrated reduced aggression, exhibited less anxiety, exhibited increased self-esteem, and improved social skills. The modern martial arts group scored higher on delinquency and aggression and was less well adjusted than when the experiment began. The traditional sports group showed little change on delinquency and personality measures, but their self-esteem and social skills improved.<sup>157</sup>

The findings support the notion that whatever advantages or liabilities are associated with sport involvement, the results do not come from the sport experience itself, but from the particular blend of social interactions and physical activities that comprise the totality of the sport experience.<sup>158</sup>

### **Helping children and youth recover from trauma**

One of the most recent uses of sport is to alleviate trauma caused by armed conflict and natural disasters. Sport and play are culturally intrinsic, naturally occurring activities that can help stabilize individuals and communities in the aftermath of such events.<sup>159</sup> Experience indicates that sport and play activities access and activate an innate resilience that helps to protect, strengthen, and heal people in times of extreme stress.<sup>160</sup>

In recent years, humanitarian assistance has increasingly responded to the psychosocial needs of populations emerging from war and disaster. This is in addition to providing material assistance related to food, water, shelter and medical care. Attention has begun to shift from a traditional emphasis on physical vulnerabilities to a more holistic emphasis

which includes the psychosocial effects of difficult circumstances. These responses aim to build on and use the innate strengths and resilience of affected populations.<sup>161</sup>

Wars and natural disasters typically have different psychological impacts. Natural disasters are seen as impersonal acts of nature, and their impact tends to be emotionally neutral. War, however, can cause entire populations to experience distrust, fear, and animosity. Communities that have experienced natural disasters tend to come together while those affected by war are often torn apart.<sup>162</sup> Sport programs in these contexts must be designed with sensitivity to the circumstances at hand.

The main objective of many humanitarian programs in the aftermath of war or natural disaster is to restore social and psychological health to children and youth. The primary focus of these programs is to support the natural healing process by quickly restoring some semblance of community stability. This process can be facilitated by collectively engaging as many community members as possible.<sup>165</sup> Introducing sport and play activities helps to normalize a child's existence by restoring structured activity to their lives, giving them a sense of safety and stability, and re-establishing supportive social networks. These activities can help by removing children from stressful environments, giving them opportunities to be worry free. In post-disaster contexts where children may fear separation from their parents, play areas can be constructed close to emergency housing so children are reassured by their parents' presence nearby. This allows parents to be involved, or left free to engage in reconstruction activity, confident that their children are being well cared for close by.<sup>164</sup>

Sport and play also offer children ways to express and resolve issues arising from the trauma they've experienced, issues they may not have the intellectual or emotional capacity to otherwise address. Coaches play a critical role in this process, helping children to re-establish normal, positive social behaviours. Coaches do this by emphasizing communication and fair play and providing structured activities that help to build children's sense of community, self-esteem and confidence. These processes have a strengthening and calming effect on children, but also help coaches who have been affected by trauma themselves to address the impact in their own lives.<sup>165</sup>

In the Russian Republic of North Ossetia, a project was established in response to a terrorist attack on a Beslan school in September 2004. The attack resulted in many deaths. Because half the victims were children, the rehabilitation project targets children and youth through a sport and play centre. Early findings suggest that the sport programs are helping youth to resolve emotions arising from trauma and have led to fewer cases of depression.<sup>166</sup>

Local coaches are the most effective in these contexts, however, they are often experiencing the same aftershocks as the children they are trying to help. It is therefore important for coaches to undergo counselling and training to ensure they are able to provide appropriate support and role modelling before working with children. Helping coaches to understand the psychosocial process they are experiencing helps equip them to deal effectively with the needs of the children and youth concerned.<sup>167</sup>

Children and youth who have been armed combatants commonly experience trauma and face challenges reintegrating into families and communities. Often they are not wanted in their communities because of actions they committed. Most children who are ex-combatants have been victims of extreme abuse and brutality, often involving sexual exploitation, drug abuse and violence – many may have committed acts of violence themselves. Many girls also become young mothers as a result of rape. As a result, former child combatants and children who have endured times of war, are often deeply traumatized, suffer from self-hatred, lack skills and education, are socially isolated, and see no hope for the future.

Sport can offer a means of gradually reintroducing these children and youth into communities and helping them to rebuild their identities and self-esteem. Sport can also help these individuals to acquire skills, education and experiences that enable them to find employment. By integrating these youth into sport programs, an element of normalcy is restored to their lives. They are provided with a caring adult guide and mentor, they can begin to form new peer relationships and can develop a sense of belonging. Sport programs can also be a door to re-enter the school system or enter alternative “second chance” educational and skill development programs.

*Droit au Sport/Sport pour la Paix* in the Ivory Coast offered football, volleyball and basketball programs, along with local sports, games and art activities, to help children, youth and adults to overcome trauma experienced during a period of civil conflict. Some regions of the country were still engaged in conflict, so the program included many internally displaced persons and had to contend with animosities between groups. Observations from the program in 2005 indicated that sport was a particularly useful and important tool because it gave people from different ethno-cultural backgrounds a reason, and a safe and neutral space, to meet. Football was the most popular sport and many female and male teams were formed. Organizers ensured that teams were ethnically mixed, to avoid igniting tensions and strife. Program organizers found that focusing on building strengths was more effective than dwelling on vulnerabilities produced by trauma. Organizers also found that children welcomed the predictability and structure of rules — so much so that they became unhappy when these were changed, reinforcing the value of structured activity and play in the eyes of children themselves.<sup>168</sup>

While sport cannot replace what children and youth lose to disasters and war, it can enable them to rebuild their lives on a positive and stable foundation. Sport can reconnect them to the fundamental childhood experience of joy in play, bring structure and positive adult guidance into their lives, restore a sense of safety and stability, help them to acquire positive values and behaviours, and help them work through the issues and emotions arising from their experiences.

## 2.3 USING SPORT TO STRENGTHEN CHILD AND YOUTH EDUCATION

Building on efforts to ensure optimal physical and psychosocial development and health of children and youth, one of the best investments is ensuring that all children have access to universal, quality education. Childhood and youth are the periods of greatest learning. What a child learns in school plays an important role in their overall development and their economic future. Education focused on the whole development of the child — intellectual, social, emotional and physical — is the best recipe for life success and one of the best means of advancing development overall.

### **Restoring physical education**

Growing concerns about childhood obesity have many governments examining their policies on physical education and activity in schools. Physical education has suffered cutbacks in quantity and quality in many countries. Although it may be difficult to reconcile, some experts believe that children today are less likely to receive regular, quality physical education than they were ten years ago.<sup>169</sup>

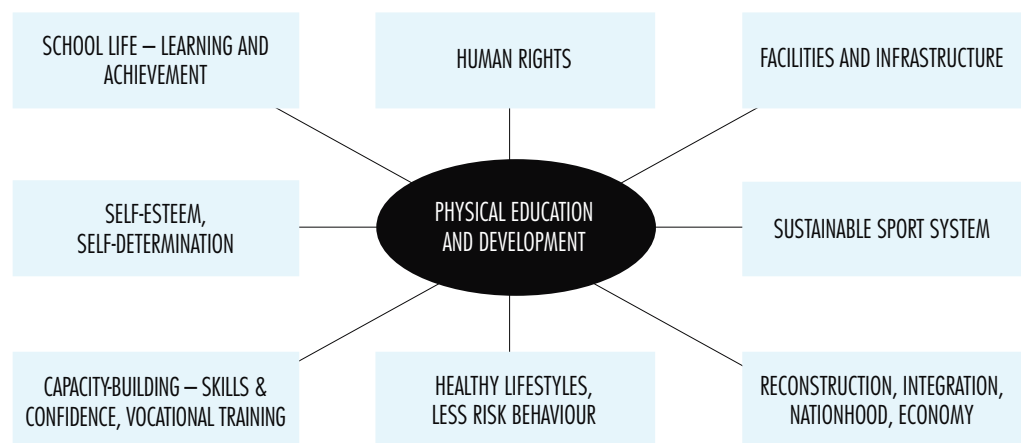
Research suggests that physical education and sport play an important role in school life. Physical education acts as a bridge between sport and education. During the years of childhood and development physical education provides an appropriate context for learning, achievement and the realization of potential.<sup>170</sup> It can help to raise standards, improve behaviour and health, increase attendance, and develop social skills.<sup>171</sup>

Schools are an ideal setting for physical education and promoting physical activity:

- Where attendance is compulsory for all children, schools can reach a full range of individuals in a population at no additional cost.<sup>172</sup> No other system offers such comprehensive capacity or infrastructure to introduce young people to sport.<sup>173</sup>
- Schools provide a range of opportunities for children to engage in physical activity, including travel to and from school, recreation breaks, physical education classes, extracurricular activities, and school sport events.<sup>174</sup>
- Physical education and sport training is delivered by trained teachers who understand the development needs of children and youth and are focused on their whole development.<sup>175</sup>
- Due to their structured environment, the positive impacts schools have in instilling active behaviour can potentially have an immediate and lifetime effect.<sup>176</sup>

The development literature also outlines many crucial outcomes that physical education can help to advance.<sup>177</sup> These outcomes are shown in Figure 3.1.<sup>178</sup> Governments are beginning to redress the decline of sport and physical activity in schools. In developing nations, initiatives are often linked to the achievement of MDGs related to improving health, enrollment in primary education and poverty reduction.

**FIGURE 3.1 PHYSICAL EDUCATION — DEVELOPMENT FUNCTIONS**



Source: M. Talbot, "The Case for Physical Education"<sup>179</sup>

While some evidence suggests rates of physical activity for youth are declining in some countries, there is evidence to suggest that activity rates are increasing in others. In South Africa, for example, the government inaugurated its *School Participation Program* in 2006, providing 798 schools with sport equipment and a school sports assistant to work with teachers on sport programming in seven sport disciplines. The program was expected to expand to 1,600 schools in 2007 and to all 20,000 schools as resources permit.<sup>180</sup> Tanzania has made physical education a mandatory part of the education curriculum at all levels of its education system.<sup>181</sup> This is expected to raise physical education rates substantially within the country.

### **Increasing school enrollment, retention, and access to education**

In many developing nations, many children do not attend school. In these cases, school-based physical education and promotion should be supplemented by programs that target out-of-school children and youth. There is some evidence to suggest that building physical education, sport and play into school curricula can be an effective means to increase the number of children enrolled in school and boost retention rates.

A number of governments have initiated sport programs designed to do just this. The best known is Brazil's *Segundo Tempo* program, which combines participation in after-school



football with a meal program and extra schooling. Targeting disadvantaged children and youth aged 7–17, the program is aimed at children and youth who might not otherwise attend school. To date the program has reached over one million children and continues to grow. Through a Sport for Development cooperation agreement with Brazil, the Government of Angola recently established a similar program aimed at reducing school absenteeism and youth violence. Five thousand children are currently enrolled in this project in Angola.<sup>182</sup>

In Zambia, the *Focus on Youth Sport* program was designed primarily to increase sport participation through the provision of school sport equipment and sport teachers. It has proven highly effective in attracting out-of-school children and youth into the education system. Program monitoring visits to two of the three provinces where the program is delivered noted significant increases in school enrollment and attendance at participating schools.<sup>183</sup>

In Afghanistan, the German Sport Federation and international NGO streetfootballworld provide support to *LEARN & Play*. This grassroots initiative encourages children aged 8–12 who are orphaned or from economically disadvantaged families to participate in sport and social activities. In addition to receiving regular meals, 600 children participate in daily soccer practice and receive classroom instruction in mathematics, English, and computer use, ensuring that they have access to educational opportunities, if not to regular schooling.<sup>184</sup>

In Tanzania, the *Grumeti SportWorks* project (designed by Right To Play and implemented in partnership with local schools) provides sport and play programs to school-age children and youth who have never had the opportunity to play sports. The project trains and equips teachers to serve as skilled coaches. They focus on overcoming divisive tribal and language differences to build social cohesion, improve school attendance, and foster the holistic development of children and youth in the program. Qualitative evidence suggests that school attendance has improved on the days that students have sports practice and there is heightened motivation to participate in sport. Evidence also suggests increased awareness of the links between physical activity and health, greater social cooperation, and increased self-esteem in participants and teacher-coaches. Similar links between school attendance and sport and physical education in schools have been reported in projects in other countries, like El Salvador and Zambia.<sup>185</sup>

Although there is little rigorous research evaluating program examples from the developing world, there is good reason to believe that they, and similar sport and physical education programs, can improve school enrollment and retention or, alternatively, connect disadvantaged children and youth with other attractive education opportunities.

Research from the United Kingdom (UK) has shown lower levels of truancy and improved behaviour in schools as a direct result of changes to more structured and purposefully active playtimes and opportunities to practise skills linked to the physical education curriculum.<sup>186</sup> This is consistent with research showing that participation in school-based physical activities can produce healthier social and academic self-concepts, positive moods and pleasurable experiences.<sup>187</sup> As well, longitudinal research from the UK confirms that sport contributes to an identification with, and commitment to, school and school values, which in turn has a positive influence on academic performance.<sup>188</sup>

### **Fostering academic achievement**

Research on the impact of school-based physical education and activity has yielded different answers to the question of whether incorporating physical education and activity into the school day improves children's academic performance.

The first landmark study of this question was a longitudinal study launched in 1951 in Vanves, France. By 1960, researchers found that, when academic time was reduced and physical education increased to one third of the weekly timetable, the academic performance, discipline, enthusiasm, fitness, and health of the students in the experimental group were superior to the children on a more traditional schedule.<sup>189</sup> A follow-up six-year study in Trois Rivières, Canada found the same results.<sup>190</sup> Since then, however, study results have varied. While many show positive gains in academic performance linked to increased physical education and activity, methodological questions prevent researchers from assuming this relationship is causal. Researchers can say, however, that reasonable time spent in physical activity does not hinder academic performance and, under certain conditions, may improve it.<sup>191,192</sup> The reasons for this link are still not entirely clear.

We do know that in the short term exercise leads to a state of relaxation, which lasts up to two hours. This is accompanied by improved concentration, enhanced creativity and memory, better task performance and problem solving, and improved mood state. Longer-term benefits of regular physical activity include increased self-confidence and self-image, relief of frustration, reduced aggression, and decreased anxiety and depression. In a school environment, these benefits are believed to help create an environment that is more conducive to learning, and greater readiness to learn on the part of individual children.<sup>193</sup>

Building on the positive results of its after-school sport programs, the Pacific island nation of Palau has made physical education a mandatory part of its primary school curriculum. School personnel report that this change resulted in improved student academic achievement, more student participation in sport, better physical health, and higher concentration in class. Related classes on health and nutrition are being added to combat Palau's high rates of child and youth obesity.<sup>194</sup>

## 2.4 INCREASING YOUTH EMPLOYABILITY AND EMPLOYMENT

### **Enhancing employability through the acquisition of transferable life skills**

By providing opportunities for young people to develop transferable life skills — characteristics such as leadership, perseverance, social and moral character, self-esteem, commitment to teamwork, problem-solving, and organizational ability — sport helps participants to realize their potential as productive employees and citizens.<sup>195</sup> The 2005 Conference Board of Canada's report<sup>196</sup> on the socio-economic benefits of sport participation states that sport is an important tool through which participants, particularly young people, gain and enhance a range of skills that are transferable to important parts of adult life. The knowledge, life skills, health, and physical abilities generally developed through appropriate sport experiences can benefit participants by improving their chances of finding employment, raising their level of income, and making them more optimistic and willing to volunteer in the community.<sup>197</sup>

This view is reinforced by the International Labour Organization (ILO), which analyzed the overlap between life skills developed through sport participation and skills identified by labour market research as important to employers in diverse countries.<sup>198</sup> The review found that, in addition to many transferable employability skills that can be acquired through sport, well-designed sport programs also build ethically based attributes in young people that employers value. Particularly valuable attributes include volunteering, commitment to teamwork and team building, tolerance and acceptance of rules.<sup>199</sup> The review also found that young workers entering the labour force with sport-specific skills are likely to be well-equipped with creativity, team building, and, most of all, peaceful and tolerant behaviour in the face of cultural diversity — a trait increasingly valued in today's diverse workplaces.<sup>200</sup>

### **Creating employment opportunities for youth**

Sport offers an important avenue for creating youth employment opportunities. The ILO has been working at the policy and project level through its *Youth Sport Programme* (YSP) to mobilize sport partnerships to help youth make a successful transition into the labour market. This program was established on the premise that sport institutions can assess socio-economic needs and pool efforts, resources, and capacities. Such institutions are an asset to a community and can foster the social and economic inclusion of young men and women. Activities under the YSP have included:

- A national inventory of sport-related jobs in Senegal to identify and exploit employment growth opportunities;
- The development of a national network of sport and development partners in Albania; and
- A partnership between the International Olympic Committee, Mozambique National Olympic Committee and a local development agency to form a job-training program for a young women's cooperative producing school uniforms at the Boane Olympicafrica Sport Centre.

These activities highlighted the need to identify new types of sport-related jobs and for developing countries to inventory sport-related job categories as a first step to developing strategies to develop these employment opportunities.<sup>201</sup>

A similar understanding is reflected at the community level where employment opportunities for youth are being developed and skilled sport-based jobs are being allocated to local community members. In the United Kingdom, renewal.net, an organization working to develop and exchange knowledge about community rejuvenation, examined sport's role in neighbourhood renewal in the UK and concluded that:<sup>202</sup>

- Sport can be a route through which a work habit and motivation to succeed can be developed;
- At a local level, sport can directly provide employment and business opportunities;
- Sport can be a means to obtaining employment in other sectors by developing confidence and self-esteem, transferable skills, and basic qualifications;
- People in disadvantaged areas are less likely to be involved in sport activities;
- Access to sport qualifications may be limited in disadvantaged communities and, where sport employment is available, it may only be in unskilled and poorly paid positions.

To harness sport's potential for community renewal through employment, renewal.net recommends that sport and development actors in communities should:<sup>203</sup>

- Develop a sport and employment plan;
- Support the creation of new employment opportunities in the sport sector;
- Adopt a policy of local recruitment and provide local opportunities for related skill development, training, and qualifications;
- Provide local opportunities to increase employability and transferable skills through sport; and
- Demonstrate the impact of sport and employment projects.

### 3 RECOMMENDATIONS TO GOVERNMENTS

The following recommendations may be challenging for some governments to pursue due to a scarcity of resources and also due to the jurisdictional division of responsibilities with provincial/state and local governments for education and other matters. It is assumed that governments will seek partnerships wherever possible to leverage the resources necessary to advance the objectives below. It is also assumed that, where governments do not have direct jurisdiction, they may use their convening power, shared-cost partnerships, and other forms of influence to promote positive action by other levels of government.

### 3.1 POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

#### Make universal child and youth access to physical education and sport and play an explicit policy objective in the context of national education, health, and sport policy frameworks.

According to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child,<sup>204</sup> children and youth are entitled to engage in age-appropriate play and recreational activities. Physical education is an essential component of a balanced and holistic approach to education and child and youth development.<sup>205</sup> Governments are asked to fully consider the development of each child's physical potential (particularly girls and children and youth with disabilities) and their right to play as fundamental rights. Accordingly, governments can develop policies to enable positive, coordinated, multisectoral action to achieve those rights.

#### Extend physical education to all children, using strategies that include mandatory comprehensive, daily physical education for students in kindergarten through secondary school.<sup>206</sup>

Physical education instruction and activities should meet the needs and interests of all students without over-emphasizing a narrow set of team sports. Emphasizing mastery of basic skills (e.g., dance, jogging, bicycling, walking), is essential to giving individuals choices for leisure time activities for the remainder of their lives. Testing can be used to help students apply behavioural skills such as self-assessment, goal setting and self-monitoring. Time can also be provided within the school day for unstructured but supervised physical activity — in physical education classes, during recess, and immediately before and after school.

#### Enhance the capacity of schools and teachers to effectively deliver educational programs.

Schools and teachers often lack the knowledge, resources, and incentives to deliver quality physical education, even when policies mandate it. It is important to consider ways to encourage and support schools and teachers in this regard. Some strategies include:

- Making physical education an examinable subject for academic credit to give it greater priority in the curriculum;
- Providing in-service training for school teachers in physical education methods to make teachers more aware of the importance of physical education;
- Providing teachers with the knowledge and confidence to deliver high quality, inclusive and enjoyable programs;
- Conducting training to specifically address gender issues and how to deliver adaptive sport and physical education for children with disabilities; and
- Facilitating regional collaboration to develop appropriate curriculum to reduce the cost of developing such programs and to foster knowledge exchange about what works best.

## Adopt national physical activity guidelines for children and youth, and consider actively promoting them through multisectoral approaches that target schools, families, sport clubs, community organizations and municipal governments.

Based on research concerning the optimal amount and forms of activity suitable for children and youth, when developing national guidelines, governments are encouraged to consider the following recommendations:

- Elementary school-aged children should accumulate at least 30–60 minutes of age-appropriate and developmentally appropriate physical activity from a variety of activities on all, or most, days of the week.
- An accumulation of more than 60 minutes, and up to several hours per day, is encouraged.
- Some of the child's activity each day should be in periods lasting 10–15 minutes or more and include moderate to vigorous activity. This will typically be intermittent, involving alternating moderate to vigorous activity with brief periods of rest and recovery.
- Children should not have extended periods of inactivity.

Research also suggests that adolescents should be physically active daily, or nearly every day, as part of play, games, sports, work, transportation, recreation, physical education, or planned exercise, in the context of family, school, and community activities. They should also engage in three or more sessions per week of activities that last 20 minutes or more at a time and require moderate to vigorous levels of exertion.<sup>207</sup>

National guidelines could be promoted through schools, sport clubs and community organizations, and would encourage parents to make sure their children are physically active for at least one hour a day.

## Invest in research to determine the most important factors influencing physical activity within different child and youth target groups and design national strategies and programs to address these factors.

Culture and context play a major role in influencing whether or not people become active. These factors vary by group, and are not the same in every country. Consequently, these factors need to be identified and taken into account if programs to engage diverse target groups in sport and physical activity are to be successful. Regional research collaborations involving governments, universities, multilateral agencies, other development funders and delivery organizations can help to defray the costs of such research, facilitate the development of research and knowledge networks, and promote knowledge exchange between policy-makers and program organizations.

**Recognize the different developmental stages of children and youth to ensure that physical education and sport policies, implementation guidelines, training resources, programs, and curricula are age-appropriate.**

Children and youth are not simply smaller versions of adults. Their physical and sport abilities are determined by their age and developmental maturity. Good physical education and sport programs are based on a sound understanding of child and adolescent development. Fostering healthy development should always take priority over competitive sport success. This can be done by building programs which provide activities that are enjoyable, emphasize learning and enable all participants to experience success. Youth programs can emphasize the benefits of physical activity — such as fun and time with friends — while providing activity experiences that respond to their interests and needs.

**Make child and youth development an integral component of all training programs for physical education teachers and sport coaches.**

The quality and effectiveness of sport and physical education programs is largely determined by the teachers and coaches involved. Training can help ensure sport and physical education programs are appropriately focused on healthy development and carried out effectively.

**Develop policies with specific provisions and implementation plans to prevent the exploitation and abuse of children and youth in sport contexts.**

The best interests of children are paramount. The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child calls on all countries to “take all appropriate...measures to protect the child from all form of physical or mental violence, injury or abuse, neglect or negligent treatment, maltreatment or exploitation, including sexual abuse, in the care of ...any person who has the care of the child.”<sup>208</sup> Children in sport are vulnerable to abuse because they are dependent on others — particularly those whom they trust — and because there is increased commercial and political pressure for children and youth in sport to win.<sup>209</sup> The main forms of abuse in competitive sports are psychological (e.g., verbal and emotional), physical (e.g., excessive training and dieting, insufficient rest or care, beating, peer violence, doping, playing when injured), and sexual.<sup>210</sup> To protect children and youth, policies concerning sport participation, training, and competition should recognize and give priority at all times to the needs and interests of the child or youth and treat them equally, respectfully, ethically, openly, excellently, carefully, and with due accountability.<sup>211</sup>

### Account for implementation challenges with disadvantaged communities and groups when developing sport and physical activity policies for children and youth.

Programming with an integrated approach will ensure that children are adequately nourished and supported to participate in sport programs. Integration will ensure that programs are made available through schools and in the community, allowing all children to participate.

### Provide children and youth with a direct voice and decision-making opportunities in the development of physical education, sport and recreation policies and action plans that concern them.

One primary way that effective sport programs can foster healthy child and youth development, and prevent child abuse and exploitation, is to encourage children and youth to express their views on, and participate in, decision-making about programs that involve them. National youth councils or advisory boards, in addition to broader consultation mechanisms, are an effective means of giving children and youth a voice. With appropriate training and support, children and youth can also take responsibility for helping to deliver programs at the local level.

The communication, negotiation, planning, project implementation and leadership skills that youth develop through these processes build self-esteem and confidence, increase their employability, and equip them to be active citizens. Government policy and planning processes can actively contribute to this goal and, by involving youth directly in shaping the programs that affect them, ensure that policies and programs are relevant to child and youth needs and interests.

## 3.2 PROGRAM RECOMMENDATIONS

### Deliver health education courses in schools to help students acquire the knowledge, attitudes, behaviour and confidence needed to maintain a physically active lifestyle.<sup>212</sup>

Courses can include information on the physical, social and mental health benefits of physical activity, as well as knowledge about how to be physically active. Developing skills such as identifying and managing barriers to activity are important to helping students adopt and sustain a physically active lifestyle. Social support — organizing group activities, initiating a buddy system approach, engaging families in supporting physical activity — is also an important way to help students maintain physical activity.



**Invite Ministries of Education to work with schools and community sport partners to offer extracurricular physical activity programs that address the needs and interests of all students.<sup>213</sup>**

Extracurricular programs will be most effective if they include activities for children and youth with varying interests and abilities, including those who are less physically skilled or are not attracted to competitive sport.

**Ensure that a complementary range of developmentally appropriate, community-based sport and physical activity programs are available for children and youth.**

Not all children attend school. Many are excluded due to poverty, gender, disability, ethnic background or other causes. These are often the children and youth who stand to benefit the most from Sport for Development and Peace programs. Tailoring programs to the needs of target groups and ensuring effective outreach will encourage participation of the most excluded young people. Doing so can create opportunities for these children and youth to observe influential role models (e.g., teachers, coaches, parents and peers) performing physical activity.

**Work with partners to ensure that all communities have physical play environments that are safe, accessible, and encourage enjoyable physical activity.<sup>214</sup>**

School and community programs can ensure play spaces are safe and accessible by: offering age-appropriate activities, providing instruction on developing and enhancing motor skills, adapting instruction and activities to the physical and developmental capacities of those involved, ensuring spaces and programs are inclusive, and fostering positive relationships among participants.

**Design Sport for Development programs to include all children and youth, with strategies to ensure the participation of girls, children with intellectual and physical abilities, out-of-school children and youth, and those from impoverished and/or minority ethno-cultural communities.**

Physical education programs in school are one of the most effective means of teaching children the importance of physical activity, introducing them to a variety of sports and physical activities, building their physical skills, and instilling healthy habits for life. In reality, many children do not attend school and additional community-based approaches are needed to reach out to these groups. Sport can be an important means of enrolling

marginalized individuals in school or alternative education programs, and helping them to acquire the skills, networks, and resources they need to combat their exclusion.

Many children and youth face barriers to participation in sport and physical activity that must be addressed before they can be fully included. Children need to be adequately nourished, have access to clean water, be able to attend and travel to and from programs safely and affordably, and have appropriate clothing. For adolescent girls, for example, it is important to have access to personal hygiene products when menstruating. Governments and program delivery partners can employ specific strategies to address barriers and ensure programs are accessible to all socially excluded children and youth and meet the needs of target participants. Partnerships with Ministries of Education, schools, municipalities, national and community sport organizations, businesses and NGOs can help governments to address these issues successfully to maximize participation.

**Focus sport programs on education and development (not winning), emphasizing skills improvement, tactical knowledge, success for all participants, enhanced confidence, positive social relationships, choices, and enjoyment.**<sup>215</sup>

Sport does not automatically produce positive effects in the development of children and youth. Considering the needs of the whole child or youth — socially, mentally, physically, and morally — is important to maximize the potential of sport to foster personal development.<sup>216</sup> Competitive sports that emphasize winning rather than the individuals' development will not necessarily deliver benefits for children and youth. In fact, an inappropriate focus on competition can result in negative effects such as aggression, poor sportsmanship, anxiety and low self-esteem among less skilled athletes, leading to drop outs. All programs should account for the diverse capacities of individual participants so that youth perceive learning activities as challenging but within their abilities. By matching challenges to personal abilities, coaches and teachers can ensure children and youth experience neither anxiety nor boredom.

**Create opportunities for children and youth to participate in dialogue and decision-making with regard to the day-to-day activities of sport and physical activity programs.**

Young people tend to be more motivated in sport if they feel that a coach or teacher attempts to understand them. Coaches and teachers that listen to what children and youth have to say can provide them with choice and enhance their sense of ownership. This approach increases their confidence to perform and learn sport, and fosters positive social relationships.<sup>217</sup>

### **Build mechanisms for effective planning and reflective action into all programs.<sup>218</sup>**

Effective planning mechanisms are essential to ensure that positive values of sport prevail over negative ones. Careful implementation plans can ensure effective outreach, community support and adequately trained personnel. Monitoring and evaluation mechanisms can lead to continuous improvement of the program.

### **Ensure that program managers screen prospective coaches and physical education teachers and help them to develop the teaching and coaching skills they will need to be positive and effective role models.**

Coaches and teachers are the single greatest influence on the enjoyment, development and learning that young people derive from sport programs. The full benefits of sport can only be realized when teachers and coaches have the requisite values, skills and understanding to relate to and lead their players and to deliver programs well. This means being committed to the best values of sport and actively teaching these. It also means placing the development of participating children and youth at the centre of their efforts (before winning), visibly caring about and for their players, and being available as a trusted guide and advisor.

### **Design programs to engage parents in physical education instruction and in extracurricular or community sport and physical activity events.<sup>219</sup>**

Parents are powerful physical activity role models for their children. They play a key role in creating a family and community environment that is conducive to children and youth becoming and remaining active.

### **Develop simple, clear and practical resource materials on sport and child and youth development, together with age-appropriate sport and physical activity guidelines, for use by parents and community volunteers who may not have access to training programs.<sup>220</sup>**

Not all communities have access to professionally trained teachers and coaches. Good resource materials that are easy to read can help parents and community volunteers provide children and youth with healthy, fun and beneficial sport and physical activities.

### **Evaluate school and community physical activity instruction, sport programs, and facilities on a regular basis.**

Regular evaluation helps to build stronger programs, prevents harm, and increases support for programs by communities and funders. It is important to involve participants,

teachers, families and other community stakeholders in the evaluation process in order to foster community ownership, engage different perspectives and capture the most information possible. Development agencies and multilateral agencies can support regional collaborations with developing country governments, universities, and delivery partners to develop, test and refine low-cost, relevant evaluation approaches and tools for front-line use.

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# SPORT AND GENDER

EMPOWERING GIRLS  
AND WOMEN





# CHAPTER 4

## 127 CONTEXT: GENDER, DEVELOPMENT AND SPORT

127 Gender and Development

131 Sport as a Tool to Promote Gender Equity and Empower Girls and Women

132 Limitations of Sport to Achieving Gender Equity and the Empowerment of Women

133 Sport, Gender Equity and the Millennium Development Goals

135 International Frameworks for Sport and Gender

## 137 EVIDENCE: USING SPORT TO PROMOTE GENDER EQUITY AND EMPOWER GIRLS AND WOMEN

137 Enhancing the Health and Well-Being of Girls and Women

143 Fostering Self-Esteem and Empowerment

145 Facilitating Social Support and Inclusion

148 Challenging Gender Norms

152 Opportunities for Leadership and Achievement

## 156 RECOMMENDATIONS TO GOVERNMENTS

157 Policy Recommendations

160 Program Recommendations

Left:  
By playing together, girls and women  
can develop social networks and  
benefit from increases in self-esteem  
and sense of self-worth.  
Right To Play

Previous page:  
By participating in sports, girls develop  
new talents and help to break down  
gender stereotypes.  
Right To Play

# 1 CONTEXT: GENDER, DEVELOPMENT AND SPORT

*“A transformed partnership based on equality between women and men is a condition for people-centred sustainable development.”*

– Mission Statement, Beijing Platform for Action  
Fourth United Nations World Conference on Women, Beijing 1995

## 1.1 | GENDER AND DEVELOPMENT

Gender is a social construct that outlines the roles, behaviours, activities and attributes that a particular society believes are appropriate for men and women.<sup>1</sup> The assignment of these roles and adoption of these traits can create gender inequities — differences between men and women that systematically favour one group to the detriment of the other.<sup>2</sup>

Gender equity is a term used to describe both the principle and practice of fair and equitable allocation of resources to, and opportunities for, men and women. Gender equity eliminates discriminatory practices that are barriers to full participation for either gender. The practice of gender equity does not necessarily mean that everyone is treated in an equal, or identical, manner. Identical treatment is unlikely to yield equal opportunities for men and women within existing power structures. Instead, gender equity means changing responses to, and treatment of, men and women to ensure that gender is a neutral factor when accessing resources, rights, and opportunities.

Gender differences between men and women do not necessarily imply inequity. Additionally, both men and women may experience adverse effects as a result of restrictive gender roles. However, globally, women are particularly disadvantaged by gender constructs which prevent them from fully realizing their rights, accessing resources,

and harnessing opportunities. Consequently, this chapter is focused on the empowerment of girls and women. Empowerment in this sense refers to the process through which women gain the confidence, strength, and in some contexts the information and skills, needed to make strategic choices to improve their lives.

Globally, evidence of gender inequity includes the widespread preference of sons over daughters, limited education and work opportunities for girls and women, and high levels of physical and sexual violence against girls and women.<sup>3</sup> More subtle forms of discrimination are arguably equally problematic and include gender stereotyping and institutional discrimination. Some cultural traditions that favour men over women, and the subsequent cultural practices that perpetuate that discrimination, lead to social exclusion.<sup>4</sup>

Gender inequity varies significantly, in both degree and in the forms it takes, from country to country. Some countries have made significant progress in reducing inequities through targeted actions to change gender norms, legislate and protect human rights, and ensure access to education, health and other services. However, disparities that affect women are widespread in every region of the world and are a significant obstacle to achieving the Millennium Development Goals.

Because gender norms are often intimately entwined with other power relations<sup>5</sup> related to class, race, sexuality, nationality, religion, and other social divisions,<sup>6</sup> they can be difficult to change. Furthermore, gender norms are not fixed — they evolve over time, vary substantially from place to place, and are subject to change. To achieve development objectives, there must be specific efforts to transform inequitable gender structures so that girls and women, as well as boys and men, can benefit equitably. This fact was underscored in the 1980s when development terminology moved away from discussing “women in development” and adopted the term “gender and development,” with the aim of investigating gender sensitive strategies that include men *and* women. This change in methodology led to international research, the establishment of NGOs, and international recognition for a gender-sensitive approach to development.

The importance of gender equity — particularly for girls and women — is reflected in all significant development goals, the MDGs in particular. Three of the eight MDGs specifically address girls and women:

- MDG 2: Achieve universal primary education (i.e., ensure that all boys and girls complete a full course of primary schooling);
- MDG 3: Promote gender equality and empower women; and
- MDG 5: Improve maternal health.

Women are also primary players in the attainment of:

- MDG 1: Eradicating extreme poverty and hunger;
- MDG 4: Reducing child mortality; and
- MDG 5: Combating HIV and AIDS, malaria and other diseases.

Gender is often a contributing factor to poverty and women throughout the world are at greater risk than men of living in extreme poverty. On average, women globally earn only slightly more than 50% of what men earn.<sup>7</sup> Women's greater risk of poverty is perpetuated, in part, by unequal access to education. Globally, boys are more likely than girls to attend school and women make up two-thirds of the world's illiterate adults.<sup>8</sup> These disparities have important health consequences. Largely because of their relative poverty and powerlessness in society, girls and women are more likely than boys and men to experience sexual violence, be involved in sex work, contract HIV and AIDS, and be vulnerable to sexual and reproductive health threats. Without adequate access to reproductive health care, women are also more vulnerable to unwanted pregnancies and death or disability from childbirth. They are also unable to take the simple and often inexpensive precautions to protect their newborn children from common, yet preventable, diseases in infancy and their early years.

The inter-relationship between gender, poverty, education and health, demonstrates the need for all nations to address gender equity as a central part of their efforts to attain the MDGs. International efforts to confront gender inequity can have a positive impact. Since the 1979 adoption of the UN Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women, the status of girls and women has improved. In many regions, girls and women increasingly have access to education, the labour market, and governmental structures.<sup>9</sup> Legal and economic reforms have also begun to remove some of the structural barriers to women's full social, cultural and economic participation.

Building on this progress is critical, as research has shown that empowering women and increasing gender equity produces tangible development benefits. These benefits extend beyond women to their families and, through their children, to the next generation. Increasing women's influence in household decisions and their education levels has been shown to significantly improve their children's survival rates, nutritional status, and educational attainment.<sup>10</sup> Education is the single most powerful means for families to escape poverty over the longer term.<sup>11</sup>

Gender equity can be achieved by enhancing women's influence and decision-making power in the household, the workplace, and the political sphere.<sup>12</sup> Ensuring that girls and boys, men and women have equitable access to education is one of the most powerful



means of doing this. Changing traditional socio-cultural norms involving gender is also critical and, therefore, engaging men and boys in efforts to reduce discrimination against women is important. Addressing stereotypes requires focusing on men and boys as well as working with women and girls. Enlisting male role models for boys, identifying male allies and establishing partnerships and initiatives designed to educate both men and women on the benefits of gender equity can help to improve understanding, communication and cooperation and lay a strong foundation for future development efforts.

Achieving gender equity and empowerment of women requires systematic and sustained attention in all policy areas. This practice is known as gender mainstreaming and it was identified in the Beijing Platform for Action as a key strategy to overcome gender disparities, alongside targeted activities for women. Gender mainstreaming aims to ensure gender equality and the empowerment of women is the responsibility of all actors across all sectors and not the sole responsibility of gender specialists. Gender mainstreaming requires consideration of the contributions, priorities and needs of women, as well as men. The Development Assistance Committee (DAC) of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) notes that gender mainstreaming requires two actions:

- Integrating concerns about gender equality into the analyses and formulation of all policies, programs and projects; and
- Developing specific initiatives that enable women, as well as men, to formulate opinions, express their views and participate in decision-making across all development sectors.<sup>13</sup>

Gender mainstreaming does not mean that there is no need for specific activities focused on women. Specific activities for women remain crucial given the remaining gaps to gender equity and challenges to empowerment that women face in many areas.<sup>14</sup>

### **The State of Women Worldwide**

- Of the world's one billion poorest people, three-fifths are girls and women.
- Of the 130 million children who are out of school, 70% are girls.
- Women make up only 16% of parliamentarians worldwide.
- Up to 50% of all adult women have experienced violence at the hands of their intimate partners.
- Each year, half a million women die and 18 million more suffer chronic disability from preventable complications of pregnancy and childbirth.
- Globally, women make up nearly half of the 37.2 million adults (aged 15–49) living with HIV and AIDS.
- In sub-Saharan Africa, 57% of those living with HIV are female and in South Africa, Zambia and Zimbabwe, young women aged 15–24 are 3–6 times more likely to be infected than young men of the same age group.

*Source: UNDP, Taking Gender Equality Seriously (2005)*

## 1.2 SPORT AS A TOOL TO PROMOTE GENDER EQUITY AND EMPOWER GIRLS AND WOMEN

Sport is an integral part of the culture of almost every nation. However, its use to promote gender equity and empower girls and women is often overlooked because sport is not universally perceived as a suitable or desirable pursuit for girls and women. Existing social constructs of masculinity and femininity — or socially accepted ways of expressing what it means to be a man or woman in a particular socio-cultural context — play a key role in determining access, levels of participation, and benefits from sport.<sup>15</sup>

It is true in all countries that girls and women are less likely than boys and men to participate in sport, and sport continues to be dominated by males.<sup>16</sup> It is a mistake, however, to assume that this is because girls and women do not wish to participate. Poverty, heavy domestic demands, safety concerns, lack of accessible transportation, inadequate sport and recreation facilities, and few opportunities for physical education and skill development frequently prevent women's participation in physical activity and sport. As well, socio-cultural norms and constraints preventing girls and women from being physically active, leaving home unaccompanied, or being seen by men outside their family, are additional barriers preventing girls and women from becoming involved in sport and physical activity. For example, even in the matrilineal society of Palau where women are already active in communities and families, sport is still seen as a male domain.<sup>17</sup>

At the same time, many international frameworks support women's participation in sport, with some national laws requiring equal access and opportunities for females.<sup>18</sup> A small but growing body of evidence has also begun to establish sport as a viable tool for addressing gender equity on a broader scale. Research on sport, gender, and development indicates that sport can benefit girls and women by:<sup>19</sup>

- Enhancing health and well-being;
- Fostering self-esteem and empowerment;
- Facilitating social inclusion and integration;
- Challenging gender norms; and
- Providing opportunities for leadership and achievement.

Through structured sport programs, girls and women can become more physically active, benefiting their physical and mental health, including the reduced risk they will suffer from chronic diseases, depression and anxiety, and engaging in health risk behaviours. Sport can also be a powerful health information and education platform, connecting girls and women with the information, skills and strategies they need to reduce health risks in their lives, particularly in connection with their sexual and reproductive health.

Sport can help increase self-esteem by giving girls and women opportunities to learn new skills, engage in positive relationships, acquire achievements, engage in volunteer service

and receive public recognition. By providing women and girls with a voice in program design and decision-making, training, and opportunities for leadership and advocacy, sport programs can also empower and help equip them to take greater control over their own lives.

Sport programs can help to reduce the social isolation and exclusion that many girls and women experience, particularly those that cannot attend school and live in poverty. Sport programs can provide girls and women with safe places to gather, help them to build social networks, offer social support, and connect them to health, education and employment information, services, and opportunities that can help to address their marginalization in society.

Sport programs can enhance the empowerment process by challenging gender norms, reducing restrictions and offering girls and women greater mobility, access to public spaces, and more opportunities for their physical, intellectual and social development. By involving families, community leaders, and boys and men in gender education, changes to gender norms can benefit men and women alike. Sport can also provide girls and women with powerful role models, leadership skills and experience that they can transfer to other domains such as their family life, civic involvement, and advocacy. All of these beneficial effects are self-reinforcing, and may also make sporting opportunities for girls and women more sustainable over time.

In spite of the benefits, the successful implementation of sport programs aimed at gender equity involves many challenges and obstacles. Not only do girls and women have limited time available for sport, but there is often little value placed on sport activities for girls by their families, by girls themselves, and by their communities. To overcome these challenges, and to convince key stakeholders about the benefits of sport programs for gender equity and empowerment, evidence to support the benefits must be documented.

### 1.3 LIMITATIONS OF SPORT TO ACHIEVING GENDER EQUITY AND THE EMPOWERMENT OF WOMEN

Sport comes with its own risks. Because female athletes and sport participants are subject to the influence and control of predominantly male coaches, teachers and officials, there can be a risk of harassment and sexual abuse. Policies and procedures to protect girls and women and ensure they have safe spaces in which to train and compete, are critical.

The Female Athlete Triad is a syndrome affecting many high-performance athletes and some very physically active girls and women. It can involve eating disorders, delayed or interrupted menstruation, and osteoporosis (low bone mass). This syndrome is usually

caused by self-imposed or externally driven pressure to maintain an unrealistically low body weight.<sup>20</sup> Participation in sporting activities where physical appearance is an important factor may increase the risk of developing this syndrome. On the other hand, engaging in “non-feminine,” or non-traditional, athletic activities that emphasize mass, power, and positive self esteem, appears to offer some protection against the development of anorexia and bulimia nervosa.<sup>21</sup>

Despite the risks associated with sport and the complex challenges inherent in its use to address gender inequity, sport can be a catalyst that liberates girls and women. Sport can empower girls and women within their communities, provide positive health and welfare outcomes, and ultimately transform gender norms. Sport can lead to a more egalitarian world by unleashing the productive, intellectual and social power of women.<sup>22</sup>

Sport programs provide girls and women with valuable opportunities to interact and socialize with one another in a constructive way.

Handicap International -  
Sport and Leisure Activities  
for Children with Disabilities,  
Bangladesh



#### 1.4 SPORT, GENDER EQUITY AND THE MILLENNIUM DEVELOPMENT GOALS

The Millennium Development Goals, have become the guiding framework for all development efforts. The MDGs explicitly address the need to promote gender equity and empower girls and women. The ways in which sport can contribute to the achievement of the MDGs related to gender equity and empowerment of women are outlined in Table 4.1.

**TABLE 4.1 SPORT, GENDER EQUITY AND THE MILLENNIUM DEVELOPMENT GOALS**

MILLENNIUM DEVELOPMENT GOAL	CONTRIBUTION OF SPORT
1. Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Acquisition of transferable life skills leading to increased employability through sport participation and coaching</li> <li>• Connection to community services and supports through sport-based outreach programs</li> <li>• Access to employment and small business supports, and jobs, through sport programs and production of sport equipment</li> <li>• Reduced risk of diseases that can cause or aggravate poverty through access to health information</li> </ul>
2. Achieve universal primary education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Incentives and support for girls to enroll in school</li> <li>• Enhanced school attendance and academic achievement</li> <li>• Alternative education opportunities through sport-based community education programs for girls who cannot attend school</li> <li>• Erosion of stigma preventing girls with disabilities from attending school</li> </ul>
3. Promote gender equality and empower women	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improved physical and mental health for girls and women</li> <li>• Increased opportunities for social interaction and friendship</li> <li>• Increased self-esteem, self-confidence, and sense of control over their bodies</li> <li>• Enhanced access to health information</li> <li>• Access to leadership opportunities and experience</li> <li>• Positive changes in gender norms giving girls and women greater safety and control over their lives</li> <li>• Empowerment of women and girls with disabilities through sport-based opportunities to acquire health information, skills, social networks, and leadership experience</li> </ul>
4. Reduce child mortality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improved education and access to health information for young mothers, leading to improved health and well-being of their children</li> <li>• Lower rates of high-risk adolescent pregnancies in some contexts</li> <li>• Reduction in child deaths and disability from measles, malaria and polio as a result of sport-based vaccination and prevention campaigns aimed at women</li> <li>• Lower likelihood of female infanticide due to reduced stigma and greater community acceptance of female children</li> </ul>
5. Improve maternal health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improved access for girls and women to reproductive health information and services</li> <li>• Increased fitness levels to speed post-natal recovery</li> </ul>
6. Combat HIV and AIDS, malaria, and other diseases	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reduced risk of HIV infection as a result of sport programs aimed at prevention education and empowerment of girls</li> <li>• Reduced stigma and increased social and economic integration of girls and women living with HIV and AIDS</li> </ul>
7. Develop a global partnership for development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Global sport and development partnerships and increased networking among governments, donors, NGOs (sport and gender-focused), and sport organizations worldwide to advance Sport for Development and Peace knowledge, policies and programs</li> </ul>

## 1.5 INTERNATIONAL FRAMEWORKS FOR SPORT AND GENDER

The use of sport to advance gender equity is underpinned by international and regional frameworks designed on one hand to promote gender equity and the empowerment of girls and women, and, on the other, to promote the right of all to participate in sport and physical activity and their ancillary benefits.

Global objectives on gender equity and empowerment of women, endorsed by the Member States of the United Nations, are found in a number of international human rights documents, including the:

- Charter of the United Nations;
- Universal Declaration of Human Rights;
- Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW);
- UN Millennium Declaration; and
- 2006 UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

Access to sport is essential to attaining the rights and freedoms set out in these international human rights documents. The importance of access to sport and physical activity is highlighted in the 1978 UNESCO International Charter of Physical Education and Sport, the 1989 UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, and the 2006 UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

Regarding equitable access of women to sport, article 10 of CEDAW,<sup>23</sup> calls on State Parties to take all appropriate measures to eliminate discrimination against women to ensure equal rights with men in the field of education. The article emphasizes the need to ensure the same opportunities for active participation in sports and physical education.<sup>24</sup> Article 13 of the Convention reiterates the importance of taking all appropriate measures to eliminate discrimination against women in economic and social life and to ensure the same rights for women and men — in particular the right to participate in recreational activities and sports.

The Beijing Platform for Action was adopted as an “agenda for women’s empowerment” at the Fourth World Conference on Women in 1995. With policy recommendations to governments and addressing the issue of women and sport, it calls for:

- the provision of accessible recreational and sport facilities by educational institutions;
- the establishment and strengthening of gender-sensitive programs for girls and women of all ages in education and community institutions; and
- the creation and support of programs in the education system, workplace and community to make opportunities to participate in sport and physical activity available to girls and women of all ages, on the same basis as they are made available to men and boys.<sup>25</sup>

In support of growing recognition of the development power of sport, in recent years, the UN General Assembly adopted a number of Resolutions which paid special attention to the development power of sport, emphasizing its particular role in attaining gender equity.<sup>26,27,28</sup>

The UN Commission on the Status of Women has also recognized the important gender empowerment potential of sport, and has called on Member States to ensure equitable access to sport for women and girls.<sup>29</sup> In 2005, the United Nations Commission on the Status of Women, the principal global policy-making body on gender equity, undertook a ten-year review of the implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action. This review specifically addressed sport and physical activity, calling on governments, the United Nations system and civil society to encourage women to practice regular sport and recreational activities. This review highlighted the still significant gap between gender equity policies and their implementation, underscoring the need for effective mechanisms to ensure follow-through and accountability.<sup>30</sup>

Ensuring gender equity within the world of sport itself is considered an important means of enhancing sport's potential as a tool for advancing gender equity and empowering girls and women. Since 1994, World Conferences on Women and Sport have assessed progress and defined priority actions to increase the involvement of women in sport. While not legally binding, these declarations, principles and calls for action provide important guidance to governments and sport bodies. The Brighton Declaration of 1994 arising from the first World Conference in Brighton, UK, paved the way by creating an informal working group on women and sport, and calling for a sporting culture that values and enables the full involvement of women in every aspect of sport.<sup>31</sup> Declarations from subsequent conferences in Windhoek, Namibia (1998), Montreal, Canada (2002) and Kumamoto, Japan (2006):

- Called for the promotion of sport as a means to realize broader goals in health, education and women's rights.<sup>32</sup>
- Recognized that realizing these goals involves a variety of actions including information and advocacy campaigns and the integration of sport into community development projects.<sup>33</sup>
- Expressed participants' commitment to building a collaborative network to realize gender equality in and through sport.<sup>34</sup>

The International Olympic Committee (IOC) plays a central leadership and policy-setting role in the world of sport.<sup>35</sup> In 1995, the IOC established a Working Group on Women and Sport (elevated to the status of a commission in 2004), which monitors the participation of women in the Olympics and their representation in decision-making. In 2004, the Olympic Charter was amended to include a specific reference to the need for action on women and sport.<sup>36</sup>

Regional inter-governmental bodies have also contributed frameworks and targets for gender equity within sport and for the use of sport as a tool to promote gender equity and women's empowerment more broadly. Notable examples include:<sup>37</sup>

- The Council of Europe recommendation 1701<sup>38</sup> on discrimination against women and girls in sport, calling for combating sexual abuse in sport.
- The African Sports Confederation of Disabled (ASCOD) policy on disabled women's and girls' participation in sport and recreation.<sup>39</sup>
- The Asian Women and Sport Action Plan 2001 developed by the Asian Working Group on Women and Sport to expand equal opportunities for women and men and girls and boys to participate fully in sport.<sup>40</sup>

Despite such widespread global recognition of the important empowerment potential of sport for women and girls, and sport's specific role in attaining the goals of gender equity, the recent UN report on women, gender equality and sport, *Women 2000 and Beyond: Women, Gender Equality and Sport*, found that the extent of discrimination against women and girls in sport demands further action and successful strategies and programs must be scaled-up and expanded.<sup>41</sup>

## 2 EVIDENCE: USING SPORT TO PROMOTE GENDER EQUITY AND EMPOWER GIRLS AND WOMEN

### 2.1 ENHANCING THE HEALTH AND WELL-BEING OF GIRLS AND WOMEN

Health issues for girls and women are diverse and complex, with important differences for those living in developed and developing countries. Non-communicable diseases such as heart disease, stroke, cancer, diabetes, and obesity are a growing problem in both the developed and developing world. Cardiovascular diseases (heart disease, high blood pressure and stroke) currently account for one-third of deaths among women around the world and half of all deaths in women over 50 in developing countries. Diabetes affects more than 70 million women in the world and this figure is projected to double by 2025.<sup>42</sup>

Infectious diseases such as HIV and AIDS, diarrheal diseases, perinatal infection, malaria, and tuberculosis continue to rank among the top 10 killers of women in developing nations. Mental health issues are also a concern because they are one of the key contributors to the global burden of disease and disability. Women in developing nations are twice as likely as those in developed countries to suffer from depression. Addressing these issues is central to placing girls and women on an equal footing with men and advancing development overall.



**Preventing non-communicable disease through physical activity**

The health benefits of physical activity are well-established for men and women. Regular activity improves quality of life, lowers risk of disease, and offers numerous psychological and social benefits. Physical inactivity is linked to increased risk of death and disability and reduced quality of life.<sup>43</sup>

These findings are discussed in Chapter 2, which notes that physical activity is one of three primary factors (along with nutrition and non-smoking) that influence individual and population risks of chronic, non-communicable disease worldwide, such as heart disease, stroke, cancer, chronic respiratory disease, and diabetes.<sup>44</sup>

As discussed in Chapter 2, obesity is closely linked to cardiovascular disease and is on the rise worldwide. Regular physical activity, combined with adequate diet, is one of the most effective means of controlling mild to moderate obesity and maintaining a healthy body weight in women.<sup>45</sup> Even modest physical activity, along with dietary changes, can prevent more than half the cases of non-insulin dependent diabetes.<sup>46</sup> Physical activity, particularly strength or resistance exercises, can also prevent and delay the onset of osteoporosis, a disease that disproportionately affects women (80% of all cases) causing bones to become fragile and more likely to break.<sup>47</sup> Physical activity can also help those affected to manage the disease.<sup>48</sup>

There is further evidence to suggest that regular physical activity can help prevent cancer, in particular decreasing lifetime risk of lung and colon cancer<sup>49</sup> and breast cancer in women.<sup>50</sup> For the latter, 1–3 hours of exercise a week over a woman's reproductive lifetime can reduce the risk by 20%–30%, while four or more hours a week can reduce the risk by almost 60%.<sup>51</sup>

Encouraged by the health benefits of sport and physical activity, and recognizing that girls and women do not have the same access to these outlets as boys and men, governments are increasingly turning their attention to strategies to improve female access to sport and physical activity.

The government of South Africa developed a white paper on sport that includes the creation of a national strategy and organization for women and sport, Women and Sport South Africa (WASSA). WASSA's mission is to develop a culture in which all girls and women have equal opportunities, equal access, and equal support in sport and recreation at all levels and in all capacities. WASSA aims to establish a culture where women are decision-makers, administrators, coaches, officials, and participants in sport and recreation and where they can develop and achieve their full potential to enjoy the benefits of sport and recreation.

In recognition of the health benefits of physical activity for women, the Government of Hungary enacted sports legislation in December 2000 to ensure equal opportunities for men and women, and boys and girls, to choose and participate in sport, contribute to sport leadership development, and receive funding for different sport programs. Under this law, all sport organizations, foundations, federations and committees were required to increase female participation to 10% by November 2001, 20% by November 2002, 30% by November 2003 and 35% by November 2004.<sup>52</sup>

Recognizing the importance of physical activity for older women, the Government of Egypt has actively promoted their participation by establishing 37 sports centres for women over 35 years of age. Each centre is used by approximately 150 women who enjoy basketball, volleyball, table tennis, and other recreational activities.<sup>53</sup>

### **Improving access to sexual and reproductive health information, education and services**

The sexual and reproductive health of girls and women is a particular challenge. Fifty percent of all adults worldwide living with HIV and AIDS are women.<sup>54</sup> This statistic is even higher in sub-Saharan Africa, where, in 2007, almost 61% of adults living with HIV were women.<sup>55</sup> Women's biological vulnerability to contracting HIV and other sexually transmitted infections is often exacerbated by existing social perceptions about their roles. Many women, and particularly girls, face a significant risk of sexual coercion (20% of women globally are sexually abused before the age of 15).<sup>56</sup> Women and girls with few assets of their own, or limited options for earning an income, may be compelled to exchange sex (inside and outside of marriage) for survival. Early marriage and childbearing are also concerns. Over the next 10 years, an estimated 100 million girls (or one third of adolescent girls in developing countries) will marry before they are 18 years old.<sup>57</sup> Similarly, 14 million adolescent girls become mothers every year, over 90% of them in developing countries.<sup>58</sup> Childbearing, particularly early childbearing and the close spacing of children, presents risks — approximately 1,600 women and more than 10,000 newborns die daily from preventable complications during pregnancy and childbirth.<sup>59</sup>

Girls and women need access to information about their bodies, protective aids, and supports and strategies that are context appropriate to help them avoid unsafe sexual practices and preventable illnesses. Access to information on relevant health issues and supports that enable self-care, prevention, and treatment is limited due to:

- Uneven access to education;
- Limited, costly, or non-existent health promotion and health care services;
- Social taboos that discourage women (particularly unmarried girls) from obtaining information on their sexual and reproductive health;

- Fear of disclosing sexual activity (voluntary and involuntary) due to the stigma and negative consequences which may result from transgressing community and family norms; and
- Social norms that discourage open discussion of sexual violence or hold women responsible for their victimization.

The use of sport as a health information and education platform is particularly important for girls entering adolescence and confronting choices, challenges, and risks in connection with sexual activity, pregnancy, and HIV (these issues are explored more thoroughly in Chapter 2). In developed nations, sport participation has been linked with delayed sexual activity and reduced risk of teen pregnancy. However, the circumstances of girls in many developing nation contexts are very different because they often do not have the same level of personal control over their sexual activity. Higher risk of sexual violence, family pressure to marry early, and gender norms emphasizing submission and obedience to men leave girls vulnerable to early, unwanted and unsafe sexual activity. In societies that discourage discussion of sexual matters with girls, lack of information on sexuality, reproductive health and HIV and AIDS increases these risks.

Sport offers multiple avenues to address these health challenges and can promote good health for girls and women. It can provide an important venue to share critical health information and education and a safe and neutral space where women can discuss sexual and reproductive health issues and strategies to address them. As noted in Chapter 3, the use of sport for these aims requires sport facilitators, such as coaches, teachers and peer educators, to be well-trained and informed on health issues. Well-trained and informed sport facilitators are uniquely positioned to convey accurate and appropriate health information and referrals. They can approach sensitive topics in an age-appropriate and culturally appropriate way, and they can use their counselling skills to provide effective support to girls and women who ask for guidance in dealing with specific issues, including sexual abuse and HIV and AIDS.

Peer education and support are particularly effective when working with adolescents. In 2002, the EduSport Foundation created the *Go Sisters* program in Zambia to address the needs of adolescent girls from disadvantaged communities. These girls tend to receive little support from their families or communities to stay in school and they face increased health risks due to their gender and socio-economic status. Adolescent girls are also the least knowledgeable of any group in Zambia when it comes to HIV and AIDS. This, in addition to gender socialization that encourages girls to be submissive to males, makes it difficult for them to abstain from sexual relationships or to negotiate protected sex. *Go Sisters* provides adolescent girls with sport, leadership, health and coach training,

equipping them to become peer educators and role models. After training, they use their new skills by training other peer leaders and designing and delivering programs in their schools. Programs provide girls with a forum to discuss issues such as healthy lifestyles, HIV and AIDS, gender equity, and protection from abuse. Activities vary by school but may include sport leagues, tournaments with different themes, discussion workshops, leadership camps, aerobics, exchanges with other project sites and community service.

There is evidence to suggest that programs like *Go Sisters* can have a positive impact. In the period 2002–2006, *Go Sisters* trained 5,474 girls as peer leaders. These leaders provided sport and health education activities to an additional 56,132 girls. *Go Sisters* program participants now speak openly and knowledgeably about issues that affect them, including early marriage and reproductive health. *Go Sisters* staff report that participants experience fewer early pregnancies (i.e., under age 16) than non-participants. Monitoring and evaluation mechanisms are being developed to more systematically capture these positive impacts,<sup>60</sup> but the early results are promising.

In the Kilifi District in Kenya, *Moving the Goalposts* Kilifi uses football as an outreach tool to tackle gender disparities in health, education and employment. Football games and tournaments provide a safe space for girls and young women to meet, build positive social relationships, and access health and leadership training. A peer educator visits each football team during tournaments and provides reproductive health education through dramas and videos. Topics include menstruation, HIV and AIDS, decision-making, and girl-child rights. Peer educators record questions that arise during the sessions for follow up visits, and project staff are creating a resource manual to address common questions and concerns.<sup>61</sup>

National governments have also begun to use sport as a platform to deliver health information and services to women. In Ghana, the Ministry of Education and Sports views sport as a means of promoting health and improving productivity and a vehicle for disseminating community health messages. Gender-based Sport for Development programs are seen as ideal vehicles for disseminating health-related messages and educating girls and women about health issues, including HIV and AIDS, other sexually transmitted diseases, and maternal and child health. In Palau, the national government and the Palau National Olympic Committee work together to offer regular sport activities for girls and women to promote gender equity and improve maternal health. In its monthly Walk and Run event, the government works with doctors to provide clinical services, family planning information, and other health services to women and families.

### **Improving maternal health**

Increased physical activity levels, combined with access to reproductive health information and services, can improve the health of women during pregnancy and the health of their newborn infants. Benefits of moderate physical activity during pregnancy include: prevention and reduction of cardiac stress, gestational diabetes,<sup>62</sup> backache, and pain in the hands and feet; strengthening of pelvic muscles; reduction of premature deliveries and caesarean sections; more flexibility and pain tolerance; weight gain control; and increased self-esteem.<sup>63</sup> According to the nurse who leads an *Aerobics for Pregnant Women* program established in 1994 in Zimbabwe, physical activity for pregnant women can contribute to heightened physical and mental well-being: “[T]he aerobics for pregnant mothers has been very important. The mothers tell us about a lot of the benefits of aerobics such as substantially reducing their time of labour. All our mothers are now taking up aerobics because it’s easy and fun. It’s just music and dance. It’s good for the women to get together — they make friends, they share experiences.”<sup>64</sup> Group exercise programs such as the *Aerobics for Pregnant Women* program can also help create lasting social networks which may provide women with outlets to share experiences and discuss sensitive issues, including post-partum depression.

### **Fostering mental health and well-being**

When it comes to mental health, there are many similarities between women and men in the overall prevalence of disorders, but women and girls experience different patterns and symptoms.<sup>65</sup> During adolescence, girls have a much higher prevalence of depression and eating disorders, and engage more in suicidal ideation<sup>66</sup> and suicide attempts than boys.<sup>67</sup> In adulthood, the prevalence of depression and anxiety is much higher in women, while substance use and anti-social behaviour are higher in men.<sup>68</sup>

Many studies indicate that gender-based differences contribute significantly to higher rates of depression and anxiety among women and girls.<sup>69</sup> Rates of depression for women are almost double those of men in both developed and developing countries. Frequent exposure of low-income women to events such as illness and death of family members, imprisonment, job insecurity, and unsafe living and workplace conditions, places them at greater risk of depression.<sup>70</sup> In China, for example, psychological disorders have been linked to arranged marriages, unwanted abortions, problems with parents-in-law and an imposed nurturing role.<sup>71</sup> Additional evidence, although not as extensive, strongly links depression, anxiety, stress-related syndromes, substance use and suicide to gender-based violence.<sup>72</sup>

The International Society of Sport Psychology indicates that sport can contribute to women's health by:

- Reducing anxiety;
- Decreasing mild to moderate depression;
- Reducing neuroses and anxiety;
- Reducing various types of stress; and
- Producing a beneficial emotional effect.<sup>73</sup>

Sport participation is also associated with lower rates of suicidal thoughts among adolescent girls in developed countries<sup>74,75</sup> although it is not clear whether this is true in developing countries.

Sport programs for women can provide critical opportunities for social support that can reduce loneliness and help relieve stresses and anxiety in their lives. In contexts where formal mental health services are scarce or inaccessible due to distance or cost, the availability of informal frontline programs that can provide social support and other inexpensive forms of mental health promotion, are critical.

## 2.2 FOSTERING SELF-ESTEEM AND EMPOWERMENT

The empowerment of girls and women involves the increased ability to make strategic life choices in contexts where this ability was previously limited. A necessary precursor to empowerment, self-esteem is defined as a person's overall self-appraisal and feeling of self-worth. Self-esteem is essential to mental health and well-being (low self-esteem can be a contributing factor to health risk behaviours such as drug, alcohol and tobacco abuse, suicide, early and unsafe sexual activity, teen pregnancy, and anti-social behaviour).<sup>76,77</sup>

Self-esteem and empowerment are critical issues for girls and women because gender stereotyping and gender norms often lead to feelings of inadequacy and lack of confidence. With limited mobility, uneven access to education and employment, and few economic assets, girls and women often lack a sense of personal worth and value. This further reduces their chances of feeling competent, being assertive, and feeling secure, safe, and connected. Together, these perceptions and feelings can cause women to feel disempowered, lacking the strength and confidence to embrace goals and possibilities, and to make the choices necessary to realize them.

Self-esteem and empowerment are often cited as significant benefits of sport participation. In a majority of studies, researchers found a strong link between physical activity and self-esteem in all age groups.<sup>78</sup> (Chapter 3 examines in greater detail the attributes of sport programs that contribute to heightened self-esteem.)

Evidence suggests that girls and women who participate in sport and physical activity, in both developing and developed countries, also derive benefits related to other constructs associated with self-esteem, including self-perception, self-worth, self-efficacy, self-empowerment, and enhanced personal freedom.<sup>79</sup> Research also points to the importance of engaging girls in sport at an early age, because self-esteem can decrease during adolescence for both boys and girls. This period of transition is also often characterized by reduced physical activity and sport participation, and increasingly restrictive gender roles for girls in both developing and developed countries.<sup>80</sup>

Qualitative research has shown a positive relationship between sport participation, self-esteem and self-empowerment in high-income countries. A comprehensive American study found that girls and women who participated in sport or physical activity before going to university displayed greater levels of self-worth, physical competence, and body image.<sup>81</sup> Furthermore, girls in Norway who participated in a sports program reported enhanced levels of confidence, success, and mastery. Girls' narratives also noted "a feeling of belonging" and a sense of "being seen and confirmed."<sup>82</sup> Participation in sport has also been shown to strengthen the ability of adolescent girls to challenge sexual pressure from men.<sup>83</sup>

Two studies provide observational support for a positive relationship between sport participation and self-empowerment. Impact analysis from the *Ishraq* program in Egypt<sup>84</sup> and the Mathare Youth Sports Association's (MYSA) *Girls' Football Program*<sup>85</sup> in Kenya suggest that sport for girls plays a significant role in enhancing self-empowerment, self-esteem, and personal freedom. In addition, focus group responses from females who participate in *Moving the Goal Posts* Kilifi's programming indicate that participation in football has significantly increased levels of self-esteem.<sup>86</sup>

In rural communities in Egypt, sport is considered appropriate for boys but not girls. Girls play traditional games up to the age of 10 or 11 but, with the onset of puberty, their movement becomes much more restricted. The *Ishraq* program was established in 14 villages in Egypt to develop girls' skills, increase their self-confidence, build their citizenship and leadership abilities, and raise their expectations for the future. Through this program, girls receive a general introduction to physical activity using traditional games, body movement and basic information on hygiene, nutrition and health. Life skills sessions are held on topics such as first aid, environmental awareness, reproductive health, marriage, pregnancy and motherhood, family planning, and violence against women.

Program research and evaluation show that before participating in the program, girls looked down on themselves. They felt that they had no mobility, no access to education,

and few friends in comparison to their brothers and male counterparts. After participating in the program, both their own self-perceptions and the way they were perceived by their families changed dramatically. Participants report experiencing greater status in their family, becoming more involved in family decision-making, and understanding their own rights more clearly (e.g., a right to education and health for themselves and future daughters). Most participants now have a stronger basis from which to counter family pressure for early marriage and, in some cases, have been able to extend their education and delay marriage. Although empowerment is often hard to measure, many *Ishraq* program graduates are mobilizing and organizing their own projects with local girls. In many communities, graduates continue to meet regularly and discuss issues relevant to their lives.<sup>87</sup>

*U-Go-Girl* is a program delivered by Sports Coaches' Outreach (SCORE) in South Africa. *U-Go-Girl* encourages female participation by introducing girls to historically male-dominated sports, developing girls' and women's sports clubs, and ensuring female representation on sports committees.<sup>88</sup> Through sport leadership and assertiveness training workshops such as those delivered through *U-Go-Girl*, girls can become more confident and better able to express themselves.

The Mathare Youth Sports Association's *Girls' Football Program* in Kenya provides another compelling example of the use of sport to empower girls. The football program offers girls the opportunity to learn football, play on football teams, and compete internationally in the Norway Cup. Girls also participate with boys in leadership training, community service and informal education sessions on health and other topics. Responses by female participants in a MYSA study indicated that, in addition to having fun, making new friends, and getting fit, they were acquiring new skills and self-confidence. In the words of one participant: "I have learned how to have my own principles and not to be blown and tossed around by the wind. Before playing football, I was fearful. Now I am not because I am used to mixing with people and I know what is good and what is bad."<sup>89</sup>

## 2.3 FACILITATING SOCIAL SUPPORT AND INCLUSION

The combined interaction of traditional, cultural and gender norms and poverty often results in girls' and women's social isolation, severely constrained education and employment opportunities, and general exclusion from mainstream community life.

Differential access to public spaces by males and females begins in childhood and is exacerbated in adolescence when girls' physical mobility is curtailed by cultural norms and conditions that determine where it is safe or acceptable for them to go.<sup>90</sup> Parents tend to restrict girls' mobility more than boys' to keep them — and their reputations — safe. This significantly narrows their public life.<sup>91</sup>



A recent mapping exercise of safe spaces for girls in Kibera, Kenya (the largest informal settlement in Africa) found that less than 2% of an estimated 76,000 girls had a place they considered safe in which to meet friends (outside of school) or family for a few hours a week.<sup>92</sup> Boys were far more likely than girls to report that they had a place outside of home or school in which to meet same-sex friends (47% versus 13% for girls).<sup>93</sup> Although security risks for both boys and girls are more pronounced in poor regions such as Kibera, gender exacerbates this risk, causing girls to face compounded challenges.

Social structures and safety issues are an important factor limiting the participation of girls and women in education and employment. For Mayan girls in rural Guatemala, there is a dramatic decline in the proportion of girls going to school as they get older — from over 75% attending school at age 10 to 13% at age 16.<sup>94</sup>

The exclusion of girls and women, however, is not limited to education and employment, and can extend to other areas of life. While the specific elements and dynamics of female social exclusion vary significantly across countries and communities, key contributing factors can include:

- Lack of employment opportunities for girls and women;
- Low awareness of, and inability to access, rights and entitlements;
- Sexual maturation leading to changes in how girls regard themselves and how they are treated by their families and communities;
- Lack of safe public spaces;
- Tolerance of gender-based violence, including rape;
- Increased domestic workload in adolescence and adulthood;
- Difficulty in travelling safely — even to school, market, etc.;
- High dropout rates for girls — with those remaining in school losing their friends and peers;
- Pressure for early marriage or liaisons as livelihood strategies; and
- Family resistance to female relatives spending significant time outside the home.

Sport can give women and girls access to safe and sanctioned public spaces, allowing them to gather, develop social networks that extend beyond their families, discuss problems, and enjoy freedom of movement on a regular basis. While literacy programs, sewing classes or other pursuits might also provide these benefits, sport also offers opportunities for physical and leadership development that other activities do not. Because sport, in most contexts, retains a predominantly masculine culture, it also offers opportunities to challenge and gradually shift gender norms that underpin and reinforce the social exclusion of girls and women.

In Afghanistan, under the Taliban, women and girls were largely confined to their homes unless accompanied by a male relative. With the change in regime, women are now looking for ways to gradually re-emerge in a society that still remains highly segregated and often unsafe. Apart from schools and universities, there are few socially sanctioned places for women to gather. Sport is being used as one way to create such spaces. The *Sport for Women* project operates a Women's Park (Bagh-e-Zanana) offering up to 10,000 women and girls opportunities to participate in educational and recreational activities and enjoy supervised sport activities. Through sport and play, women and girls can enjoy freedom of expression and movement, learn new skills and support each other.<sup>95</sup>

In post-apartheid South Africa, football programs provide girls with opportunities to participate on teams that help them to build social skills and a network of friends. Friends mentor one another and offer support, making public spaces feel more inclusive.<sup>96</sup> Developing skills and competencies such as self-discipline, self-control, independence, leadership, and communication reduces feelings of exclusion and allows girls and women to participate more openly and equally in the community. In fact, the public participation by girls and women can challenge and change expectations about their roles and capabilities.<sup>97</sup>

MYSA's *Girls' Football Program* in Kenya did not initially incorporate safety concerns into programming. However, when girls identified lack of safety as a barrier to participation, program staff took steps to improve security travelling to and from the program and during practices and games.<sup>98</sup> Gender training was implemented to sensitize staff and selected participants to gender discrimination issues. As a result, changes have been made to the program to make it a more hospitable, safe and welcoming environment for girls — including revising work responsibilities among girls and boys to avoid reinforcing gender stereotypes.<sup>99</sup>

The opportunity to travel and participate in an international competition, the Norway Cup, was viewed by many *Girls' Football Program* participants and their parents as a significant benefit. By providing female participants greater mobility and the opportunity to broaden their horizons, encounter new people and build their skills and knowledge, MYSA has helped to build their aspirations. When asked to imagine their future, female participants talked about wanting more equal partnerships with their future husbands than their mothers had had, as well as greater opportunities for their own children. These comments demonstrate that programs such as *Girls' Football* can create an expanded sense of options and possibilities in the lives of girls.

Success in using sport to foster greater social inclusion for women and girls requires that programs address a number of key issues. While each community setting is unique and requires its own assessment and response, a number of issues tend to arise in most contexts and merit particular attention. Sport programs for girls and women are encouraged to:<sup>100</sup>

- Include gender equity as an explicit program objective;
- Provide equal opportunities for boys and girls in programs (e.g., playing time, travel opportunities, access to educational workshops and events, leadership training, etc.);
- Develop explicit guidelines or codes of conduct governing behaviour of boys and girls (with appropriate enforcement);
- Ensure awareness of gender stereotypes and be careful not to reinforce these through language, behaviour, program materials, division of labour, decision-making processes, etc.;
- Select and develop appropriate role models for girls (e.g., coaches, officials and staff);
- Provide a range of activities and services, in addition to sport, to attract and retain more girls and encourage the approval and support of their parents;
- Implement sustained outreach and strategies to accommodate girls' domestic responsibilities and mobility restrictions;
- Give girls a strong voice in programs and maintain a flexible approach to participation to ensure their needs are heard and met;
- Find ways to protect the safety and reputations of participating girls and women;
- Encourage and develop girls' self-expression, decision-making and leadership capacities; and
- Encourage mutual respect, cooperation and support between male and female participants.

Similarly, it is important for development-based projects and programs that aim to increase gender equity to include sports as a component of their programming.

## 2.4 CHALLENGING GENDER NORMS

Challenging gender norms refers to efforts to change culturally defined expectations about male and female appearance, roles, activities, relationships, and behaviour. Most societies have stereotypical gender norms which influence how men and women are viewed. For example, many societies believe that women should be gentle, submissive and caring while men should be strong, daring and unemotional. Some societies believe that football is for boys, while dance is for girls. Gender stereotypes can be restrictive and harmful to men and women because they discourage individuals from expressing who they really are, which can prevent them from realizing their full human potential. Penalties for transgressing these norms can be extremely severe. This is often especially true for girls and women because there is so much at stake when existing power structures favouring women's submission are challenged.

Gender norms do change, however, and sport can be used as a means to change them, in part because sport itself is so heavily identified with the masculine domain. Typically, boys and men are more easily socialized into organized sport than girls and women — and many of the values associated with highly competitive sport overlap with attributes traditionally associated with men (e.g., competitiveness and aggression). In addition, more sport celebrities and role models are male and the physical attributes of athletes (e.g., muscular appearance, strength, power) are more typically associated with the masculine ideal. Finally, resources for male sport are far more plentiful and readily available than for female sport.

For all of these reasons, the very existence of female athletes can raise questions about deeply embedded notions of masculine and feminine roles. Girls are as likely as boys to adhere to gender stereotyping and therefore may have concerns about their own gender identity and how they will be perceived socially if they participate in sport. Girls and women who do challenge gender norms often face a difficult journey,<sup>101</sup> but one that can be highly rewarding in terms of their own personal development. Individual girls and women who challenge gender norms also help to create greater opportunities for others. Participation in sport offers girls and women opportunities to alter their own and others' perceptions about their capabilities and the range of roles they might assert in their community and in society. By calling into question the norms governing their own lives, girls and women can also call into question the roles governing their male peers. This way, they can help to establish a different understanding of the capacities of both genders, gradually reshaping the relationships between men and women in society.

Effective initiatives aimed at challenging gender norms must also involve boys and men. Because boys and men are necessary allies in the struggle for greater gender equity, gender mainstreaming cannot occur unless men are willing and equipped to incorporate gender analysis into what they do. This is particularly true in governments where implementation of gender equity measures often significantly lags behind relevant policy and legal frameworks.

The sports arena provides an opportunity to reach out to men and boys on issues related to stereotypical attitudes and gender-based discrimination and violence. The broad participation of men and boys in sport, as both athletes and spectators, provides a powerful forum for educating and informing males on a variety of issues, including violence against women and girls, and for breaking down entrenched attitudes and stereotypical behaviours.<sup>102</sup> Male athletes who speak out on such issues can be particularly effective as role models.<sup>103</sup> In 2005, top football teams from Barranquilla, Bogotá, Cali, and Cartagena in Colombia supported White Ribbon Day, the International Day for the Elimination

of Violence Against Women. The teams displayed campaign placards in their stadiums before their championship matches to raise awareness about all forms of violence against women.<sup>104</sup>

Sport programs also offer important opportunities to provide boys and male youth with role models who actively support gender equity. These models reinforce equity in the expectations they communicate to program participants, and model appropriate behaviour in their relations with girls and women. As part of their *Unite for Children, Unite for Peace* campaign, the Fédération Internationale de Football Association (FIFA) and UNICEF launched a football coaching manual, "Coaching Boys Into Men," during the 2006 World Cup. Recognizing that coaches can play a unique role in addressing issues of violence and discrimination, particularly against women and girls, the manual provides advice to coaches on how to talk to young athletes about tolerance and teach them that violence does not equal strength.<sup>105</sup>

Specific gender roles and stereotyping levels affecting women need to be analyzed in each unique cultural setting. This analysis will inform choices that are made about the degree to which, and how, sport programs can challenge these norms.<sup>106</sup> Approaches that fail to acknowledge deeply held views and severe social consequences for perceived gender transgressions can cause harm to program participants and can further discourage support for sport opportunities for women and girls. In general, gradual approaches to building consensus around incremental change are more successful than sweeping ones. Gradual approaches also offer minimal risk to participants. For consensus building to occur, outreach and dialogue with community and religious leaders, teachers, parents and male family members, and other stakeholders, is needed.

For Egypt's *Ishraq*, the sport component of the program provided an unprecedented and challenging intervention. Workshops delivered through the *Ishraq* program familiarized sports promoters with curriculum content and equipped them with the skills and tools needed to conduct classes. Orientation meetings held with parents and community members over a period of three months built acceptance of the proposed sport activities for girls.

In Pakistan, the *SportWorks* project jointly led by international humanitarian organization Right To Play and the Insan Foundation Pakistan, uses sport and play to provide leadership and participation opportunities for refugee Afghan girls and women. The project provides play activities for Afghan refugee boys and girls that build skills around communication, conflict prevention, and leadership. Key lessons learned from this project included the need to secure support from local leaders and the community.

Local leaders and community members were initially opposed to the project. However, once they were convinced it did not violate their religious and cultural beliefs, they became supportive. Project staff engaged in extensive outreach to families, because many of them were not accustomed to allowing their children, especially girls, to attend school or play outside the home. As a result of systematic efforts to build trust and gain community support, the project has grown from 1,500 participating children in 2002 to over 5,000. Of the participating children, 70% are girls. Coaching has opened up otherwise unavailable leadership opportunities to women and there is a strong female presence at all levels of the project, with most of the leadership being women. Both male and female children are now permitted, and even encouraged, to play. A positive sport culture that is welcoming to girls and boys alike has been established in the Afghan community.<sup>107</sup>

Education to change gender norms can contribute to changing images, attitudes and stereotypes; greater respect for women's rights; and reducing gender-based violence.<sup>108</sup> While the research on how sport provides opportunities for the continual re-negotiation and construction of gendered norms and roles is limited, the convening power sport can provide a forum in which to actively contest and challenge conventional notions of gendered play.<sup>109</sup>

Gender norms cannot be changed over a short period of time. When the MYSA *Girls' Football Program* created a girls' football league over 15 years ago, it involved more than simply setting up a program for girls: MYSA staff negotiated extensively with parents and communities; schedules were adjusted to accommodate domestic responsibilities in the girls' lives; mobility had to be assured, and strategies implemented to overcome other constraints. Fifteen years later, the MYSA *Girls' Football Program* has significantly changed gender norms, including the ways girls perceive themselves and the way their community responds to them. The competence, skill and ability demonstrated by the girls on the playing field have changed negative views about females playing sport. By engaging in and being successful in a traditionally male dominated sport, the women's team has been able to transcend cultural barriers.<sup>110</sup>

It is difficult for adolescent girls to take on new roles through sport and to challenge existing norms unless they have support from their male peers and are free from harassment. Despite some concerns about male peer behaviour in MYSA, many of the female participants viewed their male counterparts favourably in comparison with male peers who did not participate. They felt they could count on male MYSA members to be more respectful and even to protect them from harassment from other boys. Male MYSA members, while initially sceptical of including girls, came to see them as capable players. In general, their perceptions expressed a mix of empathy, genuine concern and care, and somewhat patronizing and even sexist attitudes. By exploring the differing perceptions of male and female MYSA members, the program is able to

continue to address gender issues and foster an environment that increasingly invites girls to safely explore less traditional roles through sport.<sup>111</sup>

The *Espérance*<sup>112</sup> program was established in Rwanda by the Youth Sports Association Kigali to promote reconciliation and lasting peace, gender equity, and awareness of human rights and health issues — through the establishment of football clubs. Under *Espérance* rules, football teams must have equal numbers of male and female players and only girls can score goals, so teams can only win by valuing and supporting their female team members. On many occasions, however, *Espérance* staff arrived in villages only to be told that there are no girls or young women interested in playing football. In fact, many girls and young women in rural Rwanda love football, but they lacked opportunities to play or even attend matches as spectators because it was not considered appropriate in their villages. By showing community members the benefits of football — for girls and boys — *Espérance* staff have changed attitudes throughout Rwanda. Girls now play on football fields throughout the country and an increasing number of players' mothers, sisters and grandmothers of players are attending games as spectators.

In the case of *Ishraq*, when local girls reached puberty, brothers often monitored their behaviour and restricted their mobility. As a result, although local youth centres had always been officially open to girls and boys, in practice only boys used them. *Ishraq* staff chose to use these centres for program activities to help shift community perceptions. Engaging parents, brothers, and community leaders facilitated the acceptance of *Ishraq's* sport activities and the use of the centres by girls. Securing these spaces for use by girls as well as boys — at separate times — was a significant community achievement. Discussions about the common misconceptions about girls and sports, and the benefits of fitness, helped families and communities understand the important role sport could play in their daughters' and sisters' lives. *Ishraq* also instituted a *New Visions* program for boys to encourage the girls' brothers, and other young male relatives, to think and act in a more gender-equitable manner. This helped to foster greater acceptance of more mobility for girls.<sup>113</sup>

## 2.5 OPPORTUNITIES FOR LEADERSHIP AND ACHIEVEMENT

Sport offers girls and women important opportunities to acquire skills and develop their leadership capacities. Currently, there are many barriers preventing women from assuming leadership positions. This is reflected by the persistent worldwide under-representation of women in positions of power and decision-making.<sup>114</sup> Domestic workload — including childbirth and caring for children and elderly parents — can limit the flexibility and time

available to women to exercise leadership roles outside the home. Low education levels relative to men and socialization that discourages girls and women from perceiving themselves as potential leaders are also significant barriers.

The world of sport itself has traditionally had a strong male bias at the leadership level. In local, national and international contexts, women are still significantly under-represented in decision-making and as leaders in sporting bodies and institutions. This under-representation extends across the spectrum of sport activity including coaching, management, media, commercial sporting activities such as sales and marketing, and in bodies responsible for local, national, regional and international level events.<sup>115</sup> Despite this traditional lack of female representation, sport programs can offer girls and women important opportunities to develop their leadership capacities. Sport programs can provide strong female role models, offer an expanded sense of possibility, and enable girls and women to acquire leadership skills and experience as sport team leaders, peer educators, coaches, officials, mentors, supporters, and organizers.

Elite sport can play an important role in this process by providing high-profile role models and advocates for women in sport. Watching female athletes participate in high-profile sporting events, such as the Olympics, can transform male and female perceptions of the capacities of girls and women. Through their achievements, elite female athletes dispel the misconception that sport is not biologically or socially appropriate for females. An Olympic medalist or world champion stimulates national pride, unity and a sense of accomplishment. When the athlete is female, she provides a visible demonstration of what is possible for women to achieve. Nawal El Moutawakel, the Moroccan hurdler who won the gold medal in the inaugural women's 400 m hurdles event at the 1984 Summer Olympics, was the first Muslim and African female Olympic champion. Her medal was a huge breakthrough for sporting women in Morocco and other Muslim countries. Similarly, Deng Yaping, a Chinese table tennis player who won 18 world championships and four Olympic gold medals before retiring, is an icon and role model for millions of Chinese girls. Both these women made huge strides for women in sport in their countries and beyond. Both women have gone on to be strong advocates for women and sport.

Female coaches, peer educators and sport program staff offer girls and women visible proof that women can excel and lead in society. These women also fulfill a teaching function, imparting advice and lessons on leadership and — perhaps more importantly — demonstrating the characteristics of effective leadership through their own example. For this reason, it is important for sport programs to ensure they develop and provide high quality female role models for girls and women in their programs.



While male athletes, teachers, coaches and staff can positively affect the development of both girls and boys, the absence of a strong mix of female and male role models can only serve to reinforce stereotypes about men's leadership capacity at the expense of women. The need for more female sport role models was highlighted by a survey in Lusaka and Kabwe that showed that 61% of the girls questioned could not think of a sports idol at all, and only 19% of those who named a sport role model mentioned a woman. On the other hand, 87% of boys questioned could think of a favourite sports figure, but none mentioned a female athlete.<sup>116</sup> Interestingly, 26% of girls who did cite a sports idol mentioned someone from their personal environment rather than a national or international figure.<sup>117</sup>

In addition to providing role models, sport can be a highly effective platform for teaching girls and women leadership skills and providing them with leadership experience that they can apply in other domains such as employment, civic leadership and advocacy.

MYSA's *Girls' Football Program* offers specialized training and development in coaching, refereeing, training, and organizing the league. A leadership-training program for boys and girls aims to create a group of leaders who will eventually organize and run the program. Training includes communication, decision-making, team building, group dynamics, and conflict resolution. Both the coaching and referee training program have seen an increasing number of girls participating. Several girls have progressed to leadership positions as project managers, coaches, and referees, and at least one girl is appointed to each of MYSA's governing councils.<sup>118</sup>

Peer leaders in the *Go Sisters* project in Zambia receive training in first aid, leadership, coaching and facilitation. As a result of this training, peer leaders are well-positioned to become role models, providing valuable volunteer services within their communities that earn them the respect and admiration of children, their peers and adult members of the community. Programs like these can help girls and young women who have experienced setbacks to turn their lives around.<sup>119</sup>

*Moving the Goalposts Kilifi* also provides girls with opportunities to develop leadership and decision-making skills, opportunities to which they would otherwise have little access. Sport and leadership training, focusing on the development of coaching skills and participation in league organization, is a central component of the program. In 2005, female participants refereed all the organization's football matches.<sup>120</sup> Because of their achievements, Kilifi girls are recognized as special both in their district and nationally.<sup>121</sup>

*Your Life, Your Health — Make it Right!* is a Caribbean program involving female netball players under 16 years of age. At netball tournaments, players are provided with leadership

training so that they can serve as role models and lead dialogue and decision-making about health issues within their own communities. The program provides a forum for discussion, led by empowered girls and young women who aim to be future leaders.<sup>122</sup>

To effectively build leadership capacity in girls and women, however, it is important that the sport movement itself do a better job of facilitating the equitable participation of women in senior leadership positions at all levels. Women are still grossly under-represented in this respect, mirroring their widespread under-representation as leaders in most aspects of society.

Recognizing the lack of women in leadership positions within sport, the International Olympic Committee established targets and urged all National Olympic Committees (NOCs), international and national sport federations, and other sport organizations of the Olympic movement to ensure that at least 20% of decision-making roles were held by women by 2005. A subsequent former evaluation found that 64% of NOCs had taken special measures to recruit women, 62% had achieved the targets by December 2005, and that more work was needed to increase women's participation at other levels, including locally.<sup>123</sup> The benefits cited by women themselves included increased influence within their NOCs, increased participation of women in leadership training; more frequent appointments of women to other committees, and greater profile of women in sport over all. NOC Secretaries-General indicated that women were among the most active Executive Committee members.<sup>124</sup> While gender targets can be highly controversial, they have proven effective in this case. It is therefore important to make effective use of incentives and supports, as well as sanctions, in order for them to both achieve their intended goal and minimize any accompanying backlash.<sup>125</sup>

Some national governments have also begun to encourage greater participation of women in sport leadership positions. Women and Sport Botswana (WASBO), a sub-structure of the Botswana National Sports Council, was launched on November 3, 2000 with the following call for action:

- All development programs should reflect the development of women and the girl child;
- All decision-making bodies (such as Executive Committees) should have at least two women as members;
- A minimum of 20% of the budget should be channelled to the development of women and the girl- child;
- All training programs (technical and managerial) should have at least 30% women participants;
- All national delegations to international events must include 30% female representation;
- All national sporting facilities should have child-care facilities; and
- Guidance and counselling must be provided to female athletes.<sup>126</sup>

The early results from of this call for action are notable. At the 2006 World Conference for Women and Sport held in Kumamoto Japan, Botswana had the largest country delegation (other than the host, Japan) with more than 20 women participating.

Women and Sport South Africa, the national strategy launched by South Africa in 1996, is aimed at empowering women to be actively involved in all spheres of sport and recreation. In particular, WSSA targets governmental and non-governmental agencies in South Africa to develop a culture where all girls and women have equal opportunities, equal access, and equal support in sport and recreation at all levels and in all capacities, as decision-makers, administrators, coaches, officials, and participants.<sup>127</sup>

In response to the low numbers of women employed in sport and the need for gender-sensitive programming, the Organization of the Eastern Caribbean States (OECS) in Saint Lucia is adapting materials from an existing sport administration program to provide skills training to women in the field of sport administration and to create opportunities for more women to be employed in this field.

### 3 RECOMMENDATIONS TO GOVERNMENTS

The individual experiences of girls and women are unique. Although girls and women are often discussed as a group, the realities they face as individuals are influenced by a multitude of diverse determinants. These determinants vary greatly from country to country and can include regional environment, economic and socio-political climate and cultural context. Within countries, social determinants including access to income, education and healthcare, as well as familial and personal experiences, all contribute to the diverse realities that girls and women face. It is therefore erroneous and misleading to make sweeping recommendations for governments to apply in all situations. Although care has been taken to ensure that the recommendations presented here can be applied to a broad range of contexts, it is important for governments to consider the specific contextual challenges at hand when developing and implementing policies and programs aimed at influencing gender norms through sport.

### 3.1 POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

**Embed gender equity in a broader government agenda, mainstreaming it across the full range of government policy and program areas, consistent with the protection and enforcement of fundamental human rights.**

Sport and gender policies adopted without such a commitment and without a comprehensive and systematic approach to eradicating gender inequities and promoting human rights are likely to have only a limited impact.

**Recognize the benefits of sport for girls and women, by formally designing national sport policies to target the advancement of gender equity, empowerment, and improved quality of life for girls and women.**

Sport can be an excellent strategy to address gender inequities but the goal must be understood and formally acknowledged before policies and programs can be established to harness sport's power.

**Reinforce policies with appropriate legislation, regulations and funding for sport programs that promote gender equity.**

Policies are only the first step in addressing an issue — legislative, regulatory and program approaches are needed to bring policies to life.

**Optimize the use of sport to advance gender equity by applying a gender lens to all sport policies and programs to ensure that they are not being distorted by gender stereotypes, inequities or discrimination.**

Imbalances in male and female access to sport funding, programs, facilities, training, decision-making, and leadership positions are all indicative of structural gender biases in the sport system. Systematic efforts are needed to identify and correct these biases.

**Examine gender equity policies and initiatives with a focus on sport opportunities — to find additional ways to use sport to empower women and girls.**

Officials responsible for gender equity may not be aware of sport's potential to help them meet their objectives. Proactive efforts by Sport for Development proponents within governments, and external advocates, can help identify ways in which sport can be used to advance government gender equity objectives and be integrated into existing initiatives.

**Involve women and girls in policy development and planning.**

Women need to have a greater voice in sport policy decisions that affect them. Women can play a critical role in helping to design measures that increase their participation in sport and physical activity, and harness sport as a tool to improve gender equity. The resulting policies and programs are more likely to be relevant and effective if they

include the perspective of girls and women. Policy-makers who take this approach are also more likely to encourage participating sport, municipal and community-based organizations to adopt a similar approach and engage women and girls in their own decision-making processes.

### **Invest in building the capacity of women and sport organizations to ensure women have an adequate voice.**

Currently, women may face barriers which prevent them from contributing to policy development processes. To be consulted in a meaningful way, women need to have an organized voice and the capacity to engage sport organizations and governments at all levels. Government investment in women and sport organizations at the national and sub-national level can help to ensure this capacity. This investment can build valuable resources and allies when it comes to developing sport programs for women and girls and sport-based approaches to enhancing gender equity.

### **Avoid generalized (one-size-fits-all) approaches to policies and programs concerning women and sport.**

Girls and women make up 52% of the population. They present enormous diversity in terms of age, health, education, social and economic circumstances, and needs. It would be unrealistic to treat girls and women as a single target group. Policies and programs need to differentiate between different groups of girls and women and provide relevant tools, programs approaches, and indicators of success.

### **Ensure an equitable allocation of resources for girls' and women's sport in relation to sport for boys and men.**

Because sport for men and boys enjoys far greater government support and resources in most countries, it is recommended that governments establish explicit timetables and targets to ensure more equitable allocation of resources over time.

### **Require publicly funded sport organizations and sport programs for girls and women to establish and enforce anti-harassment and sexual abuse policies, training and procedures to protect girls and women in sporting situations.**

These policies and procedures should be made public, communicated to all organization staff, members, and program participants, and reported on annually.

### **Ensure that government sport funding policies aim to create an equitable balance of men and women in leadership roles in sport organizations.**

Governments often provide substantial financial and other support to national and sub-national sport bodies. This support gives governments important leverage when

it comes to ensuring that sport organizations and institutions reflect the interests and aspirations of men and women equitably. Governments could consider making public funding for sport organizations contingent on these organizations making systematic and steady progress toward more balanced representation of men and women in leadership positions, according to agreed upon targets and timetables.

### **Encourage sport organizations, municipalities, and community-based organizations that offer sport programs to build gender equity into their programs.**

This can be done by developing policies, program guidelines and resources that require, motivate or help organizations to:

- Develop gender equity policies, procedures and goals that will improve operations and attitudes within the organization;
- Establish hiring and recruitment practices that will increase the number of women participating at all levels of the organization;
- Offer women and men equal opportunities for professional and leadership development;
- Collect organizational and program statistics by gender (sex-disaggregated data) to support gender equity goals (e.g., statistics on participants, athletes and leaders as a way of determining patterns and trends and progress against organizational and program gender equity goals);
- Develop or enhance support services that help remove barriers limiting female participation (e.g., child care for program participants, travel subsidies, free uniforms);
- Improve awareness of the programming needs of girls and women and increase the number and variety of programs available to them;
- Ensure that informal education, sport and other types of training, competition and travel opportunities for girls and women are equivalent to those offered to boys and men; and
- Engage in sustained outreach and recruitment to ensure balanced male and female participation in co-educational programs and to maximize women's and girls' participation in female-only programs.

### **Ensure the necessary research, monitoring, and evaluation frameworks are in place to attain gender equity policy goals in sport.**

Collecting gender-based data on sport funding, participation, athletes, and leadership is an important means of determining whether national sport policies and programs are resulting in an equitable distribution of resources, and equitable sport participation and competition opportunities for males and females.

### **Research the sport programming needs and interests of girls and women.**

This is necessary to increase the number, variety and relevance of programs.

### 3.2 PROGRAM RECOMMENDATIONS

#### **Establish programs to actively promote female participation in sport.**

Mass promotional and advertising campaigns can help instill positive public attitudes toward girls and women in sport, when supported by coordinated efforts and programs at the local level. Promotion efforts should take into account and, where necessary, address myths and misconceptions about the negative impact of female participation in sport (e.g., harm caused to female reproductive organs or “unfeminine” activity). The use of high-profile female sport ambassadors and role models can also be effective in promoting female participation.

#### **Ensure that existing sport programs introduce or enhance gender equity and empowerment.**

Existing sport programs can be redesigned with gender equity objectives in mind. This approach will allow governments to build on successful programs, prevent duplication, and facilitate mainstreaming.

#### **Incorporate mandatory physical education into primary and secondary school curricula and ensure that gender sensitivity is a mandatory component of physical education teacher training.**

Schools are the ideal way to reach large numbers of girls and equip them early in life with the information, skills and confidence necessary for lifelong physical activity and enjoyment of sport. Physical education teachers must be trained not to reinforce stereotypes that inhibit girls’ physical and sport development. Teacher training should impart an understanding of the true differences in how boys and girls approach and experience sport so that they can ensure a mix of activities and sports that are equally relevant and enjoyable for boys and girls.

#### **Invest in community-based sport programs for girls.**

Seventy percent of the 130 million children who are not attending school are girls. Clearly, these girls cannot benefit from school-based sport programs. Disadvantaged by low education and often socially isolated, they are most likely to benefit from the educational, social support and empowerment benefits of well-designed Sport for Development programs.

#### **Invest in sport facilities, equipment and spaces that are suitable for, and accessible to, girls and women.**

Too often community sport facilities are inaccessible to girls and women because of distance, safety concerns, lack of proper shower and change facilities, or tendencies to give men and boys priority in their use. Programs that can be delivered in proximity to places where women typically gather (e.g., religious institutions, markets, and washing facilities) are more likely to be successful in attracting women and girls. Measures requiring

publicly supported facilities to provide equitable access for male and female sport activities and participants as a condition of government funding are also useful. Ideally, women need to be involved in the planning of such facilities and the needs of girls and women should be taken into account before sites are chosen and facilities constructed.

### **Establish programs to recognize the achievement of girls and women in sport.**

Social and cultural barriers to female participation in sport are an ongoing barrier to participation and to women's and girls' access to other opportunities for personal health, development and quality of life through sport. High-profile national awards and recognition programs for female athletes and girls and women involved in sport can help to change public attitudes and enable more women and girls to take advantage of the opportunities sport offers.

### **Empower girls and women by appointing women to lead national and local sport initiatives.**

Placing women at the head of national and local sport initiatives sends a powerful message to sport organizations, local communities, and girls and women that they can be effective leaders. Seeing women in leadership roles communicates the message that sport is equally the domain of men and women.

### **Adopt the following best practices in all sport programs for women and girls:<sup>128</sup>**

**Adopt a female-centred approach.** Learn directly from participating girls and women about their needs and interests and tailor the program accordingly. Systematically seek input from girls and women into program design and implementation. Recognize the economic circumstances, and household and family responsibilities that result in heavy workload and time constraints, and then adapt programs to accommodate these.

**Provide programs in a female-friendly space.** Offer programs in areas where girls and women are safe from both physical and emotional danger, free from all forms of harassment and can enjoy a forum for self-expression that is not hindered by male domination.

**Ensure a safe environment.** Enable safe transportation to and from the program, avoid activities after dark or those that require participants to travel home in the dark, and take measures to protect girls' and women's reputations.

**Offer a supportive environment.** Accept participants for who they are, allow them to make mistakes, recognize their personal progress and achievements, and give them the flexibility to enter, exit and re-enter the program without blame or shame.



**Obtain parental, family and community permission.** Educate parents and community leaders on the benefits of girls' involvement in the sport program prior to launching. Because female movement in a community is often restricted by cultural norms and traditions, obtaining parental or family approval and support will help girls and women to participate. Brothers are often a key figure in girls' involvement.

**Provide female role models.** Recruit positive, enthusiastic, and encouraging girls and women as coaches, referees and officials. Developing a talented pool of female leaders is an urgent need in most countries because few females occupy such positions.

**Use peer age grouping.** Offer girls and women programs with their peers. Too broad an age range makes it challenging to meet very diverse needs.

**Offer flexibility in the choice of clothing and music.** Girls and women are often self-conscious about their bodies and can suffer from a negative body image. Social and cultural norms may also make some forms of sport clothing unacceptable in certain contexts, as well as certain kinds of music. Allow participating girls and women to choose their own appropriate clothing and music. Where uniforms are required, allow participants to help select a uniform that they are comfortable with or to modify the uniform as necessary, to conform to local conditions governing comfort, modesty and respectability.

### **Work with women in sport organizations to develop best practices to help address common safety issues for girls and women in sport.**

These insights should be communicated to municipalities, sport organizations and community-based organizations delivering sport programs. Simple, easy-to-use resources can be developed to help ensure that programs offer a safe and supportive environment for girls and women.

### **Include monitoring and evaluation frameworks in programs from the outset and develop and disseminate appropriate best practices and tools that are specific to women and sport programs.**

To overcome the challenges girls face in accessing sport and play, gender analysis in program design and gender-sensitive monitoring and evaluation (M&E) of Sport for Development and Peace programs are needed to document the evidence of the value of sport as a tool for development and a means of gender equity, as well as identify risks that women and girls might face as part of participating in the project and recommend preventive measures.

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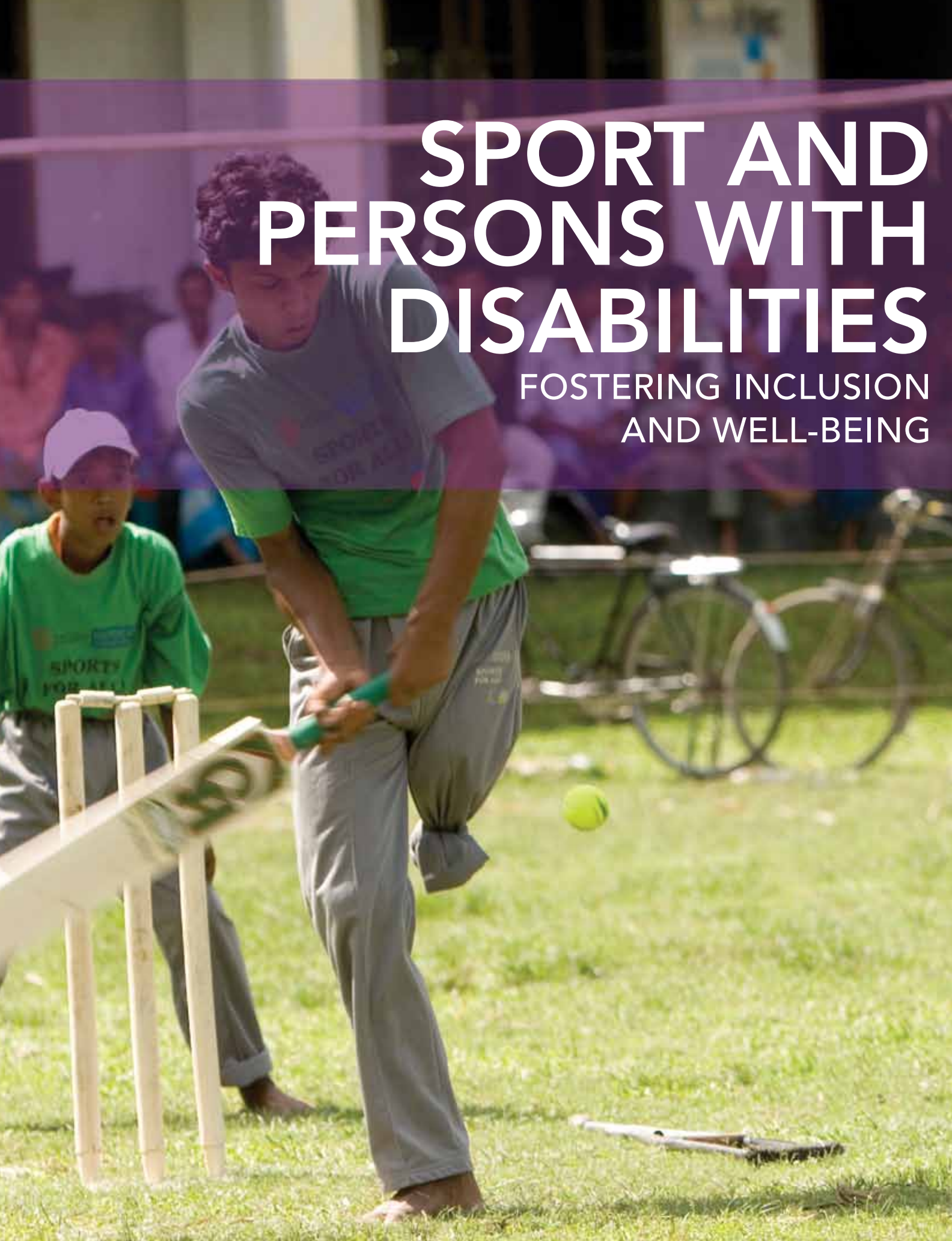
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# SPORT AND PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES

FOSTERING INCLUSION  
AND WELL-BEING



# CHAPTER 5

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Right To Play

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Handicap International -  
Sport and Leisure Activities  
for Children with Disabilities,  
Bangladesh

# 1 CONTEXT: DISABILITY, DEVELOPMENT AND SPORT

*“No country can afford to turn its back on 10% of its population.”*

– ILO/UNESCO/UNICEF/WHO proclamation, December 3, 1997

## 1.1 | DISABILITY AND DEVELOPMENT

Disability is any physical or mental condition that limits a person’s movements, senses or activities. The term disability is conventionally used to refer to attributes that are severe enough to interfere with, or prevent, normal day-to-day activities. According to the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, “persons with disabilities include those who have long-term physical, mental, intellectual or sensory impairments which, in interaction with various barriers, may hinder their full and effective participation in society on an equal basis with others.”<sup>1</sup> Disabilities can be permanent, temporary, or episodic. They can affect people from birth, or be acquired later in life through injury or illness.

The World Bank estimates that approximately 600 million people, or 10% of the world’s population, have a disability<sup>2</sup> and that 80% of these people live in developing nations.<sup>3</sup> If families of persons with disabilities are included, at least 25% of the world is directly affected by disability.<sup>4</sup>

Disability is both a cause and a consequence of poverty. This relationship is particularly acute in developing countries. Studies show that 98% of children with disabilities living in developing countries do not receive an education.<sup>5</sup> This number is even higher for girls with disabilities.<sup>6</sup> As a result, a disproportionate number of persons with disabilities in developing nations live in extreme poverty.<sup>7</sup> At the same time, people living in poverty



are more likely to experience disability as a result of inadequate nutrition and healthcare, and unsafe living and work environments.<sup>8</sup>

The correlation between poverty and disability has direct implications for the capacity of developing nations to achieve the Millennium Development Goals. Poverty itself cannot be addressed without confronting both the causes of disability and the social and economic exclusion of persons with disabilities. As long as 10% of any country's population is uneducated and unemployed, the country will have difficulty meeting its MDG targets. Conversely, countries that purposefully confront the inter-relationship of disability and poverty will make progress toward the targets.<sup>9</sup>

The link between disability and poverty is not limited to developing countries. Despite great variations in wealth and quality of life across countries, persons with disabilities tend to experience greater social, political, and economic exclusion than persons without disabilities worldwide.<sup>10</sup>

In many countries, beliefs and attitudes have evolved to recognize the importance of fully including persons with disabilities. These changing attitudes are largely the result of the leadership of persons with disabilities and their families. As a result, legislation has been enacted to ensure equal rights and efforts are underway to enhance accessibility and inclusiveness in the workplace and community life.

On March 30, 2007, the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities opened for signature by member nations. The Convention is the first legally binding international instrument focused on recognizing and enforcing the rights of persons with disabilities. States that ratify the Convention must enact laws and other measures to improve disability rights and abolish legislation, customs and practices that discriminate against persons with disabilities.<sup>11</sup> A record 81 countries acceded to the Convention on the first day it opened for signature.<sup>12</sup> On April 3, 2008, the Convention received its twentieth ratification, triggering its entry into force 30 days later, on May 3, 2008.

Despite this important milestone, persons with disabilities still face societal barriers and disability still evokes negative attitudes and discrimination in many societies. The individuals concerned — and their families — continue to experience stigma, disempowerment, and social and economic marginalization.<sup>13</sup>

The cost of this exclusion and discrimination is enormous in terms of lost opportunities and poor quality of life for individuals and their families. This cost includes lost

## 1.2 SPORT AS A TOOL FOR THE INCLUSION OF PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES

potential for society given the social, economic, and cultural contributions these individuals might be making under more equitable and inclusive circumstances.

Sport for persons with disabilities is not a new concept, but its full potential as a powerful, low-cost means to foster greater inclusion and well-being for persons with disabilities is only beginning to be realized.

Sport, gymnastics specifically, was first used in Sweden in the late 1800s as a means of therapy for persons with disabilities.<sup>14</sup> Since then, sport for persons with disabilities has blossomed to include more than 17 international games, including three Olympic-level competitive games targeting athletes with disabilities — the Deaflympics (for those with hearing impairments), the Paralympics (for those with all other forms of physical disabilities such as limb loss and blindness), and the Special Olympics (for those with intellectual disabilities).<sup>15</sup> The growth of sport for persons with disabilities is reflected in the 47 academic periodicals and journals that focus on adaptive physical education and recreation, and the many newsletters published by disability sports organizations worldwide.<sup>16</sup>

Sport works to improve the inclusion and well-being of persons with disabilities in two ways — by changing what communities think and feel about persons with disabilities and by changing what persons with disabilities think and feel about themselves. The first is necessary to reduce the stigma and discrimination associated with disability. The second empowers persons with disabilities so that they may recognize their own potential and advocate for changes in society to enable them to fully realize it. The community impact and individual impact of sport help reduce the isolation of persons with disabilities and integrate them more fully into community life.

Sport changes community perceptions of persons with disabilities by focusing attention on their abilities and moving their disability into the background.<sup>17</sup> Through sport, persons without disabilities encounter persons with disabilities in a positive context (sometimes for the first time) and see them accomplish things they had previously thought impossible.<sup>18</sup> Their assumptions about what persons with disabilities can and cannot do are profoundly challenged and reshaped by this experience. As well, the tendency to see the disability instead of the person is greatly reduced, in part because of the common experience of sport that they now share.

Sport changes the person with a disability in an equally profound way. For some, it marks their first experience of human agency — that is, it enables them to make choices and

take risks on their own. For others, the gradual acquisition of skills and accomplishments builds the self-confidence needed to take on other life challenges such as pursuing education or employment. Sport also provides opportunities for persons with disabilities to develop social skills, forge friendships outside their families, exercise responsibility, and take on leadership roles. Through sport, persons with disabilities learn vital social interaction skills, develop independence, and become empowered to lead and make change happen.<sup>19</sup> In the words of one participant:

*“It was amazing when I came to know [the] thrilling sport [of blind soccer]<sup>20</sup> since I couldn’t imagine that I could play soccer exactly the same as my sighted friends...By playing blind soccer, I experience a series of challenges, recreation for my daily life, and wonderful comrades. In mastering new techniques and challenges each game through teamwork, I feel a sense of mastery, which makes me confident and proud. I believe sports encourage the spirit of challenge and self-reliance, both of which are essential for our lives.”<sup>21</sup>*

### 1.3 LIMITATIONS OF SPORT TO THE INCLUSION OF PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES

When efforts are not made to ensure that sport participation is inclusive, sport remains simply another area where discriminatory attitudes and practices toward persons with disabilities are perpetuated. Even when the decision is made to make sport more accessible and inclusive, without basic steps to foster understanding, knowledge and communication about how to adapt sports appropriately, intolerance can be exacerbated<sup>22</sup> and divisiveness can ensue. With appropriate communication, knowledge and skill, sport can be a powerful tool for transforming community attitudes and empowering individuals through the acquisition of new physical and social skills, self-confidence and positive relationships.



Wheelchair races provide a forum to promote participation and celebrate the achievements of persons with disabilities. Sport competitions, when used effectively, can integrate people from all social classes, political affiliations and levels of ability.

Cambodian National Volleyball League (Disabled) Organisation

## 1.4 SPORT, PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES, AND THE MILLENNIUM DEVELOPMENT GOALS

Sport can play an important role in improving the inclusion and well-being of persons with disabilities and, in so doing, help to advance the Millennium Development Goals. Table 5.1 outlines the ways in which sport for persons with disabilities can help achieve specific MDGs.

**TABLE 5.1 SPORT, PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES, AND THE MILLENNIUM DEVELOPMENT GOALS**

MILLENNIUM DEVELOPMENT GOAL	CONTRIBUTION OF SPORT
1. Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reduced stigma and increased self-esteem, self-confidence and social skills, leading to increased employment and lower levels of poverty and hunger</li> </ul>
2. Achieve universal primary education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reduced stigma preventing children with disabilities from attending school</li> <li>• Increased awareness of importance of physical education for all children and ability to adapt activities for children with disabilities</li> </ul>
3. Promote gender equality and empower women	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Empowerment of women and girls with disabilities — through sport-based opportunities — to acquire health information, skills, social networks, and leadership experience</li> <li>• Loosening of restrictive gender norms by introducing the concept of women playing sports</li> </ul>
4. Reduce child mortality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improved health of children with disabilities as a result of increased physical activity</li> <li>• Reduced likelihood of infanticide by reducing stigma and promoting greater community acceptance of children with disabilities</li> </ul>
5. Improve maternal health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improved access by women with disabilities to health information and education, using sport as a communication platform</li> </ul>
6. Combat HIV and AIDS, malaria, and other diseases	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improved access to disease prevention and treatment information for persons with disabilities through sport programs with a health education component</li> <li>• Reduced stigma associated with HIV and AIDS through inclusion of people with HIV and AIDS in sport activities</li> <li>• Improved health for people living with HIV and AIDS due to participation in sport activities</li> </ul>
7. Ensure environmental sustainability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increased knowledge and action in support of environmental sustainability among persons with disabilities, using sport as an education and social mobilization platform</li> </ul>
8. Develop a global partnership for development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Creation of global sport and disability networks for data collection, awareness-raising, and knowledge exchange</li> </ul>

## 1.5 INTERNATIONAL FRAMEWORKS FOR DISABILITY AND SPORT

The power of sport as a means to improve the lives of persons with disabilities is reflected in a range of international agreements, strategies and instruments.

As early as 1978, UNESCO identified the value of sport for persons with disabilities in its *International Charter of Physical Education and Sport*.<sup>23</sup> The Charter called on countries

to make special opportunities available “to develop [persons with disabilities] personalities to the fullest through physical education and sport programs suited to their requirements.”<sup>24</sup>

In 1982, the United Nations developed the *World Programme of Action*, a global strategy to enhance disability prevention, rehabilitation and equalization of opportunities. This stated that member delegations should “encourage all forms of sports activities of disabled persons, [among other things], through the provision of adequate facilities and the proper organization of these activities.”<sup>25</sup> The Programme set the stage for the United Nations International Decade of Disabled Persons 1983–1992, during which governments were encouraged to implement its provisions. In 1993, the United Nations adopted *The Standard Rules for the Equalization of Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities*, which also addressed the right to sport for persons with disabilities.<sup>26</sup>

The UN decade was followed by the Asian and Pacific Decade of Disabled Persons 1993–2002 (later extended to 2012), the African Decade of Disabled Persons 2000–2009, and the Decade of the Americas for the Rights and Dignity of Persons with Disabilities 2006–2016. The Action Plan formally adopted by the Organization for African Unity (now the African Union) in 2002, specifically references the need to “[p]romote more efforts that encourage positive attitudes toward children, youth, women and adults with disabilities, and the implementation of measures to ensure their access to rehabilitation, education, training and employment, as well as to cultural and sports activities and access to the physical environment.”<sup>27</sup>

The Decade of the Americas builds on the Inter-American Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Persons with Disabilities, which was adopted in 1999 and entered into force in 2001. The Convention has since been ratified by 17 countries.<sup>28</sup> The Convention calls on governments to eliminate discrimination and to promote integration by public and private sector entities in the provision of goods, services, facilities, programs and activities in sports, as well as other spheres of activity.<sup>29</sup>

The UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities is the first legally binding international instrument to address the rights of persons with disabilities with regard to sport. Article 30.5 of the Convention states that:<sup>30</sup>

*“With a view to enabling persons with disabilities to participate on an equal basis with others in recreational, leisure and sporting activities, States Parties shall take appropriate measures:*

- (a) *To encourage and promote the participation, to the fullest extent possible, of persons with disabilities in mainstream sporting activities at all levels;*
- (b) *To ensure that persons with disabilities have an opportunity to organize, develop and participate in disability-specific sporting and recreational activities and, to this end, encourage the provision, on an equal basis with others, of appropriate instruction, training and resources;*
- (c) *To ensure that persons with disabilities have access to sporting, recreational and tourism venues;*
- (d) *To ensure that children with disabilities have equal access with other children to participation in play, recreation and leisure and sporting activities, including those activities in the school system;*
- (e) *To ensure that persons with disabilities have access to services from those involved in the organization of recreational, tourism, leisure and sporting activities.”*

Article 30.5 addresses both mainstream and disability-specific sport. Participation in mainstream sport means that persons with disabilities participate alongside athletes who do not necessarily have a disability — for example, when a hearing-impaired athlete participates in college soccer with peers who are not hearing-impaired. No adaptations in the rules are made for the athlete’s disability. In such cases, it is important to ensure that persons with disabilities have access to participation and are not excluded based on discriminatory beliefs about their capabilities or well-intentioned, but undue, concerns for their safety.<sup>31</sup>

Participation in disability-specific sport means that persons with disabilities are participating with others with similar disabilities. In this domain, persons with disabilities often experience problems securing practice time, accessible facilities, coaches who are knowledgeable on how to adapt sport, or equitable access to the services and resources available to athletes without disabilities.<sup>32</sup>

Adaptive sport is a third category, not specifically addressed by the Convention, and refers to sport that is adapted to include those with disabilities. In addition to disability-specific sport, it includes sport designed to enable those with and without disabilities to participate. For example, sitting volleyball teams can include athletes with disabilities and those without, because it has been adapted to accommodate both.

Article 30.5 also requires that governments ensure that persons with disabilities have access to sport and recreational venues — as spectators and as active participants. The Article also requires that children with disabilities be included in physical education within the school system “to the fullest extent possible” and enjoy equal access to play.

To guarantee that the rights enshrined in the Convention are implemented across the world, the International Disability in Sport Working Group was founded in January 2006. Its members include UN bodies, international NGOs and other organizations. The working group monitors and promotes sport for persons with disabilities on a global basis.<sup>33</sup>

## 2 EVIDENCE: USING SPORT TO FOSTER THE INCLUSION AND WELL-BEING OF PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES

The universal popularity of sport, its physical, social and economic development benefits, and its proven success as an education and social mobilization platform, make it an ideal tool for reducing the stigma associated with disability. These characteristics also make sport an ideal tool for fostering the socialization, independence, empowerment and full inclusion of persons with disabilities. In this sense, sport is not a luxury. It is a necessary and complementary approach that can expand the impact of traditional methods of stimulating individual and community development and empowerment.

### 2.1 USING SPORT TO REDUCE STIGMA

In some places, persons with disabilities have succeeded in being seen for their abilities, rather than their disabilities. Elsewhere, people suffer from social stigma associated with their disability. Stigma<sup>34</sup> consists of unfounded stereotypes, inaccurate assumptions, negative perceptions and prejudice. In many communities, stigma is deeply rooted.<sup>35</sup> Many of the discriminatory practices and policies that are barriers to persons with disabilities arise from stigma.<sup>36</sup> Stigma is what causes some children to refuse to play with children with disabilities, teachers to avoid asking what a student with a disability can do,<sup>37</sup> and employers refusing to hire a person with a disability because they believe they are inferior to persons without disabilities.

The consequences of stigma can be severe and even fatal. In some cultures merely having a family member with a disability makes it difficult for a woman without a disability in the same family to marry.<sup>38</sup> Mothers may be blamed when a child with a disability is born<sup>39</sup> and then abandoned by their husbands.<sup>40</sup> Often unable to work full-time and care for their child(ren), they may be denied help by their families because of their child's disability.<sup>41</sup> Parents, driven by shame or fear for their child's safety,

may confine a child with a disability in the home.<sup>42</sup> In some cultures, the stigma associated with disability is so severe that it results in infanticide.<sup>43</sup> Because persons with disabilities are sometimes less valued than those without disabilities, they may also be excluded from essential health care.<sup>44</sup> This situation is particularly acute in communities without services and supports for persons with disabilities and their families, such as informal settlements and slums.

The more that disability issues are addressed in mainstream society, the more persons with disabilities will be accepted. Sport can help combat stigma because it places persons with disabilities in a position where their skills are highlighted. The focus is not on their disability but their ability to score a goal or make the game-winning assist. This point is underscored by the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights:

*“For the community, participation by persons with disabilities in sport provides a means of deconstructing disabling images that portray persons with disabilities as passive, inactive and lacking capacities to participate in the wider life of the community. In breaking down stereotypes of disabilities, participation in sport helps build more inclusive communities and therefore greater social cooperation and cohesion.”<sup>45</sup>*

Media coverage of sport events involving persons with disabilities can play a major role in creating more positive and accurate perceptions. For example, the growing profile of the Paralympics has significantly contributed to increasing recognition of persons with disabilities.<sup>46</sup> Over 300 million people watched television coverage of the 2000 Sydney Paralympic Games.<sup>47</sup> This single event significantly increased awareness of the capabilities of persons with disabilities.

Using sport, persons with disabilities can work to remove the stigma confronting them in their own communities. In rural Bangladesh, where international NGO Handicap International runs the *Sport for Children and Youth with Disabilities Project*, staff report a significant change in villagers’ attitudes toward persons with disabilities after observing them playing sports alongside their peers.<sup>48</sup>

Another example, perhaps one of the best known, is that of Ghanaian Emmanuel Yeboah. Yeboah, who has no lower-right leg, was abandoned by a father ashamed of having a child with a disability. In response to the stigma and negative attitudes he encountered throughout his life, Yeboah decided to cycle across Ghana to draw attention to persons with disabilities and to compel the national government to address disability issues. Along the way, Yeboah stopped in villages to speak with people about what it means to live with



a disability. Eventually, his fight for the rights of persons with disabilities drew international attention, including that of fellow Ghanaian Kofi Annan, then Secretary-General of the United Nations, who became a strong supporter of the cause. Ghana's King Osagyefuo also took interest, inviting the cyclist to meet with him, making Emmanuel Yeboah the first person with a disability in Ghana to receive a royal audience.

Stigma is not only an external barrier, preventing persons with disabilities from accessing social, economic and political rights, but it is often an internal barrier, causing persons with disabilities to question their own worth in society. For example, most landmine victims participating in the Cambodian Volleyball League (Disabled) report that they contemplated suicide when they first lost a limb.<sup>49</sup> Based on their own previous notions of persons with disabilities, they had no hope. Through involvement in sports, however, these volleyball players saw that they were capable of far more than they had imagined. Their own views on the limitations arising from their disability were fundamentally changed, giving them a more optimistic outlook and restoring their belief in their future.

Stigma presents particular challenges for women with disabilities. Women with disabilities often experience double discrimination — on the basis of their gender and their disability. Studies show that 93% of women with disabilities do not participate in sport or physical exercise<sup>50</sup> and women make up only one-third of athletes with disabilities in international competitions. Many countries still refuse to enter women in these competitions.<sup>51</sup> Access to education and community services, including rehabilitative services, is often affected by gender. This is especially true in countries where it is believed that a woman's primary role lies in the home. As a result of this additional exclusion, women with disabilities have even higher illiteracy rates and lower employment rates than men with disabilities.<sup>52</sup> Women with disabilities are also more likely to be victims of violence, including sexual violence.<sup>53</sup> They are targeted because their reduced status in society makes them vulnerable and because it is difficult or impossible for them to gain justice and redress.

By providing women with disabilities the opportunity to compete and display their physical ability, sport helps to reduce gender stereotypes and negative perceptions associated with women with disabilities. Sport creates a more equitable and empowering environment for these women, giving them confidence to pursue goals in other areas of their life with the same confidence and belief in themselves.

## 2.2 SPORT AS AN AGENT OF SOCIALIZATION

Persons with disabilities are generally excluded from education, employment and community life from a young age. Exclusion deprives them of opportunities to engage and develop relationships with others — opportunities essential to their social development

and important determinants of health and well-being. As a result, persons with disabilities may have had very little experience greeting people, carrying on conversations and interacting with others.

Sport is well suited to helping persons with disabilities acquire social skills they may be lacking.<sup>54</sup> It teaches individuals how to communicate effectively<sup>55</sup> as well as the significance of teamwork and cooperation, goal-setting, self-discipline, respect for others,<sup>56</sup> and the importance of rules.<sup>57</sup> Sport also enables persons with disabilities to take risks and learn how to manage failure and success in a safe and supportive environment.<sup>58</sup> Coaches and teammates provide important role models<sup>59</sup> and can help persons with disabilities to develop skills they can apply in other aspects of their lives, such as employment.<sup>60</sup>

Sport's universal popularity makes it ideal for fostering social interaction, even in remote areas.<sup>61</sup> By bringing together people with similar disabilities, sport contributes to normalization<sup>62</sup> enabling persons with disabilities to share their experiences and enjoy camaraderie with others who understand their challenges and capacities. Through this peer interaction, persons with disabilities develop a positive sense of self and group identity because they no longer feel set apart — they are like everyone else. Linda Mastandrea, a Paralympic athlete and lawyer says of this effect:

*“In the world of wheelchair sports...I realized...I wasn't different, but very much like everyone else out on the floor. Through my years of competition, I found the strength and drive to pursue goals I never would have before. I learned that people with disabilities worldwide had the same struggles I had, trying to fit in, trying to get around, trying to learn, to do, to be.”<sup>63</sup>*

Sport also brings together the parents and families of those with disabilities. Often parents of individuals with disabilities find themselves socially isolated. Social interaction with others who have similar experiences enables families to provide support to one another and empowers them to advocate for positive change to ensure greater inclusion and equality for persons with disabilities.<sup>64</sup>

## 2.3 INDEPENDENCE AND SPORT PARTICIPATION

The definition of what it means to be independent and the value that individuals place on independence varies from culture to culture, and person to person. Many define independence as “self care.” However, in the context of disability, independence has been defined as “the ability to be in control of, and make decisions about, one's life.”<sup>65</sup> In one study, young persons with disabilities interpreted independence to mean “being enabled to reach their full potential and allowed to participate,” using appropriate support when needed to attain their goals.<sup>66</sup> These youth did not view support as a negative, but as

a means to facilitate new experiences.<sup>67</sup> This definition of independence includes the notion of interdependence, which is essential for all individuals to successfully live, work and communicate.<sup>68</sup>

Persons with disabilities in some societies are considered dependent and viewed as frail, incapable, and unskilled.<sup>69</sup> Interestingly, dependence arising from a disability is often unwittingly exaggerated by teachers and family members — in some cases, the dependence of persons with disabilities is almost entirely a creation of those around them. These individuals fail to encourage persons with disabilities to develop their own ideas, express their desires, and make their own decisions.<sup>70</sup>

Communities and schools are often not attuned to the importance of independence for persons with disabilities.<sup>71</sup> One study found that youth with disabilities were excluded from participation in sports because physical education teachers were overly protective and unduly emphasized their safety.<sup>72</sup> The absence of community supports to enable persons with disabilities to live more independently often leaves them and their families with few options. The result is the creation of an endless and expensive cycle of dependence that unnecessarily encumbers families and communities who care for persons with disabilities, when in fact those individuals may be capable of living a far more independent life.

Dependence frequently leads to overextended and exasperated family members. Families that have a member with a disability often have incomes below the national average because parents have to give up paid employment, work fewer hours, or give up job advancement to care for their child.<sup>73</sup> This responsibility falls largely on mothers who serve as the primary caretaker.<sup>74</sup> In some cases, the emotional and physical strain involved can lead to abuse of the family member with the disability.<sup>75</sup> Some families resort to sending their children to institutions, despite deplorable conditions, because they feel they have no other choice.<sup>76</sup>

This cycle of dependence, combined with the frequent lack of access to therapy or rehabilitative services, fosters inactivity. Inactivity often causes individuals with physical disabilities to experience restricted mobility beyond the cause of their disability.<sup>77</sup> Muscular atrophy from inactivity impedes individuals' coordination and makes it harder for them to reach, bend, and carry weight. As a result, individuals' capacities and independence are further diminished as they progressively lose the muscles they need to feed, bathe and dress themselves.

Sport has the power to reduce dependence and develop greater independence by helping individuals to become physically and mentally stronger. Research has documented

many physical benefits from sport and physical activity. For a group of young people with Down's syndrome, horseback riding increased coordination, posture, muscle tone, sitting balance, strength, and rhythmic movement of the upper body.<sup>78</sup> Similarly, children with cerebral palsy who participated in a strength training program enjoyed significant improvements in strength and the ability to walk, run, jump, and climb stairs.<sup>79</sup>

Sport also promotes social-emotional development and facilitates self-help.<sup>80</sup> The same study of the benefits of horseback riding for people with Down's syndrome found improvements in participants' emotional control, social awareness, self-confidence, self-esteem, and self-concept, as well as increased motivation and independence.<sup>81</sup>

These skills can be transferred to employment, further helping to build self-sufficiency. An overview of sport and disability programs in developing countries showed that many programs successfully increased employment levels for participants. This was due to increased self-confidence and acquiring important social skills necessary for employment. In the case of the Cambodian National Volleyball League (Disabled), 60% of participants with disabilities were able to find employment after participating in the program.<sup>82</sup> Sport for Development projects often involve income-generating opportunities. In the Cambodian example, establishing local wheelchair production shops addressed both a shortage of local employment opportunities and the need to increase the availability of low-cost, low-tech equipment.

In Afghanistan, the *Afghan Amputee Bicyclists for Rehabilitation and Recreation Program*<sup>83</sup> provides participants with adapted bicycles. A low-cost and accessible means of transportation, this is also an inexpensive form of physical therapy designed to prevent muscular atrophy. The program includes a bicycle messenger service, adding employment to its list of benefits.

## 2.4 USING SPORT TO EMPOWER PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES

Empowerment can mean giving power and authority to someone, or giving them confidence and strength.<sup>84</sup> In the context of this chapter, "giving confidence and strength" best describes the role that sport can play in helping persons with disabilities to acquire the knowledge, skills, and confidence to become effective advocates for themselves and others. Many individuals with disabilities accept the exclusion and discrimination they encounter because they feel powerless to change their situation. Additionally, many persons with disabilities have never been taught that they deserve more equitable treatment and that they have rights which should be respected. Without role models and information about living with their disabilities, persons with disabilities lack the knowledge and tools to make improvements in their lives and in their community. If they have not seen examples of better conditions, they may have difficulty imagining

a different situation. Those individuals who might have been interested in working for change may never have the opportunity to learn the leadership and advocacy skills necessary to create change.

Those without disabilities also lack access to information on disability issues and to positive role models with disabilities. A study conducted in the United Kingdom found that the schools surveyed had no staff with a disability and only 16% could name a textbook that included a positive reference to disability or achievements of persons with disabilities.<sup>85</sup> Often even the best intentioned people exclude persons with disabilities because they lack the information and skills needed to truly include them.

Sport is an effective means of building knowledge and awareness among persons with disabilities because it allows large groups to come together in an enjoyable way.<sup>86</sup> This is especially true in areas where sport is one of the few means of entertainment. In Iran, 3,000 persons with disabilities, half of whom were women, were introduced to sport through the planning and implementation of a national Paralympic Day. This festival brought potential athletes from around the country to Tehran where they were introduced to several Paralympic sports and learned about physical fitness, nutrition and preventive health practices.

Sport also provides a forum to enable persons with disabilities to build the skills they need to advocate for and influence change.<sup>87</sup> The awareness and confidence that persons with disabilities gain through sport are often the impetus for engaging in advocacy work, as the communication, leadership and teamwork skills they develop are easily transferred into this new arena. For example, Manuel Gaiato contracted polio as a young child in Angola. He became interested in playing sports after seeing photos of wheelchair basketball. Through involvement in a local sports project, *Sports for Life*, he was given an opportunity to play. Through practice and perseverance he was elected captain of his basketball team and began speaking about his experiences at schools and sports events. At the age of thirty, Manuel Gaiato has become the key spokesperson for disability rights in eastern Angola and is well known throughout the country for his advocacy work. His recognition in the sports world has earned him regular meetings with government officials and policy-makers for the purpose of improving conditions for persons with disabilities. As a direct result of his lobbying, and that of other *Sports for Life* staff and participants, wheelchair basketball and amputee football have both been adopted at the national level by Angola's National Paralympic Committee.<sup>88</sup>

Individuals with new disabilities can play a bridging role between the disability community and those without disabilities. Many former soldiers who have a disability as a result of war

are respected heroes. Because of their public stature, communities are often more willing to listen to these individuals than to those who have had a disability from birth. Because people with new disabilities often have not suffered the same social, economic and political exclusion as people born with disabilities, they often have the ability to be strong role models and effective advocates for all persons with disabilities.

## 2.5 INCLUSION OF PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES

Misconceptions and lack of knowledge about the true effects of disabilities frequently lead to social, economic and political exclusion of persons with disabilities. This exclusion may be intentional or unintentional.

Children with disabilities in many developing countries are often largely absent from the education system. School fees and transportation costs often force low-income parents to choose which of their children will attend school.<sup>89</sup> When pushed to make such a decision, most parents choose a child without a disability.<sup>90</sup> Some school systems refuse to allow children with disabilities into the classroom.<sup>91</sup> This leaves private education as the only possible alternative — an option which few families can afford.<sup>92</sup>

Children with disabilities who do go to school are often late as a result of inaccessible public transportation. These children may face further challenges because of the inaccessibility of many school buildings.<sup>93</sup> Even if these obstacles are overcome, many parents ultimately remove their children from school because of the negative treatment they receive from teachers and peers.<sup>94</sup>

Similar inclusion challenges arise with employment. Stigma, lack of education, and inaccessible transportation and buildings mean that 80% of persons with disabilities worldwide are unemployed.<sup>95</sup> Even in developed nations, persons with disabilities confront workplace challenges due to issues of inaccessibility: subway elevators can frequently break, limiting the places that people with mobility disabilities can enter or exit; taxis and buses may refuse to pick up individuals with disabilities because of the extra time and effort involved; and physical barriers often impede entrance into the workplace itself.<sup>96</sup> Globally, the level of unemployment of persons with disabilities is estimated to cost US\$1.37–\$1.94 trillion in terms of lost gross domestic product.<sup>97</sup>

As noted earlier, persons with disabilities often lack equitable access to health and rehabilitative services. Only 2% of those with disabilities can access vital rehabilitative services.<sup>98</sup> More disturbingly, persons with disabilities can be excluded from receiving life-saving healthcare. There have been reported cases of those with HIV and AIDS being refused antiretroviral drugs on the basis that these medications should be

given to people without disabilities.<sup>99</sup> In some jurisdictions, persons with disabilities living with HIV and AIDS are not counted in HIV and AIDS statistics.<sup>100</sup>

Even when stigma is absent, persons with disabilities may still face exclusion because people without disabilities do not know how to accommodate and include persons with disabilities in their activities.

The variety and flexibility of sport makes it an excellent showcase for strategies of inclusion and adaptation. For example, people who see sitting volleyball for the first time are often struck by how a simple change — from standing to sitting — can make a challenging sport accessible to players with limb loss or paralysis, providing an even playing field for all athletes regardless of disability. This insight creates a shift in perception and helps to generate interest in other adaptations.

The simple existence of high-profile international games for persons with disabilities can lead to greater inclusion. Because the 2004 Paralympics was to be held in Athens in conjunction with the Olympic Games, the Greek government initiated large-scale accessibility efforts to ensure that all athletes could circulate freely throughout the host city. These efforts included legislative change and changes to physical infrastructure (accessible transportation, communications, and housing). The result is a city that continues to be accessible and inclusive long after the athletes have gone. The International Paralympic Committee also took advantage of the opportunity presented by the Paralympic Games to organize a Paralympic School Day where elementary school children without disabilities played Paralympic-style games.<sup>101</sup> This event was a fun and successful way to increase participants' awareness of the barriers that persons with disabilities face and the methods they use to transcend these barriers.

Sport's unique capacity to cut across linguistic and cultural barriers gives it a singular capacity when it comes to inclusion.<sup>102</sup> When an individual with a hearing impairment is placed on a football field, she sees that communication with her peers does not require her to hear their words. She understands that her teammate's pointing hand means he wants to receive the ball downfield. She understands that clapping by her coaches and teammates means she did well. As one participant with a hearing impairment explained:

*“When I was on the athletic fields, I felt normal for the first time in my life. I could do what everyone else could do. I didn't have to worry about struggling to communicate. I just played. My teammates respected me for my playing skills and began to make efforts to include me.”*

This experience also helped those who played with her to put aside their fears about trying to communicate with individuals who have hearing impairments.

Because of its popularity, sport can be a highly effective way for mainstream institutions to introduce more inclusiveness for persons with disabilities. A Special Olympics pilot project in Bulgaria, *Changing Attitudes-Changing Schools*, uses sport to encourage mainstream schools to create a welcoming environment and include children with intellectual disabilities.<sup>103</sup> The principal of a participating mainstream school believes that these inclusive activities “help mainstream school educators to become more understanding of students with special needs.”<sup>104</sup> Mainstream institutions can be powerful agents when promoting inclusive programs for persons with disabilities because they are strategically placed to reach out to many people, including those with, and without, disabilities.

### 3 RECOMMENDATIONS TO GOVERNMENTS

There are numerous challenges to implementing sport programs for persons with disabilities. Persons with disabilities may be difficult to locate if they are frequently kept at home or do not have gathering places, such as accessible community centers. Transportation may not be accessible, making it difficult for persons with disabilities to travel to sport activities. Where accessible facilities are available, it may be difficult to secure playing time because sport for persons with disabilities is not considered a priority. Additionally, it can be difficult to locate coaches who believe in the capabilities of persons with disabilities and who are knowledgeable about how sport can be adapted to include them. All of these challenges must be addressed if sport is to be effective as a tool for inclusion.

Different cultural, economic, political, and development contexts offer different challenges when it comes to using sport to advance the inclusion and well-being of persons with disabilities. Implementing programs in regions where persons with disabilities are not stigmatized, but where sport is viewed as a luxury, will require a different approach from regions where sport is viewed as an essential part of life, but where persons with disabilities are not accepted as full members of society. With this in mind, the recommendations that follow are designed to be broadly applicable to governments working in very different contexts.



### 3.1 POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

#### **Declare the right of persons with disabilities to participate fully in society and affirm the realization of this right as a national objective.**

Governments are encouraged to formally include the full participation of persons with disabilities in the government's development strategies and allocate resources accordingly. Many governments claim insufficient finances to address disability.<sup>105</sup> As noted by the World Health Organization, "[w]hen the economy is good, more money is generally allocated to education and to the rights and needs of...persons with disabilities. When the economy is bad, the needs of the average citizen are targeted [instead]."<sup>106</sup> Because it is a particularly cost-effective tool to advance the inclusion of persons with disabilities, sport can help governments to address this challenge.

#### **Identify and eradicate stigmatizing and discriminatory attitudes, policies and practices within the government itself.**

This process can directly involve persons with disabilities to help the government identify problematic practices and shape more inclusive approaches.

#### **Increase public awareness of the rights and capabilities of persons with disabilities and the importance of ensuring their full participation in society.**

The use of athletes with disabilities as public spokespeople and role models can be a powerful means of creating positive change in public perceptions.

#### **Incorporate a special focus on inclusion and developing opportunities for persons with disabilities in national sport and Sport for Development strategies.**

The governments of Argentina, Benin, Brazil, Ghana, Mexico, Mozambique, South Africa, Spain, Tanzania and Zambia all include disability as a priority in their Sport for Development policies and programs.<sup>107</sup> Brazil's National Sports Policy, for instance, is based on two key principles: reversing injustice and exclusion, and reducing social vulnerability; and the government's obligation to ensure every citizen's access to sport and recreation as enshrined in the national constitution. In Tanzania, a National Policy on Disability was put forward in 2004 to ensure that persons with disabilities have the opportunity to fully participate in sport and recreation, with a requirement that sport organizations facilitate this participation.<sup>108</sup>

#### **Establish more fundamental social supports for persons with disabilities, to ensure that they can participate fully in sport.**

Examples of important needs that are not currently being met in many countries include:

- Adequate social insurance
- Access to medicines
- Rehabilitative services

- Trained and qualified caregivers
- Supports for families of persons with disabilities (caregivers in particular — 99% of whom are women)

Families and caregivers benefit from being involved in planning and decision-making about rehabilitation, programs and services — including issues related to sport.

### **Emphasize the importance of developing sport opportunities for people with different types of disabilities and equal opportunities for females and males to participate.**

Policies that include adaptive sport for people with and without disabilities foster greater inclusion. Developing an inventory of available programs and the current allocation of resources across populations with diverse disabilities and between men/boys and women/girls with disabilities can help to establish a baseline picture. This basic information can help with planning to make sport opportunities available on a more equitable basis. Incentives to support broad-based participation opportunities can be built into criteria and funding for sport programs.

### **Include physical education for children in any disability legislation and ensure that all children with disabilities are included.**

In the United States, for example, many children with disabilities are not covered by legislative provisions intended to ensure equal access to education. Under the legislation, each public school child who receives special education and related services must have an Individualized Education Program (IEP).<sup>109</sup> However, the legislation only applies to the subject that is considered to be affected by the child's disability. For instance, a child with a visual impairment may be eligible for an IEP for his or her English class, but not for physical education class — if it is believed that the child is “reasonably successful” in physical education. As a result, the law can be applied selectively and it does not fulfill its mandate to promote inclusion of all children with disabilities.<sup>110</sup>

### **Create strong physical education requirements for all children.**

Weak or non-existent physical education requirements for children generally result in low levels or non-existent physical activity for those with disabilities.<sup>111</sup>

### **Ensure that policies and practices are rights-based, with suitable and effective enforcement mechanisms.**

Many laws, policies, and practices that address persons with disabilities are rooted in charity, rather than rights.<sup>112</sup> These ignore the fundamental human rights of persons with disabilities and perpetuate dependency rather than promoting independence. Policies and development strategies focused on securing the rights of individuals with disabilities to participate in education and employment, to enjoy full access to all public facilities, and to actively participate in sports, are likely to be more cost-effective

in the longer term and to promote real inclusion, providing they are enforced. In sport, this means explicitly affirming in national sport and development policies the rights of persons with disabilities to participate in sport and physical education.

### Refer specifically to disability in government policies.

Government policies and legislation frequently neglect to mention persons with disabilities specifically, silently including them under the umbrella term of “vulnerable groups.” While this term often evokes images of women, racial and religious minorities, even children, people often fail to consider those with disabilities. As a result, persons with disabilities are frequently forgotten. Laws and policies requiring mandatory physical education or promoting sport for all are often silent on addressing the right to access physical education and sport for persons with disabilities. As a result, persons with disabilities in these countries tend to be excluded.<sup>113</sup> Awareness increases when governments and policy-makers make it clear that these laws and policies apply to persons with disabilities and that appropriate action is expected to ensure they benefit from them.<sup>114</sup> Persons with disabilities need mainstream and disability-specific sport opportunities, accessible facilities, and access to coaches trained in adaptive sport. Explicitly addressing these needs in relevant policies, legislation and programs is the best way to ensure that their vital needs are met.

### Define the terms “sport for all”, “disability”, “participation”, “mainstream sport”, and “disability-specific sport”.

While useful in many contexts, the generic term “sport for all” is sufficiently vague about the actual scope of policies to invite inconsistent application when it comes to persons with disabilities.<sup>115</sup> If this term is used, it must be clearly defined to include persons with disabilities. The definition of “participation” should also be made clear. “Participation” can be interpreted to include persons with disabilities participating as score keepers, and not active participants. Similarly, “disability” must be defined to ensure that policies embrace all disabilities, intellectual as well as physical, mild to severe, and temporary or intermittent disabilities as well as permanent. Finally, defining both “mainstream” and “disability-specific” sport will help ensure that both types of opportunities are available.

### Include persons with disabilities in policy development and planning.

Persons with disabilities are the primary experts on their own needs and are best equipped to diagnose problems and offer potential solutions for their inclusion.<sup>116</sup> They can also be extremely effective advocates and ambassadors for the resulting policies and programs. As advocates, they can help to ensure that policies and programs reach the most people and have the greatest possible impact. In a community where word-of-mouth advertising is critically important, these ambassadors can help establish sport programs for persons with disabilities and can increase the credibility of the programs within the disability community.

### **Focus on both accommodation and inclusion.**

Efforts to include persons with disabilities often stop at accommodation (environmental modifications and the provision of technological and personal aids to accommodate persons with disabilities) rather than full inclusion. Although accommodation often enables, it does not address stigma and discriminatory attitudes. Accommodation alone cannot automatically ensure that the beneficiary can participate in, and benefit from, existing systems.<sup>117</sup> To achieve this goal, both inclusion and accommodation must be addressed.<sup>118</sup> In sport, this means designing programs to enable individuals with disabilities to play, and ensuring that coaches and program leaders have the skills, and exercise the leadership, to ensure that persons with disabilities are actually fully included in the games.

### **Actively communicate government sport and disability policies and make them easily accessible to donor agencies, development partners and affected individuals.<sup>119</sup>**

This will help the government to engage partners, leverage additional resources for its efforts, and enhance accountability. It will also empower persons with disabilities by communicating their rights and making it easier for them to advocate for their enforcement. Particular attention is required to ensure that these policies are accessible to persons with disabilities (including those who are hearing or visually impaired) as they may have trouble accessing the policies through regular means.

### **Enforce laws and policies created to protect the rights of persons with disabilities to sport and physical education.**

A study conducted by Inclusion International found that in all regions studied — the Americas, Asia, Africa, and Europe — authorities were ineffective at protecting the legal rights of individuals with disabilities.<sup>120</sup> This is often due to inadequate investment in implementation, few monitoring and enforcement mechanisms, and confusion about who is responsible for what.<sup>121</sup> To remedy this, governments require clear policies on how disability should be included in their programming. Departments and implementation partners must be given the knowledge and capacity to implement policies effectively.<sup>122</sup> Implementation and enforcement require allocated funding<sup>123</sup> with penalties for not complying with laws and policies clearly written into monitoring and enforcement procedures. In Poland for example, there is a levy incentive system which fines companies that do not meet employment quotas for persons with disabilities. As a result, unemployment rates for persons with disabilities, and those without, are identical.<sup>124</sup>

### **Help develop and participate in coordinated mechanisms for international policy knowledge exchange on sport and disability.**

Sharing information can strengthen and streamline policy development and delivery of sport for persons with disabilities. Without information exchange, governments can

find themselves duplicating effort when it comes to policy development. To save scarce resources and avoid mistakes, it is helpful to review experiences in other jurisdictions. Where information on policies and their implementation in other jurisdictions is not available, dedicated efforts may be required to collect and analyze information and disseminate the resulting knowledge. In either case, a coordinated, international approach involving a variety of interested governments can yield a far richer knowledge base. Joint sponsorship of research, analysis and the dissemination of knowledge can reduce costs for individual governments. The inclusion of international disability and sport organizations in this process can leverage their extensive expertise and help develop their capacity to provide valuable policy input to governments.

### 3.2 PROGRAM RECOMMENDATIONS

#### Ensure that coaches and physical education teachers are trained in adaptive sport and inclusion of persons with disabilities.

Professional preparation and knowledge increases the likelihood that a program will be effective and will provide a sufficiently challenging experience for participants with disabilities. The Australian government requires that all educators be taught how to include children with disabilities in all mainstream activities.<sup>125</sup> In the realm of sport, the European Union recently launched a Cooperative Masters Degree in Adapted Physical Activity that enables students to study adaptive sport in a variety of countries.<sup>126</sup> Georgia State University in the United States provides a two-week training academy for emerging leaders from 15 African countries, in partnership with the International Paralympic Committee and the African Sport Federation of Disabled (ASCOD).<sup>127</sup> Governments that invest in, and take advantage of, these and similar resources will improve the capacity of sport teachers and coaches to deliver inclusive programs.

#### Invest in programs to produce and make available low-tech, low-cost adaptive aids.

It is often difficult to find adaptive equipment that allows athletes with disabilities to participate in sport. Some organizations have tried to have wheelchairs donated and shipped to areas in need. However, the cost of shipping and storage means this is not always cost efficient. To address this, organizations can train persons with disabilities on wheelchair production and repair. This approach can create a vocation and a source of income for persons with disabilities. Similar results could be achieved through programming to train technical professionals in the developing world. One such program has been developed by Smith College in the United States where engineers developed a service program to mobilize and increase the capacities of technical professionals abroad to build low cost adaptive equipment.<sup>128</sup> In another example, Tempo Tricycles makes bikes for people with unique abilities or physical requirements: one of its bikes is specifically adapted for people without arms or who cannot use their arms.<sup>129</sup>

### Disseminate resource materials on adaptive sport that include photographs and positive role models, including women with disabilities.

Generally there is a lack of knowledge about adaptive sport. People are unaware that a body of knowledge exists, comprising principles, theories, and practices to guide adaptation.<sup>130</sup> The limited number of involved and accessible experts in adaptive activity makes information distribution even more vital. Information can be shared electronically, with toolkits published online for others to follow.<sup>131</sup>

### Include monitoring mechanisms and indicators to gauge the impact of programs on persons with disabilities and their families.<sup>132</sup>

Currently, where good examples of inclusive practices are being demonstrated, governments and development agencies do not often have the tools to translate these experiences into systematic approaches for disability and inclusion.<sup>133</sup> To date, Europe is the only region that has attempted to collect data on physical activity among persons with disabilities.<sup>134</sup> Canada is the only country in North America to have done the same — including persons with disabilities in its 1983 national fitness survey.<sup>135</sup> This means there is little statistical evidence on which to base inclusion strategies,<sup>136</sup> particularly in the developing world. One way to address this gap is for sponsoring organizations to examine local best practices in performance monitoring and evaluation and to adapt these approaches for sport and disability programs. When formal ties to the leaders of local disability communities are created, several areas of understanding and impact can be measured through their networks — community knowledge about the program and how this is spread, number of participants, skills acquired, and any change in behaviour in participants and their immediate community of friends, family, and schoolmates. Even the most basic evaluative data can be used to systematically improve programs if data collection is built into the program from the beginning.

### Organize forums where parents of children with disabilities can gather, share experiences and ideas, and network.

Very often parents are successful initiators and leaders of disability projects. Because they have a personal interest in the well-being of their child, they are results-driven and committed. Many take significant risks in challenging prevailing social norms to get projects off the ground. Governments and implementation partners can benefit from this level of engagement by creating forums to exchange knowledge and information.

### Encourage partnership and collaboration.

Competition for government and other resources is often healthy. However, competitiveness among organizations that should be partnering — and the uncoordinated initiatives that often result — can create problems and waste resources. Unproductive competitiveness

among disability organizations can be reduced and coordination can be fostered by giving priority to proposals that demonstrate a holistic approach to program objectives by engaging multiple sport, disability and development partners.

### **Exercise flexibility when partnering with local development programs.**

Flexibility will facilitate continuous local control and can help to resist the prescription of highly precise goals, validated methods, and predictable results. Flexibility is critical for successful sport and disability programs as it emphasizes strong vision and willingness to experiment (and even take risks) to see what works. Projects that rely heavily on routine and are overly bureaucratic tend to lose energy and perspective. Projects that continuously develop a range of new activities in direct response to local needs and opportunities tend to have the most positive impact. A few simple goals and clear impact measures can keep organizations focused and motivated.

### **Develop a forum to enhance the capacities of stakeholders globally to include persons with disabilities in sport through sharing knowledge and experience.<sup>137</sup>**

This includes establishing mechanisms for dialogue between local, regional, and international players to link local knowledge and experience to national, regional and international analyses.<sup>138</sup> One example, Active Places, is an online Australian search engine that identifies physical recreation, sport and cultural activities, appropriate contacts and accessible facilities for persons with disabilities.<sup>139</sup>

## **3.3 HARNESSING THE CONTRIBUTION OF ALL SECTORS OF GOVERNMENT AND SOCIETY**

### **Recognize and apply the right of all persons with disabilities to participate in sport, physical education and activity in all spheres of government activity.<sup>140</sup>**

Disability affects all sectors of society, including many areas for which governments are partially or fully responsible, such as education, gender equality, youth, employment, etc. Because of this, government strategies and initiatives must be broadly inclusive at the level of policy and practice. Concentrating responsibility for persons with disabilities in a single department usually results in their rights not being adequately addressed in other departments. For example, in several countries, children with disabilities are excluded from the educational system because ministries responsible for social welfare are given sole responsibility, and ministries of education take no responsibility for addressing disability issues.<sup>141</sup> Instead, each ministry must be trained and equipped to effectively address disability within its own area of responsibility.

This same approach applies to sport-focused initiatives. Argentina, Brazil, and Norway's national strategies on sport are all multisectoral. This coordinated approach can save

resources and can be applied in every government. For example, it is less expensive to ensure that a pamphlet created by the Ministry of Health on HIV and AIDS is converted into Braille for blind readers, than for the Ministry of Social Welfare to expend resources researching and writing its own pamphlet on the same issues and then converting it into Braille.

### Engage as many sectors and implementation partners as possible in helping to realize the potential of sport to advance the inclusion and well-being of persons with disabilities.

The list of sectors below is not exhaustive, but is offered as a starting point.

#### The health sector can:

- Ensure that all pamphlets and educational materials are accessible.
- Encourage sport for persons with disabilities to foster health, by directing campaigns at persons with disabilities and by including examples of persons with disabilities engaged in sport in their materials. (According to a study in Cambodia, approximately 98% of the children with disabilities are unaware of the possibilities and advantages of practicing sport.)<sup>142</sup>
- Provide persons with disabilities with the necessary aids to enable their participation in sport and training on how to use these aids.
- Ensure that rehabilitative and other services are accessed equally by women and men with disabilities.
- Organize sports clinics and tournaments that showcase disability sport and deliver health-related messages to these individuals.
- Educate doctors on the capabilities of persons with disabilities and the benefits of sport. When physical education is required, children with disabilities often get a note from their doctors to excuse them from this requirement.<sup>143</sup> Doctors are often viewed as knowledgeable about the capabilities of persons with disabilities. However, many doctors have discriminatory beliefs about the capabilities of their patients with disabilities because they often view the disability from a medical perspective only.

#### The sport sector can:

- Include persons with disabilities in their education materials as examples of participants.
- Make persons with disabilities a target group in their campaigns.
- Provide information to persons with disabilities on the location of accessible sport facilities.
- Encourage service providers and sport clubs to target persons with disabilities for inclusion in their activities (e.g., make sure that court time is provided to them).
- Educate physical education teachers, sport service providers, and sport clubs on methods of adaptation and inclusion in sport.
- Plan national sports days or events that highlight the inclusion of persons with disabilities.
- Have politicians and government leaders recognize persons with disabilities in sport and make special appearances at their events.



- Develop educational campaigns that use positive images of athletes with disabilities involved in sport.
- Support the inclusion of persons with disabilities in sport leadership positions (e.g., teacher or coach).
- Devote resources to developing elite athletes with disabilities.
- Promote disability sport games, especially international competition such as the Paralympics, Deaflympics and Special Olympics.
- Ensure sport stadiums and venues are accessible.
- Promote media coverage of famous athletes with disabilities and their accomplishments.

#### The education sector can:

- Educate physical education teachers about disability to reduce stigma and misperceptions and foster inclusion.
- Provide physical education teachers with toolkits that discuss methods of adaptation and inclusion. In Canada, curriculum on adapting sport for persons with disabilities was distributed to over 15,000 schools.<sup>144</sup>
- Provide role models of persons with disabilities engaged in sport (through books or live examples).
- Ensure that there are teachers and coaches on staff who have disabilities.
- Create awards to recognize positive examples in disability sport.
- Create competitions for the design of adaptive sports.
- Include adaptive sport competitions in the regular sport calendar, creating showcase opportunities.
- Establish programs and cooperatives to educate individuals on adaptive sport, especially within the university system.

#### The social welfare sector can:

- Encourage independence by using sport to attract participants with disabilities to vocational and life-skills training.
- Build the capacity of disabled peoples' organizations (DPOs) working in sport. Promote mechanisms for cooperation and collaboration in pursuit of common goals, versus unproductive competition for resources that can dilute the community's voice.
- Hold training seminars for DPOs on methods to secure funding.
- Develop networks of DPOs involved in sport for persons with disabilities to promote capacity development and knowledge exchange.
- Distribute information on resources and methods of adapting materials for persons with disabilities.
- Host national game days that promote sport as a tool for social change for persons with disabilities and others. For example, Argentina hosts the Evita Games, encouraging widespread participation in sport and promoting sport as a tool for social inclusion.
- Encourage ambassador programs where persons with disabilities educate communities on disability.

### The transportation sector can:

- Ensure that public transportation is accessible:
  - New buses or trains should have a wheelchair lift and easily navigated aisles; routes should be visually displayed and verbally announced.
  - Policies should be developed to ensure no discrimination takes place in public transport (e.g., buses do not drive past those in wheelchairs because they do not want to take the extra time to assist with boarding and disembarking).
  - Drivers should be trained on how to assist individuals with disabilities.
  - Elevators should be installed in subway systems where appropriate.
  - If existing public transport is not accessible, alternative transport should be provided. In Washington, DC, a taxi service is available to persons with disabilities at a cost comparable to public transit, because not all transit is accessible.<sup>145</sup>
  - Maps of accessible routes should be provided.

### The employment and economic development sector can:

- Help persons with disabilities develop vocational skills through sport-related enterprises.
- Develop industries and markets for low-cost, low-tech, adaptive equipment.
- Educate companies on the capabilities of those with disabilities and the ways that sport can develop reliable, dedicated workers.
- Encourage corporate sponsorship of sport programs for persons with disabilities.
- Develop a tourism infrastructure around disability sport.

### Local governments and municipalities can:

- Celebrate the accomplishments of athletes with, and without, disabilities in the same way — bring Paralympian, as well as Olympian, medal winners home to a hero's welcome.
- Encourage community gatherings of parents of children with disabilities to foster networking and empowerment.
- Encourage the development of sport programs for persons with disabilities by ensuring the equitable allocation of community resources and facilities (e.g., local fields or gyms).
- Require any new construction, including recreation facilities and playgrounds, to be accessible. For example, instead of using mulch for playgrounds, use a hard flat surface. Leave plenty of space between equipment to enable a wheelchair to navigate between machines and stationary structures. Post accessible signage.<sup>146</sup>
- Ensure that community centres are physically accessible and can be reached by accessible public transportation (where public transit exists). Ensure that persons with disabilities know which community centres and public transit routes are accessible.
- Provide incentives for existing public-use facilities to become accessible. For example, privately run accessible facilities could qualify for a reduction in property taxes while public facilities might receive extra funding to make the necessary changes to become accessible.

**Finance ministries and multilateral funding partners can:**

- Ensure that some development resources are allocated to disability.
- Ensure that annual budgets include money for inclusion, accommodation, and outreach.
- Ensure that development assistance targeted to disability is large enough in scale to make a real difference.<sup>147</sup>
- Develop innovative approaches to funding sport for persons with disabilities. Examples of innovative approaches include
  - Poland's use of the revenue from enforcement of its employment equity law to fund the *Polish Fund for People with Disabilities*. This program sent 106 athletes and 44 support staff to the Paralympic games in 2004.<sup>148</sup>
  - Profits from Brazil's *Timemania* lottery are directed to soccer clubs, sport management agencies, social security, and the Olympic and Paralympic Committees.
  - Brazil's *Sport Incentive* legislation allows citizens to direct up to 6% of their income taxes toward investments in sport activities and projects. Legal entities such as companies may direct up to 1% of their revenue-based taxes for the same use.
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**The Media can:**

- Ensure that disability is portrayed in a positive way — too often the view of disability is a negative one of dependence, inactivity, and isolation.
- Ensure that the involvement of persons with disabilities in high-performance competitive sport is given appropriate coverage and not included in the "life" or "culture" sections of newspapers, but in the sport section with other elite athletes.
- Ensure that when interviewing a person with a disability, the piece does not exclude the disability (e.g., wheelchair) when filming or photographing the individual. However, an overemphasis on the disability sometimes means overlooking standard sports-reporting information about the person's training, accomplishments, goals, etc. An appropriate balance is crucial.

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# SPORT AND PEACE

SOCIAL INCLUSION, CONFLICT PREVENTION  
AND PEACE-BUILDING





# CHAPTER 6

## 203 CONTEXT: PEACE, DEVELOPMENT AND SPORT

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Young leaders from the African Youth  
Development Foundation march in  
a peace day parade.

Right To Play

Previous page:  
A student at Pan Wan Border Patrol Police  
School in Thailand participates in a structured  
and holistic child development “play for peace”  
activity led by teachers and volunteers.

Ian MacDonald (on behalf of  
Right To Play/ Thailand Migrant  
SportWorks Project)

# 1 CONTEXT: PEACE, DEVELOPMENT AND SPORT

## 1.1 PEACE AND DEVELOPMENT

Peace among and within nations is a fundamental human aspiration and a primary goal of the global development community.

International commitments to peace and conflict resolution are widespread and clearly articulated in the Millennium Declaration adopted by the United Nations on September 8, 2000: “We will spare no effort to free our peoples from the scourge of war, whether within or between States, which has claimed more than five million lives in the past decade.”<sup>1</sup> This statement reinforces an earlier General Assembly resolution acknowledging that “governments have an essential role in promoting and strengthening a culture of peace.”<sup>2</sup>

In 1999, the UN General Assembly adopted a resolution on the right to peace, affirming peace as a human right and “appeal[ing] to all states and international organizations to do their utmost to assist in implementing the right of people to peace through the adoption of appropriate measures at both the national and the international level.”<sup>3</sup>

These declarations are rooted in the understanding that peace, in addition to being essential to human security<sup>4</sup> and well-being, is a necessary condition for all development — social, cultural and economic — and that violent conflicts can quickly wipe out decades of development gains.

In countries directly affected by armed conflict within their borders, many civil society institutions stop functioning, critical health and education systems break down, physical

infrastructure is destroyed, agricultural activity is interrupted, food supplies become scarce, commerce and trade shrink, poverty increases, populations are uprooted and made homeless, disease epidemics spread unchecked, discrimination against vulnerable populations increases, and violence and criminality become widespread. Lives are lost or shortened by violence, hunger and disease; survivors are left with permanent psychological scars and often physical disabilities; families are separated and deprived of their livelihoods; and countless children are orphaned. Where land mines have been used, civilians continue to be killed, maimed and prevented from returning their land to productive use, long after wars themselves are over.

Currently, there are over 32 wars or conflicts raging in more than 27 countries. The majority of these involve struggles for political and economic control between competing groups within a country. In some cases, groups are contesting the existence of the state itself. Even in regions where peace has been restored, sustaining peace can be a significant challenge, with 50% of countries that emerge from violent conflict slipping back into instability or violence within five years.<sup>5</sup>

While countries engaged in war outside of their own borders may not suffer these effects, military engagements divert resources away from domestic uses. As economists have long noted, investment in “guns” comes at the expense of investment in “butter,” sometimes to the extent of impeding a country’s ability to meet the basic human needs of its population.

Not all conflict is national in scale. Many communities have to contend with more localized tensions and conflicts arising between different political factions, ethno-cultural groups, long-time residents and newcomers, etc. While these may, or may not, involve outbreaks of violence, they polarize communities, foster hostility and distrust, and undermine the collaboration needed to advance development initiatives.

Finally, some communities may experience conflict related to the presence of organized criminal elements. Typically such organizations are intent on maintaining and expanding control of lucrative illegal enterprises and extracting money and other resources from the local population through coercion. Organized crime is most often present where civil society institutions are weak or non-existent and governments are vulnerable to corruption through instability, poor governance, lack of transparency, and inadequate resources to pay civil servants adequately. Because any development which strengthens public and civil society institutions is a threat to the dominance and control of criminal gangs, these gangs are active opponents of development.

Peace can be defined in many ways but, for the purposes of this chapter, the terms “negative peace” and “positive peace” are particularly useful. Negative peace refers to an absence of violent conflict, but the continued existence of the sources of violence (e.g., fear, hatred, intolerance) and structures of violence (e.g., injustice, denial of rights, discrimination, social and economic exclusion) that cut short human life as a result of failure to address preventable causes of harm (e.g., lack of access to clean water or basic health care). Structural violence may arise as a result of local, national, or international policies and actions — or the interaction of all three.

In contrast, positive peace refers to the absence of both violent conflict and structural violence and offers optimal conditions for development. Positive peace-building involves helping nations to develop more just and democratic systems in which poverty, illiteracy, and other root causes of conflict are eliminated.<sup>6</sup> The closer nations and communities come to attaining this state, the more likely they are to be successful in safeguarding human rights and achieving the Millennium Development Goals.

Ideally, this means addressing societal tensions and the structural causes of violence before they escalate into full-blown conflicts. In a development context, this can mean:

- ensuring basic human needs are met,
- strengthening civil society and its institutions,
- fostering more democratic and transparent governance,
- ensuring a fair and impartial justice system,
- reducing poverty, and
- finding ways to break down barriers and build cohesion among different ethno-cultural groups — across political lines, between citizens and newcomers, and among the rich and poor.

Where violent conflicts have already broken out, the challenge is greater — finding ways to lessen the effects of conflicts on communities even as they take place and to de-escalate conflict itself until peace has been restored.

Once peace has been achieved, effective processes are needed to demobilize and disarm combatants and to foster reconciliation and healing in order to prevent conflicts from flaring up again. These processes are an integral aspect of a broader range of activities referred to as peace-building. Originally defined in the United Nations Agenda for Peace (1992)<sup>7</sup> as a purely post-conflict activity, peace-building has evolved to include four main

types of activities taking place before and after peace accords are in place:

- providing security;
- building the socio-economic foundations for long-term peace;
- establishing the political framework for long-term peace; and
- fostering reconciliation, healing and justice.<sup>8</sup>

Figure 6.1 presents a variety of peace-building interventions under each of these categories.

These activities reflect the fact that, with the emergence of intra-state conflicts, the focus of peace-building efforts has moved beyond traditional state-centred diplomacy to include the building and maintenance of relationships at all societal levels.

**FIGURE 6.1 PEACE-BUILDING INTERVENTIONS**

<b>SECURITY</b>	<b>SOCIO-ECONOMIC FOUNDATIONS</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Humanitarian mine action</li> <li>• Disarmament, demobilization and reintegration of adult combatants</li> <li>• Disarmament, demobilization and reintegration of child combatants</li> <li>• Security sector reform</li> <li>• Small arms and light weapons reduction</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Physical reconstruction</li> <li>• Economic infrastructure</li> <li>• Health and education infrastructure</li> <li>• Repatriation and return of refugees and internally displaced persons</li> <li>• Food security</li> </ul>
<b>POLITICAL FRAMEWORK</b>	<b>RECONCILIATION AND JUSTICE</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Democratization (parties, media, NGOs, democratic culture)</li> <li>• Strengthening governance (accountability, rule of law, justice system)</li> <li>• Institution building</li> <li>• Human rights enforcement (monitoring laws, justice system)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dialogue between leaders of opposing groups</li> <li>• Grassroots dialogue</li> <li>• Other bridge-building activities</li> <li>• Truth and reconciliation commissions</li> <li>• Trauma therapy and healing</li> </ul>

Source: Adapted from *The Peacebuilding Palette (Utstein Report)*<sup>9</sup>

1.2  
SPORT  
AS A TOOL  
TO PREVENT  
CONFLICT AND  
BUILD PEACE

The purpose of sport for peace initiatives is to harness the power of sport to support the four types of peace-building activities outlined in Figure 6.1. Sport alone cannot prevent conflict or build peace. However, it can contribute to broader, more comprehensive efforts in a range of important ways.

### **Building relationships**

Sport works primarily by bridging relationships across social, economic and cultural divides within society, and by building a sense of shared identity and fellowship among groups that might otherwise be inclined to treat each other with distrust, hostility or violence.

One peace researcher views relationship-building as the central component of peace-building and highlights the importance of interventions that explicitly focus on strategic networking to build relationships.<sup>10</sup> Ideally, peace-building establishes a web of relationships that can sustain local damage without loss of the whole. This means that relationships are not all linked to, or dependent on, a single individual or small number of individuals. This includes horizontal connections at the community level across groups and institutions, as well as vertical links to influential leaders and decision-makers outside the community.

NGOs are well positioned to facilitate the process of relationship-building by bringing people together and engaging them in dialogue and programs that cross diverse boundaries. When properly supported, sport programs can play a contributing role in this process, creating more opportunities for social contact. Establishing community sport organizations and the participation of community sport volunteers generates social ties and community infrastructure that help to build peace and stability.<sup>11</sup>

### **Connecting individuals to communities**

Community sport programs can provide shared experiences between people that “re-humanize” opposing groups in the eyes of their enemies. By sharing sport experiences, sport participants from conflicting groups increasingly grow to feel that they are alike, rather than different. This shared “ritual identity,” or sense of belonging to the same group on the basis of a shared ritual experience, helps to erase the dehumanizing effects of persistent negative characterizations of opposing groups.

Sport can serve as a tool to advance demobilization and disarmament efforts and to support the often difficult reintegration of ex-combatants, particularly former child combatants, into their communities. Regular sport activities can also help to address war-related trauma and promote healing by providing safe spaces for activities that enable victims of war to regain a sense of security and normalcy. Within safe spaces, victims are able to build positive relationships and, in the case of those newly disabled, to rebuild a sense of confidence in their own abilities.

Through its nearly universal reach and popularity, sport also offers an important means of reaching out to and engaging socially excluded groups. In these cases, sport programs are often the initial “hook” that opens the door to other opportunities to connect people to a wider range of services and supports that can assist them.

### Using sport as a communications platform

The profile and influence of elite athletes and sporting events can shine a light on the structural causes of social exclusion and help to promote solutions. The global popularity of elite sport makes it an ideal and extremely powerful mass communication platform that can be used to promote a culture of peace. Celebrity athletes, in particular, can be extremely influential as role models and spokespeople for peace and serve, at times, as intermediaries between hostile nations, creating openings for dialogue. While these moments generally occur spontaneously at the international level, the same effect can be generated at the local level through carefully designed programs that work in a sustained way to build bridges between antagonistic groups.

### Creating a space for dialogue

Elite sport has been used to open the door to peaceful dialogue and to defuse political tensions between nations. The famous “ping pong diplomacy” between the People’s Republic of China and the United States was launched in 1971 when an American national table tennis player missed his bus after a practice and was invited onto the Chinese team’s bus. One of the Chinese players offered a silkscreen portrait to his American counterpart in greeting. The American later presented the Chinese player with a T-shirt containing the peace symbol and the words “Let it be.” The media attention that followed this incident led to an invitation for an American government delegation to visit China. More recently, the term “cricket diplomacy” has been used to describe the improvement of relations between India and Pakistan resulting from an informal invitation from Prime Minister Singh to General Musharraf to watch an international cricket match between the two nations.

Sport, at the elite or community level, is increasingly being used in a wide variety of ways to promote social inclusion, prevent conflict, and build peace in developed and developing countries. Whether the aim is to promote peace at the elite or community level, it is important to consider the limitations that may be involved.

## 1.3 LIMITATIONS OF SPORT AS A PEACE-BUILDING MECHANISM

It is important to be aware that there are limitations to peace-building through sport. In the words of one scholar — “[s]port is neither essentially good nor bad. It is a social construct and its role and function depends largely on what we make of it and how it is consumed.”<sup>12</sup> Furthermore, there is no denying that sport can, and is, being used by some groups and nations to promote conflict. Elite sport has been used to wage tit-for-tat diplomacy (equivalent retaliation) to pressure nations, and even to terrorize — as with the murder of Olympic athletes at the Munich Olympic Games. Sport is also commonly used to promote nationalism and, in its more extreme forms such as sport hooliganism, acts of racism and violence against members of minority ethno-cultural groups and other excluded groups.

In general, peace-building is a fragile and unpredictable process. Sport for peace initiatives, undertaken in complex and volatile contexts, are the same in this regard. To be effective, they must be strategic and undertaken in coordination with other key stakeholders in the peace-building process — not by sport organizations alone — especially during periods of conflict. With careful design and implementation, sport for peace initiatives can play a valuable role in helping to prevent conflict and build peace around the world — a fundamental pre-condition for all development.

#### 1.4 SPORT, PEACE AND THE MILLENNIUM DEVELOPMENT GOALS

Although peace is not named explicitly as a Millennium Development Goal, it is widely recognized as a fundamental pre-condition for development progress. Table 6.1 outlines some of the ways sport for peace initiatives can contribute to the achievement of the MDGs.

**TABLE 6.1 SPORT, PEACE AND THE MILLENNIUM DEVELOPMENT GOALS**

MILLENNIUM DEVELOPMENT GOAL	CONTRIBUTION OF SPORT
1. Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Engagement of socially excluded groups — often the very poor — helping them to build their human capital, connecting them with supports and services, and facilitating their social reintegration</li> <li>• Use of high-profile athletes and sport events to highlight structural causes of poverty and social exclusion and to advocate for solutions</li> <li>• Breaking down negative community perceptions of excluded groups that contribute to their ongoing social and economic marginalization</li> <li>• Support for reintegration of ex-combatants, including access to skills training to help them secure jobs</li> </ul>
2. Achieve universal primary education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Encouragement and support for orphans, street children, former child combatants and other vulnerable children to enroll in school</li> </ul>
3. Promote gender equality and empower women	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Opportunities for female refugees and newcomers to enjoy physical activity and social interaction, and access information and services to support their temporary or permanent transition into a new community</li> <li>• Support for the reintegration of girls who are former child combatants, helping them to recover from trauma and regain their self-esteem, sense of control over their bodies, and hope for the future</li> </ul>
4. Reduce child mortality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Connecting families in socially excluded groups to health information and services</li> <li>• Truce opportunities during the Olympic Games that permit immunization efforts and humanitarian aid to proceed in conflict zones</li> </ul>
5. Improve maternal health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Connecting mothers from socially excluded groups, including those who have become mothers as a result of rape, to health information and services</li> </ul>
6. Develop a global partnership for development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Creation of global sport and peace networks for awareness-raising and knowledge exchange</li> </ul>



## 1.5 INTERNATIONAL FRAMEWORKS FOR SPORT AND PEACE

Sport's power and importance as a tool for preventing conflict and building peace is reflected in a range of international agreements, strategies and instruments.

In 1993, the United Nations restored the ancient tradition of the Olympic Truce, under which athletes from warring nations are granted safe passage to participate in Olympic Games. Since 1993, prior to every Olympics, the Olympic Truce has been reaffirmed by the United Nations General Assembly through a symbolic Resolution entitled Building a Peaceful and Better World Through Sport and the Olympic Ideal. More recently, the Olympic Truce has been extended to include the Paralympic Games as well. The truce begins seven days before the start of each Olympic/Paralympic Games and continues until seven days after the closing ceremony, reminding the world that sport offers an opportunity to bridge even the most bitter political divides.

Over the past few years the United Nations General Assembly has adopted a series of resolutions<sup>13</sup> on Sport for Development and Peace. The most recent, Resolution 61/10,<sup>14</sup> invites Member States, the United Nations system (including the governing bodies of United Nations agencies), sport-related organizations, the media, civil society and the private sector to collaborate to promote greater awareness and action to foster peace.

Building on the spirit of the UN General Assembly resolutions, in 2007 the International Olympic Committee, the Association of National Olympic Committees of Africa, and the African Union issued the Brazzaville Declaration, proposing to join their efforts with those of governments, NGOs and private partners to create a fund for sport for peace initiatives.<sup>15</sup>

These international frameworks reflect growing awareness of sport's potential to help prevent conflict and build peace. To be effective, sport for peace initiatives must be carefully designed with specific conflict prevention or peace-building goals in mind. These initiatives should only be undertaken after a rigorous assessment of the context and dynamics involved to minimize the risk that they will inflame the tensions they are intended to address. Widespread programmatic sport for peace initiatives, however, are relatively new and there is little scientific research that documents their impact. In such cases, programmatic examples provide useful evidence of sport's impact in the area of peace-building.

## 2 EVIDENCE: USING SPORT TO PREVENT CONFLICT AND BUILD PEACE

Of the 34 countries invited by the Sport for Development and Peace International Working Group to share information about their Sport for Development and Peace initiatives,<sup>16</sup>

approximately 69% of developing countries and 85% of developed countries either use, or plan to use, sport in national strategies for conflict resolution or peace-building.

Similarly, a review of current sport for peace programs listed on the International Platform on Sport and Development<sup>17</sup> reveals initiatives relating to each of the four key peace-building components identified in Figure 6.1 and to approximately half of the activities under these categories, underscoring the versatility of sport as a peace-building tool. This section explores this versatility and the use of sport for conflict prevention and peace-building both during and after conflicts.

*“Sport is [a] hook that allows other things to happen...”*

- Interviewee, UK program using sport as a tool for inclusion of refugees and asylum seekers<sup>18</sup>

## 2.1 USING SPORT TO PROMOTE SOCIAL INCLUSION

At the most fundamental level, well-designed sport activities that incorporate the best values of sport — self-discipline, respect for one’s opponent, fair play, teamwork, and adherence to mutually agreed upon rules — help individuals to build the values and communication skills necessary to prevent and resolve conflict in their own lives. In El Salvador, for example, where communities are struggling with a legacy of gang violence in the aftermath of a prolonged civil war, the Scotiabank Salud Escolar Integral program uses sport, play and physical activity to teach life skills — especially conflict prevention and non-violent conflict resolution — to primary and secondary school children, equipping them to make healthy choices later in their lives.<sup>19</sup>

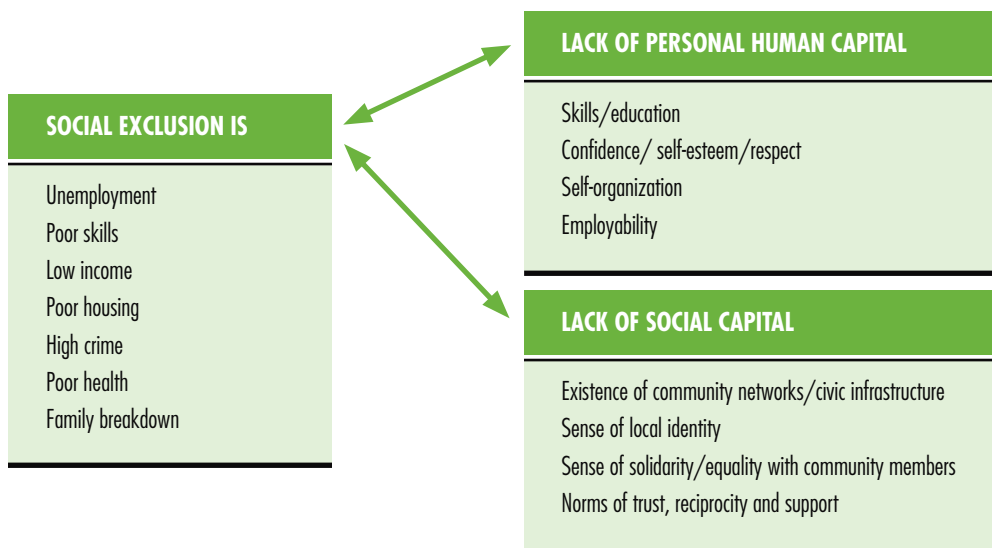
Sport can also be used to reduce tensions and prevent conflict on a broader, community-wide level. Violence has many causes — including lack of opportunity arising from social and economic exclusion. Excluded populations vary greatly, as does the extent of their exclusion. However, excluded populations often include indigenous peoples, members of minority ethno-cultural groups, asylum seekers and refugees, girls and women, persons with disabilities, homeless people, and out-of-school unemployed youth. All people living in extreme poverty suffer from exclusion.

Sport can play an important role in reducing social tensions and conflicts at the community and national level by addressing the sources of this exclusion and providing an alternative entry point into the social and economic life of communities. Many of the factors leading to exclusion (see Figure 6.2), at the individual or the societal level, are mutually reinforcing, causing individuals and groups to experience multiple problems. This experience of

multiple inter-related difficulties often results from, and contributes to, lack of human capital and social capital. Human capital is the skills, knowledge and personal attributes (e.g., confidence, self-esteem, education, employment skills, etc.) that individuals possess. Social capital is the social networks, connections and sense of belonging to wider society that enable individuals to access the people, resources and institutional help they need to tackle challenges and realize opportunities in their lives.<sup>20</sup>

While lack of human capital and social capital manifest in the lives of individuals, they are often the result of social and economic structures and dynamics that constrain the choices available to individuals and the actions they take. As such, factors leading to social exclusion (such as lack of human and social capital) need to be addressed at the societal, as well as individual level in order to achieve real change. Sport can be used at both of these levels to improve people’s lives. Because of its near universal popularity, sport is a particularly effective tool for connecting with socially excluded groups who are often hard to reach.

**FIGURE 6.2 DIMENSIONS OF SOCIAL EXCLUSION<sup>21</sup>**



Source: Mafoud Amara et al., (2005)

At the individual level, sport can aid fitness, foster health, and enhance mental health and well-being by reducing stress, anxiety, and depression.<sup>22</sup> There is also evidence that sport participation can enhance self-concept, self-esteem and self-confidence.<sup>23</sup> In social psychological terms, sport is believed to have the potential to foster individual empathy, tolerance, cooperation, social skills and teamwork.<sup>24</sup> All of these benefits help individuals to increase their store of human capital.

When Sport for Development and Peace initiatives are well-designed, holistic and sustained, they can help marginalized people to acquire the skills and self-confidence needed to both overcome personal barriers and advocate for the elimination of structural barriers to their full participation in community life.<sup>25</sup> (These aspects of sport are discussed in Chapters 3, 4 and 5 with regard to children and youth, women and girls, and persons with disabilities.) When integrated properly with other community programs and services, sport initiatives can also connect participants to resources that help them in this process, such as health services, education and employment opportunities, or help with starting a small business.

At the societal level, the role of sport in promoting social networks and active citizenship is potentially very important. Research suggests that sport has the potential to promote community identity, coherence and integration,<sup>26</sup> and that people actively involved in sport are more likely to play an active role in the community in other ways.<sup>27</sup> Sport can therefore be used as a tool for building community and social capital.

Social capital is a key element in local responses to problems of social exclusion and is generally thought to serve three important functions — bonding, bridging, and linking. Bonding social capital refers to the informal realm, the close ties that help people to get by. These usually involve family, friends and neighbours.<sup>28</sup> Bridging social capital refers to the civic realm and involves the development of looser ties through networks that extend across different groups in civil society and create bridges between them.<sup>29</sup> Finally, linking social capital refers to the institutional realm, building links to organizations and systems that can help people access resources and bring about broader change.<sup>30</sup>

The following examples highlight how sport is being used to address various forms of social exclusion by building human and social capital and helping to prevent conflicts in communities and at the national level.

### **Integrating refugees, migrants, internally displaced persons, and asylum seekers**

Although refugees, migrants, asylum seekers, and internally displaced persons (IDPs)<sup>31</sup> differ significantly in their legal status and treatment under international law, these uprooted populations often face similar challenges.<sup>32</sup> Common challenges include breakdown of communities; risk of tension within host communities; increased risk of violence; and increased risk of familial separation. While most available examples of sport for peace initiatives focus specifically on refugees and asylum seekers, the findings presented here can be extrapolated to address the mutual challenges that all of the above-mentioned groups may face.

A research team examined case studies in a systematic review of the role of sport in the inclusion of refugees and asylum seekers in the United Kingdom.<sup>33</sup> From these case studies, anecdotal stories emerged illustrating the positive effects on participants, including:<sup>34</sup>

- Breaking down barriers between asylum seekers and refugees and the local population;
- Improving relationships between asylum seekers and refugees from different ethnic backgrounds; and
- Providing opportunities to build the self-esteem and self-confidence of asylum seekers and refugees.

Interviewees engaged in sport-based initiatives generally believed that sport acts as a positive vehicle for addressing issues of social inclusion for asylum seekers and refugees, largely because of its capacity to bring people together from different cultural backgrounds. Some believed that team sport offers the greatest potential for positive impact, recognizing that in contact sports, however, tensions can sometimes run high and conflicts may arise. Interviewees noted that the positive benefits of sport do not arise simply because people from different cultural backgrounds are brought together. For sport to be successful in dealing with issues of racism and integration, participants must be challenged when they engage in unacceptable behaviour. If unacceptable behaviour is not challenged, opportunities to develop positive attitudes toward people from other cultures are undermined.<sup>35</sup>

Interviewees provided numerous examples of the effects their programs were having. *Operation Reclaim*, a Scottish program using sport to integrate young refugees and asylum seekers and divert them from gangs and drugs, cited the example of a 17-year-old Scot who was charged with racially aggravated assault two years previously. Following involvement in organized sport, the young Scot became friendly with the asylum seekers and refugees with whom he now played football. His attitude to asylum seekers and refugees changed because he had come to know them personally.<sup>36</sup>

Interviewees also provided examples where sport had brought people together. For example, a 16-team mini world cup five-a-side football competition, organized by the Scottish Asian Sports Association, was considered to be a success in bringing together people from different national and cultural backgrounds.<sup>37</sup>

The Derby Bosnia-Herzegovina Community Association and the Zimbabwean Association football team both provide opportunities for members of their national community to participate in regular team sports and, in so doing, to build stronger bonds within their own communities and greater opportunities for mutual social support.<sup>38</sup> Stakeholders in

both programs indicated that bonding had overcome some of the ethnic, political and religious divides which were endemic in their country of origin. However, this is not always the case and in some instances sporting contests have reignited problems between groups.<sup>39</sup>

*The Madeley Youth and Community Centre Project* in the UK uses sport to build bridges between the local “host” British Asian community and Kurdish refugees and asylum seekers who recently moved into the area. Similarly, the *Swansea World Stars* football team, made up of refugees and asylum seekers, constituted itself as a competitive sporting team in a formal domestic league in Swansea with a plan to build links with other local teams in the Swansea area, rather than simply playing football within the group.<sup>40</sup>

The *Sport Link* project in Charnwood, UK uses sport to develop links between refugee and asylum seeker groups and other institutions. Referral services for women link groups with medical institutions (doctors’ medical practices and health centres) and local government institutions (leisure centres running exercise programs), and give access to sports facilities in the local university, with the goal of fostering educational aspirations in youth participants.<sup>41</sup> Similarly, the *Kingsway Court Health and Well-Being Centre* links the provision of sport and physical recreation opportunities to other services for refugee and asylum seeker groups, including information and advice on men’s and women’s health, community development, English as a Second Language classes, and child care.<sup>42</sup>

None of the above examples has been formally evaluated, so there is no rigorous evidence of their impact. However, in the experience of stakeholders interviewed, the programs are having a positive effect.<sup>43</sup> This suggests that sport initiatives that specifically target bonding, bridging and linking social capital for refugee and asylum seeker groups may be an important means of addressing exclusion, its causes, and related conflict at the community level.

Developing nations, which are often called on to host refugees from conflicts in neighbouring countries, are also making use of sport to promote peaceful coexistence — often among groups from opposing sides of conflicts. The National Republic of Tanzania’s Sport Development Department has been particularly successful in using sport to address conflict among Tanzania’s refugee population. Projects begin by mixing refugee children from different groups in supervised sport and play activities, encouraging them to form friendships across ethnic and cultural boundaries, and building in conflict prevention messages and skill building. Parents are encouraged to become involved and participate as well. The government feels these programs have been very successful in building bridges between the various refugee communities and reducing incidents of conflict.<sup>44</sup>

The Tanzanian government has also declared September 21 to be National Sports Day. In addition to a broad range of sport activities, celebrations include a World Harmony Run organized to promote peace and understanding and reduce conflict. Approximately 2,000 Tanzanians participated in the 2006 run, and even more in 2007.<sup>45</sup>

Sport-based initiatives are also used to help address the trauma experienced by many refugees and asylum seekers. These initiatives are designed to help normalize people's existence and rebuild a sense of security, community and hope. The Bakuria Peace Camp in Georgia<sup>46</sup> and Summer Peace Camp in Bulgaria<sup>47</sup> were established to promote tolerance and encourage the establishment of new relationships among children and teenagers from different conflict zones. Both programs use sport and recreation to develop team spirit in participating children and teenagers. Developing team spirit helps to remove the psychological barriers that hinder the creation of relationships among them, and helps to spread the spirit of peace-building and tolerance. Through these activities, the programs hope to achieve psychological and social rehabilitation of refugee children and youth.

### **Providing an alternative to participation in criminal gangs and armed militia**

In many communities, criminal gangs, paramilitary organizations, and armed factions actively recruit disaffected, abandoned, or homeless young people. Here, well-designed sport activities can provide an attractive alternative for young people seeking to make friends, build their sense of self-esteem and self-confidence, and find a positive direction in their lives.

As an integral and valued part of youth culture, sport can be the ideal enticement, attracting and helping youngsters learn about relationships and conflict resolution and develop life skills. To be effective, however, these programs must be focused on the whole youth (not just their sport skills), explicitly promote positive values (such as cooperation, teamwork, fairness and respect for opponents), and empower youth by helping them to set goals, make effective choices, practice responsibility and leadership, and contribute.<sup>48,49</sup> For this reason, programs that are purely recreational or focus only on sport skills, like basketball shooting and passing, are unlikely to be effective.

Research undertaken in the United States indicates that sport programs have the potential to help youth who live in under-served neighborhoods to overcome the root problems associated with poverty and crime.<sup>50</sup> This is only true, however, when explicit values that emphasize personal and social development are built into the program.<sup>51</sup> Placing these types of values at the centre of programs makes them more effective at combating "street" messages and involvement with gangs, violence, and drugs, as well as the incidence of teenage pregnancy.<sup>52</sup>

Research conducted by the Australian Institute of Criminology on the use of sport for youth crime prevention has shown that sport and physical activity can combine with other interventions to reduce crime in particular groups and communities, as long as programs provide accessible, appropriate activities in a supportive social context. In other words, sport and physical activity must be connected positively within the social fabric of groups and communities, and sport-based interventions must be carried out in collaboration with a range of other strategies and sectors.<sup>53</sup>

The Complexo de Maré neighbourhood of Rio de Janeiro offers a compelling example of this approach. The neighbourhood is divided into territories controlled by rival gangs. Drug trafficking, related violence and other criminal activity are highly visible and many youth believe gangs are their best option for social and economic advancement. The *Luta Pela Paz (Fight for Peace)* program was established to offer youth an alternative to drugs, gangs and violence. The program's primary activity is a boxing club, but it also offers access to education and work opportunities, youth leadership training, and social action. Boxing was deliberately chosen for its appeal to male youth attracted to gangs, because it is a good means to channel frustration, and because it offers a relevant entry point for discussions about violence. Sixty percent of the program's trainers are former participants, bringing the credibility and insights of their own experience to the program. Regular boxing tournaments allow participants to publicly compete and gain respect, something the program's founder believes they otherwise could only have gained by picking up a gun.<sup>54</sup>

Youth in crisis zones are exposed to similar risks of involvement in armed groups and militia. According to the recent Report of the UN Secretary-General on Children and Armed Conflict, "[t]housands of children continue to be abducted to serve as soldiers, spies, messengers, servants and sexual slaves with armed forces and groups. Poverty, propaganda and ideology continue to drive the involvement of children in many conflict areas."<sup>55</sup>

While in many cases children and youth are forced to serve in armed groups, in others they are recruited. Displacement separates families and deprives children of a secure environment. The destruction of schools and the displacement of teachers reduces access to schooling and leaves children at further risk of recruitment.<sup>56</sup> Sport can play a role in reducing their vulnerability to recruitment by providing a reason for young people to stay in their existing communities. Sport for peace initiatives can also help children and youth to adopt a more critical perspective with regard to their own involvement in conflict and to envision alternative peaceful ways in which they can play a valued social role and achieve a sense of belonging and purpose.

Since 2003, the crisis in Darfur has displaced an estimated 1.6 million people and caused over 210,000 refugees to cross the border into Eastern Chad. There, inter-ethnic clashes



and scarce resources have led to increasing numbers of internally displaced Chadians. In the refugee camps, it is difficult to keep children and youth occupied, making them vulnerable to enrollment in armed factions. International humanitarian organization Right To Play's *SportWorks Chad* program<sup>57</sup> uses sport and play programs to improve health and build life skills among children in participating refugee camps and host communities. Games and activities promote peace-building and community cohesion and teach conflict resolution skills, focusing on teamwork, fair play, and inclusion and integration of different ethnic groups. Special community play days are organized with "No Winner, No Loser" competitions that encourage the spirit of peace and fair play and often feature peaceful messages from influential religious, traditional or local authorities. To date, more than 400 local coaches have been trained and they lead regular sport and play activities for 7,716 children and youth. The activities provide participants with a more structured and normalized environment as well as opportunities to develop peace-building skills. This has led to increased school enrollment and fewer youth joining armed groups, because they are reluctant to give up their sport activities.

### **Strengthening indigenous culture**

Indigenous people in developed and developing nations are often marginalized as a result of histories of colonization, attempts to force their cultural assimilation, and being deprived of traditional lands and resources. There is growing evidence that cultural continuity is critical to restoring the social, economic and spiritual health of Aboriginal communities.<sup>58</sup> Sport and games centred on traditional skills and culturally-based principles play an important role in Aboriginal culture and can therefore contribute to this process.

A review of research undertaken by the Australian Sports Commission confirms that sport offers particular benefits with regard to Aboriginal communities.<sup>59</sup> Sport carnivals organized by local indigenous communities have been described as pivotal events for social and traditional cohesion, largely because they are organized and managed by indigenous communities themselves.<sup>60</sup> Volunteer involvement in sport events and activities contributes to social cohesion as individuals get involved in coaching, umpiring, administration, management, and equipment and facilities maintenance. Volunteers acquire employment skills and a sense of purpose, while participants and volunteers benefit from enhanced self-esteem because of their involvement.<sup>61</sup>

Restoring indigenous games as part of the spectrum of publicly supported sport activity is an important means of supporting Aboriginal cultural renewal because these help strengthen young people's knowledge of their heritage and traditional games. The Brazilian Ministry of Sport supports the Indigenous Peoples Games<sup>62</sup> as a means of showcasing and celebrating the traditional sport and cultural activities of native Brazilians and

building pride in their traditions. The Government of South Africa also supports indigenous games, and Mozambique is in the process of planning an annual festival of traditional games. The North American Indigenous Games, which takes place every three years, combines indigenous sports with other popular sports. The goal of the games is “to improve the quality of life for indigenous peoples by supporting self-determined sport and cultural activities.”<sup>63</sup>

### **Empowering homeless people**

Although homelessness may not be immediately recognized as a peace-building issue, homeless people can face the same forms of social exclusion as asylum seekers and refugees. Issues of homelessness can also affect a nation’s progress toward peace and prosperity and generate conflicts at the local level.

Homeless people often face multiple challenges which, in combination, make it difficult for them to secure and keep safe and adequate housing. Without a fixed address, they are often unable to qualify for public services, to secure employment or attend school as a means to improve their condition. Many suffer from addictions and chronic low self-esteem. Efforts to help the homeless find secure housing and employment must therefore adopt a holistic approach that addresses these underlying issues. The need to address the structural causes of homelessness is equally important. Inadequate public investment in affordable housing, income security programs, and addiction treatment and rehabilitation are just a few of the possible causes for homelessness in a society. Addressing these and other structural factors greatly increases the chances that community programs to assist the homeless will be successful.

The Homeless World Cup is the best known example of the use of sport to reintegrate homeless people into society. The event draws public attention to the structural causes of homelessness, and empowers homeless people themselves to become effective advocates for social change. A professionally run, high-profile annual event, the Homeless World Cup is an international football tournament attracting teams of homeless athletes from over 48 developing and developed countries. The purpose of the event is to engage and assist homeless people from around the world and to help reconnect them to society by changing their own and other people’s perceptions of their capacities. Once a venue is chosen through a bidding process, the Cup is advertised, playing spaces are built in the streets, and stands are constructed for spectators. Games are played every day for a week. Crowds are attracted by the fast, dynamic games, but also by the unusual and moving sight of homeless people proudly representing their countries. Over 100,000 spectators attended the 2006 Cape Town Homeless World Cup in South Africa.

The Homeless World Cup Foundation's own research shows that 77% of players involved change their lives significantly in the long term. Homeless participants are involved in planning, working and playing together, and each is assigned an important role and the opportunity to develop and display their capacities. Being part of a team, especially a team that competes internationally, helps players take a more positive view of their own strengths and abilities. It also enables players to learn or re-learn important life skills, such as tackling difficult challenges, recovering from losses and setbacks, and exercising personal responsibility. All participants must obtain their own passports and visas, a process that helps their re-socialization. In this way, sport and belonging to a team build participants' confidence, self-respect and self-esteem. In the words of one participant: "Today, someone came and wanted my autograph — it's pretty cool to be someone's hero."<sup>64</sup> The success of the event has allowed organizers to leverage its popularity to ensure that visas will be issued to all participants, a significant achievement with respect to homeless people from developing countries.

### **Reducing political tensions**

Many conflicts within countries are linked to partisan politics and the competition between rival parties. Electoral outcomes can have profound impacts on the opportunities and benefits available to specific groups in societies and tensions can therefore run high in the lead-up to elections. While Ghana is not a country that typically suffers from serious conflict, tensions have nonetheless arisen. In the past, the government has organized UN-sponsored Global Peace Games to bring rival factions together and to defuse tensions. As some tensions are expected in the lead-up to the 2008 national election, the government plans to build on this experience and organize Global Peace Games, refereed by celebrity athletes, to encourage friendly competition between political parties.

*"You don't wait for peace in order to use sport for peace. You can use sport to achieve peace."*

- Shimon Peres, Athens Roundtable on Sport for Development and Peace, 2004.

## **2.2 USING SPORT IN PERIODS OF CONFLICT**

The use of sport to advance peace in conflict situations must always take into account what is realistically achievable — not just through sport — but by any means. Basic security and self-preservation concerns, as well as difficulty in transport and communication, can make everyday activities nearly impossible in conflict zones. As a result, most sport-based peace-building initiatives are established in the post-conflict phase, where objectives can be more comprehensive and programs have a reasonable chance

of being successful. However, examples of interventions during conflict do exist. These are necessarily less ambitious and need to be considered in this light.

In periods of short-term conflict, sport-based initiatives may be limited to providing people with temporary relief from the tensions and concerns they are experiencing. During longer, more protracted conflicts, peace-building is more likely to succeed when conflicting communities have begun to re-establish positive contact while fighting is still underway.<sup>65</sup> Sport-based initiatives can be one means of establishing and re-establishing relationships and nurturing points of communication that can eventually serve the peace process. Use of sport for more complex networking and peace-building efforts, however, is extremely difficult in high-intensity conflicts and generally cannot be undertaken until conflicts have subsided.

The following sub-sections provide examples of how sport is being used to provide respite from conflict and to build bridges to a more peaceful future.

### **Providing respite in the midst of conflict**

On rare occasions, sport can provide a respite from war and briefly open a window for temporary aid and humanitarian relief for civilians during conflicts. Perhaps the best known example of this is the Olympic Truce. During the 1994 Lillehammer Olympic Games, conflict in Bosnia ceased long enough to permit the inoculation of 10,000 Bosnian children and a ceasefire between the Sudanese government and an armed opposition group was secured.

Most recently, an Asian Cup football victory brought momentary social cohesion in the midst of widespread factional violence in Iraq. The potential of this moment was not lost on a 25-year-old Iraqi who noted: "In 90 minutes, 11 men on a soccer pitch thousands of miles away have made millions of Iraqis happy while 250 MPs, our government, the mullahs, imams and warlords can't provide us with a single smile. I hope this is a turning point for our country."<sup>66</sup> This sentiment was echoed by another Iraqi observer following the much publicized match: "Football alone may not be able to heal the nation's deep wounds, but for the moment it has induced a sense of cohesion, and we can all build on that if we try."<sup>67</sup>

At the community level, regular, organized sport activity in a safe and supervised setting can provide an important island of healthy, secure, stress-free enjoyment for people of all ages in conflict situations. This is particularly true for children, who may be more easily traumatized by the turmoil around them. Because parents are trying to protect their children from the effects of conflict, community-level programs that bring children

together in this manner may be somewhat easier to organize than those for adults who may be averse to participating in cross-factional activity.

### **Sport as a bridge between opposing groups**

Sport can be used to create bridges and sustain positive relationships between individuals on opposing sides of a conflict through outreach to participants from these different communities. Research supports the power of sport to create “relational spaces” across wide and diverse populations.<sup>68</sup> This can take place at the community or elite level. One expert stresses the importance of creating safe and accessible social spaces, such as youth football clubs.<sup>69</sup> However, the success of such programs depends on the quality and nature of the contact. To successfully reduce inter-group prejudices, sport for peace initiatives must promote equal status, cooperation and common goals, and reward moments of cross-community intimacy.<sup>70</sup> For example, *Football4Peace* is a sport-based project for Jewish and Arab children in Northern Israel, which operates under a framework of neutrality, equity and inclusion, respect, trust, and responsibility. Under this framework, common goals and rewards are built into the game structure.<sup>71</sup>

The Cross Cultures Project Association (CCPA) is a humanitarian organization which develops and implements cross-cultural projects to promote reconciliation and integration through dialogue and collaboration. One of its projects, *Open Fun Football Schools*,<sup>72</sup> brought together teachers, instructors, trainers and children from different ethnic and social backgrounds in Bosnia-Herzegovina to promote social unity and democratic behaviour through grassroots football. An independent donor evaluation concluded that *Open Fun Football Schools* has established, “in very sensitive areas, the first significant, post-war contacts between municipalities experiencing serious ethnic tension and antagonism.”<sup>73</sup>

In 2006, CCPA trained seven Iraqi coaches in the principles and methods of its *Open Fun Football Schools*. These coaches have since organized five football schools, reaching a total of 1,000 boys of mixed ethnicity in Baghdad neighborhoods. They have also trained 16 more coaches to build on their initial effort.<sup>74</sup> Because of the intensity of the conflict in Baghdad, the expectations for these projects are less ambitious than for other *Cross Cultures* projects and achievements are difficult to monitor. However, efforts are being made to provide a safe space for children to enjoy regular physical activity away from the pressures and fears of the conflict. By fostering relationships between children of different ethnicities and religious communities the projects are also helping to build bridges between these communities at the individual level.

Elite athletes, coaches and sporting events naturally attract media and public attention. High-profile athletes from conflict zones can bring international attention to raging conflicts and provide examples of working together across the divide, as part of their own sporting activities or through specially organized events. For example, leading international football club Real Madrid was brought to Israel by the Peres Centre for Peace to play a match against a mixed Israeli-Palestinian squad. The goal was to focus attention on local peace efforts and communicate a strong peace message. People remember the image from the 2000 Sydney Summer Olympic Games of North and South Korean athletes entering the Olympic Stadium under one flag for the first time in decades. The flag, held by one athlete from North Korea and one athlete from South Korea, represented all of Korea, with a white background and a blue map outlining the entire Korean peninsula.

Sport is often used as an opener by international peace-keeping forces when they are stationed in a new conflict zone. Peace-keepers often coordinate sporting activities with the local population at the start of missions to reduce fear and mistrust, build goodwill, and open doors to communication.<sup>75</sup> Similarly, peace-keepers have used organized sporting events to promote peace among the local population. In August 2004, when the Brazilian National soccer team travelled to Port au Prince to play a game against the Haitian National soccer team, Brazilian peace-keepers stationed on the island handed out tickets to the match in exchange for firearms. The effort to disarm local factions in the country garnered the attention of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, who applauded the act as one of the most important initiatives of the International Decade for a Culture of Peace and Non-Violence for the Children of the World, 2001–2010.<sup>76</sup>

Sport's use as a bridge sometimes arises spontaneously, without organizational leadership or design. The Brezovica ski resort in Kosovo has long been a place for ethnic Serbs and Albanians to interact and share their enjoyment of the outdoors, prompting a UN publication to state: "...Brezovica wins this year's peace prize for an almost spontaneous growth of multi-ethnic recreation."<sup>77</sup> Programs were later established to promote multi-ethnic relations, building on this natural foundation.<sup>78</sup>

Spontaneous gestures sometimes grow into larger sport for peace initiatives. For example, in the midst of the Gaza crisis in the summer of 2007, an 85-year-old Jewish surfer from Hawaii who introduced surfing to Israel in the 1950s, delivered 12 surfboards to the small, but committed, surfing community in Gaza. Three weeks earlier he had read a US newspaper article describing Gaza surfers working with poor equipment. One Voice, an Israeli/Palestinian conflict resolution organization, made contact with the Palestinian surfers and negotiated the transfer of the boards with the Israeli military authorities responsible for border control. One of the Palestinian surfers, a Gaza beach lifeguard,

said “when I touched those boards I felt a joy I cannot describe.” He hopes to train on the coast, sponsored by an Israeli partner in the initiative, so that he can teach surfing to Palestinian youth.

This project attracted significant media coverage in the United States and in the Middle East<sup>79</sup> and led to the creation of *Surfers for Peace*, a joint Palestinian/Israeli initiative to mobilize the surfing community, including its elite athletes, to unite one million Palestinians and Israelis in support of a peace settlement in the region. The *Surfers for Peace* initiative is an example of how sport can be used to give a human face to those on opposing sides of a conflict leveraging the pre-existing, shared identity of the surfing community, one which (at least in the western world) has a broad symbolic association with peace.

### 2.3 USING SPORT TO BUILD PEACE IN POST-CONFLICT SITUATIONS

Most sport for peace activities take place in a post-conflict setting. Their focus is on reconciliation between victims and perpetrators and formerly hostile communities; rehabilitation and reintegration of ex-combatants; and, to a more limited extent, reconstruction of the social, political, and economic infrastructure. The following sub-sections provide examples of the use of sport to achieve each of these aims.

#### **Reconciliation**

The goal of reconciliation is to establish the minimum level of trust necessary to foster cooperation and mutual reliance among former enemies. It is a long and difficult process which demands changes in attitudes (e.g., tolerance instead of revenge), in conduct (e.g., joint commemoration of the dead instead of separate partisan memorials), and in the institutional environment (e.g., integrating veterans from both sides of the conflict in the national army instead of keeping ex-combatants in quasi-private militias).<sup>80</sup>

The handbook on Reconciliation after Violent Conflict published by the International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance identifies three stages of reconciliation:

- replacing fear with non-violent co-existence;
- building confidence and trust; and
- moving toward empathy.<sup>81</sup>

Each of these stages is achieved through four main processes: healing of survivors, historical accounting through truth-telling, retributive or restorative justice, and reparation of material and psychological damage inflicted on victims.<sup>82</sup> These are inter-related and mutually reinforcing processes.

Sport for peace initiatives are particularly effective in helping to build confidence and trust between opposing parties and advancing the healing process. Healing comprises strategies, processes and activities aimed at improving the psychological health of individuals or rehabilitating and reconstructing local and national communities.<sup>83</sup> Building trust requires that each party — victim and offender — gains renewed confidence in himself or herself and in each other. Building trust also entails seeing the humanity in every individual. This acknowledgement is the basis for the mutual trust required to build a lasting culture of peace.<sup>84</sup>

Sport can help advance this process by virtue of its far-reaching appeal and its ability to create new, shared identities that transcend the lines that divide societies. This dimension of sport has long been appreciated by nations and used to foster positive feelings of national identity, pride, and unity in the face of internal political and ethno-cultural divisions. In this respect, sport has been particularly important to emerging nations trying to forge a new identity internally and with the rest of the world. Sport has also been used for the same purpose by sub-national groups seeking independence, and “bottom-up” efforts have often proven more effective than “top-down” state-led initiatives at making use of sport’s power to create and strengthen group identities.<sup>85</sup>

In the context of peace-building, sport offers a means to create positive new shared identities among formerly opposing groups in order to build a solid foundation for a peaceful future. The successful use of sport as a ritual for this shared identity-building relies on cultural sensitivity and the use of symbols that are meaningful to those involved in the reconciliation process.<sup>86</sup> In some circumstances, the appropriate ritual activity will be team sports such as football, cricket, basketball, or baseball. In others, it may be individual sports such as long distance running, boxing or judo. In certain circumstances indigenous sports will be more suitable.

In Cambodia, after years of civil war, the *Cambodian National Volleyball League (Disabled)* has contributed to the healing process by engaging formerly hostile factions.<sup>87</sup> Matches between integrated teams of ex-Khmer Rouge soldiers and civilians recently attracted media attention. Participants interviewed before the match indicated that they were focusing on the opportunity that the match presented for positive interaction, not the past. The match has inspired many more positive interactions between these two groups off the playing field.

In South Africa, apartheid has ended but its effects are still felt in a society that remains heavily divided by race and social class. PeacePlayers International — South Africa (PPI-SA)<sup>88</sup> established the *Bridging Divides Program* to break down race barriers, educate children



about health issues, and provide alternatives to crime in the KwaZulu-Natal province.<sup>89</sup> The program brings together children and youth from different backgrounds to play basketball and forge positive relationships that transcend race, culture and religion. Young adults benefit from a *Leadership Development Program* that empowers them to make positive change in their communities and the lives of children they work with.

Since 2000, PPI-SA has taught basketball to over 25,000 children; involved 7,000 boys and girls in inter-community leagues, life skills clinics, court launches, tournaments and clubs; and trained and employed 2,000 young South African adults as coaches and mentors. An external evaluation of this program concluded that it contributed noticeably to breaking down racial stereotypes and divides<sup>90</sup> and that school and sport contexts provided the most favourable environments for multicultural mixing.<sup>91</sup> Parents and school principals understood that the program's goals extended beyond sport delivery and rated the program as highly successful with regard to its objectives.<sup>92</sup>

Building empathy is an essential stage in the reconciliation process. Empathy comes with the willingness of victims to listen to offenders' reasons for causing them pain, and with offenders' listening to and understanding the anger and bitterness of those they have hurt.<sup>93</sup> Truth-telling is one way to make this possible, creating "objective opportunities for people to see the past in terms of shared suffering and collective responsibility."<sup>94</sup> It also helps victims and offenders to recognize their shared humanity and the reality that they all have to move forward by getting along with each other.<sup>95</sup>

Sport can be used to build empathy and as an information platform to inform people of, and promote, truth telling processes. In 1996, the Youth Sports Association in Kigali established the *Espérance* community sports club to foster healing and reconstruction following the 1994 Rwandan genocide. *Espérance* uses football to develop young people's capacity to resolve conflict peacefully and as a forum for education on peace, health, and human rights issues. In addition to other activities, sport events are used to publicize the *Gacaca*, a community justice process instituted by the government in 2001 to reconstruct what happened during the genocide; speed up legal proceedings; and aid the process of reconciliation. *Espérance* uses its outreach activities to raise awareness of the system and its benefits to communities.

Sport can also play a role in promoting healing through remembrance. Remembrance is an essential process because it publicly acknowledges the pain of victims, invites offenders to take responsibility for their actions, and offers a means to understand, learn from the past, and build a lasting reconciliation.<sup>96</sup> To advance reconciliation, it is necessary to create opportunities for shared commemoration that is non-partisan and involves

people from all sides of a conflict. The alternative (relying on separate memorials and remembrance rituals) risks allowing wounds from the conflict to fester, which may cause renewed conflict in the future.

In Rwanda, the annual Great Lakes Region Invitational Basketball Tournament is hosted in memory of Gisémbé Ntarugera Emmanuel, a well-known basketball player killed during the 1994 genocide.<sup>97</sup> The tournament attracts men's and women's teams from neighbouring Burundi and the Democratic Republic of Congo, and serves as a remembrance activity with community theatre performances, visits to genocide museums, and public speeches. The tournament brings together inter-ethnic teams, using competition in a friendly environment to reinforce the shared identity of former opposing groups. It engages all sides in commemorating the Rwandan genocide in an effort to ensure it is never repeated.

A group of school children in Beijing, China smile and wave peace signs after participating in a specially-designed sport and play program.

Right To Play



**Rehabilitation and reintegration of ex-combatants<sup>98</sup>**

The disarmament, demobilization and reintegration of ex-combatants is a three-step, post-conflict process aimed at turning soldiers into civilians. The process is considered essential to peace-building.<sup>99</sup> Sport for peace initiatives are used for demobilization and disarmament, but most frequently for reintegration.

In periods of demobilization, sport is particularly useful when soldiers are in camps, especially for long periods, because it offers a healthy and entertaining way to pass the time during long periods of inactivity.<sup>100</sup> This helps to prevent fights and other disruptions from breaking out. With respect to disarmament, sport is used along with other incentives — such as car raffles and livestock — to induce former combatants to turn in their weapons in post-conflict zones. The famous Brazil-Haiti soccer match in Port au Prince in August 2004 — where prized tickets were exchanged for firearms as part of an effort to disarm rival factions in the country — is a prime example.

The reintegration of ex-combatants once they are demobilized and disarmed is a particularly challenging process. This challenge is greatest when ex-combatants are known to have committed atrocities in host communities. Reintegration requires that ex-combatants relinquish their military identity as their primary identity and learn to build a new identity linked to qualities and accomplishments valued in civilian life. Sport for peace initiatives can be helpful in this process. By mixing ex-combatants and non-combatants on the same teams, sport-based initiatives can help to replace military affiliations with new team-based bonds and relationships. The identities and status that ex-combatants derived from their military rank and prowess are replaced by community status gained through sport skills and accomplishments.

Sport also provides an important means for community members, once subjugated by armed combatants, to establish peer-to-peer relationships with ex-combatants based on equality instead of force. This is an important process for community members and ex-combatants alike. Where respect was formerly commanded at the point of a gun, it must now be earned on the playing field with everyone on an equal footing.

The reintegration of former child combatants poses particular challenges because children and youth have often been severely traumatized by their experiences. This issue is identified in Chapter 3 in relation to the psychosocial health of children and youth. It is also integral to reconciliation efforts because successful demobilization and reintegration can help to prevent continuing cycles of violence.<sup>101</sup>

Child soldier demobilization and reintegration during and after conflict is a complex and challenging process. The situation of girls in particular continues to require advocacy

and new approaches. As disarmament and demobilization programs are implemented, it is difficult to identify and gain access to women and girls who may have been abducted and taken as “wives” or dependants of the combatants. These women, girls and their children, often referred to as “camp followers,” move from place to place with their abductors, perpetuating a cycle of dependence.<sup>102</sup>

World Vision International’s *Youth Reintegration Training and Education for Peace Project* (YRTEP)<sup>103</sup> in Sierra Leone uses football, in addition to dances and a confession process, to help ex-combatant youth reintegrate into their communities.<sup>104</sup> The project was designed to provide non-formal education activities to 45,000 youth affected by the war — approximately half of whom are ex-combatants. On the first day of the process, ex-combatants and villagers play football on opposing teams. On the second day, ex-combatants participate in a confession process and a second match is played with the same teams. On the third day, ex-combatants and villagers play football again, but on integrated teams. This is followed by a three-month comprehensive training program for ex-combatants and non-combatants in areas such as: reintegration and sensitization for ex-combatants; vocational and life skills counselling; livelihood skills development; environmental protection; health; peace and conflict prevention education; and functional literacy and numeracy.<sup>105</sup> At the end of this period, the process is repeated.

While it is difficult to isolate the effect of the sport component of the program, the programs’ coordinator believes it has played a significant role in their 94% self-reported success rate. An independent external evaluation confirms that the program is meeting its objectives and making a significant difference in the lives of the young people participating, who feel they are accomplishing things that would not have been possible without the program.<sup>106</sup> Participants reported decreased violence on the part of youth who participated and improved functioning in the community.<sup>107</sup>

### **Reconstruction**

The use of sport for reconstruction has been largely focused on mine risk education (MRE) in post-conflict zones. This is accomplished through a variety of means, including using high-profile celebrity athletes as spokespeople and role models, using sport clubs as teaching platforms to communicate critical mine safety information to children, train coaches and physical education teachers in MRE, and integrating MRE into national physical education curricula.

The International Red Cross uses high-profile soccer celebrities to raise awareness and resources for the removal of land mines, as does UNICEF’s *Spirit of Soccer* (SOS) campaign in the former Yugoslavia, which combines football games with education on the dangers of land mines. *Spirit of Soccer*, now in its tenth year of programming, uses coaching clinics

(mainly soccer), physical education teacher-training programs, sport celebrity posters and a sport re-equipping campaign to spread its messages about mine risks and mine-safe behaviour. SOS implemented its first project in Bosnia and Herzegovina in 1996–1998, providing 7,500 children with sports and mine awareness training. In 1999 and 2000, these activities were extended to 2,000 children in Kosovo, where 5,000 mine awareness posters featuring football players like Ronaldo De Lima were also distributed.

Further programming has reached another 15,000 children and youth through 106 soccer clubs, schools, and children's organizations.<sup>108</sup> These successful activities were subsequently introduced into school curricula, are being incorporated into the Faculty of Physical Education curriculum at the University of Sarajevo, and will receive funding and recognition in the Federal Ministry of Sport's policy on physical education for young people.<sup>109</sup>

### 3 RECOMMENDATIONS TO GOVERNMENTS

The use of sport to prevent conflict and advance peace is a relatively new field and evidence-based guidance with respect to policies and programs is limited. However, from 1993 to early 2003, an experience-based learning initiative, the *Reflecting on Peace Practice Project*,<sup>110</sup> engaged more than 200 agencies and many individuals working on conflict around the world in a collaborative effort to learn how to improve the effectiveness of peace practice. The results of this research are summarized in "*Reflecting on Peace Practice Project 2004*."<sup>111</sup>

Many of the key findings from this project are aimed at international NGOs and international development agencies operating in conflict zones. However, the lessons are also useful to governments seeking to establish sport for peace initiatives in their own countries. Many of the recommendations that follow are derived from this work and are aimed at project and program implementation, rather than the policy level. Because most programs will involve governments working with local, NGO or multilateral partners, recommendations are generally targeted to governments and these partners.

It is important to remember that sport for peace initiatives can have diverse objectives. As is the case with any recommendations, when applying Sport for Peace recommendations to policies and interventions, their contexts should be considered.

### 3.1 POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

**Reference the use of sport to prevent conflict and build peace in national Sport for Development policies and in international development policies related to peace-building.**

Different governments will see value in different applications of sport for peace purposes — for instance, reintegration of former combatants, support for excluded groups, conflict prevention among refugee populations, or post-conflict reconciliation. Explicit reference to these uses of sport, however, will help to raise awareness of sport's potential and facilitate the integration of sport into broader government strategies.

**Include sport as a tool in government strategies, to address the challenges confronting excluded populations and to prevent conflicts arising from these challenges.**

Both developed and developing countries can benefit from a more systematic use of sport to build human and social capital in communities and provide marginalized individuals with experiences to enhance their health, self-esteem, life skills, employability, and social integration. Systematic approaches require targeted, resourced and sustained programs that are integrated at the policy level into broader government strategies. Such approaches must also allow for integration at the community level with related initiatives and organizations working to address the specific issues confronting excluded groups in their communities.

**Review the use of sport for nation-building purposes to ensure that the messages conveyed are peaceful and conducive to preventing conflict both within and outside the country.**

Competition is an essential dimension of all high-performance sport and a spur to excellence. However, the use of high-performance sport and athletes as tools to promote negative feelings toward opposing groups or nations undermines the spirit of international sport events. A negative approach and negative values erodes the capacity of sport to generate benefits at the community level. Sport for Development and Peace works only when governments send a consistent message about the positive values that sport represents.

**Observe the Olympic Truce.**

Governments, as members of the UN General Assembly, can call on and encourage armed opposition groups involved in conflict, without prejudice to their legal status, to respect the Olympic Truce.

## 3.2 PROGRAM RECOMMENDATIONS

Ensure an effective sport for peace program focus by first undertaking a context analysis that answers the following questions:<sup>112</sup>

**What is this conflict not about?** Identify areas where competing groups agree, share common beliefs, and continue to interact so that programs can build on these commonalities. Avoid easy or popular assumptions about the nature of the conflict because those assumptions may be wrong (e.g., inaccurately characterizing competition for resources as a religious conflict).

**What needs to be stopped?** Every conflict includes actions, situations and dynamics that must be stopped or interrupted to de-escalate conflict and restore peace (e.g., recruitment of young people into militia, arms trade, exploitation of natural resources to support armed factions, misuse of the media for propaganda purposes, or funding from diaspora groups). Identify contributing factors and the groups who are likely to resist changes.

**What are the regional and international dimensions of this conflict?** Forces outside the immediate local context (village, province, nation) can affect the conflict and these influences should be addressed.

The information gathered through this process can be used to identify a suitable program focus (including issues and participants), priorities, strategic points of intervention, and should help program organizers to match available skills and resources to the situation. It is important to avoid partial analyses based on pre-set theories of change and peace-building models, or analyses conducted from a distance with limited local input. This will distort the focus of initiatives and impede their effectiveness.<sup>113</sup>

**Understand how the sport for peace initiative will contribute to broader conflict prevention and/or peace-building strategies for the community/region/country before it is launched.**

Initiatives that are linked to larger strategies are more likely to have an impact on peace. All sport for peace initiatives become part of the context where the conflict is occurring and are therefore not neutral. Initiatives impact *dividers* — factors that are causing tension or that people are fighting about, and *connectors* — factors that bring people together and/or reduce tension. Sport for peace initiatives must be clear about the impact they are having and whether or not they are increasing or reducing dividers and connectors.<sup>114</sup>

**Consider whether it is appropriate or beneficial to coordinate with other peace partners before launching a program.**

It may not be feasible for a single program to engage all identified target groups or issues. In many cases, it may be more beneficial to coordinate with other peace partners who

are better placed or equipped. Coordination can overcome the tendency among many peace initiatives to focus uniquely on children, health workers, NGOs, church groups, etc. Coordination promotes the development of an overall strategy which addresses more difficult to reach groups, such as combatants and ex-combatants.<sup>115</sup>

### Consider gender impacts and ensure girls and women are fully included in all peace initiatives because they are key stakeholders in the peace-building process.

Many programs encounter cultural and religious barriers that make it challenging to reach women and girls. However many programs have been able to gradually overcome these obstacles. The football club *Espérance* in Rwanda, for example, has established a *Football for Peace* program based on a Brazilian model, where only girls can score goals. *Espérance* reports that initial resistance toward girls and women participating in sports has been overcome, with female attendance (including mothers and grandmothers) at events increasing from almost none to over 50% of spectators on some occasions. The program builds the skills and self-esteem of girls, improves boys' perceptions of girls' capacities, and provides women with opportunities for social interaction outside the home and a chance to actively participate in community peace-building dialogue and activities. *Espérance* engages women on multiple levels and contributes to their empowerment as essential stakeholders in the peace-building process.

### Address conflict and peace-building at the socio-political level and the individual level.

Research has shown that peace programs that focus only on change at the individual level, without linking or translating this into action at the socio-political level, have no discernible effect on peace. Programs that build trust and relationships across conflict lines may have a transformative effect on individuals' attitudes, perceptions and trust, but broader peace impacts are much greater when these personal transformations are linked to socio-political action.<sup>116</sup> The *Rebuilding the Community* component of the Peres Centre for Peace's *Twinned Peace Sports Schools* program in Israel is a good example of this. This integral aspect of a broader sports program works to empower young Palestinians and Israelis, fosters their community awareness, and encourages activism for positive change.

### Engage key people and larger target populations in sport for peace initiatives.

Approaches that concentrate on reaching large numbers of people but ignore key leaders and decision-makers and, conversely, approaches that target key leaders while ignoring the grassroots, have limited impact. Programs which address both groups through coordinated



strategies are more effective. Social change processes in general are most effective when they link the “grassroots,” or community level, to the “grassstops,” or leadership and decision-making level.<sup>117</sup> A dynamic exchange between the two is a necessary part of the process. For example, the association of many sport for peace programs with elite athletes creates a unique opportunity to mix “key people” with “more people.” Elite athletes not only attract a great deal of attention, but they also often have leverage with other key people in society. For example, key people have been incorporated into the *Football4Peace* program by bringing Arab and Jewish Israeli community leaders to the UK from Israel for training purposes. Similarly, *Open Fun Football Schools* in Bosnia-Herzegovina work with municipal leaders from opposing ethnic communities as a means of securing their commitment to administer and help fund joint children’s football programs that reach thousands of children and their families.

Sport for peace initiatives, that work on multiple levels (socio-political levels and individual levels) and embrace key people and large numbers of people, are likely to have the greatest impact. All sport for peace initiatives can be plotted on a simple matrix (see Figure 6.3) that represents the two axes mentioned above. Many programs operate in only one quadrant, while others may evolve to move into additional quadrants over time — either through direct action or indirectly through partnerships and coordinated support to other organizations and groups. Wherever a project is located on the matrix, organizations need to ask themselves who, and to what level, needs to be affected to produce significant change.<sup>118</sup>

**FIGURE 6.3 PEACE-BUILDING MATRIX**

	<b>MORE PEOPLE</b>	<b>KEY PEOPLE</b>
<b>INDIVIDUAL LEVEL</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All former child combatants</li> <li>• Families of former child combatants</li> <li>• Other community members</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Community leaders</li> <li>• Teachers</li> <li>• Coaches and top athletes</li> <li>• Heads of relevant NGOs/ UN/Gov’t organizations</li> </ul>
<b>SOCIO-POLITICAL LEVEL</b>	<p>Advocate for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Programs for ex-child combatants</li> <li>• Alternative education opportunities</li> <li>• More international focus on child protection measures</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Minister of Youth</li> <li>• Minister of Education</li> <li>• Minister of Sport</li> <li>• Minister of Employment</li> <li>• Elite athlete ambassadors</li> </ul>

Source: Adapted from CDA Collaborative Learning Projects, *Reflecting on Peace Practice Project* <sup>119</sup>

### Work with partners in a way that sends a positive ethical message to participating communities.

Implicit ethical messages transmitted by the way a government, agency or NGO works can send as strong a signal as the program itself. Attention must be paid to ensuring that the message sent is the right one.<sup>120</sup>

### Adapt and apply the principle of “do no harm” in all sport for peace initiatives.

Peace-building, by its nature, takes place in volatile and unpredictable environments. Sport for peace initiatives may be affected by forces beyond the control of program designers, or by simple human errors. Faulty projects can harm people by making a conflict situation worse. Research has shown that negative impacts from peace projects fall into six main categories (as outlined below). By adopting the principle of “do no harm,” each of the negative impacts can be weighed, giving systematic attention to understanding a conflict, its causes, actors, and dynamics.<sup>121</sup> Sport for peace actors can develop a balanced assessment of the negative and positive effects of actions at all levels,<sup>122</sup> and avoid making costly mistakes that are harmful to those they are trying to help:

**Worsening divisions between conflicting groups.** Programs can make divisions between groups worse by confirming or reinforcing prejudice, discrimination, or intolerance. This can result from inadequate analysis or skills, biased advocacy favouring one group, or failing to monitor the effects of bringing people together across lines of conflict. By neglecting to manage concerns and leaving them unresolved, old prejudices and divisions may be reinforced.

**Increasing danger for participants in peace activities.** Peace work can be dangerous and the people involved may be vulnerable to attack. Outside parties can increase dangers to participants by creating false expectations of security or creating additional real danger. Cooperation with outside organizations may place people in danger, or they may be lulled into a false sense of security by the apparent expertise and confidence of these organizations. Unrealistically high expectations and insufficient follow-up and support from such organizations can also expose local partners to attacks, burnout, and psychological trauma. Local and external partners need to openly discuss and analyze the differences in the risks they face and work together to prevent problems.

**Reinforcing structural or overt violence.** Peace initiatives can inadvertently reinforce asymmetries in power that underlie conflicts or legitimize structures that

systematically disadvantage certain groups. This inadvertent reinforcement usually arises from a lack of understanding about existing power structures. The effects of this reinforcement are typically problematic because they tend to favour those with power (inside or outside the country) and fail to challenge discriminatory behaviours. This results in disadvantaged groups perceiving the peace initiative as a reinforcement of the discrimination against them.

**Diverting resources from productive peace activities.** Diverting resources away from activities and resources that local people perceive to be central to conflict resolution can make peace more difficult to achieve. Outside partners often enter a situation with pre-conceived ideas they may be reluctant to relinquish even though local partners feel other issues are more central. International organizations may also hire local talent, diverting valuable resources from more productive, locally driven activities.

**Increasing cynicism.** Inadequate assessments of a situation before embarking on an initiative can set unrealistic expectations and can lead to a lack of transparency with local partners that gives rise to rumours and distrust. Cynicism can be aggravated if those in charge lack appropriate skills and training, or if old programs are simply re-labelled under the guise of peace-building to maintain funding. Thorough assessments prior to launching projects, coupled with a commitment to transparency, strong communication, and joint planning with local partners and participants can help to prevent this problem.

**Disempowering local people.** Programs that aim to empower local people can fail, or backfire, if appropriate care is not taken. Failure can result from: ignoring local priorities, engaging in redundant or unhelpful activities (as a result of not consulting local partners/participants), fostering dependency and ignoring local capacity-building opportunities, ignoring governments and creating competition between governments and/or NGOs, and not having an exit strategy that provides for a transition to sustainable local ownership of the program.

**Monitor all the variables of the program and be ready to change them to reduce possible negative impacts such as increased conflict.**

Issues pertaining to what, why, who, by whom, when, where and how — all matter to local participants and can affect the effectiveness of the program.<sup>123</sup> If any of these variables

lead to unanticipated negative impacts and aggravate existing dimensions of conflict, program designs should be changed.

### Be aware of the contexts and vulnerabilities of certain target populations in designing and delivering sport for peace initiatives.

Special attention needs to be paid to reintegrating child and female combatants. Children may not have any point of reference other than conflict and may not be accepted by their families. Women, in most cases, are more likely to have been the victims of sexual abuse. Cases such as these will require special attention.

### Ensure that sport for peace activities are inclusive of persons with disabilities — particularly those with a new disability resulting from conflict.

Persons with disabilities are among the most vulnerable in periods of conflict and ensuring their full inclusion in the community will help to reduce their vulnerability. At the same time, disability is a pervasive outcome of conflict and reintegration and healing cannot take place without addressing the needs of persons with new disabilities. Sport is an important means of helping persons with newly acquired disabilities to explore and adjust to the change in their capacities, to reduce community stigma associated with disability, and to focus the perceptions of community members and persons with disabilities on what they can do, rather than what they cannot do. Adapted sports, like sitting volleyball, that can be played by persons with and without disabilities are a powerful means of building this understanding in individuals and communities.

### Engage parents in programs for children and youth to build their confidence in the program and to reach out to a more diverse range of beneficiaries.

Although children represent an easy point of entry and may be the most appropriate initial targets, their parents are also important. Parents may be hard to reach because their opinions with regard to a conflict are often more entrenched than those of their children. However, changing their perceptions and engaging them in building relationships and trust across conflict divides is equally essential to the peace-building process and should be attempted. *Open Fun Football Schools*, for example, does this through workshops designed for the parents of participants. Some programs begin by inviting parents as spectators to peace-focused sport events, and then engaging them in more structured dialogue.

### Ensure that coaches and trainers are well trained in sport, conflict management, and peace-building techniques.

Peace-building is a complex process that requires highly skilled facilitators. Research

on effective peace programs emphasizes the importance and value of thoughtful, committed facilitators, and highlights the value of selecting and training volunteers or coaches to run the programs.<sup>124</sup> At the same time, the quality of the sport offered is equally important to building participants' skills and confidence and sustaining participation levels. Training that emphasizes the explicit integration of conflict prevention and peace-building values and messages in sport activities, combined with appropriate role model behaviour, will help to ensure a positive impact on participants.

For example, *Sport for Lebanese Children and Youth*, a sport for peace program in Lebanon, uses psychologists and education specialists to train their coaches. Other programs are directly linked to and/or created by peace-building institutions with in-house expertise in peace, conflict and mediation skills. *Twinned Peace Sports School* coaches meet monthly to discuss issues, receive guidance and socialize. *Football4Peace* has incorporated conflict resolution principles into football exercises,<sup>125</sup> and trains a mix of UK and local coaches in those principles, though local coaches may not initially be enthusiastic. One Palestinian coach admitted that he was originally only interested in the sporting components, but after seeing Palestinian and Israeli youth play together on the same teams, his opinion began to change: "I said I don't believe in peace. Maybe I do now...Maybe it's not too late for us."<sup>126</sup>

### Use existing social spaces where people cross in natural ways to leverage the inherent attraction of such spaces and the platform they provide for sport activities.

Markets, hospitals, schools, street corners, cattle dips, youth soccer clubs—the list of social spaces is long and different in every context. Social spaces can be effectively leveraged to affect the whole community.<sup>127</sup> Newly created sport spaces can be combined with other important community uses to maximize their attraction and use. In Southern Sudan, for example, a non-profit strategic design firm has proposed the construction of a football pitch which will also act as a water storage and filtration device to combat local drought conditions. The result is a social space for community interaction, economic activity and cross-cutting development activities.<sup>128</sup> Plans call for the use of shipping containers abandoned by aid agencies as water storage devices. Because these containers were also used as detention units during recent conflicts, the project has the added potential to transform negative reminders of the past conflict into sources of life and well-being.

### Aim for year-round, long-term initiatives when the objective is to change perceptions and build relationships and trust across conflict lines.

Long-term, year-round initiatives can be supplemented with, but should not be replaced by,

one-off events. Building relationships and trust in post-conflict contexts are challenging processes and require sustained long-term commitment. This is evident in programs like those delivered by *PeacePlayers International*, which aim to engage participants in year-round programs over a period of several years. In the case of the *Homeless World Cup*, a high-profile event is linked to year-round social inclusion programs that help to create positive feedback and boost the self-confidence and skills participants develop over the course of the year. The high profile of the *Homeless World Cup* also enables implementing organizations to connect with hard-to-reach potential participants because of their knowledge of, and interest in, the event.

### Capitalize on spontaneous events to mobilize longer-term sport for peace initiatives with targeted impact.

Spontaneous events can serve as a catalyst to develop longer-term sport for peace initiatives. *Surfers for Peace* is a compelling example of an effective program that arose from a spontaneous event. In the case of *Surfers for Peace*, the chance viewing of a television news story quickly grew to involve key people and institutions, as well as elite athletes, in the promotion of peace and economic opportunity.

### Respect the value of competition and build programs on the respect that competition can stimulate.

Competition in a well-managed context, especially for youth and adults, may help bonding processes and weaken the imprint of military command structures on ex-combatants. Well-designed sport programs based on the best values of sport offer a positive, healthy and peaceful alternative to armed combat as a means of achieving status in a community. Team sports can also replace military structures in creating opportunities for friendship, mutual support and belonging. For example, the *Youth Reintegration Training and Education for Peace Project* in Sierra Leone uses football to help ex-combatants break down identity structures tied to conflict roles and replace these with new identity structures anchored in a more positive and peaceful relationship to their communities and themselves.

### Chose the appropriate sport to use in sport for peace initiatives, giving due consideration to local socio-cultural, sport and program contexts.

Choosing an appropriate and relevant sport can positively affect the outcome of sport for peace initiatives. Key considerations include: the sport's popularity; the acceptability of girls' and women's participation; the potential for it to be adapted to include participation

by persons with disabilities; whether it is an indigenous sport; and whether it is identified with particular socio-political factions or has a history of giving rise to violent conflict. The *Tegla Loroupe Peace Foundation*, for example, organizes running events for peace in African regions with a tradition of producing elite middle- and long-distance runners. *PeacePlayers International*, however, chooses not to use football in areas where it considers the sport to have a divisive history.

### Take advantage of opportunities to mobilize high-profile elite athletes to serve as public spokespeople and role models for peace.

Whether they intend to or not, celebrity athletes possess significant influence in society, particularly with regard to young people for whom they are often role models. They also possess the capacity to attract and focus national, and even global, media attention. These attributes allow them to make a powerful contribution to conflict prevention and peace initiatives. This was demonstrated by the *Peres Centre for Peace* when it arranged for a live Internet broadcast of a peace football match between Real Madrid and a team of elite Jewish Israeli and Palestinian players. This match highlighted the potential for peace between the groups-in-conflict and provided young people with an opportunity to meet their heroes and, more importantly, to hear them delivering a strong peace message. Not all athletes, however, are skilled peace-builders by nature. Peace initiatives must select athlete spokespeople whose values and behaviour are consistent with the messages they are expected to carry, and should ensure athletes are adequately trained to fulfill their role in a program.

### Target programs to the broader community, trying not to limit programs to disadvantaged populations or ex-combatants.

Success in peace-building relies on building shared identity and relationships across societal divides. Programs which target their benefits narrowly to one group because they are disadvantaged, risk perpetuating the social barriers these groups already experience. There is also a risk of creating resentment against targeted groups, in cases where they are offered benefits others are not. While some targeted interventions are always necessary, these should be combined with program elements that promote broader community involvement and participation to build relationships and trust across different groups (e.g., youth from different socio-economic backgrounds, ex-combatants and non-combatants, persons with and without disabilities, men and women, elite athletes and grassroots sport teams).

**Involve targeted beneficiaries, partners and other stakeholders in the evaluation and documentation process to increase ownership and improve the flow of honest, useful feedback between a program's stakeholders and its organizers.**

Involving beneficiaries in evaluation processes leads to a more accurate assessment of the program's strengths and weaknesses, creates more ideas for its improvement, helps to build capacity in participating individuals and organizations, and fosters more sustained participation and support. All sport for peace program participants — no matter how young — have a view on what the program means to them and its impact. *Sport for Lebanese Children and Youth Affected by Armed Conflict*, for instance, provides participating children with cameras to document their activities and present their perspective on the program's impact on their lives.

**Ensure that sport for peace initiatives are not only evaluated at the program level, but also for their impact on the peace environment at large.**

Most programs already assess the effectiveness of their activities against specific program objectives. Few, however, undertake the more difficult challenge of trying to assess what impact — if any — their initiative is having on the larger peace landscape, of which they are usually a very small part. Attempting to understand the connection between individual projects and the broader peace environment is a valuable process. It invites a more strategic approach to peace-building and compels organizations to be conscious about what they are doing and why. Often it is impossible to isolate the specific impacts of a particular program in a scientific sense. Nonetheless, the process invites reflection and offers valuable opportunities for re-assessing programs in mid-course and improving effectiveness overall.

The *Reflecting on Peace Practice Project* proposes that organizations assess the impact they are having on the broader peace environment by examining:<sup>129</sup>

- The contribution to stopping a key driving factor of the war or conflict.
- The contribution to building a momentum for peace by causing participants and communities to develop their own initiatives in relation to critical elements identified in the context analysis.
- The resulting creation or reform of political institutions to handle grievances in situations where such grievances genuinely drive the conflict.
- The potential of people to increasingly resist violence and provocations to violence.
- The resulting increase in people's security and their sense of security.



The more criteria that a sport for peace initiative meets, the more effective it will be in advancing peace on the broader scale, in addition to the benefits it offers to participating individuals and communities.

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# DEVELOPING EFFECTIVE POLICIES AND PROGRAMS







# CHAPTER 7

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Left:

A Minister of Sport and Youth participates in a “play day” with school children at Burma Camp in Accra, Ghana on the margins of the third Executive Committee meeting of the Sport for Development and Peace International Working Group (SDP IWG). Delivered by local coaches, play day activities are specially-designed to promote holistic child development.

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Previous page:

Ministers and Heads of State participate in a panel discussion at the 2004 Athens Roundtable Forum, “Harnessing the Power of Sport for Development and Peace.”

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# 1 CONTEXT: DEVELOPING EFFECTIVE POLICIES AND PROGRAMS

## 1.1 THE STRATEGIC CHALLENGE

All governments play an active and crucial role in developing and supporting the sporting life of their nations. This is true at the high-performance level and in community sport systems for people of all ages and abilities. Few governments, however, make intentional and active use of sport on a large scale as a tool for advancing their domestic and international development and peace objectives.

As the preceding chapters outlined, evidence and experience have demonstrated that sport can be a low-cost, high-impact tool for advancing a broad range of development objectives, in particular, but not limited to, the Millennium Development Goals. At present, the use of sport to advance these goals has largely been confined to numerous small-scale projects, often developed at the margins of existing government policy and program frameworks, with limited funding, capacity and prospects for long-term sustainability.

To fully harness sport’s potential, Sport for Development and Peace approaches must be accepted and integrated into the broader development toolkit, and the necessary national policies, investment, and capacity must be in place to permit programs to be scaled-up on a national basis.

Moving to this reality presents a dual challenge. First, development agencies must be aware of, and open to, the use of sport as a tool for development and peace, integrating



it into their international assistance policies and programs. Second, national governments must be aware of the power of sport to help them meet their domestic development goals, and they must recognize the importance of integrating sport into their development priorities and strategies. This is particularly important because ownership of policies and initiatives must reside with national governments and, at the project level, with local communities. Ownership is critical to the long-term success and sustainability of initiatives. Without local ownership, initiatives are unlikely to receive the support and commitment required to succeed.

Once key policies are in place, governments must address the challenge of developing programs and ensuring they have the capacity to deliver them effectively. The jurisdictional division of responsibilities with provincial/state and local governments for education and other matters means that many initiatives and programs will require partnerships with other levels of government to secure their active participation and support. Where national governments do not have direct jurisdiction, they may use their convening power, shared-cost partnerships, and other forms of influence to encourage positive action by other levels of government.

In virtually all cases, Sport for Development and Peace programs will involve mobilizing partnerships with a broad range of actors, including sport organizations, NGOs, the private sector, and multilateral agencies, to harness expertise, leverage resources, and coordinate capacity-building and program activity. Many of these partnerships will arise from the policy-making process itself, which should ideally involve the full range of Sport for Development and Peace stakeholders.

## 1.2 ADOPTION AND IMPLEMENTATION OF SPORT FOR DEVELOPMENT AND PEACE

The process of adopting and implementing Sport for Development and Peace policies and practices will differ from country to country. The process will depend, among other factors, on the current country context, the history of the government's involvement in the issue, the existing political framework, and the government's public policy development process.

While no linear, step-by-step process exists, there are four general areas of activity that most governments embark on when developing and integrating Sport for Development and Peace policies and practices into national and international agendas. These areas of activity include:

- Mobilizing government support and action;
- Policy development;
- Program design and implementation; and
- Resource mobilization, partnerships and collaboration.

The following sections highlight key considerations within each of these areas, and provide policy and program recommendations to governments, recognizing that governments will adopt those that are applicable and adapt them to their own contexts.

While the previous chapters focused on the use of sport to achieve specific development and peace objectives (namely health, child and youth development, gender empowerment, inclusion of persons with disabilities, and peace-building), this chapter addresses key cross-cutting themes that relate to all Sport for Development and Peace initiatives undertaken by governments, and the policies and actions necessary to their success. The recommendations in this chapter build on and reinforce ideas and recommendations presented in the preceding chapters and provide a framework for harnessing the power of Sport for Development and Peace.

### 1.3 GUIDING PRINCIPLES

Governments interested in mobilizing Sport for Development and Peace purposes are invited to consider the following guiding principles, derived from the experiences of governments, commonly agreed upon development principles (such as those set out in the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness<sup>1</sup>), and generally accepted best practices in policy and program development.

To ensure the relevance, quality, and effectiveness of their Sport for Development and Peace policies and programs, governments are encouraged to adopt the following key guiding principles.

#### **Adopt participatory policy and program development and consultation processes.**

Policy and program development processes should engage all key stakeholder groups. These inclusive processes will help define needs, opportunities, and priorities. Stakeholder groups may include but are not limited to:

- Target beneficiary populations;
- Relevant government departments and agencies;
- Local governments;
- Schools;
- Sport federations and national Olympic and Paralympic committees;
- Domestic and international civil society organizations engaged in development;
- Private sector organizations involved with sport and/or development;
- UN and other multilateral partners, including regional bodies such as the European Union and African Union;
- Donor governments (where applicable); and
- Media.

### Apply an evidence-based approach.

An evidence-based approach makes effective use of research evidence, best practice guidance, and effective consultation and evaluation mechanisms. This approach will help to identify needs, contribute to effective program and policy design, and ensure continuous improvement.

### Adopt a rights-based focus.

A rights-based focus recognizes and enforces the right of individuals to sport and play, as set out in relevant international treaties (some of which are identified in Chapters 2-6) and national laws, and seeks to promote inclusion and prevent discrimination.

### Commit to learning and development.

A learning and development focus emphasizes the need to share lessons learned with Sport for Development and Peace practitioners and policy-makers and to collect feedback from stakeholders to continuously adapt and improve policies, initiatives, processes, and relationships.

### Commit to transparency and accountability.

A commitment of this nature can foster trust, effective partnerships, public support, and successful policies and programs.

## 2 RECOMMENDATIONS TO GOVERNMENTS

The recommendations that follow have been distilled from the experiences of more than 50 national governments involved in the SDP IWG, and consultations with representatives from UN agencies, sport organizations, NGOs, and the private sector. To be relevant to all governments, the recommendations that follow are necessarily high-level. Governments seeking more detailed analysis and examples are encouraged to consult the SDP IWG's companion report, *Sport for Development and Peace: Governments in Action*, which examines the experiences, challenges and lessons learned from 34 national governments that have been actively developing and implementing Sport for Development and Peace policies and programs around the world.

## 2.1 MOBILIZING GOVERNMENT SUPPORT AND ACTION

Raising awareness and building support among national political leaders and senior government officials are critical first steps in mobilizing government action around Sport for Development and Peace. In some countries, participation in the SDP IWG has been the catalyst to generate this kind of support. However, in most cases, ongoing outreach and awareness-building within governments by Sport for Development and Peace proponents is required to build the cross-governmental support needed for the broad-based and integrated use of sport to advance development and peace objectives.

### Recommendations: Mobilizing Government Support and Action

#### Undertake outreach and raise awareness.

Sport for Development and Peace proponents may encounter a general lack of awareness of sport's potential as a development and peace tool. They may find that sport is perceived as a luxury relative to more compelling development needs and is, therefore, unsuitable for investment by developing nations' governments or donor agencies. Systematic outreach and awareness-raising efforts are needed to address this view. It is crucial to communicate and provide evidence that sport can be an effective means of addressing diverse societal challenges and reducing the public costs associated with these challenges.

#### Position sport as a tool for development and peace.

While sport has inherent value in and of itself, it is critical that it not be positioned as a development goal on its own. Sport is a means to achieve other development goals, especially those linked to the MDGs. It is also important to be clear about the risks associated with the use of sport in particular contexts, as well as the limits to what sport can achieve.

#### Access existing knowledge resources.

Governments can now access a modest but growing range of research and knowledge resources that can be used to demonstrate sport's capacity to impact diverse development and peace objectives. Resources available can also provide guidance on how to use sport for these purposes. Sport for Development and Peace proponents are encouraged to collect and make use of research evidence, case studies, reports on other governments' activities and materials that provide:

- Evidence of sport's impact in relation to specific development and peace objectives;
- Examples of sport's use for these ends; and
- Evidence-based guidance on how to design effective Sport for Development and Peace policies and programs.<sup>2</sup>

### Build on the priorities of other government departments.

Support for Sport for Development and Peace policies and initiatives is most likely when initiatives are designed to help individual departments and governments achieve their specific priorities and honour their international commitments under relevant treaties, conventions and agreements. Many government departments pursue development objectives that can benefit from the inclusion of sport in their policy and program approaches. Sport has particular relevance for departments targeting health, child and youth development and education, inclusion of persons with disabilities, the advancement of gender equality, and conflict prevention and peace-building. Additional impacts can be demonstrated in the areas of employment, economic development and environmental sustainability.

When building on government priorities, proponents of Sport for Development and Peace are encouraged to:

- Conduct outreach and engagement to inform different departments of the ways that sport can help them to advance their mandate and objectives and create a critical mass of supporters and partners, in leadership positions and at the operational level.
- Contact officials in other departments and provide them with evidence of sport's impact on development goals relevant to them. Forwarding relevant reports and resource documents, meeting with key individuals to discuss how sport can be used to address issues of shared interest, and meeting with those most likely to be interested are all good ways to start.
- Include finance departments in Sport for Development and Peace dialogue because they are the lead department in the budget-making process. Table 7.1 provides examples of how to convey the importance of Sport for Development and Peace to achieving finance ministry priorities.
- Engage other departments that can contribute to advancing Sport for Development and Peace in key ways. For example, departments of transportation and urban planning play a critical role in planning and designing community infrastructure like indoor and outdoor sport facilities, trails, etc.

Children participate in a Sport for Development and Peace program in the occupied Palestinian territory. Sport and play activities can be strong tools for peace-building, particularly in regions affected by conflict.”

Right To Play



**TABLE 7.1 REDUCED PUBLIC COSTS ASSOCIATED WITH SPORT FOR DEVELOPMENT AND PEACE<sup>3</sup>**

<b>SOME WAYS THAT SPORT FOR DEVELOPMENT AND PEACE CAN REDUCE PUBLIC COSTS</b>		
<b>Increased physical activity levels</b>	➔	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reduced health care costs associated with chronic diseases and mental illness</li> <li>• Reduced costs to individuals from lost work and health care expenses incurred due to illness</li> <li>• Reduced employer payroll costs due to reduced absenteeism</li> <li>• Economic benefits from improved productivity</li> </ul>
<b>Higher childhood vaccination rates</b>	➔	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reduced health care costs due to reduction in preventable childhood illnesses</li> <li>• Reduced productivity losses due to absences by family members to care for sick children</li> </ul>
<b>Reduced adolescent health risk behaviour</b>	➔	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reduced health care costs due to reduction in high-risk adolescent pregnancies</li> <li>• Reduced health care costs arising from diseases linked to smoking</li> <li>• Reduced health care and policing costs from reduced alcohol and drug use</li> </ul>
<b>Improved HIV prevention knowledge</b>	➔	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reduced health care and productivity costs as a result of fewer HIV infections</li> </ul>
<b>Increased access to reproductive health information and services</b>	➔	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reduced health care costs due to improved maternal and infant health</li> </ul>
<b>Increased school enrollment and attendance</b>	➔	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increased economic productivity and reduced social costs due to better educated and more employable youth</li> </ul>
<b>Acquisition of transferable skills by youth</b>	➔	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increased productivity and reduced social costs due to higher youth employment</li> </ul>
<b>Prevention of youth crime and involvement in armed militia and gangs</b>	➔	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reduced policing and security costs and reduced costs to victims of crime due to lower crime rates and less militia/gang activity</li> </ul>
<b>Increased employability of persons with disabilities</b>	➔	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reduced cost pressure on families and income-assistance programs due to increased employment among persons with disabilities</li> </ul>
<b>Job creation through sport equipment manufacturing</b>	➔	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reduced cost pressure on income assistance programs and increased productivity from increased employment and skills training</li> </ul>

### **Identify and work with internal and external champions.**

As more people, organizations and governments learn about Sport for Development and Peace, champions are likely to emerge who are willing to reach out to, engage, and inspire other potential supporters. These champions can be elected or non-elected officials within the government, or advocates external to government such as athletes and beneficiaries of Sport for Development and Peace programs. Champions are essential to capturing the

attention of potential target audiences and demonstrating the power of sport, often in personal and highly compelling ways. Because key champions can be particularly helpful in promoting Sport for Development and Peace within government, it is important to identify them and to find ways to work together.

### **Establish ongoing mechanisms for inter-departmental collaboration.**

Once sufficient interest is established, cross-departmental mechanisms for coordinating policy and program development and implementation are useful. These mechanisms promote knowledge-sharing, help to prevent duplication of effort between departments, and promote a more integrated approach to programming, which is often welcomed by external partners and communities.

Two commonly used approaches for inter-departmental collaboration include:

- Establishing formal and informal inter-departmental working groups. Sport for Development and Peace efforts can be strengthened, for example, when sport and development departments meet and collaborate on a regular basis.
- Creating sub-committees focused on specific areas such as research or capacity-building. Sub-committees can establish clear, shared objectives, a small number of priority goals and a work plan. These steps can help motivate departments to participate and will ensure progress in building Sport for Development and Peace knowledge, support and capacity.

### **Identify and work with key external Sport for Development and Peace stakeholders.**

Governments can benefit from engaging and consulting national sport federations and organizations, relevant NGOs, UN and other multilateral agencies, and interested private sector partners. These bodies can act as powerful advocates and provide valuable expertise, insight, resources and partners for government initiatives. National advisory councils or roundtables can effectively mobilize leaders from all sectors and foster more effective policies and programs through coordinated consultation and action.

### **Liaise with Sport for Development and Peace proponents in other governments.**

Governments can benefit from exchanging knowledge and experiences with their peers on a regional basis and participating in international ministerial meetings, working groups, and conferences. Policies and initiatives undertaken in these fora can be useful catalysts for advancing policy and program development at home. They also offer opportunities for coordinated initiatives and partnerships with other governments in areas such as

research, capacity-building, and joint programs, increasing the resources available to participating governments.

### Utilize other international networks.

Governments can expand on knowledge exchange, coordinated initiatives, partnerships, and resources by participating in broader cross-sectoral Sport for Development and Peace networks and events (e.g., Magglingen and Next Step Conferences, IOC Sport for All Congress) which offer access to the knowledge and expertise of Sport for Development leaders from the private sector, sport federations and organizations, NGOs, and the international research community.

### Build public support for Sport for Development and Peace.

Public engagement and support is critical to the success of Sport for Development and Peace efforts. This is particularly true when there are questions about whether investment in sport should be a government priority, given other compelling development needs. A clear public message positioning sport as an effective way to meet these needs is essential in these circumstances.

To build public support for Sport for Development and Peace, government proponents are invited to:

- Draw on research evidence and examples from successful programs/projects to tell a compelling story about what sport can do. Involving the media to deliver this message can help build public awareness and support;
- Capitalize on the role that athletes, teams and sport figures can play as advocates; and
- Engage civil society actors in shaping Sport for Development and Peace policies and programs because they can provide important insights and be strong advocates.

## 2.2 POLICY DEVELOPMENT

Once there is sufficient awareness and support for Sport for Development and Peace within a government, policy development is the next step. This can be approached through two primary avenues: 1) establishing a distinct national Sport for Development and Peace policy and related legislation, programs, and investments that flow from this; and 2) integrating Sport for Development and Peace into existing national and international development and sport policies and related legislation, programs, and investments.

Ideally, governments will pursue both avenues because they are mutually reinforcing. However, some governments may feel that a separate national Sport for Development and Peace policy is not appropriate to their needs. A government may choose instead to focus



on integrating the use of sport into other pre-existing policies. This may involve including Sport for Development and Peace in:

- National sport policies;
- International assistance strategies and policies;
- National poverty reduction and development strategies; and
- Other key policy frameworks (e.g., health, education, children and youth, indigenous peoples, persons with disabilities, women, settlement of migrants and refugees, and employment).

Because contexts vary across countries, and within countries according to the policy objectives and target populations involved, there are no one-size-fits-all policies or approaches that governments can adopt. Each government must undertake its own consultations and analysis to determine where sport can be used effectively to achieve development objectives and how best to do this. Governments can, however, build on the lessons learned from other governments already making use of sport in this way. These lessons are incorporated in the recommendations that follow.<sup>4</sup>

## Recommendations: Policy Development

### Determine the need for a national Sport for Development and Peace policy.

In some cases, a separate Sport for Development and Peace policy may be appropriate and necessary to advance Sport for Development and Peace. This must be assessed on a case-by-case basis.

### Leverage existing development and sport policies and programs as potential platforms for Sport for Development and Peace activity.

These should be assessed individually to ensure their suitability for the purpose.

### *Governments of developed nations* - Consider integrating Sport for Development and Peace into international development and international sport policies.

Sport can be a valuable tool to advance international assistance priorities. Unless Sport for Development and Peace is integrated into international assistance priorities, international and grassroots NGOs will have difficulty securing funding for projects and developing country governments will be denied an important source of funds for scaling-up successful national programs.

*Governments of developing nations* - **Consider integrating Sport for Development and Peace into Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers and National Development Frameworks.**

Sport can be an effective tool for advancing many of the development objectives already reflected in these strategic documents. This requires that sector-wide approaches and policy frameworks agreed to by developing country governments and donor partners opt for an inclusive approach to sport. Without an inclusive approach, national scale-up of effective programs may be difficult.

**Incorporate lessons learned when developing any Sport for Development and Peace policies.**

SDP policies are more likely to be effective if they:

**Define the terms “Sport for Development and Peace” and “sport” for the purposes of the policy.** There are many ways to define these terms and governments should choose definitions that are relevant and appropriate to their national context.

**Reinforce the attainment of development and peace objectives, especially the Millennium Development Goals, where appropriate.**

**Explicitly acknowledge other relevant international obligations and commitments under UN conventions, treaties and other instruments of international law.** Some of these commitments were identified in the preceding thematic chapters.

**Commit to ensuring programs, projects, initiatives and events embody and promote the best values of sport.** These values include fair play, respect for others, teamwork, cooperation, inclusion and excellence.

**Commit to full inclusion.** Governments are encouraged to recognize the importance of sport as a right and give particular attention to ensuring the full inclusion of girls and women, persons with disabilities, people living in poverty, people living in urban and rural communities, indigenous peoples, and other disadvantaged populations as appropriate to each country’s context. Inclusion involves ensuring:

- Equal access to sport opportunities, facilities and programs;
- Participation in policy and program development and implementation; and
- Accommodation of the needs and preferences of each group in the selection of sport activities and the design of programs and facilities.

**Draw on the full range of physical activities, sports and games (traditional and non-traditional) as a means of encouraging participation.**

**Commit to working in partnership with diverse Sport for Development and Peace stakeholders and other government departments.** Partnerships can facilitate the leveraging of resources (financial, human and physical), expertise, training, facilities, and equipment.

**Consider community access to sport.** To ensure safe and equitable access to sport, when designing SDP policies, governments are encouraged to ensure that communities have access to:

- Safe, accessible and appropriate sport spaces and facilities;
- Low-cost sport and play equipment; and
- Trained coaches, teachers, program staff and volunteers.

**Ensure a supportive legal framework.** Where appropriate, laws and regulations may need to be put in place to make SDP policies effective.

**Include a clear monitoring and evaluation framework.** This framework should invite feedback from affected target populations and policy implementation partners, enabling governments to assess the effects of their policies on an ongoing basis and to make necessary corrections.

## 2.3 PROGRAM DESIGN AND IMPLEMENTATION

Sport for Development and Peace lies at the intersection of international development and sport. A well-managed and integrated approach to both is essential to ensuring quality programs with maximum impact.

Sport for Development and Peace programs are most effective when they have clear development objectives and are delivered as part of broad, integrated approaches to addressing development issues. At the national level, this means ensuring programs are integrated with other related policy and program efforts. At the local level, this means working closely with organizations and partners to ensure initiatives are locally driven, coordinated, mutually reinforcing, and that they leverage partnerships to optimize available resources.

The recommendations below are based on best practices derived from existing programs and generally accepted development and programming principles — most notably the importance of supporting local ownership and capacity development.

## Recommendations: Program Design and Implementation

Strive to ensure that all Sport for Development and Peace programs incorporate best practices.

Sport for Development and Peace programs are more likely to be effective if they:

**Possess clear development objectives, goals, target populations, and success indicators.**

**Actively involve target populations in the design, planning and implementation stages.**

**Give priority to development objectives over sport objectives.** This way, general community sport programs can contribute to a more equitable distribution of social and health benefits.

**Embody and actively communicate and reinforce the positive values of sport.** These values include fair play, respect for others, teamwork, cooperation, inclusion and excellence.

**Deliver a quality sport experience that is fun and enjoyable.** All sporting activities must be supported by appropriately screened and trained coaches, teachers, program leaders and volunteers.

**Recognize the holistic development of individual participants throughout the life cycle.** Emphasize choice and participation for everyone.

**Empower participants.** Ensure participants have a direct voice in decisions concerning the program's design and operation, and a role in program delivery.

**Consider the culture, gender and age of target groups and take into account their material realities, risk factors, specific needs and capacities.** Draw on available best-practice information, input from knowledgeable stakeholder organizations, and consultation with target group members to weigh these factors.

**Identify and address barriers to participation.** Ensure the inclusion of girls and women, persons with disabilities, individuals living in poverty, migrants and refugees, indigenous peoples, out-of-school and unemployed youth, and other socially and economically excluded groups.

**Build local capacity.** Plan to deliver, grow and sustain program activities, ensuring the participation of skilled and trained personnel — teachers, coaches, community workers, volunteers, and program participants themselves.

**Work in an integrated and coordinated way with other national or community level programs, organizations and initiatives to achieve shared objectives.**

**Leverage resources.** Utilize partnerships, shared initiatives with other organizations, and participation in broader learning and knowledge exchange processes.

**Adopt and implement child protection principles consistent with the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.**

**Deliver activities in an accessible, safe, clean, and hazard-free environment.**

**Facilitate access to low-cost equipment and other supports to participation.** Ensure the greatest possible participation through access to sport clothing, adaptive equipment for persons with disabilities, sanitary products for girls and women, etc.

**Raise awareness of the need for broader social and economic changes and supports.** Where necessary, advocate for everyone to enjoy access to quality opportunities for sport, physical activity and play.

**Commit to sustainability over the long term.**

**Build in clearly defined monitoring and evaluation mechanisms from the outset.** Design mechanisms to support ongoing learning and continuous program improvement and invite input from participants, delivery organizations, program partners and the broader community.

**Share lessons learned with other Sport for Development and Peace practitioners and policy-makers.**

**Adapt lessons learned from the sport and development sectors.** Tailor lessons learned from other sectors and programs to meet local needs and realities.

**Bring together Sport for Development and Peace stakeholders at the national level to address coordination issues.** Coordinating diverse Sport for Development and Peace actors across sectors is an ongoing challenge. Governments

can play a leading role in addressing this challenge by convening national stakeholders to address these issues. This has the added benefit of fostering opportunities for partnerships and maximizing the use of limited resources.

*Donor governments and agencies* - **Uphold the principles outlined in the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness.**

The effectiveness and impact of donor support for Sport for Development and Peace programs and initiatives can be enhanced by:

- Eliminating duplication of effort and rationalizing activities to make them as cost-effective as possible;
- Implementing shared arrangements and simplifying policies and procedures to encourage collaboration and alignment with other donor agencies, developing-country governments and NGO partners; and
- Helping to strengthen partner countries' development strategies and build their capacity to implement these strategies effectively.

**Strengthen the capacity of government departments, sport federations and organizations, and other partners to design and administer programs to enhance their quality and sustainability.** Mechanisms for knowledge exchange and training are important and can be implemented on a regional as well as a national basis. In addition to governments of developing nations, multilateral agencies and donor governments have an important role to play in supporting capacity-building efforts.

2.4  
**RESOURCE  
MOBILIZATION,  
PARTNERSHIPS AND  
COLLABORATION**

Many governments have identified the challenge of obtaining resources to support their Sport for Development and Peace initiatives as a hurdle to be overcome. In some instances, this is due to lack of awareness of sport's potential as a development tool within the government, making it difficult to access resources through regular budgetary processes. In these instances, outreach and engagement with other departments is needed to build greater support. In other cases, there is broad support for Sport for Development and Peace, but governments are faced with general resource constraints that limit the funds available. In these cases, finding ways to expand available resources and optimize their use is critical. Emphasizing both the low cost of sport-based programs, and their effectiveness in preventing or reducing larger health, social, or economic costs is an important strategy (see Table 7.1 for examples of how Sport for Development and Peace can contribute to reducing public costs).

Governments can mobilize a broad range of resources through collaborations and partnerships internally across government departments and with external partners. Success depends on each government's ability to work through the inevitable challenges that arise from differences between organizations and sectors when it comes to operating cultures, values, processes, and time frames.

### **Recommendations: Resource Mobilization, Partnerships and Collaboration**

#### **Consider the full range of resources that can be mobilized to advance Sport for Development and Peace initiatives.**

In addition to funding, there are a variety of resources (e.g., sport, development, technical and management expertise; sporting goods and services; access to facilities; media and communications opportunities; global networks) which can be used to support Sport for Development and Peace initiatives. Governments are encouraged to use collaborations and partnerships to leverage these resources wherever possible. While most governments have significant experience collaborating with other governments, multilateral organizations, and civil society organizations, many have far less experience partnering directly with the private sector on development programs. The International Business Leaders Forum has undertaken valuable research to understand key success factors for Sport for Development and Peace partnerships involving governments and the private sector, as well as potential barriers that governments and businesses must overcome in order to partner successfully.<sup>5</sup>

#### **Harness the power of mass sport events as public education and communication platforms, and deploy elite athletes as ambassadors and role models for Sport for Development and Peace initiatives.**

The rise of sport as entertainment and its dissemination through mass media makes sport one of the most powerful and globalized communication platforms in the world. Global and national professional sport federations and organizations can be highly effective partners for governments interested in harnessing this power for public education and communication campaigns to advance development and peace objectives. The global reach of high-profile sport events has also amplified the reach and impact of star athletes, making them invaluable spokespeople, role models, and partners in Sport for Development and Peace.

## Recognize and take advantage of the critical role of civil society organizations as partners in Sport for Development and Peace.

Governments can benefit from identifying key civil society stakeholders and designing processes to:

- Engage them in policy and program development;
- Keep them informed of government Sport for Development and Peace activity;
- Invite their collaboration in leveraging resources for Sport for Development and Peace activity; and
- Facilitate networking and knowledge exchange opportunities.

International and national development NGOs, amateur sport federations and organizations, and local grassroots organizations play a critical role in Sport for Development and Peace.

In most cases, these organizations are:

- Essential intermediaries between governments and the people and communities they are working to assist;
- Primary delivery agents (in addition to schools and workplaces) for many Sport for Development and Peace programs;
- Repositories of community, development and/or sport knowledge, expertise, and leadership; and
- Largely trusted and respected by their members and stakeholders.

As such, these groups are necessary and central partners when it comes to Sport for Development and Peace policy and program advocacy, development and implementation.

## Encourage multilateral organizations and regional bodies and commissions to support and participate in Sport for Development and Peace national efforts.

Many multilateral organizations actively promote Sport for Development and Peace efforts, funding grassroots projects, undertaking research, facilitating networking and knowledge exchange, and integrating Sport for Development and Peace into their own priorities, policies and programs. Governments can build on this interest by inviting these organizations (in particular UN agencies, programs and funds) to participate in national initiatives and engaging them in inter-governmental processes aimed at research, knowledge exchange, policy development, and capacity-building.

## Engage municipal and local governments and communities in the design and delivery of Sport for Development and Peace initiatives.

Because most Sport for Development and Peace initiatives are delivered in communities,



municipal and local governments are logical partners for governments. In particular, municipal governments can:

- Provide local insights and expertise;
- Provide access to local sport facilities (for which they are often responsible);
- Ensure programs are integrated with other local efforts to achieve shared objectives; and
- Mobilize local support, resources and participation.

Use of local facilities and efforts to ensure that these are accessible to everyone are particularly dependent on the goodwill and cooperation of municipal and local partners.

### **Involve formal educational institutions and community-based learning organizations in the design and delivery of Sport for Development and Peace initiatives.**

Primary and secondary schools are prime sites for the delivery of Sport for Development and Peace initiatives aimed at school-going children and youth. Post-secondary institutions play a critical role in providing the teachers, coaches and staff who deliver programs with the skills and expertise they need to work effectively. In both respects, schools are essential partners and merit a place in Sport for Development and Peace policy and program design processes.

### **Involve the private sector in Sport for Development and Peace initiatives.**

The private sector can provide a wide range of skills, expertise and resources which include:

- Funding;
- Technical and project management skills;
- Branding, communications and marketing expertise and services;
- Global relationships and networks;
- Management support; and
- Employee volunteering and fundraising activity.

Workplaces are also important delivery sites for some Sport for Development and Peace initiatives such as physical activity, health education, and sport volunteerism.

### **Maximize the private sector's contribution by actively seeking opportunities to partner with international, national and local businesses.**

Engaging businesses, local businesses in particular, can help to build support and capacity and increase the sustainability of local and national Sport for Development and Peace initiatives. Private sector interest in Sport for Development and Peace is likely to increase

during the next two to three years, with a series of high-profile sporting events unfolding in developing countries, including the Beijing Olympic and Paralympic Games (2008), the Delhi Commonwealth Games (2010), and the FIFA World Cup in South Africa (2010). At the same time, robust tools to support cross-sector partnerships now exist. Governments and businesses can use these tools to overcome challenges such as a lack of shared language, limited best practice norms, and a sometimes uneven degree of mutual trust between companies, governments, the development community, and sport organizations.

Governments are well-positioned to pursue partnerships with the private sector. They can:

- Invite companies to add a Sport for Development and Peace component to existing and future sport sponsorship and marketing arrangements;
- Suggest linkages between companies' sport sponsorships and their existing corporate sustainability commitments;
- Build on existing company involvement in community-based sport development activities (e.g., encouraging participation, helping to finance start-up of community-based sport organizations, training sports coaches, etc.);
- Solicit the contribution of sporting goods and services (design, production, and distribution); and
- Make connections between government Sport for Development and Peace initiatives and companies' core business objectives (e.g., health development for pharmaceutical companies; community safety and security for tourism industries; and an educated work force for information and communications technology companies).

### Optimize efforts to secure partners for Sport for Development and Peace initiatives.

This can be done by:

**Clarifying the objective of the initiative and its target population(s).** This is particularly important information for potential funding partners who may have specific funding requirements, or for private sector institutions seeking to develop new markets or with already defined corporate social responsibility and philanthropic objectives.

**Developing clear program parameters that will help define partnership parameters.** For example, establish budget, types of resources required, start and end dates, project milestones, success indicators, plans for monitoring and evaluation, other prospective partners and their roles.

**Preparing a brief and compelling program rationale.** This should include supporting research evidence or success stories from comparable programs elsewhere to demonstrate that sport can have the intended development impact.

**Identifying diverse ways in which potential partners can contribute to the Sport for Development and Peace initiative.** Partners can contribute to initiatives in many ways and they are often looking for a more engaged role than simply providing funding. With regard to the latter, however, matched-funding programs<sup>6</sup> are a potentially effective means to encourage support for Sport for Development and Peace initiatives.

**Identifying opportunities for direct engagement of the partner's employees.** The opportunity to have staff, board members, or private sector employees directly engaged in community initiatives is important to many partners. All parties benefit and learn from opportunities to feel good about their organization's role in the community (locally or globally). Opportunities for engagement may involve volunteering in programs, fundraising, providing technical expertise or assistance with project management.

**Describing related sponsorship and marketing opportunities.** Not all partners are seeking public relations opportunities but these can be valuable and can make some opportunities more attractive to partners.

**Demonstrating the government's clear support for the initiative.** It is important that governments be strongly committed to any partnership opportunities they present to potential partners. Governments must come prepared to discuss the contribution they propose to make — whether this takes the form of funding or other kinds of contributions.

**Establish or designate a lead office to serve as the primary point of contact for all Sport for Development and Peace stakeholders seeking or engaged in partnerships with the government.**

Stakeholders can find it confusing and sometimes frustrating to navigate different government departments on their own. This can be a significant impediment to collaboration. A designated office or primary contact can function as a one-stop source of information on all relevant government initiatives for companies, civil society organizations and sport federations and organizations, helping to connect them to initiatives that meet their objectives and needs. This office could also support departments seeking business partners by helping them to identify appropriate target firms, develop effective solicitation strategies, and administer public-private partnership agreements and conflict of interest guidelines.

## Consider the full range of fiscal mechanisms available for raising funds to supplement those secured through external donors and partnerships.

These mechanisms may include:

- General government revenues;
- Dedicated taxes (e.g., on alcohol, tobacco, etc.);
- Proceeds from authorized national lottery and gaming programs;
- Interest from special-purpose government endowment funds or foundations; and
- Citizen- or corporate-designated tax revenues.<sup>7</sup>

Governments are encouraged to avoid user fees, as these can be a significant barrier to participation for low-income individuals and families.

## Explore tax policy options that provide incentives to communities, businesses, and individuals to support Sport for Development and Peace initiatives, and related tax options for removing barriers to the success of these initiatives.

For example, national governments may give preferential tax treatment (e.g., tax credits or deductions) to: municipal recreational facilities that are fully accessible; companies that implement eligible workplace sport and physical activity programs, donate sporting equipment or services, or financially sponsor Sport for Development and Peace initiatives; and individuals who make financial donations to Sport for Development and Peace initiatives. Governments may also choose to reduce taxes that increase the cost of sport equipment, clothing, participation, and facilities.

## Work with other governments and stakeholders to develop regional and international forums and mechanisms for collaborative Sport for Development and Peace research, knowledge exchange, and best practice development.

As interest in Sport for Development and Peace grows, governments are no longer confined to working alone to develop their initiatives. International collaborations have shown that governments and other Sport for Development and Peace stakeholders, including multilateral agencies, benefit when they work together. In particular, all governments benefit from opportunities to exchange knowledge and work with their peers on shared challenges. The International Platform on Sport and Development and the Magglingen and Next Step conferences provide excellent examples of existing forums for knowledge exchange. Donor governments and multilateral agencies can help by supporting further coordinated inter-governmental and cross-sectoral efforts in relation to research, knowledge exchange and capacity-building.

Donor governments (and multilateral agencies) may wish to consider giving priority to supporting collaboration in the following target areas:

- Research to evaluate and enhance sport's impact as a development tool;
- Policy development and implementation;
- Program development and implementation;
- Partnership development;
- Resource mobilization;
- Human capacity-building;
- Inclusion strategies and methods;
- Low-cost sport facility and equipment development; and
- Monitoring and evaluation.

In some cases, regionally based collaborations may be most effective because they bring together governments operating in similar cultural or development contexts that are responding to related opportunities and challenges. In other cases, it will be important to involve a broader cross-section of governments to ensure diverse perspectives and contexts are taken into account and that the tools and strategies that are developed are relevant to more than a narrow range of contexts.

Successful collaboration of this kind is likely to make a valuable contribution to the broad adoption and effective implementation of the recommendations outlined in this chapter. Governments have diverse experiences, capacities and expertise to share. All can benefit from focused opportunities for joint research, knowledge exchange, and capacity development that enable them to better leverage their own resources, make progress against their goals, and contribute to the progress of Sport for Development and Peace worldwide.

### 3 CONCLUSION

Today, international momentum around Sport for Development and Peace is growing. With this momentum comes mounting evidence of the value and development power of sport. Although *Harnessing the Power of Sport for Development and Peace: Recommendations to Governments* will provide governments and practitioners with a solid foundation on which to build their own policies, programs and initiatives, the recommendations contained herein will need to evolve over time to reflect the research, experience and best practices that are emerging.

There is tremendous enthusiasm among Sport for Development and Peace proponents to fully harness the development power of sport. Although significant progress has been made, much work remains. By embracing sport as an innovative tool for development and peace today, and by joining together in collaborative undertakings in the future, governments can strengthen their efforts to overcome development challenges and attain the Millennium Development Goals.

**ENDNOTES**

1-7

- 1 *Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness*, endorsed 2 March 2005, online: World Bank <<http://www1.worldbank.org/harmonization/Paris/FINALPARISDECLARATION.pdf>>.
- 2 For further information on where to find research evidence, case studies, reports on activities of other governments, and other related material, please consult the Resources section in the Appendix.
- 3 Evidence supporting the information presented in this table is provided in Chapters 2-6.
- 4 For more information on the work governments are currently doing in the area of Sport for Development and Peace, see the SDP IWG Secretariat's compendium report *Sport for Development and Peace: Governments in Action* (Toronto: SDP IWG Secretariat, 2008).
- 5 For more information, governments are encouraged to consult the International Business Leaders Forum's 2008 report, *Shared Goals Through Sport*, (London, UK: 2008), online: International Business Leaders Forum <[http://www.iblf.org/media\\_room/general.jsp?id=123994](http://www.iblf.org/media_room/general.jsp?id=123994)>.
- 6 These are programs wherein the government commits to match all funds raised through funding partnerships up to a maximum amount. These programs are attractive to funders because they increase the impact of donations.
- 7 This refers to revenues derived from formalized opportunities for citizens or corporations to designate a portion of their tax payments to a particular program or expenditure area when they file their tax returns.



A photograph of a group of children in an outdoor setting, possibly a schoolyard. Many of the children have their hands raised in the air. One child in the upper left is holding a large red ball. The background shows a green field and some trees under a bright sky. The image is overlaid with a semi-transparent blue horizontal band across the top, and pink text is superimposed on the image.

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Sporting activities promote teamwork and can build trust and respect among participants.

Sport and Play for Traumatized Children and Youth, Bam, Iran

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Team sports offer opportunities for children to work together towards a common goal.

Right To Play

## APPENDIX 1

### SPORT FOR DEVELOPMENT AND PEACE INTERNATIONAL WORKING GROUP (SDP IWG) MEMBERS AND PARTICIPANTS

#### SDP IWG STEERING GROUP

#### AUSTRIA

**Barbara Spindler**

Deputy Head of Department, General Sport Affairs, PR and International Relations  
Federal Chancellery, Sport Division,  
Government of Austria

#### CANADA

**Joanne Butler**

Director, International Sport Directorate  
Canadian Heritage, Government of Canada

**Michael McWhinney**

Manager, International Sport for  
Development Unit  
Canadian Heritage, Government of Canada

#### NORWAY

**Sverre Lunde**

Senior Adviser, Section for Global  
Cultural Cooperation  
Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Government  
of Norway

#### SECRETARIAT

**Johann O. Koss**

Head of the SDP IWG Secretariat  
President and CEO, Right To Play

#### SIERRA LEONE

**Saidu B. Mansaray**

Director for Sports  
Ministry of Youth and Sports,  
Government of Sierra Leone

#### SWITZERLAND

**Lukas Frey**

Advisor, Sport and Development  
Swiss Agency for Development  
and Cooperation, Federal Department of  
Foreign Affairs, Government of Switzerland

#### UNITED NATIONS

**David Winiger**

Head of Office  
United Nations Office on Sport for  
Development and Peace

**SDP IWG  
SECRETARIAT  
RIGHT TO PLAY**

**LINDSAY GLASSCO**

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Sport for Development  
and Peace International Working Group

**ANNA ALEXANDROVA**

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Sport for Development  
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**SIBEL CICEK**

Policy Analyst  
Sport for Development  
and Peace International Working Group

**CORA CONWAY**

Coordinator  
Sport for Development  
and Peace International Working Group

**SDP IWG  
BUREAU AND  
EXECUTIVE  
COMMITTEE  
PARTICIPANTS**

**NATIONAL GOVERNMENTS**

Angola	Greece	Papua New Guinea
Argentina	Guatemala	Peru
Australia	India	Russia
Austria	Israel	Rwanda
Azerbaijan	Jordan	Sierra Leone
Benin	Kenya	South Africa
Brazil	Lebanon	Spain
Burundi	Malawi	Sri Lanka
Canada	Mali	Sudan
Cape Verde	Malaysia	Switzerland
Chad	Mozambique	Tanzania
China	Namibia	Thailand
Colombia	Netherlands	Uganda
Costa Rica	Nigeria	United Kingdom
El Salvador	Norway	Zambia
Ethiopia	Pakistan	Zimbabwe
Germany	Palau	
Ghana	Palestinian National Authority	

**UN AGENCIES, PROGRAMS AND FUNDS**

International Labour Organization (ILO)  
United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF)  
United Nations Development Program (UNDP)  
United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO)  
United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP)  
United Nations Fund for International Partnerships (UNFIP)  
United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR)  
United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN HABITAT)  
United Nations Office for Partnerships (UNOP)  
United Nations Office on Sport for Development and Peace (UNOSDP)

**INTER-GOVERNMENTAL AGENCIES**

African Union (AU)  
European Commission (EC)  
Supreme Council for Sport in Africa (SCSA)

**SPORT FEDERATIONS**

Commonwealth Games Association of Canada (CGAC)  
Fédération Internationale de Football Association (FIFA)  
International Olympic Committee (IOC)  
International Paralympic Committee (IPC)

**CIVIL SOCIETY**

Handicap International  
International Council of Sport Science and Physical Education (ICSSPE)  
Northeastern University  
streetfootballworld

## APPENDIX 2

### SELECTED SPORT FOR DEVELOPMENT AND PEACE MILESTONES

PHASE 1  
**EMBEDDING  
 SPORT INTO  
 INTERNATIONAL  
 HUMAN RIGHTS  
 FRAMEWORKS**

#### 1952 — UNESCO recognizes sport as a tool for education

The United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) incorporates sport into its program at the seventh session of its General Conference in Paris. Since then, UNESCO has been working to foster international cooperation in the field of sport for education.

[http://portal.unesco.org/education/en/ev.php-URL\\_ID=2032&URL\\_DO=DO\\_TOPIC&URL\\_SECTION=201.html](http://portal.unesco.org/education/en/ev.php-URL_ID=2032&URL_DO=DO_TOPIC&URL_SECTION=201.html)

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#### 1959 — UN Declaration on the Rights of the Child recognizes every child's right to play and recreation

The UN Declaration on the Rights of the Child states that: "The child shall have full opportunity for play and recreation" and "...society and the public authorities shall endeavour to promote the enjoyment of this right."

<http://www.unhchr.ch/html/menu3/b/25.htm>

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#### 1978 — UNESCO recognizes sport and physical education as a fundamental right

UNESCO adopts the International Charter of Physical Education and Sport at the General conference of its twentieth session in Paris and proclaims that sport and physical education is a fundamental right for all.

[http://www.unesco.org/education/information/nfsunesco/pdf/SPORT\\_E.PDF](http://www.unesco.org/education/information/nfsunesco/pdf/SPORT_E.PDF)

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#### 1979 — Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women recognizes women's right to sport

The UN General Assembly adopts the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of

Discrimination against Women which affirms women's right to participate in "recreational activities, sports and all aspects of cultural life." (Part III, Article 13).

<http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/cedaw/>

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### **1989 — Adoption of Convention on the Rights of the Child reinforces every child's right to play**

The Convention on the Rights of the Child is adopted at the UN General Assembly. Article 31 reinforces a child's right to engage in play.

<http://www.unhchr.ch/html/menu3/b/k2crc.htm>

## PHASE 2 LINKING SPORT TO DEVELOPMENT AND PEACE INITIATIVES

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### **1991 — Commonwealth Heads of Government acknowledge the unique role of sport**

The Heads of Government of the Commonwealth's 72 member countries acknowledge the unique role of sport in fostering the Commonwealth's goal of eliminating poverty and promoting people-centred development, and call on member countries to recognize the importance of sport as a vehicle for development.

[http://www.thecommonwealth.org/Internal/20723/34457/harare\\_commonwealth\\_declaration/](http://www.thecommonwealth.org/Internal/20723/34457/harare_commonwealth_declaration/)

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### **1993 — UN General Assembly revives the Olympic Truce**

The UN General Assembly revives the ancient Greek tradition of ekecheiria, calling for a truce during the 1994 Lillehammer Olympic Games to encourage a peaceful environment and ensure the safe passage and participation of athletes. The UN General Assembly has adopted six similar Resolutions since 1993.

<http://www.sportanddev.org/data/document/document/98.pdf>

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### **1999 — MINEPS III Punta Del Este Declaration calls for sport for all**

The third International Conference of Ministers and Senior Officials Responsible for Physical Education and Sport (MINEPS III) is held in Punta Del Este, Uruguay. Ministers adopt the Declaration of Punta Del Este, committing to focus on "sport for all" with particular attention on the participation of children and women.

[http://www.unesco.org/education/educprog/eps/EPSSanglais/MINEPS\\_ANG/declaration\\_of\\_punta\\_del\\_estea\\_ang.htm](http://www.unesco.org/education/educprog/eps/EPSSanglais/MINEPS_ANG/declaration_of_punta_del_estea_ang.htm)

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### **2000 — UN General Assembly adopts Millennium Declaration**

The UN General Assembly adopts the Millennium Declaration, reiterating Member States' commitment to the Convention on the Rights of the Child, the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

<http://www.un.org/millennium/declaration/ares552e.htm>

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### 2001 — UN Secretary-General appoints Special Adviser on Sport for Development and Peace

UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan invites Adolf Ogi, former President of Switzerland, to be his Special Adviser on Sport for Development and Peace, and appoints him Under-Secretary-General on Sport for Development and Peace.

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### 2002 — UN General Assembly adopts A World Fit for Children

The UN General Assembly adopts A World Fit for Children, a resolution calling for the participation of governments, multilateral agencies, civil society, the private sector and the media to ensure children's enjoyment of all human rights and fundamental freedoms, including equal access to educational and recreational services, and accessible sports and recreational facilities in schools and communities worldwide.

[http://www.unicef.org/specialsession/docs\\_new/documents/A-RES-S27-2E.pdf](http://www.unicef.org/specialsession/docs_new/documents/A-RES-S27-2E.pdf)

## PHASE 3 EMERGENCE OF A GLOBAL MOVEMENT

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### 2002 — Sport for Development and Peace Roundtable convened at the Olympic Games

International non-governmental organization Right To Play hosts an international Roundtable Forum on Sport for Development and Peace, bringing together leading international figures and fostering the establishment of the UN Inter-Agency Task Force on Sport for Development and Peace.

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### 2003 — UN Inter-Agency Task Force reaffirms sport as a tool for development and peace

The UN Inter-Agency Task Force on Sport for Development and Peace releases its report, *Sport for Development and Peace: Towards Achieving the Millennium Development Goals*, outlining how sport can contribute to the achievement of the MDGs.

<http://www.un.org/themes/sport/reportE.pdf>

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### 2003 — First Magglingen Conference on Sport for Development and Peace

Government, UN and NGO delegates attending the International Conference on Sport and Development in Magglingen, Switzerland, issue the Magglingen Declaration affirming the benefits of sport as a tool for development and peace and their commitment to making the world a better place through sport.

[http://www.magglingen2005.org/downloads/magglingen\\_decl\\_english.pdf](http://www.magglingen2005.org/downloads/magglingen_decl_english.pdf)

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### 2003 — First International Next Step Conference on Sport for Development and Peace

Nearly 200 Sport for Development experts and practitioners from 45 countries gather in

Amsterdam, the Netherlands, for the Next Step experts meeting, galvanizing grassroots Sport for Development initiatives and launching the Next Step Toolkit, a practical resource for Sport for Development and Peace practitioners.

<http://www.toolkitsportdevelopment.org>

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### **2003 — Swiss Academy for Development launches International Platform on Sport and Development**

The International Platform is launched to provide an online information clearinghouse and communication tool exclusively dedicated to the cause of Sport for Development and Peace.

<http://www.sportanddev.org>

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### **2003 — UN General Assembly adopts first Sport for Development and Peace Resolution**

The Resolution, entitled Sport as a Means to Promote Education, Health, Development and Peace, identifies sport as a means to achieve wider development goals including education, health and peace.

<http://www.who.int/moveforhealth/publications/resolutions/en/index.html>

## **PHASE 4 MOMENTUM AND GROWTH**

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### **2004 — UN General Assembly adopts second Sport for Development and Peace Resolution**

The Resolution, also entitled Sport as a Means to Promote Education, Health, Development and Peace, expresses renewed commitment to Sport for Development and Peace.

<http://www.who.int/moveforhealth/publications/resolutions/en/index.html>

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### **2004 — European Commission launches European Year of Education through Sport (EYES)**

EYES aims to sensitize Europeans to the importance of sport as a tool for education, with the European Commission co-funding 185 local, regional, national, and EU sport and education projects.

<http://www.eyes-2004.info/254.0.html>

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### **2004 — WHO adopts Global Strategy on Diet, Physical Activity and Health**

Concerned about the global burden of non-communicable diseases, the WHO calls for national action plans and cross-sectoral partnerships to promote physical activity worldwide.

<http://www.who.int/dietphysicalactivity/en/>



**2004 — National Governments establish an inter-governmental policy initiative, the Sport for Development and Peace International Working Group**

A Roundtable Forum held at the 2004 Athens Summer Olympic Games showcases the potential of sport for development and leads to the creation of the Sport for Development and Peace International Working Group (SDP IWG), a four-year initiative engaging national governments, UN agencies and civil society organizations in harnessing the power of Sport for Development and Peace.

<http://www.iwg.sportanddev.org>

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**2004 — MINEPS IV targets sport for health**

The fourth International Conference of Ministers and Senior Officials Responsible for Physical Education and Sport (MINEPS IV) is held in Athens. Ministers cite the need for urgent action to include women in sport, ensure sport is recognized as an important factor in physical and ethical development, and to ensure that governmental, intergovernmental, non-governmental, national, international and multilateral bodies are all working to ensure sport is a key component of health programs and policies.

<http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0013/001374/137455e.pdf>

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**2005 — UN proclaims International Year for Sport and Physical Education (IYSPE)**

UN Member States call on decision-makers at all levels to come together in partnership to support sport and physical education activities and sport-based development worldwide. Initiatives are undertaken to highlight the vital contribution that sport and physical education for all can make toward achieving the Millennium Development Goals and to ensure that sport and physical education are acknowledged by policy-makers as valuable development tools.

<http://www.un.org/sport2005/>

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**2005 — UN General Assembly adopts Resolution: Building a Peaceful and Better World through Sport and the Olympic Ideal**

This Resolution recognizes the role of sport as a tool for achieving the Millennium Development Goals, the value of sport as an educational tool for youth, and the contribution of sport to mutual understanding, fair play, friendship and solidarity.

[http://www.torino2006.org/ITA/OlympicGames/bin/page/C\\_3\\_page\\_ita\\_63\\_spalla\\_paragrafo\\_1\\_attachments\\_s\\_allegato\\_2\\_object\\_s.pdf](http://www.torino2006.org/ITA/OlympicGames/bin/page/C_3_page_ita_63_spalla_paragrafo_1_attachments_s_allegato_2_object_s.pdf)

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**2005 — Second Magglingen Conference on Sport for Development and Peace**

The Magglingen Call to Action is adopted by the 400 delegates attending from 70 countries. Participants resolve to use sport to promote education, health, development and

peace goals. Governments and multilateral agencies are called on to take a lead role in developing policy dialogue on strategies to integrate Sport for Development and Peace programming into national and international agendas.

<http://www.maggingen2005.org>

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### **2005 — European Parliament adopts Resolution on Development and Sport**

The EU confirms its support for sport as a low-cost, high-impact tool for development and acknowledges sport's positive contribution to social inclusion and cohesion, intercultural dialogue, environmental understanding and the reintegration of children in post-conflict situations.

<http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?pubRef=-//EP//NONSGML+MOTION+B6-2005-0633+0+DOC+PDF+V0//EN>

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### **2005 — Second International Next Step Conference on Sport for Development**

Next Step 2005, in Livingstone, Zambia, is the first Sport for Development conference to be held in Africa, attracting 180 participants, with extensive representation from the developing world.

<http://www.nextstep2005.no>

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### **2005 — World Summit confirms UN support for Sport for Development**

This high-level plenary meeting of the UN General Assembly issues a declaration confirming UN support for sport as a vehicle to achieve tolerance, understanding, peace and development. The summit encourages proposals to the General Assembly and calls for a plan of action on sport and development (Article 145).

<http://www.un.org/summit2005/documents.html>

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### **2006 — Special Adviser to the UN Secretary-General releases the Final Report on the International Year of Sport and Physical Education (IYSPE)**

Adolf Ogi presents the final report on IYSPE to the UN Secretary-General on April 3, 2006, summarizing initiatives and events undertaken by 106 countries worldwide.

[http://www.un.org/sport2005/resources/IYSPE\\_Report\\_FINAL.pdf](http://www.un.org/sport2005/resources/IYSPE_Report_FINAL.pdf)

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### **2006 — UN General Assembly adopts third Sport for Development Resolution**

Sport as a Means to Promote Education, Health, Development and Peace builds on previous resolutions and recognizes the need to maintain momentum generated by the IYSPE 2005.

<http://www.who.int/moveforhealth/publications/resolutions/en/index.html>

---

**2006 — Sport for Development and Peace International Working Group releases Preliminary Report**

*Sport for Development and Peace: From Practice to Policy* is the first examination of Sport for Development and Peace activities of national governments. It focuses on 13 governments, providing analysis, key findings and lessons learned.

<http://iwg.sportanddev.org/en/sdp-iwg-preliminary-report-from-practice-to-policy/index.htm>

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**2006 — UN Secretary-General sets out a UN Plan of Action on Sport for Development and Peace**

Presented to the UN General Assembly, *Sport for Development and Peace: The Way Forward* reviews the IYSPE 2005 activities of national governments and sets out a UN Plan of Action on Sport for Development and Peace.

<http://www.un.org/sport2005/resources/statements/N0653114.pdf>

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**2006 — African Union launches the International Year of African Football 2007**

The African Union Assembly proclaims 2007 the International Year of African Football, recognizing sport, and football in particular, as instruments for the promotion of unity, solidarity, peace and reconciliation, and the prevention of HIV and AIDS.

<http://www.africa-union.org/root/AU/Conferences/2007/January/SA/football/html/IYOAF.htm>

---

**2007 — First African sport convention addresses sport for education and development**

The first international gathering of sport professionals in Africa was organized in Dakar, Senegal, from February 1–3, 2007, bringing together over 200 participants from five continents to discuss sport for education and development in Africa.

<http://www.sportanddev.org/data/document/document/303.pdf>

---

**2007 — EU White Paper on Sport acknowledges the increasing social and economic role of sport in the European Union**

This White Paper is a result of broad-based consultations with sport and development stakeholders, culminating in the Pierre de Coubertin Action Plan which will guide the Commission in its sport-related activities during the next few years.

[http://ec.europa.eu/sport/index\\_en.html](http://ec.europa.eu/sport/index_en.html)

---

**2007 — EU Treaty includes sport as an area of competence for the EU**

The EU Treaty establishing a Constitution for Europe allows the EU to support, coordinate or supplement the actions of the member states in the social, educational and cultural aspects of sport.

[http://europa.eu/lisbon\\_treaty/index\\_en.htm](http://europa.eu/lisbon_treaty/index_en.htm)

### **2007 — Third International Next Step Conference highlights the value of educating and developing young people through sport**

The conference also provides a platform for young sports leaders from across the world to contribute to the use of sport to attain the MDGs.

<http://www.nextstep2007.org/>

---

### **2007 — Ministers and high-level officials from 43 countries adopt Accra Call for Action on Sport for Development and Peace**

The Call for Action reiterates participants' commitment to fully harness the development power of sport.

<http://iwg.sportanddev.org>

---

### **2008 — Joint Parliamentary Assembly of African, Caribbean and Pacific States and the European Union debates Sport for Development and Peace**

For the first time in the history of the Joint Parliamentary Assembly, Sport for Development and Peace is debated by the Members of Parliament from over 170 countries.

[http://www.europarl.europa.eu/intcoop/acp/10\\_01/default\\_en.htm](http://www.europarl.europa.eu/intcoop/acp/10_01/default_en.htm)

---

### **2008 — Right to recreation, leisure and sport for persons with disabilities is recognized**

The Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities enters into force and reinforces the right of people with disabilities to participate on an equal basis with others in recreation, leisure and sporting activities.

<http://www.un.org/disabilities/>

---

### **2008 — UN Secretary-General appoints second Special Adviser on Sport for Development and Peace**

UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon invites Wilfried Lemke, former Senator from Bremen, Germany to be his Special Adviser on Sport for Development and Peace, and appoints him Under-Secretary-General on Sport for Development and Peace.

---

### **2008 — SDP IWG Final Report *Harnessing the Power of Sport for Development and Peace: Recommendations to Governments* is launched**

The first comprehensive report on Sport for Development and Peace, including policy recommendations to national governments and evidence supporting the development power of sport, is launched at the 2008 Beijing Summer Olympic Games.

## APPENDIX 3

### SPORT FOR DEVELOPMENT AND PEACE RESOURCES

The following is a selection of key publications, organizations and documents related to Sport for Development and Peace. Many of these resources were used to inform this report. For a more comprehensive inventory, and to keep up to date on new developments and initiatives, please see the International Platform on Sport for Development and Peace, online: <http://www.sportanddev.org>.

#### KEY PUBLICATIONS

Adapted Physical Activity Quarterly.

<http://www.humankinetics.com/APAQ/journalAbout.cfm>

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**KEY  
ORGANIZATIONS**

Active Living Alliance

<http://www.ala.ca>

Agita Mundo Network/World Day for Physical Activity

[http://www.agitamundo.org/site\\_en.htm](http://www.agitamundo.org/site_en.htm)

Argentina National Social Sport

<http://www.deportes.gov.ar/>

British Heart Foundation National Centre

<http://www.bhfactive.org.uk>

Canadian Association for the Advancement of Women and Sport and Physical Activity

<http://www.caaws.ca/>

Canadian Fitness and Lifestyle Research Institute

<http://www.cflri.ca/eng/>

Caribbean Healthy Lifestyle Project

<http://www.sportanddev.org/en/projects/see-all-projects/the-caribbean-healthy-lifestyle-project.htm>

Cerebral Palsy International Sports & Recreation Association

<http://www.cpisra.org/index.htm>

CISS (Deaflympics)

<http://www.deaflympics.com/>

Commonwealth Advisory Body on Sport Secretariat

<http://www.thecommonwealth.org/Internal/144435/cabos/>

EduSport Foundation

<http://www.edusport.org.zm/>

European Women and Sport

<http://www.ews-online.org/en/>

European Year of Education through Sport 2004

<http://europa.eu/scadplus/leg/en/lvb/l35008.htm>

Fédération Internationale de Football Association

<http://www.fifa.com/>

Gender Equity in Sport

<http://bailiwick.lib.uiowa.edu/ge/>

Global Measles Initiative

<http://www.measlesinitiative.org>

Grassroot Soccer Foundation

<http://www.grassrootsoccer.org/>

Grumeti SportWorks (Tanzania)

<http://www.sportanddev.org/en/projects/see-all-projects/grumeti-sportsworks-tanzania.htm>

Handicap International

<http://www.handicap-international.org.uk/>

Harassment and Abuse Prevention in Sport

<http://www.harassmentinsport.com>

International Association of Physical Education and Sports for Girls and Women

<http://www.iapesgw.org/>

International Blind Sports Federation

<http://www.ibsa.es/eng/>

International Council of Sport Science and Physical Education (ICSSPE)

<http://www.icsspe.org/>

International Disability in Sport Working Group (IDISWG)

<http://www.sportanddev.org/en/organisations/see-all-organisations/international-disability-in-sport-working-group-idiswg.htm>

International Federation for Persons with Intellectual Disability

<http://www.inas-fid.org/>

International Federation of Adapted Physical Activity

<http://www.ifapa.biz/>

International Foundation for the Olympic Truce

<http://www.olympictruce.org>

International Idea (IDEA)

<http://www.idea.int>

International Labour Organization — Sport for Development and Peace

<http://www.ilo.org/public/english/universitas/sport/index.htm>

International Olympic Committee

<http://www.olympic.org>

International Paralympic Committee

<http://www.paralympic.org>

International Sport and Culture Association

<http://isca-web.org/english/>

International Sports Organization for the Disabled

[http://www.paralympic.org/release/Main\\_Sections\\_Menu/Contacts/International\\_Sports\\_Organization\\_for\\_the\\_Disabled\\_IOSDs/](http://www.paralympic.org/release/Main_Sections_Menu/Contacts/International_Sports_Organization_for_the_Disabled_IOSDs/)

International Working Group on Women and Sport (IWG)

<http://www.iwg-gti.org/>

International Year of Sport and Physical Education 2005

<http://www.un.org/sport2005/>

Ishraq (Population Council)

[http://www.popcouncil.org/projects/TA\\_EgyptIshraq.html](http://www.popcouncil.org/projects/TA_EgyptIshraq.html)

Japanese Association for Women and Sport

<http://www.jws.or.jp/>

Johns Hopkins Center for Communication Programs

<http://www.jhuccp.org/>

Kicking AIDS Out!

<http://www.kickingaidsout.net/>

LEARN & Play (Afghanistan)

<http://www.fifa.com/aboutfifa/worldwideprograms/footballforhope/programmes/newsid=512707.html>

Mathare Youth Sports Association

<http://www.mysakenya.org/>

Moving the Goalposts Kilifi

<http://www.mtgk.org/>

National Center on Physical Activity and Disability (NCPAD)

<http://www.ncpad.org>

On the Move

<http://www.caaws.ca/onthemove/index.htm>

OSAGI (Office of the Special Adviser on Gender Issues and the Advancement of Women)

<http://www.un.org/womenwatch/osagi/>

Peres Center for Peace

<http://www.peres-center.org>

Physical Activity Policy Research Network

<http://prc.slu.edu/paprn.htm>

Play the Game

<http://www.playthegame.org/>

Right To Play International

<http://www.righttoplay.com>

Roll Back Malaria Partnership

<http://www.rollbackmalaria.org/>

Segundo Tempo (Brazil)

<http://portal.esporte.gov.br/snee/segundotempo/>

Special Olympics International

<http://www.specialolympics.org>

Sport and Peace

<http://www.peace-sport.org>

Sports for Kids

<http://www.sports4kids.org/>

Sports for Life

<http://www.sportsforlife.net/>

Stop TB Partnership

<http://www.stoptb.org/>

streetfootballworld

<http://www.streetfootballworld.org>

TBTV.org — Run for Life program

[http://www.stoptb.org/wg/advocacy\\_communication/acsmga/assets/documents/run4life\\_ACSM\\_140207.pdf](http://www.stoptb.org/wg/advocacy_communication/acsmga/assets/documents/run4life_ACSM_140207.pdf)

Thematic Network of Adapted Physical Activity

<http://www.kuleuven.ac.be/thenapa/>

True Sport

[www.truesportpur.ca/](http://www.truesportpur.ca/)

UNESCO

<http://portal.unesco.org/en/>

UNICEF

<http://www.unicef.org/sports/index.html>

United Nations and the Status of Women

<http://www.un.org/Conferences/Women/PubInfo/Status/Home.htm>

United Nations Development Program Bureau for Crisis Prevention and Recovery (BCPR)

<http://www.undp.org/cpr>

United Nations Millennium Project 2005

<http://www.unmillenniumproject.org>

United Nations Office on Sport for Development and Peace

<http://www.un.org/themes/sport/>

Women's Sport Foundation — UK

<http://www.wsf.org.uk>

Women's Sport International

<http://www.sportsbiz.bz/womensportinternational/>

Women's Sports Foundation — US

<http://www.womenssportsfoundation.org>

World Bank

<http://www.worldbank.org>

World Bank Disability Initiative

<http://www.worldbank.org/disability>

World Health Organization

[http://www.who.int/topics/physical\\_activity/en/](http://www.who.int/topics/physical_activity/en/)

## KEY DOCUMENTS

*2005 World Summit Outcome*

<http://www.un.org/summit2005/documents.html>

*A World Fit for Children*

United Nations General Assembly Resolution A/Res/S27/2 (May 10, 2002)

[http://www.unicef.org/specialsession/docs\\_new/documents/A-RES-S27-2E.pdf](http://www.unicef.org/specialsession/docs_new/documents/A-RES-S27-2E.pdf)

*Building a Peaceful and Better World through Sport and the Olympic Ideal*

United Nations General Assembly Resolution A/Res/60/8 (November 3, 2005)

[http://multimedia.olympic.org/pdf/en\\_report\\_1242.pdf](http://multimedia.olympic.org/pdf/en_report_1242.pdf)

*Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women.*

United Nations General Assembly Resolution A/Res/34/180 (December 18, 1979).

Entered into force September 3, 1981.

<http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/cedaw/text/econvention.htm>

*Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities*

United Nations General Assembly Resolution A/Res/62/170 (March 18, 2008).

Entered into force May 3, 2008.

<http://www.un.org/disabilities/documents/convention/convoptprot-e.pdf>

*Declaration on the Rights of the Child*

United Nations General Assembly, Resolution 1386(XIV) (November 20, 1959).

<http://www.unhcr.ch/html/menu3/b/25.htm>

*Convention on the Rights of the Child.*

United Nations General Assembly, A/Res/44/25 (November 20, 1989).

Entered into force September 2, 1990.

<http://www.unhcr.ch/html/menu3/b/k2crc.htm>

*EU White Paper on Sport*

Commission of the European Communities (Brussels: 2007)

[http://ec.europa.eu/sport/whitepaper/wp\\_on\\_sport\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/sport/whitepaper/wp_on_sport_en.pdf)

*European Parliament Resolution on Development and Sport*

RES/59315EN, B60663/2005 (November 24, 2005)

<http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?pubRef=-//EP//NONSGML+MOTION+B6-2005-0633+0+DOC+PDF+V0//EN>

*European Sports Charter*

Adopted by the Committee of Ministers (September 24, 1992) with revisions (May 16, 2001).

[http://www.sportdevelopment.org.uk/European\\_sports\\_charter\\_\\_revised\\_.pdf](http://www.sportdevelopment.org.uk/European_sports_charter__revised_.pdf)

International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights

A/Res/2200A (XXI) (December 16, 1966)

[http://www.unhcr.ch/html/menu3/b/a\\_ceschr.htm](http://www.unhcr.ch/html/menu3/b/a_ceschr.htm)

*Maggingen Call to Action* (December 6, 2005)

[http://www.maggingen2005.org/downloads/Maggingen\\_call\\_to\\_action.pdf](http://www.maggingen2005.org/downloads/Maggingen_call_to_action.pdf)

*Maggingen Declaration* (February 18, 2003)

[http://www.maggingen2005.org/downloads/maggingen\\_decl\\_english.pdf](http://www.maggingen2005.org/downloads/maggingen_decl_english.pdf)

*Millennium Declaration*

United Nations General Assembly Resolution A/Res/55/2 (September 18, 2000)

<http://www.un.org/millennium/declaration/ares552e.htm>

MINEPS III. *Declaration of Punta Del Este:*

[http://www.unesco.org/education/educprog/eps/EPsAnglais/MINEPS\\_ANG/declaration\\_of\\_punta\\_del\\_estea\\_ang.htm](http://www.unesco.org/education/educprog/eps/EPsAnglais/MINEPS_ANG/declaration_of_punta_del_estea_ang.htm)

*Report on the International Year of Sport and Physical Education 2005*

[http://www.un.org/sport2005/resources/IYSPE\\_Report\\_FINAL.pdf](http://www.un.org/sport2005/resources/IYSPE_Report_FINAL.pdf)

*Sport as a Means to Promote Education, Health, Development and Peace*

United National General Assembly Resolution A/Res/58/5 (November 17, 2003)

<http://www.un.org/sport2005/resources/resolution.html>

*Sport as a Means to Promote Education, Health, Development and Peace*

United Nations General Assembly Resolution A/Res/59/10 (December 8, 2004)

<http://www.un.org/sport2005/resources/resolution.html>

*Sport as a Means to Promote Education, Health, Development and Peace*

United Nations General Assembly Resolution A/Res/60/9 (January 17, 2006)

<http://www.un.org/sport2005/resources/resolution.html>

*Sport for Development and Peace: From Practice to Policy* (2006)

Preliminary report of the Sport for Development and Peace International Working Group.

<http://iwg.sportanddev.org/en/sdp-iwg-preliminary-report-from-practice-to-policy/index.htm>

*Sport for Development and Peace: Towards Achieving the Millennium Development Goals*

Report from the UN Inter-Agency Task Force on Sport for Development and Peace (2003).

<http://www.un.org/themes/sport/reportE.pdf>

*Sport for Education and Development*

Report from Africa International Sports Convention 2007.

<http://www.sportanddev.org/data/document/document/303.pdf>

*UNESCO International Charter of Physical Education and Sport* (November 21, 1978)

[http://www.unesco.org/education/information/nfsunesco/pdf/SPORT\\_E.PDF](http://www.unesco.org/education/information/nfsunesco/pdf/SPORT_E.PDF)



*Universal Declaration of Human Rights*

United Nations General Assembly Resolution A/Res/ 217 A (III) (December 10, 1948)

<http://www.un.org/Overview/rights.html>

*WHO Global Strategy on Diet, Physical Activity and Health*

WHA 57.17 (2004)

[http://www.who.int/dietphysicalactivity/strategy/eb11344/strategy\\_english\\_web.pdf](http://www.who.int/dietphysicalactivity/strategy/eb11344/strategy_english_web.pdf)

## ONLINE RESOURCES

International Platform on Sport and Development

<http://www.sportanddev.org>

Next Step Toolkit

<http://www.toolkitsportdevelopment.org>

Sport for Development and Peace International Working Group

<http://iwg.sportanddev.org/en/index.htm>

## APPENDIX 4

### GLOSSARY<sup>1</sup>

**best values of sport** refer to positive characteristics inherent to sport that include principles of fair play, teamwork, inclusion, respect for one's opponents, cooperation and a commitment to excellence.

**capacity-building** is the process of equipping individuals, groups, and communities with the skills and competences needed to take on new roles, or to improve their existing abilities. The term 'capacity-building' is often used when discussing international development as many international organizations (including UN organizations, bilaterally funded entities, NGOs, and private sector firms) often facilitate capacity-building as part of their programming with local NGOs and beneficiaries.

**chronic diseases** (also **non-communicable diseases**) are conditions that persist for a long time (typically three months or more) which generally cannot be prevented by vaccination or cured by medication. Chronic diseases include (but are not limited to) arthritis, cardiovascular disease, cancer, diabetes, and obesity.

**communicable diseases** (also **infectious diseases**) are illnesses resulting from specific infectious agents (such as bacteria, viruses, parasites or fungi) that can be transmitted from person to person. Infectious diseases include (but are not limited to) HIV, malaria, tuberculosis, measles, and polio.

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<sup>1</sup> These definitions have been compiled from an analysis of a multiple sources (including those produced by the UN and various subject-matter experts). Although they represent working definitions of the terms used in this report, the meanings presented here are not meant to be exhaustive or prescriptive.

**disability** is generally a long-term physical, mental, intellectual or sensory impairment which, in interaction with various barriers, may hinder an individual's full and effective participation in society on an equal basis with others.

**disability-specific sport** refers to sporting activities where persons with disabilities participate alongside others with disabilities.

**empowerment** refers to increasing the capacity, strength and confidence of individuals or groups to make choices and to transform those choices into desired actions and outcomes.

**G8 governments** are the eight major industrial democracies that meet annually to address major economic and political issues. They include Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, Russia, the United States, and the United Kingdom.

**gender equity** describes the principle and practice of fair and equitable allocation of resources to, and opportunities for, men and women. The practice of gender equity does not necessarily mean that everyone is treated in an equal, or identical, manner. Instead, gender equity means changing responses to, and treatment of, men and women to ensure that gender is a neutral factor when accessing resources, rights, and opportunities.

**human capital** refers to the stock of productive skills and technical knowledge embodied within a labour force.

**infectious diseases** (see **communicable diseases**)

**informal settlement** is a residential area where housing units have been constructed on land to which the occupants have no legal claim, or which they occupy illegally.

**mainstream sport** refers to sporting activities that facilitate the participation of different groups of people. In the context of disability, for example, this term is used to describe activities that integrate persons with and without disabilities.

**mainstreaming** describes the process of integrating a specific issue into multiple policy sectors in a systematic and sustainable way. For instance, gender mainstreaming requires efforts amongst numerous sectors (education, health, children and youth, sport, etc.) to build gender equity into all policies and programs.

**non-communicable diseases** (see **chronic diseases**)

**peace-building** is a process which takes place both before and after peace accords are in place. Peace-building activities include providing security; building socio-economic foundations for long-term peace; establishing the political framework for long-term peace; and fostering reconciliation, healing and justice.

**self-esteem** reflects a person's overall self-appraisal and feeling of self-worth. It is often measured by the extent to which a person values, approves of, or appreciates him or herself.

**social capital** refers to the social networks, connections and sense of belonging to wider society that enables individuals to access the people, resources and institutions they need to tackle challenges and realize opportunities in their lives

**social constructs** refer to social phenomena, ideas, or ways of understanding that have been created and developed by members of a society through a process of cultural or social practice and assignment.

**sport** is all forms of physical activity that contribute to physical fitness, mental well-being and social interaction, such as play, recreation, organized or competitive sport, and indigenous games.

**sport for all** refers to inclusive sport activities that all people can participate in, regardless of age, sex, religion and/or socio-economic condition. It also refers to a movement that promotes sport as a human right.

**Sport for Development and Peace** refers to the intentional use of sport, physical activity and play to attain specific development and peace objectives, including, most notably, the Millennium Development Goals.

**Sport for Development and Peace International Working Group** is a policy initiative that was established in 2004 with the aim of presenting governments with recommendations on how to integrate sport as a tool for development in their national and international development strategies and programs.

**sport for health** refers to sport programs that are specially-designed to promote the attainment of health objectives.

**sport for peace** refers to sport programs that are specially-designed to promote the attainment of peace objectives.

## APPENDIX 5

### ACRONYMS

<b>AIDS</b>	acquired immune deficiency syndrome
<b>ARV</b>	antiretroviral
<b>BDNF</b>	brain-derived neurotrophic factor
<b>CABOS</b>	Commonwealth Advisory Body on Sport
<b>CCPA</b>	Cross Cultures Project Association
<b>CEDAW</b>	Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women
<b>CELAFISCS</b>	Centro de Estudos do Laboratório de Aptidão Física de São Caetano do Sul
<b>CVD</b>	cardiovascular disease
<b>DPOs</b>	disabled peoples' organizations
<b>EYES</b>	European Year of Education through Sport
<b>EU</b>	European Union
<b>FIFA</b>	Fédération Internationale de Football Association
<b>FOSPO</b>	Swiss Federal Office for Sports
<b>GAVI</b>	Global Alliance for Vaccines and Immunization
<b>GRSF</b>	Grassroot Soccer Foundation

<b>HIV</b>	human immunodeficiency virus
<b>HRC</b>	Human Rights Committee
<b>IBLF</b>	International Business Leaders Forum
<b>IDPs</b>	Internally Displaced Persons
<b>IEP</b>	Individualized Education Program
<b>ILO</b>	International Labour Organization
<b>IOC</b>	International Olympic Committee
<b>IPC</b>	International Paralympic Committee
<b>IYSPE 2005</b>	International Year for Sport and Physical Education 2005
<b>IWG</b>	International Working Group on Women and Sport
<b>M&amp;E</b>	Monitoring and Evaluation
<b>MDGs</b>	Millennium Development Goals
<b>MINEPS</b>	Ministers and Senior Officials Responsible for Physical Education and Sport
<b>MRE</b>	mine risk education
<b>MYSA</b>	Mathare Youth Sports Association
<b>NGO</b>	non-governmental organization
<b>NOC</b>	National Olympic Committee
<b>OECD</b>	Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development
<b>OECS</b>	Organization of the Eastern Caribbean States
<b>PPI-SA</b>	PeacePlayers International — South Africa
<b>PRSP</b>	Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper
<b>SDP IWG</b>	Sport for Development and Peace International Working Group
<b>SDP</b>	Sport for Development and Peace
<b>SOS</b>	Spirit of Soccer

<b>TB</b>	tuberculosis
<b>UN</b>	United Nations
<b>UNAIDS</b>	United Nations Programme on HIV and AIDS
<b>UNESCO</b>	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
<b>UNHCR</b>	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
<b>UNICEF</b>	United Nations Children’s Fund
<b>UNOSDP</b>	United Nations Office on Sport for Development and Peace
<b>WASSA</b>	Women and Sport South Africa
<b>WHO</b>	World Health Organization
<b>YMCA</b>	Young Men’s Christian Association
<b>YSP</b>	Youth Sport Programme





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