

C O N C E P T



**International Year
of Sport and
Physical Education**



UNITED NATIONS



“ People in every nation love sport. Its values – fitness, fair play, teamwork, the pursuit of excellence – are universal. It can be a powerful force for good in the lives of people devastated by war or poverty – especially children. The International Year of Sport and Physical Education is a reminder to Governments, international organizations and community groups everywhere to draw on the promise of sport to promote human rights, development and peace. ”

Kofi Annan

United Nations Secretary-General

“ The regular practice of sport offers invaluable lessons essential for life in our societies. Tolerance, cooperation, integration are necessary to succeed in both; sport and everyday life. The fundamental values of sport are consistent with the principles of the United Nations Charter. Sport is all-inclusive, knows no barriers and is easily accessible.

Together with Governments, Civil society and the United Nations system, the world of sport will help us demonstrate the value and power of sport to improve education, health, development and to reach lasting peace. ”

Adolf Ogi

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Introduction

In November 2003 the General Assembly of the United Nations adopted resolution 58/5 entitled “Sport as a means to promote Education, Health, Development and Peace”, where it recognized the power of sport to contribute to human and healthy childhood development, and proclaimed the year 2005 as the International Year of Sport and Physical Education.

The potential of sport to effectively convey messages and influence behaviour has been increasingly recognized in the recent years. The United Nations are committed to mainstream sport in their programmes and policies. Some governments have taken the first steps to introducing sport in their development and foreign assistance policies.

The International Year of Sport and Physical Education aims to facilitate better knowledge-sharing among different key stakeholders, to raise general awareness, as well as creating the right conditions for the implementation of more sport-based human development programmes and projects.

This concept document briefly outlines the potential of sport in four key areas: education, health, development and peace, as well as sport’s potential contribution to the achievement of global development plans such as the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). It includes the objectives and the expected outcomes of the International Year of Sport and Physical Education, and provides background resources on the issue.



The Power of Sport

Sport and physical education play an important role at the individual, community, national and global levels. For the individual, sport enhances one's personal abilities, general health and self-knowledge. On the national level, sport and physical education contribute to economic and social growth, improve public health, and bring different communities together. On the global level, if used consistently, sport and physical education can have a long-lasting positive impact on development, public health, peace and the environment.

Access to and participation in sport and physical education provide an opportunity to experience social and moral inclusion for populations otherwise marginalized by social, cultural or religious barriers due to gender, disability or other discriminations. Through sport and physical education, individuals can experience equality, freedom and a dignifying means for empowerment. The control over one's body experienced while practicing sport is particularly valuable for girls and women, for people with a disability, for those living in conflict areas and for people recovering from trauma.

The United Nation's Children Fund (UNICEF) is incorporating the power and potential of sport and recreation into its programmes in developing countries. Sport is one way for UNICEF to defend the right of every child to a healthy start in life; the right of every girl and boy to be educated; and the right of every adolescent to have ample opportunity to develop into caring and involved citizens. UNICEF views sport and recreation not only as a means to achieve the organization's core objectives but also as bona fide goals that ensure every child's right to play (Article 31, Convention on the Rights of the Child).



Sport and Education

Sport and physical education teach essential values and life skills including self-confidence, teamwork, communication, inclusion, discipline, respect and fair play. Sport and physical education also have psychological benefits such as reducing depression and improving concentration. Sport, physical education, play and recreation have a positive impact on child education. Physical education typically improves a child's ability to learn, increases concentration, attendance and overall achievement. Young people learn better when they are having fun and are being active. Within schools, physical education is an integral component of quality education.

As the lead agency for sports-related activities within the United Nations, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) has a key role to play in convening Governments to advance the cause of sport and physical education and to improve the general knowledge of the benefits of sport as a means to promote education in particular.

The skills and values learned through sport are especially important for girls, given that they have fewer opportunities than boys for social interaction outside the home and beyond family networks. Through sport, girls are given the chance to be leaders and improve their confidence and self-esteem. As girls begin to participate in sport, they also acquire new interpersonal links and access to new opportunities, allowing them to become more engaged in school and community life.

Giving young people with disabilities the opportunity to participate in physical education programmes at school and through community clubs is crucial given the additional benefits, among others, for social inclusion and self-esteem they receive from sport and physical activity.



Sport and Health

In 2002 the World Health Organisation (WHO) *World Health Report* indicated that mortality, morbidity and disability attributed to the major non-communicable diseases accounted for over 60% of all deaths, and unhealthy diets and physical inactivity were among the leading causes of these diseases.

Sport and physical activity are crucial for life-long healthy living. Sport and play improve health and well-being, extend life expectancy and reduce the likelihood of several non-communicable diseases including heart disease.

Regular physical activity and play are essential for physical, mental, psychological and social development. Good habits start early: The important role of physical education is demonstrated by the fact that children who exercise are more likely to stay physically active as adults.

Sport also plays a major positive role in one's emotional health, and allows to build valuable social connections, often offering opportunities for play and self-expression.

Recognizing the important links between sport, physical activity and health, in 2004 the WHO adopted the *Global Strategy on Diet, Physical Activity and Health* and a *resolution on Health Promotion and Healthy lifestyles*. Both documents emphasize the importance to start the practice of adapted physical activity early in childhood.

In 2004, the United Nations Joint Program on HIV/Aids (UNAIDS) was the latest United Nations system organisation to sign a Memorandum of Understanding with the International Olympic Committee (IOC) to involve the world of sport more actively in fighting the epidemic.



Sport and Peace

Sport, as a universal language, can be a powerful vehicle to promote peace, tolerance and understanding. Through its power to bring people together across boundaries, cultures and religions, it can promote tolerance and reconciliation. For example, sport has helped re-initiate dialogue when other channels were struggling: North and South Korea have merged their athletes into a common team for the Sydney 2000 Olympic Games; table tennis set the stage for the resumption of diplomatic ties between China and the USA in 1971; and today, Israeli and Palestinian children regularly come together to play soccer or basket ball.

The core values integral to sportsmanship make sport a valuable method of promoting peace, from the local to the international scale. The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) has long been using the power of sport in its programmes to foster refugee reintegration and to ensure tolerance and understanding between the communities. In 2005, UNHCR is set to expand its activities and actively mainstream sport in its programs and policies.

On a communication level, sport can be used as an effective delivery mechanism for education about peace, tolerance, and respect for opponents, regardless of ethnic, cultural, religious or other differences. Its inclusive nature makes sport a good tool to increase knowledge, understanding and awareness about peaceful co-existence.



Sport and Development

Sport is a catalyst for economic development. Individually, each of the various sectors of the sports economy can create activity, jobs and wealth. When several are combined together into a single strategy, it is possible to achieve additional economic gains because of the synergies that result. The local economic potential of sport is further enhanced when supported by national 'sport for all' strategies.

Securing Government leadership is essential to ensure that sport and physical education are incorporated into country development and international cooperation policies and agendas. Governmental commitment is also crucial to ensuring that the root causes of the issues that challenge human development are addressed, and sport is used as one of the tools for that.

The engagement of the UN specialized agencies, programmes and funds demonstrated the potential breadth and depth of sport to support the UN system in achieving development goals. The IYSPE 2005 will seek to engage Governments and the world of sport more deeply in sport-based development activities in order to ensure that this powerful and diverse element of civil society becomes an active and committed force in the global partnership for development.

Local development through sport particularly benefits from an integrated partnership approach to sport-for-development involving the full spectrum of actors in field-based community development including all levels and various sectors of government, sports organisations, NGOs and the private sector. Strategic sport-based partnerships can be created within a common framework providing a structured environment allowing for coordination, knowledge and expertise sharing and cost-effectiveness.



Sport and the Millennium De

► **Goal 1 Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger**

Providing development opportunities will help fight poverty. The sports industry, as well as the organisation of large sports events, create opportunities for employment. Sport provides life skills essential for a productive life in society.

► **Goal 2 Achieve universal primary education**

Sport and physical education are an essential element of quality education. They promote positive values and skills which have a quick but lasting impact on young people. Sports activities and physical education generally make school more attractive and improve attendance.

► **Goal 3 Promote gender equality and empower women**

Increasing access for women and girls to physical education and sport helps them build confidence and a stronger social integration. Involving girls into sport activities alongside with boys can help overcome prejudice that often contribute to social vulnerability of women and girls in a given society.

► **Goals 4 & 5 Reduce child mortality and improve maternal health**

Sport can be an effective means to provide women with a healthy lifestyle as well as to convey important messages as these goals are often related to empowerment of women and access to education.

Development Goals (MDGs)

▶ **Goal 6 Combat HIV/Aids, malaria and other diseases**

Sport can help reach out to otherwise difficult to reach populations and provide positive role-models delivering prevention messages. Sport, through its inclusiveness and mostly informal structure, can effectively assist in overcoming prejudice, stigma and discrimination by favouring improved social integration.

▶ **Goal 7 Ensure environmental sustainability**

Sport is ideal to raise awareness about the need to preserve the environment. The interdependency between the regular practice of outdoor sports and the protection of the environment are obvious for all to realise.

▶ **Goal 8 Develop a global partnership for development**

Sport offers endless opportunities for innovative partnerships for development and can be used as a tool to build and foster partnerships between developed and developing nations to work towards achieving the millennium development goals. Goal 8 acknowledges that in order for poor countries to achieve the first 7 goals, it is absolutely critical that rich countries deliver on their end of the bargain with more and more effective aid, sustainable debt relief and fairer trade rules for poor countries – well in advance of 2015.



Why an International Year for

Sport and physical education play an important role in human development. By their very nature, sport and physical education are about participation, inclusion and a sense of belonging. They bring individuals and communities together, highlighting commonalities and bridging cultural and ethnic divides. Sport and physical education provide a forum to learn skills such as discipline, confidence and leadership and they convey core principles that are important in a democracy, such as tolerance, cooperation and respect.

Sport and physical education teach the fundamental value of effort and how to manage essential steps in life such as victory or defeat. At the same time, physical education classes are often the first ones to be reduced or cancelled in schools in hard economic times, conflict or under the pressure from other academic fields. Grassroots sport-based initiatives receive little support from governments.

The United Nations General Assembly in its Resolution 58/5, entitled “Sport as a means to promote Education, Health, Development and Peace”, recognized the positive values of sport and physical education and acknowledged the challenges presented before the world of sport today. This Resolution proclaimed the year 2005 as the International Year of Sport and Physical Education (IYSPE 2005), and invited Governments, the United Nations system and sport organizations to:

Sport and Physical Education?

- include sport and physical education as a tool in development programmes and policies, including those contributing to the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs)
- work collectively and form partnerships based on solidarity and cooperation
- promote sport and physical education as a tool for health, education, social and cultural development on the local and national levels;
- strengthen collaboration with civil society actors

Resolution 58/5 encourages Governments, international sports bodies and sport-related organizations to elaborate and implement partnership initiatives with the aim of supporting sport-based development projects targeted at the achievement of the MDGs.



Goals and Objectives

The overall goal of the International Year of Sport and Physical Education is to highlight the vital contribution sport and physical education can make in the achievement of global development goals. Through a series of conferences, events and the publication of research documents, the value of sport and physical education for education, health, development and peace is to be clearly demonstrated.

In line with United Nations General Assembly Resolution 58/5 and the United Nations Economic and Social Council resolution 1980/67 on international years and anniversaries, these goals will be achieved through the following tasks:

1. Promote sport and physical education for all when furthering their development programmes and policies, to advance health awareness, the spirit of achievement and cultural bridging to entrench collective values;
2. Ensure that sport and physical education are included as a tool to contribute towards achieving the internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals and the broader aims of development and peace;
3. Promote a culture of peace, social and gender equality and advocate dialogue and harmony through collective work promoting sport and physical education-based opportunities for solidarity and cooperation;

4. Promote the recognition of the contribution of sport and physical education towards economic and social development and encourage the building and restoration of sports infrastructures;
5. Promote sport and physical education, on the basis of locally assessed needs, as a means for health, education, social and cultural development;
6. Strengthen cooperation and partnerships between all actors, including family, school, clubs/leagues, local communities, youth sports associations and decision makers as well as the public and private sectors, in order to ensure complementarities and to make sport and physical education available to everyone;

The IYSPE 2005 will also strive to reach the above-set targets through the dissemination of scientific evidence about the value of sport and physical education for development and peace in order to promote the role of sport for development and to mainstream sport in national and international development policies.

In achieving its objectives, IYSPE 2005 will build on the experience of the European Year of Education through Sport 2004.



Expected results

Overall the IYSPE 2005 will strive to achieve “a better understanding of the value of sport and physical education for human development and a more systematic use of sport in development programmes.”

Sport becomes a partner in development. The IYSPE 2005 provides the international community with an opportunity to promote the value of sport as a partner for the achievement of development and peace goals.

Sport for all is recognized as a national priority. It strives to expand the perception of “sport” by the general public and at the Government level, emphasizing the notion of “sport for all”. This is a particular issue for developing countries where the promotion of elite sport and the achievement of results at international sports competitions are considered a way of promoting national unity and a country’s value and competitiveness.

The IYSPE 2005 is expected to demonstrate that a fraction of the resources allocated to elite sport, if allocated to sport activities accessible for all, will have a significant impact on the general health conditions and well being of a large portion of a national population.

Sport is recognised as an integral part of quality education. It is expected that IYSPE 2005 will illustrate the importance of sport and physical education for a quality education. Though an essential component of quality education and an integral part of lifelong learning, physical education is continuously losing ground in formal education systems. The neglect of physical education reduces the quality of learning, with negative future impacts on public health and health budgets. Given that rates of physical activity tend to decrease from adolescence, it is imperative that young people gain an appreciation of sport at school in order to ensure lifelong active and healthy living.

Sport-related private sector becomes more involved in human development. It is expected that the sport-related private sector (sporting goods manufacturing industry) and international sports federations grow more interested in human development and peace building issues. This can be achieved through the development of private – public partnerships with United Nations system organisations and an increased sharing of information at all levels.

Sport-based initiatives for development and peace are supported, monitored and evaluated. Initiatives will be encouraged to use sport as a means of promoting inter-cultural, post-conflict and peace-building dialogue. It is expected that these efforts will be evaluated and lessons will be learned and disseminated. To date, evidence of the validity of such initiatives remains anecdotal. Such efforts are often considered non-essential and non-life-saving and are therefore only little funded and insufficiently documented. The aim is to have solid evidence to make the case for sport-based initiatives promoting sustainable peace and development. This shall allow the implementation of such initiatives to be better integrated and more systematic. To achieve this, additional scientific research into sport-based initiatives is required. The research should be supported during IYSPE 2005 and reports widely disseminated and promoted.

A common framework is developed. In view of the various contributions to IYSPE 2005, it is necessary to develop a common framework to unite the United Nations system and its partners to further sport for education, health, development and peace in a coordinated way. The overarching objective should be to systematically mainstream sport into existing activities, programmes, and projects wherever relevant.



National Committees

UN Member States: A note verbale was sent to all Member State governments in April 2004 from the Secretary-General urging Member States to consider the systematic inclusion of sport as a means to improve people's lives.

In line with resolution 1980/67 of the UN Economic and Social Council, Member States are invited to establish National Committees or focal points with responsibility for promoting activities related to the observance of the IYSPE 2005. The Committees should engage and include a broad range of country-level actors, including: local governments, national Olympic Committees, sports federations and clubs, athletes, the private sector, interested academic circles, UN Country Teams and the NGO community.

Committees are encouraged to develop inclusive strategies, and implement a diverse set of activities. National Committees may:

- Host special events, meetings, conferences and propose the integration of existing events into their promotional and public awareness campaign
- Establish national committee websites and links to the official website of the IYSPE 2005
- Engage the private sector in initiatives that recognize the connectivity between private sector development and sport and physical education
- Organize national awards for development through sport and physical education
- Report on activities to the UN Office for the IYSPE 2005.

Private Sector: The private sector of sport is among the most successful and dynamic sectors worldwide. The private sector of sport and other interested companies are encouraged to participate in National Committees for the IYSPE 2005. Private sector companies may:

- Support the creation of innovative partnerships promoting development, education, health and peace through sport and physical education

- Conduct research to better understand the critical links between human, social and economic development and the access to sport and physical education.
- Graft the theme of “development through sport and physical education” onto major conferences, events and meetings
- Disseminate information on the IYSPE 2005 through corporate distribution systems
- Participate in National Committees for the IYSPE 2005

Academia: University students are asked to engage in research to learn more about the value of sport and physical education as means to achieve education, health, development and peace. With careful thought given to how to reach and engage students and youth in developing countries. Students and universities may:

- Establish new curriculum, research, and lecture series
- Engage in the IYSPE 2005 through writing and reporting on local and global initiatives

NGOs and Civil Society: NGO’s and civil society are encouraged to actively take part in and support National Committees, particularly to provide advocacy services, lessons learned and expertise based on field experience, and deepen the work of the IYSPE 2005 as they enjoy close ties with local communities. NGOs and civil society may:

- Engage with and support the work of the National Committees or Year focal points
- Strengthen existing networks and regional cooperation efforts to improve channels of communication among groups active in sport for development.
- Organize or host field visits and media trips to promote their work.



Partnerships

The UN General Assembly Resolution 58/5 invites Governments, the United Nations, its funds and programmes, the specialized agencies and sport-related institutions to strengthen cooperation and partnership between all actors, including family, school, clubs/leagues, local communities, sports associations and decision makers as well as the public and private sectors, in order to ensure complementarities and to make sport and physical education available to everyone.

Early in 2004, the Executive Office of the Secretary-General asked the United Nations Fund for International Partnerships (UNFIP) to assume responsibility for facilitating partnerships on sport for development and peace, particularly with regard to activities aimed at promoting field-level projects using sport as a programme tool and involving UN funds, programmes and agencies with partners from the sport world.

UNFIP's main objective for the IYSPE 2005 is to raise awareness among the international cooperation and development community but also among the sports community (private sector, NGOs, Sport organizations etc.) that sport and physical education have an important contribution to make to human development and lasting peace.

UNFIP, through its global private-public network of companies, foundations, NGOs and individuals, will serve as a gateway for partnerships with the United Nations system.



Communication strategy

The International Year provides a unique opportunity to use the convening power of sport to capture the attention of and mobilize individuals, organizations, communities and the public at large in support of issues such as HIV/AIDS and poverty eradication. It facilitates delivery of messages and programmes to a wide range of people at local, national, regional and global levels, drawing diverse groups together in a positive and supportive environment.

The aim of IYSPE 2005 is to ensure that the value of sport as a tool for human development is promoted systematically around the world and, thus, the concept of “development through sport” must be effectively demonstrated to all target audiences. This is at the centre of the communications strategy for IYSPE 2005.

Throughout the year, participating UN offices and agencies will emphasize sport and physical education in their outreach to sport organisations and other key partners.

The communications strategy includes

- outreach to media drawing upon the UN system’s public information network in donor capitals and in the field and ensuring coordination between the UN’s Department of Public Information, Office of the Special Adviser to the Secretary-General on Sport for Development and Peace in Geneva and New York; the UN Fund for International Partnerships and other UN agencies and partners;
- identification of issues and messages that will support the strategic objectives of the Special Adviser;
- targeting of decision-makers with sport and development information.



Events

The events dedicated to the celebration of IYSPE 2005 (existing events, campaigns or communication strategies) will adopt the IYSPE 2005 imagery and further support the achievement of social, economic and human development and peace goals.

Preparation for a number of events is underway, among them – international conferences on sport and environment, sport and health, sport and peace, sport and education, sport and development, sport and gender, designed to provide a forum for international discussion and raise awareness of the convening power of sport and the importance of sport for all.

A timeline of planned events can be consulted on: www.un.org/sport2005

Sample of conferences organised in relation with the International Year of Sport and Physical Education in 2005 ▶

SPORTS AND DEVELOPMENT – ECONOMY, CULTURE, ETHICS	Bad-Boll – Germany (13 – 15 February 2005)
SPORT AND HEALTH	Hammamet – Tunisia (22 – 24 March 2005)
SPORT AND CULTURE	Darwin – Australia (13 – 15 May 2005)
SPORT AND PEACE	Moscow – Russia (1 – 3 June 2005)
NEXT STEP II	Livingstone – Zambia (12 – 15 June 2005)
SPORT AND ENVIRONMENT SUMMIT	Aichi / Nagoya – Japan (31 July 2005)
SPORT AND EDUCATION	Bangkok – Thailand (2nd half 2005)
SPORT AND WOMEN LEADERSHIP	Atlanta – USA (20 – 22 October 2005)
SPORT AND DEVELOPMENT II	Maggingen – Switzerland (4 - 6 December 2005)

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CD-Rom

1. Concept document

2. PDF documents

UN_TASK_FORCE_REPORT.pdf

UNESCO_PES_CHARTER.pdf

UN_RES_58-5.pdf

UNEP_POLICY.pdf

WHO_GLOBAL_STRAT_A57_R17.pdf

WHO_MOVE_FOR_HEALTH_1.pdf

WHO_MOVE_FOR_HEALTH_2.pdf

WHO_PHYSICAL_ACTIVITY.pdf

3. Logos



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