

sportanddev 2020 survey results

The International Platform on Sport and Development (sportanddev) has conducted its 2020 annual survey. This helps us improve our work, better serve our users and gain insights into the future of sport and development. The results are illuminating across the following key areas:

1. The diversity of the sportanddev audience (demographics)
2. How the community utilises the sportanddev platform (use)
3. Views on the sportanddev platform (value)
4. How sportanddev can improve its offering (recommendations)
5. Views on the sport and development field (broader insights)

1. About survey participants

Questions about respondents help us get an idea of our community's demographics. Overall, 110 people responded to the 2020 survey. Over 57% identified as male (up from 51% in 2019) and just under 43% identified as female (down from 49% in 2019). Respondents were fairly evenly spread across the age groups, with 31% of respondents aged 31-40, 25% aged 21-30 and 22% aged 41-50.

As in previous years, the highest number of respondents were based in Europe (31%), followed by sub-Saharan Africa (16%) and North America (11%). There was an increase in respondents from Asia (16%, up from 10% in 2019) and Oceania (9%, up from under 3% in 2019). 4% were from the Middle East and North Africa, and 8% from Latin America and the Caribbean. These figures suggest great geographical diversity, and we aim to encourage and improve upon this trend.

The largest number of respondents were working in the sports sector (39%) and for implementing NGOs (33%). The rest of the responses further reflected the diversity of our target audience. Over 25% of respondents identified as a researcher, volunteer, coach and/or from a sport federation.

The following proportion of respondents identified as/with: athletes/players (12%), donor organisations (12%), practitioners (11%), students (11%), government (10%), development agencies (9%), the private sector (7%), and the media (2%) and other (12%). Many participants affiliated with more than one group, and we recognise that there is significant overlap across categories.

NB: The survey was available in English (no. of respondents = 100) and French (no. of respondents = 10). In the future, sportanddev would like to make the survey and analysis available in more languages.

2. How do users utilise sportanddev?

Over 56% of respondents access the sportanddev website at least once a week – of these respondents, 5.5% access daily; 5.5% access 4 or more times per week and 20% access 2-3 times per week. The news and commentary articles, sportanddev.org newsletter, and social media pages are our most used services. Jobs, new opportunities, the events calendar and the toolkit are also popular.

Over half of respondents read the newsletter fortnightly (i.e. every time it is released) and over 67% of respondents follow sportanddev on Facebook, YouTube, LinkedIn and/or Twitter.

- 81% of respondents have used information on sportanddev in their projects or programmes
- 47% of respondents have attended an event after reading about it on sportanddev

- 28% of respondents have applied for a job after finding the advertisement on sportanddev
- 26% of respondents have posted a job opportunity, event, article or publication on sportanddev
- 22% of respondents have formed a partnership after reading about that organisation on sportanddev

3. How do users view and value sportanddev?

Respondents provided valuable feedback which reinforces the status of the sportanddev platform as the leading information source, networking hub and advocacy space for sport and development:

- 93% of respondents strongly or mostly agree that they feel more informed about developments in the sector because of sportanddev
- 78% of respondents strongly or mostly agree that sportanddev is the leading source of information on sport and development
- Over 76% of respondents strongly or mostly agree that sportanddev has helped them and/or their organisation in their own work

Users also indicated that the platform plays a pivotal role in strengthening the overall field. This is crucial given the need to better strengthen the value proposition of the sport and development sector:

- Over 84% of respondents strongly or mostly agree that sportanddev has been important in helping the sport and development sector grow
- Over 72% of respondents strongly or mostly agree that sportanddev has helped bring voices from the field into higher level policy discussions
- Over 73% of respondents strongly or mostly agree that sportanddev has been important in helping the sport and development sector gain credibility
- Over 91% of respondents strongly or mostly agree that they trust the integrity and impartiality of sportanddev

Results also show that users see sportanddev as well positioned to play a greater coordination, leadership and advocacy role in sport and development:

- 94% of respondents strongly or mostly agree that would like to see sportanddev grow and provide more services to its users and stakeholders
- 78% of respondents strongly or mostly agree that sportanddev is well placed to coordinate the diverse range of actors in the sport and development field
- 85% of respondents strongly or mostly agree that sportanddev can help bridge the gap that exists between policy and practice in sport and development
- Over 93% of respondents strongly or mostly agree that they would like to see sportanddev take an even greater leadership position in sport and development
- Over 98% of users strongly or mostly agree that they would like to see sportanddev play a greater advocacy role in the sport and development field

NB: Respondents could select responses from five options: strongly agree – mostly agree – don't know – mostly disagree – strongly disagree. The numbers that strongly or mostly agree exclude those that strongly or mostly disagree AND those that selected 'don't know'. In most cases, the number who disagreed with the statements was low, with 'don't know' being selected more frequently.

Topics and trends

We asked respondents to provide feedback on what issues the platform should cover in an article series. The following topics were among the suggestions:

- The role of sport in a post-COVID world and how actors can best prepare for a new reality (NB: sportanddev has launched a [section](#) with news and resources related to the COVID response)
- Greater focus on the role of sport in the economy and how to engage national actors
- Sport and social justice, including racism, and how sport can play a transformative role
- Gender and equity in sport, including women in sport and the inclusion of vulnerable groups
- Fundraising advice and approaches, including grants, partnerships and entrepreneurship
- Guidance on advocating for the widespread use of sport in development priorities
- Integrity and transparency in sport, including issues of governance and safeguarding
- Guidance on monitoring and evaluation (M&E), including impact measurement and research



Figure 3: Word cloud reflecting user responses to question 7: What topic would you like sportanddev to publish an article series about?

5. Views on the sport and development field

We asked survey respondents to comment on the sport and development field. Despite the challenges facing sport and development, which have been exacerbated by the COVID pandemic, 95% of respondents were 'very or mostly positive' about the future of sport and development. However, respondents did identify specific challenges and opportunities for the field given the current crisis.

Challenges included:

- Growing divide and inequities within sport for development between bigger, established organisations with greater access to resources and smaller organisations with less access
- Reduced funding and opportunities for sport for development given the fact that resources are constrained due to the COVID pandemic, with fears that sport may not be seen as a priority
- Practical challenges of running projects in-person due to social distancing, closure of institutions (e.g. schools), limited availability of coaches/volunteers and the difficulties of adapting to other forms of delivery, recognising the digital divide that continues to exist
- Increased social issues, including child abuse, gender-based violence, alcoholism etc. that have impacted communities and present a challenge to sport for development programmes

Opportunities included:

- An opportunity to innovate delivery, for example using a blended approach to implementing programmes – both online and offline (where possible) – to expand access and reach
- Build bridges virtually through enhanced online collaboration and knowledge sharing
- With a hiatus and reduced exposure to elite sport, this may be an opportunity to advocate for grassroots sport, and sport and development initiatives as being important priorities
- Align sport and development policies and programmes with urgent global needs enabling them to be part of the relief, response and recovery efforts, thus enhancing their sustainability

These challenges and opportunities also featured in the [call for articles](#) from sportanddev on '[Reimagining the future of sport and development](#)'. Overall, sportanddev received 55 articles in English and French. We identified 10 key themes for the future of sport and development.

Thank you to everyone who took the time to complete the survey. We are community driven and your feedback is important to us. While we are not able to promise to implement all suggestions made – some are dependent on financial resources – we take all suggestions seriously and will carry out as many as possible. To provide feedback throughout the year, please email info@sportanddev.org.