

SPORT & DEVELOPMENT E-DEBATE

Experts explore challenges
and ways forward



 sportanddev.org

OCTOBER 2009 - DECEMBER 2009

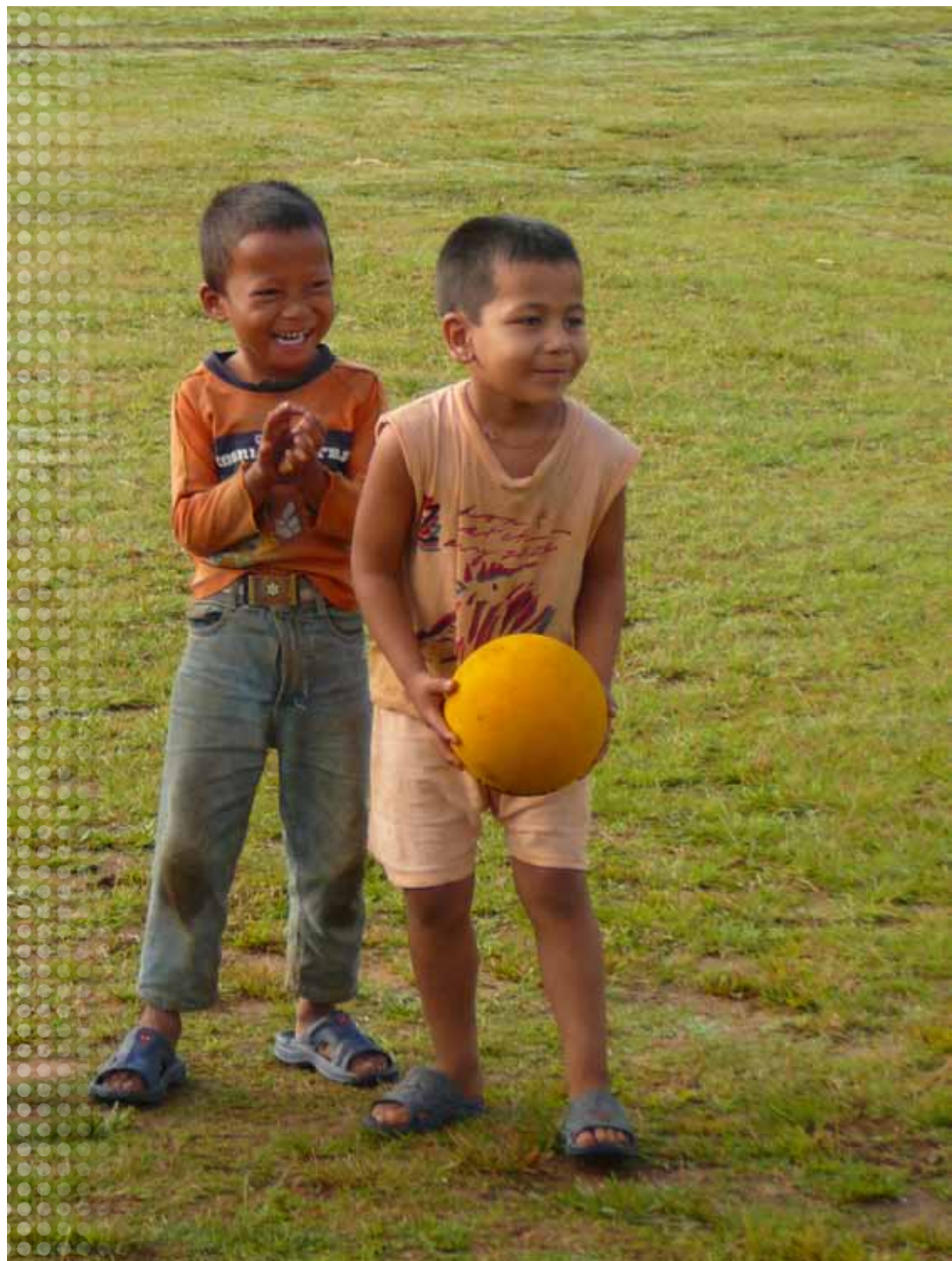
Held on the International Platform on
Sport and Development
www.sportanddev.org/edebate

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A word of special thanks to the experts participating in the e-Debate. Their quotes are used throughout the booklet. We highly appreciate their open and frank answers and their willingness to share their knowledge and experience. View their full profiles on www.sportanddev.org/edebate.

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OBJECTIVES, APPROACH AND SCOPE



1 OBJECTIVES AND BACKGROUND

Objectives

The International Platform on Sport and Development (www.sportanddev.org) hosted the Sport & Development e-Debate. Twenty-six experts discussed the challenges the field of Sport & Development is currently facing. The aim was to explore success factors of programmes and to search for solutions that can improve interventions.

Background

The International Platform on Sport and Development (www.sportanddev.org) is a website dedicated entirely to the field of Sport & Development. 'The Platform' is an online resource and communication tool, providing information and communication services to those with an interest in Sport & Development, including: development organisations and agencies, government agencies, the sports sector, practitioners and field workers, the private sector, researchers, youth, the media and volunteers.

The Platform is a hub for sharing knowledge, building good practice, facilitating coordination and fostering partnerships between and within different stakeholders in Sport & Development.

The International Platform on Sport and Development is a multi-stakeholder initiative supported and governed by a diverse set of stakeholders who are committed to contributing to the field of Sport and Development. One of these stakeholders is NCDO (National Committee for International Cooperation and Sustainable Development) based in the Netherlands. The Operating Team of the Platform wanted to strengthen the interaction and exchange of ideas on the platform. NCDO had positive experiences organising online debates and provided a field tested online debating method and manpower to help implement the e-Debate. In close cooperation with the Operating Team, the Sport & Development e-Debate was held from October 2009 – December 2009.

2 APPROACH

Poll to identify topics and iterative process in rounds

Before the e-Debate was launched, a poll was conducted on the Platform to identify topics for the experts to discuss in the first of three debating rounds. Visitors to the Platform who took part in the poll voted for the e-Debate to focus on a specific thematic area – Sport and Health.

After the closing of each round, contributions were analysed, categorised, results summarised and reported back to the e-Debaters for feedback. The statements and questions of rounds two and three were based on the results and feedback from the previous rounds, thus creating an iterative process aimed at identifying and discussing the main challenges in the field and to find solutions for them.

Open questions and statements

Each round consisted of two open questions and two statements. The moderators intentionally formulated controversial statements in order to provoke a strong response and to 'spice up' the debate.

Participants and visitors

The selection of participants included members of the Dutch network of Sport and Development provided by NCDO as well as other experts in the field of Sport & Development who could contribute meaningfully to the e-Debate. Fifty experts were invited. A few experts heard of the e-Debate by word of mouth and registered as participants. Visitors to the Platform joined the discussion by voting on the statements and giving feedback on contributions. In total, twenty-six experts participated in the e-Debate. Responses varied per round between eighteen and twenty-four debaters (minimum response rate 70%). The e-Debate section of the Platform had a total of 113 pages and 8,215 page views from 1 October 2009-31 December 2009.

3 SCOPE

Round 1 of the e-Debate focused on setting the stage for the discussion. A variety of participants from different fields, with varying expertise and knowledge were expected to come together to discuss issues related to Sport and Development, within the context of health. To help start the discussion on a level everyone could contribute and add value, questions that drove to the heart of Sport and Development were chosen.

Round 1: In search for the optimal balance between sport and education in health awareness programmes

Before addressing the main open questions, participants were asked to what extent they agree to the following two statements:

- S&D programmes alone do not lead to behaviour change and healthy lifestyles, for instance in HIV/AIDS prevention.
- Health issues are best addressed through education interventions instead of Sport for Development interventions.

The optimal balance between sport and educational elements in Sport & Development programmes was the central theme of Round 1. The e-Debaters responded to the following main questions:

- How much sport is too much sport? What's the key to optimising the balance between sport and educational components in health awareness programmes?
- How can we formulate realistic aims for Sport for Development projects aimed at improving health? Can you name examples of realistic aims?

Round 2: Aims and challenges for Sport & Development interventions

Round 2 of the e-Debate steered the discussion towards exposing the challenges currently being faced in the field of Sport & Development. The experts were asked to identify challenges they had come across in their work (from programme implementation in the field to programme management and policy making).

The questions in Round 2 focused on how to set realistic aims and how to follow a holistic approach:

- Delivering a balanced or holistic approach in S&D programmes is often advised, but difficult to implement. In your opinion, what are the three main challenges we face in trying to maintain a balance between sport and other components?
- Can you describe a bad example of trying to embed sport in other interventions aimed at addressing health issues?

Statements:

- Setting realistic aims in Sport & Development requires aiming low and starting small.
- Sport for Development programmes which are developed for communities instead of with communities, are doomed to fail.

Round 3: How do we progress? Active measures to overcome the major challenges for Sport & Development interventions

The final round of the e-Debate focused on bringing the discussion to a close and to provide suggestions and recommendations on how to overcome some of the challenges raised in the previous rounds.

The questions in Round 3 focused on the learning capacity of the field and on active measures to progress:

- Do you consider it still a 'taboo' to talk openly of mistakes or 'what went wrong' in S&D programmes? How do you propose overcoming this challenge?
- What three active measures do you recommend the S&D community to take as a collective in the next 3-5 years to address the biggest challenges outlined earlier in the discussion?

Statements:

- The S&D Agenda is still largely determined by donor priorities and needs.
- Ensuring the sustainability of S&D interventions requires less focus on financial stability and more effort to embed such programmes into local structures and existing local practices.

4 HOW TO READ THIS REPORT

The following chapters provide a summary of the results of the three rounds in the e-Debate. After the closing of each round, the moderators analysed, categorised and summarised contributions and reported them to the e-Debaters for feedback. Consequently, the summaries were again made openly accessible on www.sportanddev.org/edebate. The summaries presented in this publication are the result of this process.

The Sport & Development e-Debate is a practical tool to initiate communication and allows a variety of individuals working in the field of S&D to provide their opinions. This publication highlights the diverse and sometimes opposing views of experts on the topic discussed. The opinions presented in this report are those of the e-Debaters.

Some background knowledge about the subject of Sport and Development is assumed. When questions arise, additional information on discussed topics is available on www.sportanddev.org. We also refer to the e-Debate website for all contributions and for the full profiles of the e-Debaters (www.sportanddev.org/edebate).

We hope you enjoy reading the contributions of the participants and trust you will find ideas and opinions which inspire you!

RESULTS ROUND 1

IN SEARCH FOR THE OPTIMAL BALANCE BETWEEN SPORT AND EDUCATION
IN HEALTH AWARENESS PROGRAMMES



1 INTRODUCTION

The questions in Round 1 focused on determining the optimal balance between sport and educational elements in Sport & Development programmes. Furthermore, the issue of how best to formulate realistic aims was explored. The e-Debaters answered the following questions:

- How much sport is too much sport? What's the key to optimising the balance between sport and educational components in health awareness programmes?
- How can we formulate realistic aims for Sport for Development projects aimed at improving health? Can you name examples of realistic aims?

2 CONTROVERSIAL STATEMENTS TRIGGERED DISCUSSION

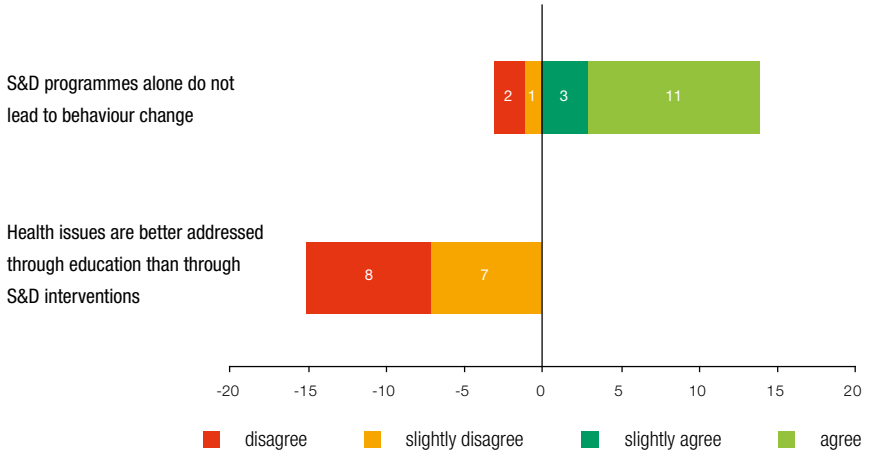
Two controversial statements related to the topic were provided in each round. Participants were asked to vote in a poll on the extent to which they agreed or disagreed with each statement (agree, slightly agree, do not agree or disagree, slightly disagree, disagree). The statements were worded in a direct manner, purposefully intended to trigger reactions.

In Round 1, the participants were asked to vote on the degree to which they agreed or disagreed with the following two statements:

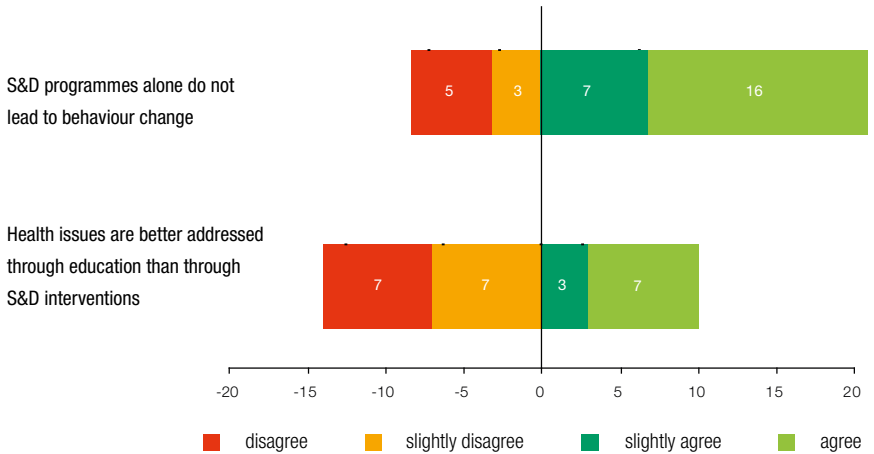
- S&D programmes alone do not lead to behaviour change and healthy lifestyles, for instance in HIV/AIDS prevention.
- Health issues are best addressed through education interventions instead of Sport for Development interventions.

The first figure shows the results of the votes of participants. Please note that the 'neutral' category has been left out to highlight differences. The S&D e-Debate was open to anyone to vote on statements. The second graph shows the results from visitors to the Platform who voted in the poll.

Statements in power of sport & education (n=20) - Results participants



Statements in power of sport & education (n=33) - Results visiting e-Debaters



Realistic and balanced view: Sport is not a ‘magic bullet’

From the graphs one can conclude that visitors to the Platform more often than the e-Debaters believe that health issues are best addressed through education than through S&D interventions. Furthermore, the graphs show that the majority of e-Debaters and visitors to the Platform agree that S&D programmes alone do not lead to behaviour change. Most experts believe S&D programmes and education should be a joint effort.

The opposing of S&D versus education in the second statement - *‘Health issues are best addressed through education interventions instead of S&D interventions’* - results in resistance: some participants state that S&D interventions are education, because education interventions should be incorporated; education should be an integral part of S&D. The e-Debaters explained their votes:

It is not a question of whether education or Sport for Development; it is both in joint effort; educational interventions should be part and parcel of Sport for Development.

Yves Vanden Auweele

There is considerable evidence that demonstrates that education alone has minimal impact on behaviour. It is possible that a well designed, quality sports programme could support people to take on the attitudes and values that help promote decision making that leads to healthy behaviours. If this is the case then there is a strong argument for the support of sport from behaviour change perspective. Furthermore, awareness and readiness will only have an impact if it is matched by an environment that supports the healthy behaviour. The challenge remains to determine which behaviours contribute to better health decisions and how these behaviours can be promoted in sports activities.

Kylie Bates

According to several participants, the second statement is based on a false assumption: that education and Sport for Development can be mutually exclusive. They stress that sport and play programmes should always enhance education. Sport is an excellent tool to educate children about key health issues. Sport for Development programmes which focus on health are more effective than educational programmes without sport. When children are engaged through sport and play in a fun and enjoyable way, they are more likely to process and retain the lesson at hand – which in turn helps to ensure that they adopt and maintain a healthy lifestyle.

Furthermore, some participants pinpoint the complexity of issues to be solved by development interventions. Only a well-balanced mix, targeting social, economic, cultural and educational development, can result in desired changes, as sport alone cannot change the world. Similarly, health issues also need to be addressed using a range of approaches, means and tools:

Health issues need to be addressed through a multitude of channels. For example in order to prevent obesity, you need to educate people but you also need to create health enabling environments: provide a safe place to exercise (kids are not going to play outside if they risk getting run over or mobbed), provide healthy foods at affordable prices, work with industry to lower sodium and salt content in foods, etc. This will help people because this way, the healthy choice becomes the easier choice.

Helen Alderson

It is unrealistic to expect a sport development initiative to solve massive social problems by itself. In southern Africa, the area which I've spent time working and researching since the early 1990s, the HIV/AIDS pandemic has obviously had catastrophic effects on people's lives. But there are multiple and intertwined factors behind the spread of what the South African author Jonny Steinberg called 'The Three-Letter Plague.' Similarly, treatment and prevention depend on numerous factors, not just one, and these include access to health care facilities in rural areas, need for living wage jobs, education (including sport), stigma and fear, cultural dynamics and so on. Sport development projects should speak to these factors even while they continue to strive to play an important role in assisting HIV/AIDS prevention, particularly among children, teenagers, and young adults.

Peter Alegi

Strong conviction on the power of S&D, when done 'right'

The results of the poll on the second statement show that the e-Debate participants value the educational power of S&D in health issues highly. Fifteen out of twenty disagree that educational interventions are better suited to address health issues than S&D interventions; five participants chose the neutral category.

Besides stressing that S&D and education should not be separate interventions, several participants state that S&D is better equipped for certain aspects of social change.

Firstly, it is possible to discuss sensitive subjects because sport and play creates an open and conducive environment and because it is fun.

Many educational settings are not very open and conducive where children feel safe to share their personal challenges.

Pelle Kvalsund

This statement makes the false assumption that education and Sport for Development are mutually exclusive. Sport and play programmes can enhance education and can be an excellent way to educate children about key health issues. S&D programmes that focus on health can produce better results than educational programmes alone. When kids are engaged through sport and play in a fun and enjoyable way, they are more likely to process and retain the lesson at hand – which in turn helps to ensure that they adopt and maintain healthy lifestyle behaviours over the long term.

Johann Olav Koss

Secondly, to achieve behaviour change, educational activities are not sufficient because attitudinal change is not easily achieved. Also, context has a strong influence. A mix of education aimed at knowledge transfer and S&D interventions aimed at changing attitudes is said to be very effective.

For me, health issues are very complex. They are multifaceted and some aspects of health messages need quite high levels of understanding of how life (and our bodies) work. To get that level of understanding, health issues need to be part of formal education. Building on the basic levels of understanding, some knowledge and behavioural aspects are very difficult to teach at school, since they may have taboos around them, or since they need to be placed in a certain context. Sport and Development is much closer to the world and hence can be more effective for some aspects.

Jouwert van Geene

3 HOW MUCH SPORT IS TOO MUCH SPORT? WHAT'S THE KEY TO OPTIMISING THE BALANCE BETWEEN SPORT AND EDUCATIONAL COMPONENTS IN HEALTH AWARENESS PROGRAMMES?

In response to these questions, there was a great diversity in answers, showing that the subject is complex and multifaceted. The different views with quotes from e-Debaters are highlighted in the following section.

Too much sport in a literal sense

The first part of the question was mostly interpreted literally. In fact, the question was meant to point specifically to the balance between sport and educational components.

'Too much' maybe relevant in professional sport, even in high level sport for children but not in Sport for Development. Moreover it is a misconception that a sport programme is to be kept apart from an educational intervention: Sport programmes should use critical incidents happening before, during and after a session to introduce a relevant educational issue.

Yves Vanden Auweele

I personally think this should be assessed in individual cases, but when sport becomes so mentally and physically demanding that it starts interfering with school performance or personal health, it is too much.

Pelle Kvalsund

Fortunately for healthy young people, the inherent enjoyment of playing sports rarely becomes too much. However, this of course depends on the environment in which sport is offered, the fun built into sports programmes and the social context in which activities take place. Indeed, like anything else, involvement in sport can get too much if it starts to negatively impact on a participant's life and opportunities, and we perhaps see this phenomenon with young men and women encouraged to pursue professional sport at the expense of their educations. This is all part and parcel of the competitive and potentially lucrative world of sport and symptomatic of the decline in the perceived value of recreational sporting activities. Competitive sport and having ambitions in sport are entirely valid and not without benefit.

Vladimir Borkovic

The International Alliance for Youth Sports recommends that youth sport programmes should limit practices and games to no more than 1 hour a day and 3 days a week up to the age of 8, and not more than 1.5 hours a day and 4 days a week for ages 9-12. These are good general guideline for parents and programme coordinators to strive for.

Kate Cowan

From my point of view, sport can be considered as 'too much', whenever it causes imbalances. Physical imbalance: when the physical limits are exceeded and when doing sport is not healthy anymore. Social imbalance: when one just focuses on his sport and himself no matter what. In sport business: sport and sports people become a 'profitable product', no longer related to sport values (e.g. violence, doping, ...).

Caroline Gutton

Sport should be life enhancing

Mogens Kirkeby provided a response that was slightly different. His opinions pointed to the need for sport to be 'life enhancing' meaning that the individual's life should be improved through participation in physical activity:

The short answer is that sport should be a 'Life Enhancing Physical Activity'. Wherever we are using sport as tool for personal or society development, it would be valuable to have the perspective - is it "Life Enhancing" or not.

Mogens Kirkeby

Sport can both divert and attract attention to education

Another aspect is that sport and the emotions involved can actually distract from educational activities and messages. Jouwert van Geene used an example to illustrate his point. He cited a highly successful soccer league in Malawi. Due to the success of the league, the issue of HIV/AIDS was finally taken seriously:

From my experiences in Zimbabwe and Malawi, the balance is very difficult to strike, since it is quite personal for the individuals involved. For instance, if we organise a soccer league in rural Malawi with HIV/AIDS awareness as the key aim, for some teams and players the sport activity became the central issue. They really went for the games and took anything additional for granted. Obviously all the other added values of S&D came along, such as building leadership, sense of community, discipline etc, but in terms of HIV/AIDS messages, not everything could sink in with these boys and girls. On the other hand, since it became a real BIG tournament for many people, the issue of HIV/AIDS was also taken seriously.

Jouwert van Geene

That is a difficult question. I think it is important that everybody should be able to participate in a sort of sport. On the other hand, sport is also about winning and in a team you need team mates of your own level of skills. That means that we use sport as a tool in which everyone can participate and that winning is important but it is not the overall goal (as it mostly is in sport). On the other hand, if you lose too much of the idea of competition you also lose the interest of the participants. The secret of success is to find your way balancing these dimensions.

Dik Bol

Sport should be the core component

An opposing reflection was made by a few participants who claimed that sport should always be the core of S&D projects, reversing the implied risk that education would get too little attention.

Let's turn the question around. How much external components are too much for sport? We should always remember why kids play sport: because of the sport itself. One rule, I would say, is never to change the 'core' or 'heart' of the sport. Yes, we can use sport as an instrument for health awareness, but without the fun of the game, the message will not be heard.

Frank van Eekeren

Too much sport for the sake of sport doesn't exist, but when sport has also the aim of health awareness, sport must, first for all, stay sport. Sport should not be abused! But it can be used to create a conducive environment whereby youngsters feel relaxed and open to discuss health awareness issues together.

Cees Versteeg

...And don't forget about play

Several participants stress the importance of fun in S&D activities. They warn for the risk for education activities to dominate and disrupt sport. Education should be well dosed and woven into activities with care. Furthermore, 'play & fun' need to be key elements in S&D programmes.

Sport is what attracts the children and is therefore the glue. If we mess too much with sport, the glue will loosen and effects will minimise. As much as it is important to use sport to spread important health messages, we must make sure that we don't kill sport in the process. My advice would be: try to break up the game as little as possible; only when very obvious related health issues can be perceived. And don't do extensive debriefs after each game: children are easily bored.

Pelle Kvalsund

There is no set formula which dictates how much sport is too much sport – but we can safely conclude that sport alone is not enough. We must never forget that play is critical to motivate and engage children – so this must always be a central focus of our Sport for Development activities.

Sport and play interventions that seek to promote health and educate children and youth about health issues should also be structured with clear messages and attainable outcomes. To ensure that programme goals are attained, a hands-on approach to learning must be guided by positive role models who can create an inclusive space for participants to reflect on the lesson at hand, to connect that lesson to their own experience, and to apply their knowledge to a real life situation. Sport and play programmes that are specially-designed to do this, while giving kids a chance to play and have fun, will be much more likely to succeed.

Johan Olav Koss

If you are 'forced' to do sport you won't be receptive to other inputs. So a key to optimising the balance between sport and educational components in health awareness is to use attractive forms of sport and movement and with kids, adults or elderly people. This way, you can communicate about anything.

Jan Rijpstra

But not all participants share the opinion on sport's central role. Some argued that sport needs to be adapted to be used as an effective teaching tool:

In 'Health Awareness Programmes', sport should be used as an teaching tool. It should favour the message we want to share. The rules of the game should be modified to reach the educational objective.

Caroline Gutton

Sport as a tool for developing skills for life

The e-Debaters' answers illustrate a wide range of perspectives on Sport for Development. As said, some participants stress the intrinsic value of sport: it is educational in itself. Some believe that educational messages on health should be limited and should be integrated in programmes in a natural way - if at all. They stress being aware of educational elements that interfere with sport.

Other participants believe in the instrumental value of sport: sport as a tool for developing life skills. By focusing consciously on the potential for social learning in sport programmes, without competing with formal education activities, optimal added value is realised. The following quote illustrates this point of view:

...the key to ensuring that no amount of sport is too much sport is to revitalise the traditional idea that sport is a tool, a method for developing skills for life, and not just an end in itself. In the context of contemporary development, the skills for life that can be promoted through sport must be carefully calibrated for the challenges faced, and the rules of sports themselves can even be manipulated to promote pressing aspects of good citizenship. As such, 'too much sport' does not become an issue if the sport played is largely recreational and socially beneficial, and of course does not infringe on educational components. In the field of development that streetfootballworld operate, the sports programmes offered by our affiliates are not competing with formal education (and as such, not distracting kids from school), and are in fact mostly established with the central aim of disseminating education. This educational core to sporting programmes ensures that the sports element is not excessive. However, in Development through Football programmes, sport can sometimes become too much when the relationship between the sporting

and social components are not clear at the outset to those designing, delivering and participating in activities. A clear understanding of how sport is being used in education is vital.”

Vladimir Borkovic

Sport adds crucial elements to education efforts

Some elements needed for behaviour change are hard or impossible to influence through education alone. The transfer of knowledge is not sufficient to influence lifestyle choices. Sport alone will not accomplish this change either. Kylie Bates explained that sport does offer an opportunity to add essential factors contributing to producing healthy behaviours:

It’s well documented in research on topics from tobacco use to safe sex that being informed about health issues is only the first and possibly the least significant step in adopting a healthy behaviour. The crucial next steps involve being convinced the behaviour is worthwhile, taking action, re-confirming the idea is a good one and maintaining the behaviour. While sport’s convening power provides an opportunity for education (and even that should be applied cautiously “We come to play netball, not learn about AIDS” said one young participant in a programme in Zambia), the real value lies in the influence a quality sport programme has on other components of the behaviour change process.

For sport to impact on the adoption of healthy behaviours, it needs to do two things well. Firstly, the sport experience needs to be “sticky” to be valued by its participants. That is, it needs to be inclusive, well organised, challenging and fun. Secondly, the sports activities need to be designed in a way that promotes the factors that contribute to people choosing healthy behaviours.

If a sports programme can increase individuals’ ability to lead, network, communicate, co-operate, self determine, become more active, inform each other and develop a sense of responsibility and respect, then there is a strong argument for its contribution to the later parts of the behaviour change cycle.”

Kylie Bates

Sport should not compete with ‘regular’ education

Children need many different social and educational experiences; sport is just one of them. Every programme therefore needs to critically assess the balance of activities to be able to create an effective combination of activities for the target group involved.

A child’s life needs to be balanced with many different social and educational experiences. We need to be encouraging children to be involved in a variety of

activities, while at the same time ensuring a child is not over-scheduled or that activities do not distract from their academic work. School structures need to recognize the importance of health education along with basic motor skill development and ensure mediatory implementation of these programmes at a primary level.

Kate Cowan

On the other hand, in some contexts, sport is the only available channel to provide health education. Trevor Dudley explains that when society fails to provide proper education, S&D interventions can fill the gap until responsibility is taken by government:

In Uganda average class sizes have increased alarmingly over the last 12 years. This places pressure on teachers to complete compulsory and measurable academic courses. Sports programmes in schools have therefore been significantly reduced to enable teachers to comply with minimum academic requirements. Extra curricular sports for Development Programmes offer an attractive opportunity for children to take part in Sports programmes. Some programmes are more like academies; some however, like The Kids League, try to maintain a balance by recognising that sports can be used as a magnet to attract children so that health education and peace building components can be built in.

Trevor Dudley

Use an interdisciplinary approach to achieve integrated health programmes

Sport, health and education are separate realms of expertise and practice, with their own methods, ways of thinking and language. Truly bridging these fields can produce effective interventions, new approaches and methods. Vladimir Borkovic stresses the need for innovation and new perspectives:

The key to optimising the balance between sport and education lies in overcoming the distinction between them and working towards integrated interdisciplinary programmes that utilise sport as a tool in delivering education. With regards to health awareness programmes, the benefits of using sport are threefold; the promotion and demonstration of good health through fun and physical activity, the opportunity to use sport as a learning environment in and of itself, and the attraction that sport offers as a gateway to other types of educational delivery. Ultimately, optimising the balance between sporting and educational components depends on the extent to which education is integrated with sport. It goes without saying, of course, that education is the goal in health awareness programmes, and sport

should never compromise the educational message. However, it is possible that a balance needs not be struck; sport can itself be the educational component in health awareness, a change that perhaps requires some to look at sport in a new way and requires us all to generate innovative methods of utilising sport as a tool in development. Most pressingly for our development community, it is crucial to define as accurately as possible the scope of using sport to address the various health issues; to what extent can sporting activities themselves be adapted to integrate the relevant health messages? In defining this it would be wise to consult both health and (physical) education experts.

Vladimir Borkovic

Integrated approach, clear aims and tailor made for target groups

Astrid Aafjes also calls for an integrated approach to using sport to teach and share information on health:

I think there is never too much sport if this is done in a good environment with the right equipment and with a healthy balance between different key aspects in life including sufficient and healthy nutrition, good social relationships and with respect for your body and health.

The key is ensuring the outcomes you want from the health awareness programmes are clear and that the sports are aligned with the educational components to ensure these outcomes.

Further, it is important that the sports and educational components are designed for the target group and that when you are, for instance, addressing reproductive health with a group of young girls, that the sports and educational components are implemented in a safe space, where they are able to discuss and share issues that might be difficult to talk about openly and are connected to social stigma.

Astrid Aafjes

Learn from the past and adapt to local circumstances

One recipe for success in balancing sport and educational components in programmes does not exist. History has shown again and again: what might work perfectly in one community might prove disastrous in another. But practice has also proven that mistakes in the past are a good prediction for failure today, if the methods used remain unaltered.

As a historian, I am inclined to think that in order to find a sensible balance between sport and education components in health awareness programmes one needs to know how similar initiatives in the past have addressed this issue. This historical knowledge, where available, would help avoid the repetition of previous mistakes in

strategy and implementation. Be that as it may, the balance between body and mind education cannot be optimized without effectively accounting for local conditions and needs, a process that must always be done in partnership with local, regional, and national stakeholders as well as the targeted individuals and communities.

Peter Alegi

Sports for Development programmes do not automatically on their own lead to behavioural change and healthy lifestyles. It is how the sports programme is designed and used that determines if there is likely to be behavioural change. Some sports programmes will not focus properly on the lifestyle to be changed. It is vitally important to understand the challenges facing the community and carefully design a programme that will bring about sustainable short term and long term behavioural change.

Trevor Dudley

4 HOW CAN WE FORMULATE REALISTIC AIMS FOR S&D PROGRAMMES?

How can we formulate realistic aims for S&D projects aimed at improving health?

The answers of the participants to this question prove that S&D is a complex subject that needs to be approached with great care. Development cooperation has been heavily criticised recently. Ambitions are not realised. Effectiveness and efficiency of efforts is questioned. The capacity to learn from mistakes and to innovate is crucial for further progress in the field.

Do we have this capacity? One of the key success factors for learning, is the ability to formulate realistic aims. In order to formulate realistic aims - while remaining consistent with the vision of the intervention – it is necessary to be clear about what can be achieved. Furthermore, innovation depends on measurable aims. Feedback is needed from practice: were the objectives met; what went right and what went wrong; how can interventions be improved? Without realistic aims it is almost impossible to obtain meaningful feedback on how well those aims are being reached. Without meaningful feedback the learning process is blocked.

So if unlocking this learning process starts with formulating realistic aims, how can this be accomplished? From the analysis of participants answers a diversity of views emerges. Behaviour change is not a realistic aim according to some of them; they suggest using indicators on awareness and knowledge. Furthermore, it should not be overlooked that other actors and factors influence targeted behaviour. Several e-Debaters stress that programme managers should be aware of this when formulating aims.

Another conclusion is that a thorough understanding of health issues, common lifestyle behaviours and local circumstances is crucial when formulating realistic aims.

However, knowing and understanding the current context, situation and behaviour is not enough. A theory or model of change is needed to clarify causal relations, to estimate the potential for change and to predict the outcomes of the project. A theory or model of change provides a framework and can be used to identify benchmark indicators usable for monitoring and evaluation.

Beware of over ambitious aims

A few participants claimed that sometimes S&D projects are over ambitious. As a result, the organisations involved cannot live up to expectations. This should be avoided at all cost. Targeting specific health knowledge, behaviour change and keeping goals 'simple' helps.

From my experience, some projects are a bit over ambitious in regards to their impact. This goes for sport and peace projects as well as for sport and health projects. The simpler we keep it, the easier it is to both achieve and measure it.

Pelle Kvalsund

Historically, Sport for Development has done itself a disservice by overstating it's capacity to impact on development goals. Sport should aim to impact on a specific health related behaviour rather than taking responsibility for presenting the entire health solution. Usually in many cases it will be necessary to keep digging until there is a single behaviour identified that can help unlock the other healthy behaviours.

Kylie Bates

Thorough understanding of issues comes first

Several participants stress that in order to achieve social change effectively, the first step is to understand the behaviour that is targeted. What is the current level of knowledge and what are the attitudes and behaviour concerning certain health issues? Which factors cause this behaviour? What role do individual, social, infrastructural and economic circumstances play? Answers to these are crucial when formulating realistic aims.

To formulate realistic aims, constitutive steps should be followed. Firstly, it is indispensable to have a clear understanding of health, defining whether one looks mainly at physical health or whether mental health and general well-being are taken into consideration.

Daniela Preti

Sport doesn't produce 'automatically' positive effects. Good planning and reflective action is needed to give potential positive effects a chance. Therefore we need a clear operational definition of the health aspects that we want to focus on as well as of the effects we are aiming at.

Yves Vanden Auweele

Behaviour change requires comprehensive interventions

The participants widely agreed on the fact that behaviour change is very difficult to achieve. Furthermore, in most cases the behaviour targeted by S&D projects is caused by multiple factors outside the scope and control of the project.

According to some participants, this implies that other indicators should be used to define aims, e.g. the number of children taking part in activities and the knowledge they gained on health issues. Baseline studies and monitoring & evaluation consequently deliver needed insights on the effectiveness of interventions.

There is no general answer to this question. It all depends on the specific context of the project. Spreading a message and changing behaviour depends on a lot of variables. The power of sport is getting people together, and having shared experiences. These are necessary conditions to change behaviour, but not the only ones.

Frank van Eekeren

It is hard to measure the level of health in a community, especially if you want to connect it to certain activities. It starts with the conviction that sport improves the health in a community. Realistic aims can then for instance be the number of people participating in programmes and the number of people participating in local sport clubs and activities.

Matthijs Huizing

Knowing is not the same as doing. This is one of the most well documented facts, we have in the field of "sport and health". Changing behaviour often takes more than receiving the messages. However, having the basic knowledge on what is good or bad for my health – be it safe sex or how to avoid non-communicable diseases – is a human right, it is a democratic right. I have seen a lot of projects with realistic aims and unfortunately also the opposite. I believe that realistic aims are based on knowing what is possible and then sticking to this. Do not pretend you will have solutions for all problems."

Mogens Kirkeby

Local circumstances and capacity of organisations involved

Kate Cowan explains that the starting point to defining realistic goals should not only be the specific context but also the power of implementing actors:

Sport for Development projects are such that no project or organisation can expect to function and thrive in isolation. Every project and every community will have different realistic aims depending on their links to other organisation's structures within their community. It is important for an organisation to realistically understand their expertise and not to over extend. Therefore when developing project aims, one should look at the level of expertise within the team, and partner organisations –it is important to keep that list at the top of the board to make sure to not overextend the team or partners.

Kate Cowan

Aims should be formulated with beneficiaries

Daniela Preti stated that the direct beneficiaries of interventions should be mainly involved in defining targets, not the community, donors or the implementing NGOs:

Secondly, the aims of a project should be related to the direct beneficiaries of an intervention and not to the broader community as such.

Daniela Preti

Aim high

Besides warnings and precautions about aims, some participants point to the 'proven' value of sport for health and for mental, emotional and social well being. With the assumption that sport is intrinsically good and an effective instrument to deliver educational messages, teach life skills and promote a healthy lifestyle, measuring the participation rates of sport activities should be sufficient, according to some participants.

Sport for Development programmes can most definitely lead to behaviour change and healthy lifestyle choices, but in order to do so, they must be specially-designed with these objectives in mind. Let's not forget that they also need to be delivered by well-trained, caring and positive adult role models and must be delivered in safe and inclusive environments. Not only can regular physical activity enhance the health of children and youth by preventing and/or delaying the onset of non-communicable diseases, sport and play can also improve young people's mental, emotional and psycho-social well-being. The universal appeal of sport also makes it an ideal vehicle to inform, educate and empower entire communities to fight communicable disease and promote holistic life-long approaches to health. These are big goals, but they are not unrealistic.

Johann Olav Koss

MDG offers indicators

Marleen Romeny suggested using MDG indicators as cornerstones to defining realistic aims:

You can take indicators that are used to measure improvement with regard to MDGs - finally that is what your intervention should contribute to - and that is possible! For example, the proportion of population in malaria-risk areas using effective malaria prevention and treatment measures. Another example is the comprehensive correct knowledge on HIV/AIDS; we use certificates for coaches having passed HIV/AIDS trainings. Finally, we receive statements about 'improved healthy lifestyle' from teachers and parents in interviews and questionnaires.

Marleen Romeny

Theory of change needed

An important addition to the above guidelines for setting targets is that a theory or model of change is needed. A theory of change clarifies causal relations, estimates the potential for change and predicts the outcomes of the project. It offers a framework and can be used to identify benchmark indicators usable for monitoring and evaluation.

What matters for me is to have a clear 'theory of change'. This means, a clear sense of the logical flow of causalities that will lead to the desired change. What needs to happen for young people to change their sexual behaviour? We perhaps assume that young people experience peer pressure and copy 'good' and 'bad' experiences from peers and 'champions' around them. We may also assume that linking youth to well trained HIV/AIDS youth counsellors can make them better aware of the consequences of risky sexual behaviour. This makes us design certain interventions in Sport for Development. So what we always need to make clear is how we think the change will happen, and how we will test the underlying assumptions along the way.

On the other hand, formulating realistic aims also has to do with practical issues of monitoring and evaluation. If we want measurable aims, we need good data.

Jouwert van Geene

5 EXAMPLES OF REALISTIC AIMS

We asked participants for examples of realistic aims. The quotes below illustrate the wide range of possible aims:

Depending on the above-mentioned steps, realistic aims might be:

- Increase the knowledge on HIV and AIDS among project participants.
- Offer youth a safe and supporting environment for public health counselling.

Daniela Preti

By ... date all the participants in our activities should know how to protect themselves against HIV/AIDS. To create a safe environment where our participants feel that they can open up for discussions affecting them and to offer support for them on an individual basis.

Pelle Kvalsund

Realistic aims are for example personal hygiene and injury prevention, improvement of the (physical) self concept, respect for the body of the opponent, estimate the risks of one's behaviour for one's own and the opponents health.

Yves Vanden Auweele

One example of an HIV/AIDS awareness project in Malawi used a soccer league as the key vehicle for awareness creation (with many capacity building components). There was a good baseline survey that showed levels of awareness of youth on the topic, but also the number of youth going for voluntary counseling and testing of HIV/AIDS (VCT). The aim was to increase awareness and number of youth going for HIV/AIDS testing. At the end of the soccer league there as a central VCT-week in which testing was promoted, and higher numbers of youth went there. Finally, it is also important to look for the stories behind the numbers. So, for instance using stories of most significant change, or participatory video making, can help to test whether our theory of change was actually valid.

Jouwert van Geene

The best example I can think about is the Game On! project in Speyside Tobago - this project has been developed though a network of many partners, IAYS, TTASPE, UNICEF, Speyside Community Council and the Red Cross. This project has been very successful at bringing international and community organisations together to lend this community a helping hand in understanding the healthy benefits of sport, and starting conversations about HIV/AIDS, obesity, communicable deceases etc...

Kate Cowan

- Create an environment that encourages sport and physical activity for children and adults. Provide safe facilities and space for people to exercise and do sport.
- Recognize the specific need to promote regular physical activity among women.
- Establish partnerships to promote sports and H8 such as the partnership between UEFA and the World Heart Federation.

Helen Alderson

Small-scale improvements in health are possible. I'm not a development specialist or scholar, but I am familiar with Sports Coaches' Outreach (SCORE) and other NGOs in southern Africa focusing on HIV/AIDS education through sport. I also know that in Kenya sex education among girls is making very positive strides in Kilifi on the coast thanks to the work of Moving the Goalposts. In Nairobi, the well-known Mathare Youth Sports Association has done some wonderful projects on environmental citizenship and also on photography, which underscores the utility of culture for mental and social health.

Peter Alegi

An approach with so far positive results is the integration of testing (e.g. HIV/AIDS) and general vaccination sessions in sport programmes and connected events (e.g. tournaments), always of course in cooperation with all relevant actors, such as local health institutes, community leaders, entities dealing explicitly with testing/vaccination, etc. In the case of HIV/AIDS testing, apart from the obvious benefit of knowing one's status and receiving immediate support as necessary, its application in the framework of sporting activities also greatly helps to lower the knowledge barriers and weaken or extinct the prejudices around the disease. A defined set of outcomes of such an approach (e.g. # of people informed, tested and, accordingly, medically cared for) could be an aim that is both feasible and measurable. Examples of strategies which proved effective can be a useful guide. New strategies need to be developed and field tested on a small scale. Pilot projects should be launched and approaches and results made transparent so everybody can benefit from lessons learned.

Vladimir Borkovic

For example, in Nauru, a country with the highest rate of obesity in the world, the initial target behaviour for women was simply: get to the basketball courts once a week. The focus of the programme was therefore on providing transport for the women (the men would usually have the car to go to work) and providing childcare options. Once at the court, there were few barriers that would prevent the women from taking part in a in an hour of physical activity which could contribute to reducing the incidence of non communicable disease. Choosing a less specific

behaviour change or education focused objective (for example, increasing awareness of the risk factors of diabetes) may have meant overlooking the key actions that would facilitate the participation.

Kylie Bates

Example of a Teen HIV Prevention Programme:

Vision: To see youths making informed decisions about their behaviour to create an HIV free generation.

Mission: To ensure that youngsters by the providing of sports activities are healthy and living in a safe environment with the best information that promote safe reproductive sexual behaviour.

Specific objectives: To delay the onset of sexual activities in youths. To promote safe sex amongst youths that are already sexually active. To reduce (unwanted) teenage pregnancies.

Operational objectives: To provide young people with sport activities as a platform to: give accurate information about HIV and AIDS and other reproductive health matters. To encourage young people to explore their values and attitudes about sexuality and sexual behaviour. To teach young people skills to help them make and maintain informed decisions.

Cees Versteeg

Realistic aims for Sport for Development projects aimed at improving health are:

- *girls and women have increased knowledge about reproductive health and also increased ability to make alternative decisions regarding reproductive health;*
- *to choose not to have a sexual relationship;*
- *to have safe sex;*
- *to postpone a pregnancy;*
- *to seek medical support when they face health problems.*

Astrid Aafjes

These objectives can be either individual or collective:

For individual objectives: Sport must teach the young men and women how to respect his/her body. Not only in minimising the risk of injuries, but also in avoiding all kinds of addictive behaviour (e.g. alcohol, drugs...)

For collective objectives: Sport is a strong means of awareness-raising on public health problems such as HIV, nutrition, hygiene. It can help to induce behaviour change, thanks to a playful approach ('edutainment').

Caroline Gutton

6 WAYS FORWARD

NGOs need to be empowered and supported in developing capacities in this relatively new field; new knowledge, skills, and methods need to be disseminated. Examples of strategies which proved effective can be a useful guide. New strategies need to be developed and field tested on a small scale. Pilot projects should be launched, with approaches and results made transparent so all can benefit from lessons learned. Balancing S&D interventions with other interventions, developing a interdisciplinary approach and setting realistic aims are essential building blocks. Hopefully, the e-Debate results contribute to this process by highlighting opinions & perspectives, which unlock knowledge and expertise.

AIMS AND CHALLENGES FOR S&D INTERVENTIONS



1 INTRODUCTION

The questions in Round 2 focused how to pursue a holistic approach when implementing programmes. The e-Debaters answered the following questions:

- Delivering a balanced or holistic approach in S&D programmes is often advised, but difficult to implement. In your opinion, what are three main challenges we face in trying to maintain a balance between sport and other components?
- Can you describe a bad example of trying to embed sport in other interventions aimed at addressing health issues?

2 CONTROVERSIAL STATEMENTS TRIGGERED DISCUSSION

In Round 2, the participants were asked to vote on the degree to which they agreed or disagreed with the following two statements:

- Setting realistic aims in Sport & Development requires aiming low and starting small.
- Sport for Development programmes which are developed for communities instead of with communities, are doomed to fail.

The first figure shows the results of the votes of participants. Please note that the 'neutral' category has been left out to highlight differences. The S&D e-Debate was open to anyone to vote on statements. The second graph shows the results from visitors to the Platform who voted in the poll.

Involving communities is key

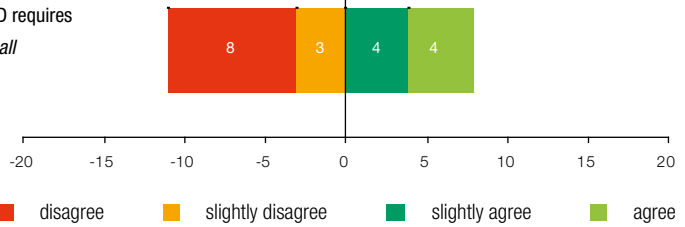
The graphs show that e-Debaters more often than visitors to the platform disagree with the statement that 'Setting realistic aims in S&D interventions requires aiming low and starting small.' There is consensus that S&D programmes should be developed with communities instead of for communities: only one e-Debater and one visitor disagree with the statement on this subject. Thus one can conclude that local involvement in programme design and implementation is considered crucial. The majority of participants are convinced that without ownership of the project by beneficiaries, social change will not be achieved. However, some participants mention that there are exceptions to this rule.

Statements on aims of S&D interventions (n=24) - Results participants

S&D programmes developed *for* communities instead of *with* them are doomed to fail



Setting realistic aims in S&D requires aiming *low* and starting *small*

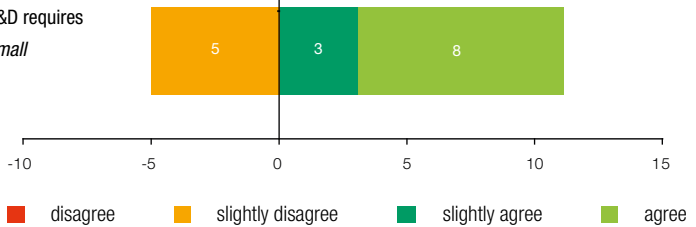


Statements on aims of S&D interventions (n=16) - Results visiting e-Debaters participants

S&D programmes developed *for* communities instead of *with* them are doomed to fail



Setting realistic aims in S&D requires aiming *low* and starting *small*



Particularly if sustainability of the activities is a goal, it is crucial to involve communities. If the S&D intervention is a once event to raise awareness for a particular issues, this is less important.

Pelle Kvalsund

Yes, I agree. Although there will always be exceptions –that programmes developed for communities can work too- I am convinced that participation of the communities in design and implementation of the programme is crucial for its success.

Marleen Romeny and Matthijs Huizing

I agree. ‘Doomed to fail’ is perhaps too harsh, but certainly any programme that seeks to improve the health and well-being of individuals and communities will need to ensure that the community in question plays an integral role in the development and delivery of that programme.

Johann Olav Koss

I agree with the statement. How far do we have to go before we fully understand and except that only ‘bottom up’ approaches will survive. Ownership from grass roots level is essential!

Cees Versteeg

I agree, it is important to have ownership. In that respect, sport is no different than any other development programme. It needs to buy in and support of the beneficiaries.

Astrid Aafjes

Many communities might not have the knowledge or know how of how to implement a S&D program- so experts/masters might have to guide them- not dictate- but guide.

Maya van Gent

Start small and aim low?

The votes on this statement reflect different points of view among the e-Debaters and visitors to the platform. Eleven participants believe that S&D interventions should start small and aim low; eight e-Debaters disagree and five vote neutral. As this topic is controversial, it is interesting to explore it in further detail in Round 3.

Actually, the statement consists of two elements. Some participants stress that S&D interventions should indeed start small but should not aim low. It is not wrong to have high ambitions as long as they are realistic. Programmes need something to

fight for. Aiming low from the start could kill ambition and drive, as stressed by several e-Debaters.

Another point made is that especially large-scale projects need realistic goal-setting. Field-tested strategies can be scaled up successfully if certain conditions are met; including field tested activities, sufficient resources, qualified staff and sufficient capacity.

Small is beautiful, local is better. Avoid top-down approaches and 'outsider knows best' attitudes.

Peter Alegi

There are numerous examples of national projects that have managed to maintain both reach and quality. It has more to do with starting right than starting small (e.g. YES Zimbabwe).

Pelle Kvalsund

No, I don't think you should start small and aim low. I believe the Sport and Development movement should be less modest in general when it comes to what aims can be set.

Marleen Romeny and Matthijs Huizing

I disagree. If we aim low, how can we achieve something great? While it is important to start small, conduct proper needs assessments, and take the time to pilot projects before scaling up, our aims should be as high as realistically possible. Governments and organisations will forever think about you related to the aim you have set and if you aim low you will never be able to change the perception that you are aiming low. Obviously if you only want to have small impact and create a small project then you should aim low.

Johann Olav Koss

The argument here is not about the magnitude of the goals but whether the programme is designed and resourced in a way that makes reaching these goals realistic.

Kylie Bates

I disagree, aiming low and starting small is the excuse at the end that you will say: 'I tried but I...'

Cees Versteeg

Programmes have to come from the grassroots but that does not mean that projects always have to start small. If the design is right and appropriate skilled staff/volunteers are available, it can start big.

Astrid Aafjes

Starting small and making it work effectively makes a module reliable and useful- then this can be duplicated to other communities and tailor made for them. I think a truly South African module still needs to be developed, implemented and evaluated effectively- unfortunately this takes time.

Maya van Gent

I do not like the question as it ignores the fact that one is required to work in different ways with different styles in different times and what matters is the intent and the inclusion of stakeholders of all levels.

Marion Keim

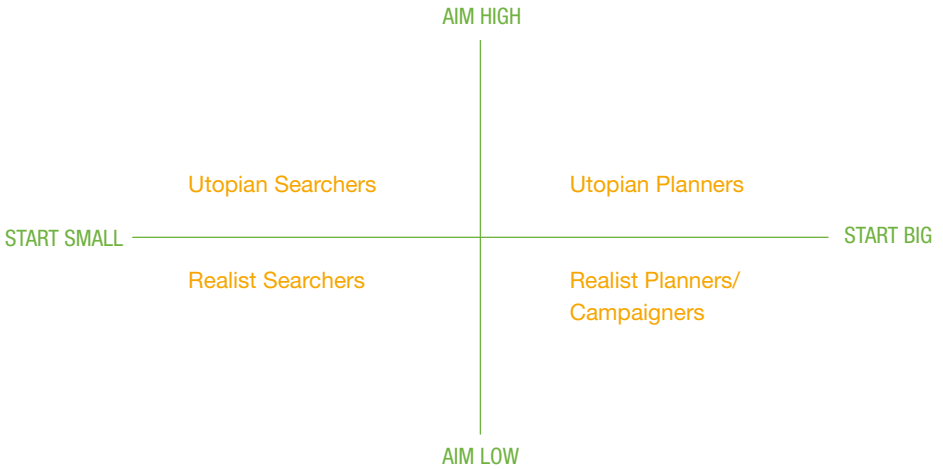
At times you can find organisations who have the resources and capabilities to implement huge programmes that deliver however most of the time starting small is more effective.

Emmanuel Madonda

‘Planners’ versus ‘Searchers’?

The comparison of two different approaches to development aid by Bill Easterly might provide some guidance in the discussion. Easterly compares Searchers versus Planners approaches in his book ‘The White Man’s Burden: Why the West’s Efforts to Aid the Rest Have Done So Much Ill and So Little Good’ (Easterly, 2006). Planners don’t start small and don’t aim low; they design ‘grand utopian schemes for change’. Searchers in contrary look for existing local activities with potential and start from there, slowly building and evolving along the way. The route unfolds as you go; from the Searchers’s perspective there are no set recipes or roads to success. Analysing the answers, it seems that the majority of e-Debaters propagate the ‘Searchers approach’ while some believe in the potential of (elements of) the ‘Planners approach’¹.

If we view the two aspects of the statement as axes on a continuum, a quadrant can be drawn which might be a useful model for positioning current beliefs, as shown in the next figure:



3 CHALLENGES FOR A BALANCED/HOLISTIC APPROACH IN S&D PROGRAMMES

Introduction and main challenges

The first open question in Round 2 was: *“Delivering a balanced or holistic approach in S&D programmes is often advised, but difficult to implement. In your opinion, what are three main challenges we face in trying to maintain a balance between sport and other components?”*

- Once again, there is great diversity in the answers. Some of the participants elaborate on the key to optimise the balance between sport and educational components in health awareness programmes. The **dilemma of focusing too much on sport (as a primary goal) versus focusing too much on education and other components** (thus dominating sport & play experience), is discussed thoroughly.

¹ Bill easterly: “Searching can work in foreign aid by following some simple maxims: experiment, evaluate, and learn. The basic principles are much easier to state than to actually make happen. Agents of assistance have to have incentives to search for what works to help the poor. If you want to aid the poor, then:

- (1) have aid agents individually accountable for individual, feasible areas for action that help poor people lift themselves up.
- (2) Let those agents search for what works, based on past experience in their area.
- (3) Experiment with the results of the search.
- (4) Evaluate, based on feedback from the intended beneficiaries and scientific testing, and learn what works.
- (5) Reward success and penalize failure. Get more money to

interventions that are working, take money away from interventions that are not working. Each aid agent should explore and specialize further in the direction of what they prove good at doing.

(6) Make sure incentives in (5) are strong enough to do more of what works, then repeat steps (4) on. If action fails, make sure incentives in (5) are strong enough to send the agent back to step (1). If the agent keeps failing, get a new one. It’s so obvious, I’m embarrassed to even lay it out. It’s worth laying out only because it is the opposite of the present methodology of foreign aid.” Bill easterly, 2006. Sources: www.adb.org/economics/speakers_program/easterly.pdf www.youtube.com/watch?v=o_h0g30ywg8

- Another challenge repeatedly mentioned is the **multidisciplinary character of S&D interventions**; implementers are asked to perform on multiple levels such as professional cooperation, capacity building and building bridges between different working fields and skills. According to three e-Debaters, it is a crucial challenge to overcome barriers between professions involved (sport, health, education, development, social change) in order to avoid missing targets and risking to do more damage than good.
- A parallel challenge mentioned by eight e-Debaters, is the **capacity of organisations and staff** designing and implementing S&D programmes. Education and training is needed to acquire knowledge and skills. Because specialised expertise from a diversity of fields is required, either intense cooperation between organisations is needed and/or training of staff and organisations in new realms of expertise is required. Knowing how sport works is not sufficient. Understanding theories and practical processes of development and social change is essential as well. Depending on the focus of the project, additional specialists will be needed (gender, inclusion, trauma, etc.) to fully cover the range of challenges to be tackled.
- Knowing **local circumstances and involving communities** is another major challenge the field is facing.
- Other challenges mentioned by participants are:
 - setting of realistic goals;
 - keeping focus on achievable components;
 - sufficient resources;
 - independence from donor's agendas;
 - sustainability;
 - monitoring and evaluation;
 - equity in partnerships;
 - a common understanding of the desired steps towards change;
 - quality of programmes, projects and staff.

Knowing local circumstances

Knowing local circumstances is a main challenge for a balanced approach in S&D programmes according to a substantial number of participants. Involving the community is key, as the votes on the statements illustrated. Different aspects of this challenge are mentioned: formulating objectives that are valuable from local perspectives and designing programmes which take context into account. Creating feedback loops during programme implementation by listening and through monitoring & evaluation is also seen as a challenge.

Several participants point out that social change starts from the bottom up. They propagate a community-based approach instead of an institutional approach. Communities need to be involved from the start; not only in the implementing phase of programmes and projects, but also in the designing phase. What is the ambition, what are development targets? Teaching the community during development processes to prevent dependency on development workers is mentioned as a challenge as well.

The following quotes from e-Debaters illustrate the challenge of taking local circumstances into account and to involve communities:

First challenge is not knowing and or understanding the needs or the culture of the target population. Second challenge ...

Pelle Kvalsund

Building on what works is a main challenge. While many communities may not have experience with regular participation based sports programmes or have a sports infrastructure they will have a way of making decisions and getting things done. In creating change, the easiest place to start is where the energy and activity already exists. For example, if rural villages in Vanuatu already have a way of running festivals for special days during the year then it makes more sense to develop an inter village sports programme that is based on regular festivals rather than a weekly league.

Kylie Bates

First main challenge: to have a mutual understanding about your objectives (what are you trying to achieve or change). Second challenge is to have a mutual understanding of the specific context in which you operate. Thirdly.....

Frank van Eekeren

..... Thirdly, continuously listen to and talk with the community and beneficiaries to make sure the programme is still targeting the right needs.

Marleen Romeny and Matthijs Huizing

(1) Time - programmes often try to cram too many sporting and educational activities into too short a time; (2) Practitioners rarely have enough understanding of the local history, culture, and languages to be able to truly deliver a holistic S&D program; (3)

Peter Alegi

1) *Getting the community involved and supportive to the sports programmes is key. If you deal with gender based violence or HIV/Aids or other development issues it is important to include the whole community and not just work with a small selective group.*

Astrid Aafjes

Finding creative ways to introduce and demonstrate community issues through age-appropriate active games - some of the health challenges communities face are often difficult (sometimes taboo) to speak to children about. Therefore as professionals and practitioners working with S&D programmes it is often difficult to know how to approach these issues at an age appropriate level and develop sports centred activities that speak to these challenges.

Kate Cowan

Equal partnerships

Equity in relationships with beneficiaries and partners is a crucial element for success.

Create a partnership based on trust, mutual benefits and transparency. An arrangement where the funder's main responsibility is to hand over money and review reports creates an unequal power balance which can result in impractical designs, selective reporting and missed opportunities. Although sometimes more difficult to get started, an approach that is based on trust, organisations sharing responsibility and making decisions together can lead to a stronger long term impact.

Kylie Bates

Unrealistic goals

Trying to achieve too much, integrating too many components in programmes, is a challenge pointed out by several e-Debaters. The votes for the statements in Round 1 and Round 2 showed that opinions differ on what realistic and justifiable goals should be for S&D interventions.

Several e-Debaters stress that goals should be related to sport. Sport has intrinsic value. Practicing sport is healthy, gives hope, supports healing from trauma and teaches social skills. That is enough, according to these e-Debaters. They point out that this is a major challenge because S&D interventions tend to use sport as a carrier, sacrificing quality sporting experiences for other educational components. To deliver quality sport, quality sport structures and capacity need to be developed. According to several e-Debaters, this should be the main focus of attention of S&D interventions.

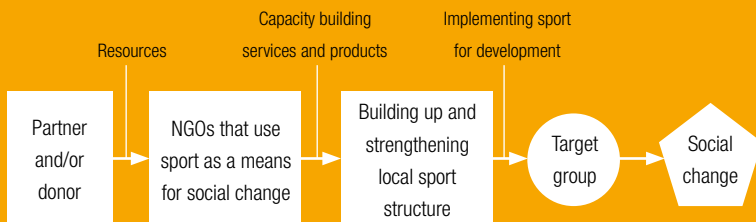
On the other hand, a substantial number of participants disagree with this point of view. They argue that the lack of integration of other educational components in S&D interventions leads to the lack of effect. 'Just sport' does not have enough development value, a broader approach is needed. A substantial number of e-Debaters believe that sport should not be an end in itself but should be the vehicle for social change and education. According to them, the main challenge for quality programmes is to add enough 'development aspects' and to realise the right balance between components.

What is the role of sport?

The position and role of sport in S&D interventions have been discussed since the field emerged. The following questions are repeatedly raised: Do we first have to develop local sport structures before we can add other educational components? Or can we simply implement integrated programmes at once? Is quality sport an adequate ambition for S&D interventions because of the intrinsic value of sport?

DEVELOPING SUSTAINABLE LOCAL SPORT STRUCTURES

An expert consultation in the Netherlands focused on the following questions: Is building sport capacity in developing countries the same as capacity building in other sectors of development cooperation? In other words, is the development of sport a development goal in itself, or is sport a means by which to achieve specific development objectives? The majority of the consulted experts pointed out that sport can only be used as an instrument if the sport in itself has already become sufficiently developed (i.e. if sport capacity has been built up). So even if one sees sport as a vehicle for teaching life skills, the first step is to develop a sustainable sport structure and organisation. This implies that development organisations need specialised sports organisations to lay the foundation. Capacity building is aimed at strengthening the NGOs that use sport as a means for social change. The central challenge is how to ensure that these organisations can service their target groups and local partner organisations using sport. This chain is illustrated below.



(Source: Lessons Learned, 2005)

The following quotes illustrate the opinions on sport as a goal or as an instrument:

Delivering a holistic approach in S&D programme is difficult. The main challenges that must be faced are: Firstly, keeping sport our focus rather than a tool to attract participants - it is sometimes difficult to avoid getting overwhelmed by the challenges communities face; we want to fix them all. However, we have to recognize that sport is our delivery method and we need to remember that this needs to remain our focus. Secondly,

Kate Cowan

The first challenge is, without a doubt, not to consider sport as an end in itself or as a simple recreational activity but as a complementary tool to a development project. The second challenge...

Caroline Gutton

First challenge: to be realistic on short and long term goals. Secondly, do not overestimate the power of the sport activity - the settings are more important. Third challenge: ensure that the educational/learning aspects are the top priority - not the sport activity itself.

Mogens Kirkeby

In my opinion you have to take a sports programme as the base. At that base you can build up the other components like gender, social inclusion, health. The challenge is to develop methods for change of behaviour by using sports. The other challenges are...

Jan Rijpstra

Integrating the benefits of sports/physical activity into other key development components such as education, gender equality, health is difficult as the latter are often considered more "serious" issues that need to be addressed.

Helen Alderson

Making it a quality sport experience is a challenge. If the sport experience is not valued by the target audience then it is unlikely to have power to create social change. A quality sport experience usually means that the sport activities need to be fun, exciting, inclusive, well organised and challenging. It can also mean that the type of activities need to be valued by the participant. For example some participants may be more drawn to activities that are higher risk and individualist such as surfing or BMX riding while others may value belonging to a team or group.

Kylie Bates

It always comes back to the same old question- what is the aim of the programme? Is the aim to develop sport or to use Sport for Development? And if it is the latter- what development needs to be achieved? My experience with S&D programmes is limited; however the ones that I have been involved with try to focus on too much. And sometimes even the focus is based on what funding is available- if funding is coming from the department of health, then it will be connected to HIV/ AIDS or obesity etc. It should be kept in mind that by simply participating in sport a lot of soft skills are learnt like how to work in a team, discipline, commitment, perseverance etc. So skills like these should not be the main aim. A big gap that I see in a lot of development programmes is the lack of attention to the motor and physical development of the participants- a lot of these programmes are happening on a volunteer basis and many of the programme leaders have very little or no experience in this field.....

Maya van Gent

First main challenge is setting priorities in the curriculum. Most of the organisations working in the field of S&D face challenges on many different levels such as health, gender inequity, environmental pollution etc. Trying to tackle all these issues at once often leads to a lack of expertise in specific thematic fields. At times, 'less is more' and a clear focus on one additional topic might help to maintain the balance between sport and other components. A third challenge is directing attention away from sport by other components. It is a simple fact that children come to the sessions because they want to do sports, not because they want to be taught about other topics. Once children start playing, it is quite challenging for coaches to direct the participants' attention to other subjects. Creativity, playful learning methods and diversified activities might help to tackle this problem.

Daniela Preti

Holistic Sport for Development and Peace programmes are not necessarily difficult to implement – provided they are specially-designed and carefully delivered by well-trained coaches and leaders. We should not think about having to balance sport with other programming components, but instead should focus on using sport as a vehicle to achieve a wide range of key programmatic outcomes. It is therefore crucial that Sport for Development programmes be designed to ensure that sport and play are central to the experience – and that coaches and leaders work to ensure participatory practices are favoured.

Johann Olav Koss

Our point in round one was that the key to optimising the balance between Sport and Development lies in overcoming the distinction between them and working towards integrated programmes that utilise sport as a method of delivering other components. The first challenge here then is to ensure that there is a fundamental understanding on the ground of how sport is being used. It is crucial to understand and communicate the scope of the specific sport used as a tool in addressing a specific social issue. This perception of using sport to produce quantifiable positive outcomes needs to run through the coordinators, implementers and beneficiaries of a given programme, and getting the balance right surely just means using sport no more than is proven useful.

Vladimir Borkovic and William Rook

Balancing sport and other health components

Beware of only focusing on sport to achieve healthier lifestyles. It remains a challenge to integrate other lifestyle components in S&D interventions, e.g. nutrition.

It is very often a challenge to ensure that there is a balance between sport (physical activity) and healthy nutrition, i.e. calories in calories out. Please see the bad example and related comments hereunder. The promotion of sport cannot be a substitute for a healthy diet! Another challenge: sport often conflicts with competing priorities such as classroom time, learning languages or computer skills.

Helen Alderson

Insufficient Monitoring and Evaluation

In many cases, programmes are not evaluated sufficiently, thus hindering the learning capacity of the field. Several e-Debaters argue that the ability, capacity and willingness to gather quality data about the effectiveness of S&D interventions is a major challenge.

Third challenge is that outcomes are hard to measure. This makes holistic approaches difficult to both devise and implement.

Peter Alegi

A pitfall is trying to achieve too much, major challenge is to be able to measure and back up results.

Pelle Kvalsund

The use of sports in development is still very much a growing field, and one without much grassroots analysis. As an opportunity it represents a logical and exciting means of development; it clearly makes sense to those of us passionate about it, but much of the impact from sports that we know is out there comes anecdotally, which is totally insufficient as our community moves forward. We need to make concerted efforts to broaden the knowledge base about how these programmes can and do operate on the ground, invest a significant amount of time and resources in Monitoring and Evaluation, and put a great deal of effort into generating curricula that incorporate realisable lessons into sports. Through in-depth research and the production of innovative techniques for delivering education through sports, we can consolidate the great work already being done on the ground, clarify how sports fits in with wider issues, and also ensure all stakeholders are making the best use of their efforts. It should be a duty for all of us to test, evaluate and innovate so that all are aware of practices that work best in maintaining the balance between sport and other components.

Vladimir Borkovic and William Rook

True multidisciplinary programmes

A major obstacle is to integrate skills, expertise and knowledge from different disciplines in S&D interventions. Often, there is sufficient capacity in one field – for instance sport - but other capacities are lacking (for instance: development, social change, education). Bridging the gaps between disciplines is not easy. There are professional barriers that result in gaps of communication and approaches to resolve problems that need to be bridged in order to successfully cooperate.

It is important to have experts in specific areas (shelters, social workers, counsellors, legal support) involved and have partnerships with other support organisations who can provide counselling, advise or medical support to address the issue in a holistic way.

Astrid Aafjes

Another challenge is expertise in Sport and Development. Practitioners delivering sessions on the ground often have a background as a sports coach and sometimes lack expertise in other thematic fields. It's thus advisable to collaborate with other organisations with specific expertise in these topics in order to capitalise on each others expertise and use synergies.

Daniela Preti

The main challenge of the implementing of S&D programmes is that you need experts from two sides: one, an expert in sport and sport development for the interest of sport itself and two: an expert who is a social or health scientist who fully understands the problems related to health issues and how to create awareness of it etc. Where do you find this expertise in one person or in one organisation?

Understanding and implementing the dynamics of sports and creating understanding and implementing awareness of vital social and health problems are hardly found in one person or one organisation. So, in my opinion we need highly qualified experts and organisations in sports and from social and health sciences who have to work together from their own discipline without handing in their specific level of quality. Sport should not give in (be abused) for social or health reasons and health awareness should not rely on 'spin off' effects of sport mainly. It is not win-win situation, but a ++ situation which is the challenge.

Cees Versteeg

The second challenge for an educational project, to me, it seems essential to build a project with local partners from other fields sharing the same objectives. Each can therefore use a specific tool (sport is only one of them) which together will enable to answer a problematic, some needs or a defined audience.

Caroline Gutton

A shared 'language' is the main challenge - different disciplines use different vocabularies and jargon, coming from different backgrounds. Balancing all components assumes we all understand each other. Furthermore, resources are an important challenge: often we work with limited resources, for which different components will compete. Thirdly, 'interconnectedness and synergy' is a challenge: the sum of all components should be bigger than that of all individual components. We have to face up to understanding what each discipline can contribute to the other.

Jouwert van Geene

Capacity building

Many e-Debaters stress the need for capacity building. Sport and Development is a relatively new field. Because of the scope and ambition of many programmes, expertise from a wide range of sources is needed. In many cases, certain skills are insufficiently developed, leading to ineffective projects. A number of e-Debaters claim that the field needs clear standards, comprehensive curricula and tailor made courses for programme designers, project leaders and coaches.

...This leads on to the second challenge, which is adequately qualified staff – what we need are coaches and instructors trained in delivering educational content in a vibrant and involving way. This requires not only skills as a coach and an educator, but also an appreciation of the Development through Sport vision.

This point goes hand in hand with meeting the third main challenge – comprehensive curricula based on considered knowledge of using sports based activities to deliver social and educational messages. This is the area that presents the greatest ongoing challenge to those of us in the Development through Sport community, requiring a great deal of pedagogical and physical education research.

Vladimir Borkovic and William Rook

...Thirdly, to guarantee a good balance you need both high quality coaches and referees to implement the sports component, but you also need to have people who have the skills and knowledge to facilitate the discussion groups and provide a safe space. Sometimes, this can be the same person, but mostly it requires a different skill set. You have to create safe spaces on the field as well as off the field.

Astrid Aafjes

Quality volunteers for quality programmes – One of the main challenges S&D programmes face is providing quality training of volunteers, peer leaders, teachers, staff etc. These are the people that our children will look up to, therefore we need to ensure they have the technical skill, embrace our philosophies and understand their position as a role model.

Kate Cowan

The third challenge is that the existing sport organisations should be more interested in developmental work; should be more aware of the fact that they have an enormous influence/impact on sport practise in developing and emerging countries whether they want it or not.

Yves Vanden Auweele

I also think that this is a relative new concept for South Africa and a lot of assistance has been coming from the North- however South Africa needs to develop and find ways that suit the people of South Africa. Challenges also exist if government sees this as an important part of strategic development for the country- will they support such initiatives? Financially and/or in principle? Qualifications? People with passion are needed to sustain and continue with initiatives of this nature. A lot of group leaders are not educated/qualified for this specific job- they learn as they go- and many lose interest and also time is wasted.

Qualifications-some are offered in small scale- needs to be development in South Africa equipping these individuals. Seeing that this is till such a new concept in

South Africa many individuals/institutions are not sure where sport development lies- does it lie within sport science/development studies/local governance or government/education? A lot of these programmes are run by individuals/NGOs that work alone with little support/assistance from other sectors- they sometime are funded by one main funder and if this funder withdraws the financial support most of these projects end- thus sustainability is compromised.

Maya van Gent

Theory of Change

In Round 1, Jouwert van Geene stressed the need for a Theory of Change as an element in the design and implementation of programmes. In Round 2, this standpoint is supported by other e-Debaters:

The first main challenges is a listing of the 'working' elements in sport that may unlock the positive potentials of sport and lead to positive effects, i.e. a sport quantity (intensity, duration) and quality elements of sport delivery including the context of delivery (communication style, motivational climate, obtain feelings of competence, self efficacy and enjoyment etc.). We certainly do not want to avoid sport to be a catalyst or facilitator for negative tendencies such as egocentrism, abuse, violence and corruption.

Yves Vanden Auwele

Three main challenges are:

- 1) Have a mutual understanding about your objectives (what are you trying to achieve or change).*
- 2) Have a mutual understanding of the specific context in which you operate.*
- 3) Have a mutual understanding about the theory of change (for that specific project or programme).*

Frank van Eekeren

Resources and donor agendas

An obstacle mentioned by several e-Debaters is sustainable financing of programmes. Long term commitment is important. How much time is needed is a matter of discussion; however, real social improvement cannot be accomplished in a period of 2-4 years, the average length of most contracts in the field.

Main challenges are: sustained funding; parental involvement for youth programmes and interference by international organisations who want to own programmes.

Marion Keim

1) Donor restrictions/requirements. 2) Funding restrictions. 3) Limited organisational capacity.

Carla Thachuk

4 LESSONS LEARNED

Introduction

Much can be learned from mistakes and successes of the past. There are many enthusiastic and highly competent development workers active in the field of S&D, but monitoring and evaluation is often disregarded. Best practices are often not shared; bad practices are virtually never shared. In light of this we asked e-Debaters: *Can you describe a bad example of trying to embed sport in other interventions aimed at addressing health issues?*

Are mistakes still a taboo in the field of S&D?

Only a few e-Debaters describe a specific project which did not succeed. Mostly, a general mistake is described as a bad example. Several e-Debaters state that they do not know any bad examples. Is this really the case or does this prove that there is still a taboo surrounding 'bad development projects'? Looking at the number of programmes and projects implemented in the last few years, it seems inevitable that mistakes were made and ambitions were not realised in some cases. Actually, for new and emerging fields of expertise, mistakes are not only good but are absolutely necessary to progress. No mistakes means no learning. No mistakes means no innovation. To innovate one has to experiment; mistakes need to be an integral part of this process.

In this chapter, the 'bad examples' mentioned by e-Debaters are provided through their quotes.

Donor priorities

To let the agendas of donors lead programme goals instead of local agendas is mentioned as a recurring mistake. What Western organisations value is different than what communities and target groups in developing countries value. This implies that projects need to be developed with the beneficiaries, not for them.

The votes on the statements prove that the majority of e-Debaters agree with this standpoint. Indicators of success should be defined by management staff and target groups and not by donors. And effects should be estimated by beneficiaries and internal stakeholders, not by external experts. If these conditions are taken into account, S&D interventions will be more effective.

The difficulty can come when organisations chase after money and follow the mandate of funders rather than the long term needs of their communities and thereby shifting their priorities on a semi-annual basis.

Marion Keim

Focusing on HIV/AIDS in an area where there are other more urgent issues because it is what the donor-partners easiest can access financial support to do.

Pelle Kvalsund

Obstacles for social and behaviour change

Realising social change is not an easy affair. Any social context triggers certain behaviour patterns that might be problematic. Even if the behaviour patterns are identified as risk-taking or problematic, there are barriers for behaviour change. S&D programmes need to take the context, barriers and drivers for behaviour change into account to be effective. This is not always the case, leading to projects that fail to trigger behaviour change and thus to create long-term, sustainable social change.

Sport is a great entry point for making youngsters aware, for instance about HIV/AIDS. But ... in many countries awareness about HIV/AIDS is not the main issue (anymore). People are aware, but there are other elements that prevent them from changing behaviour - like gender relations, stigmatization, etc. In other words: the use of sport in these programmes is quite useless. A better notion of the theory of change (what interventions could lead to behavioural change) is needed.

Frank van Eekeren

Hmmm... I have always relied on sport to resolve implementation concerns or difficulties within other interventions – i.e. if something isn't working, add sport! However, when adding sport it is essential to ensure the sports based activities are age/stage appropriate.

Carla Thachuk

If sport is embedded in an intervention mainly addressing health issues, it is crucial to ensure an inclusive environment for the sport activities. A bad example would be to provide 'health for all - but sport only for the healthy' interventions. In order to have inclusive sport sessions, however, the coaches need to be carefully sensitised and trained in inclusive activities and games.

Daniela Preti

Sport as an instrument to attract attention

In some cases, sport is only used to attract children and youth. It is not an integral part of the educational intervention but is a separate activity.

I have witnessed situations where sport is used as a tool to attract children to an event or activity. When the children show up they are given 15 minutes of activity, the ball is then hidden and the event is turned into a lecture or inactive discussion period on health issues that may or may not be a concern to the community. This is a bad example of how to use sport to address health issues. I would have to agree with Frank van Eekeren and Cees Versteeg in the first round of this debate- sport should be the core of S&D projects, not just a means for attraction.

Kate Cowan

I was aware of one programme that wanted to bring HIV/AIDS awareness to rural areas with sport- thus they would start with a soccer game to bring all the youth together and then give some info on HIV/AIDS- after this initial visit the kids just started showing up for soccer- which was just done by throwing a ball on the pitch and all 40 kids would run after that for about 40 minutes. Some kids later said after a feedback session after 16 weeks that all they wanted to do was play soccer- which was not wrong- but even if this part of the programme was run more effectively at least some soft skills would have happened.

Maya van Gent

E.g. Kicking AIDS out games are only for one time in one situation useful. A youngster or a team who plays football every weekend and in every tournament will not complain. But when he or the team has to play a Kicking Aids Out Game for the second time, the response will be: 'We already know this game!' Don't underestimate the power of the official recognised sports.

Cees Versteeg

Insufficient attention for other health aspects

Only sport is not enough for a healthy lifestyle. Other aspects e.g. nutrition are sometimes disregarded. A lack of involvement of knowledgeable experts to address the factors causing a problematic health situation is a well-known pitfall. A multidisciplinary approach is needed.

Bad example: www.foodmagazine.org.uk/press/cadbury_get_active/Cadbury promoting chocolate consumption in a scheme to promote sport and physical activity. Although this is a worst-case scenario, fast food, confectionary and other industry promotion of physical activity is often designed to develop brand loyalty to unhealthy foods or distract or discourage attention to issues like marketing practices, or inappropriate availability of fast foods (vending machines) for children. They can also subtly give the message that as long as you exercise, it is ok to eat junk food by associating brands with health imagery and activity. The take away is that physical activity promotion in children should NOT be a substitute for addressing causes of unhealthy diet, and the two should always be linked.

Helen Alderson

The main point, not to forget, is that sport on its own can't resolve everything, especially if it's about a health issue. Sports is only a tool that can be used as therapeutic support, it can also be a tool used as awareness to public health matters. The biggest mistake would be to organise a health project not consulting specialists in that matter (psychologists or specialists in the concerned topic) through all the different steps of the project: from the conception until the youth follow-up.

Caroline Gutton

Sport, play and physical activity are excellent tools to promote good health and to instil positive values about healthy lifestyle choices. Sport for Development programmes also provide an excellent platform from which to raise awareness about targeted health issues and can provide participants with access to information to help reduce risky behaviour. Good health, however, is impacted by many factors, including nutrition, sanitation, access to health services and state of mind. Whenever possible, Sport for Development programmes should be offered in tandem with other supports in order to ensure that the health needs of targeted beneficiaries are met. For instance, a programme that aims to help people overcome drug addiction will not succeed by using physical activity as the sole intervention. In this case, physical activity should be combined with other physiological and medical interventions, including addiction counselling and treatment. Sport for Development programmes in these situations will be more likely to succeed if they are designed and delivered using integrated approaches.

Johann Olav Koss

Beware of negative side effects

In a worse case scenario, an S&D intervention which fails to reach its targets, might additionally have detrimental side effects. An example is sport activities offered to

women without involving men. It is not possible to emancipate women without emancipating men. Changing social roles that have evolved over centuries is not a simple 'trick'.

The mantra of 'first do no harm' should be observed in the design of all programmes. For example if large groups of people are travelling for days by foot to an event or festival then the safety of the women and children and possibility of the spread of disease needs to be considered. While training young females as sports leaders in the community might tick a lot of inclusion boxes for a development agency, thought needs to be given to how their new job will be perceived by their husbands and families. When you throw a rock into a river there is a ripple effect. Sport needs to be aware of the impact, good and bad, it may have.

Kylie Bates

Limited value of general campaigns

Behaviour change is very difficult to accomplish. This is backed up by scientific evidence. There is a huge gap between awareness and behaviour. Often target groups are already aware of current and potential social problems facing their community. Context and social structures are dominating factors which should be addressed as well to realise social change.

I would mention the area of 'General Campaigns'. We have unfortunately seen a lot of general campaigns with simple messages on how to improve your health. Despite the fact that we know that there is a long way from "knowing to doing". Overall campaigns with simple messages have very little effect on changing behaviour. So let me say, that each time I meet such overall campaign, I tend to be rather sceptical.

Mogens Kirkeby

5 WAYS FORWARD

We need to challenge the field to apply lessons learned and to change ineffective practices. Success factors most experts agree upon, are:

- Involve beneficiaries, stakeholders and local communities from the start.
- Use experience from other organisations, local expertise but also bring your own competence: stay involved.
- Integrate monitoring and evaluation in programmes. Learn from mistakes.

// ROUND 3

HOW DO WE PROGRESS? ACTIVE MEASURES TO OVERCOME THE MAJOR CHALLENGES FOR S&D INTERVENTIONS



1 INTRODUCTION

The questions in Round 3 focused on the learning capacity of the field and on active measures to progress. The e-Debaters answered the following questions:

- Do you consider it still a 'taboo' to talk openly of mistakes or 'what went wrong' in S&D programmes? How do you propose overcoming this challenge?
- What three active measures do you recommend the S&D community to take as a collective in the next 3-5 years to address the biggest challenges outlined earlier in the discussion?

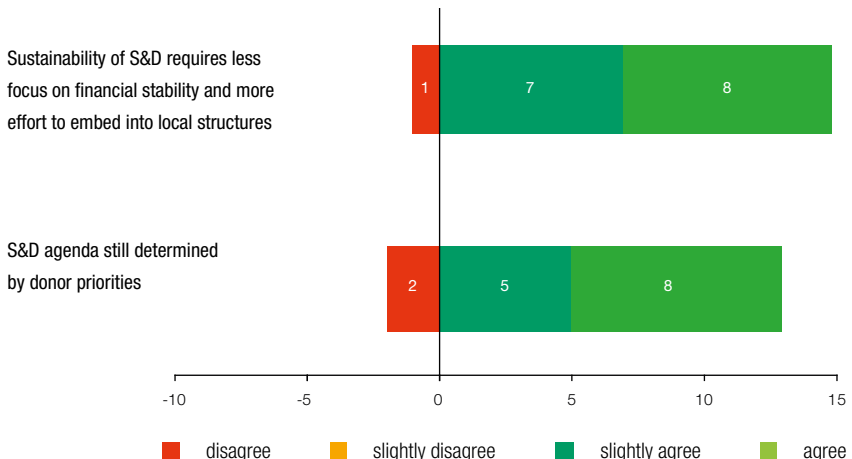
2 CONTROVERSIAL STATEMENTS TRIGGERED DISCUSSION

Participants were asked to what extent they agree to the following two statements:

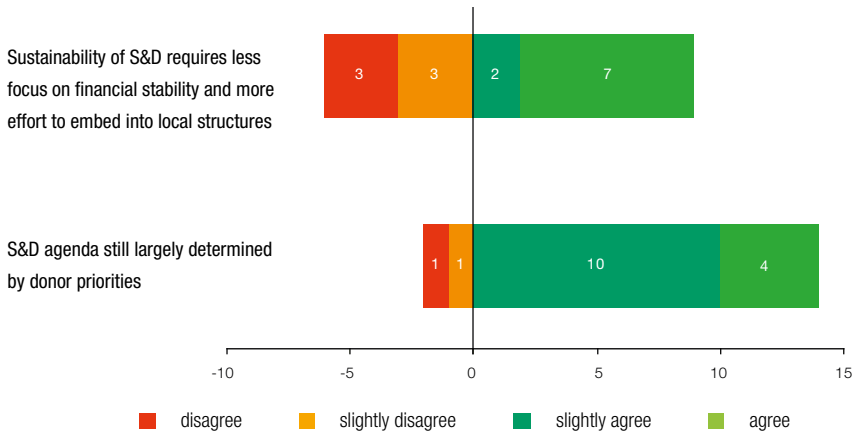
- The S&D agenda is still largely determined by donor priorities and needs.
- Ensuring the sustainability of S&D interventions requires less focus on financial stability and more effort to embed such programmes into local structures and existing local practices.

The first figure shows the results of the votes of participants. Please note that the 'neutral' category has been left out to highlight differences. The S&D e-Debate was open to anyone to vote on statements. The second graph shows the results from visitors to the Platform who voted in the poll.

Statements on focus of S&D interventions (n=18) - Results participants



Statements on focus of S&D interventions (n=18) - Results visiting e-Debaters



Embedding interventions into local structures is essential and financial sustainability is crucial

The graphs show that visiting e-Debaters more often than registered participants disagree with the statement that ‘Sustainability of S&D interventions requires less focus on financial stability and more effort to embed such programmes into local structures and existing local practices’. There is consensus that S&D programmes should be integrated in local structures and existing local practices. Registered e-Debaters even agree - with only one exception – that this is a more important focus than financial sustainability. One third of the visitors disagree: financial sustainability is more or just as important as embedding programmes into local structures.

From e-Debater’s explanations, one can conclude that they naturally recognise the essential value of financial sustainability. However, financial sustainability without local integration will not lead to effective programmes, they conclude. The following quotes highlight the e-Debaters views:

I think embedding in local structures has been started in many places, especially at community levels. However, the biggest gains can be made to have S&D being integrated in mainstream development structures, for instance in those places where integrated development planning takes place e.g. district health/water/ education/HIV-AIDS committees that have a multi-stakeholder constituency.

Jouwert van Geene

The best programmes fail because lack of support from the local structures and practices.

Yves Vanden Auweele

Without adequate and reliable financial resources no sport development programme can survive, let alone succeed. That said, embedding S&D initiatives into local structures (e.g., schools, community centres) and existing practices is also critical to long-term sustainability. One would have to analyse each case carefully to devise an appropriate focus between the two.

Peter Alegi

Yes, of course I agree with the statement: start from the potentials of the people on grass roots level. When you want to stimulate and train youngsters to bring social change by sports, you have to start with activities where they are passionate for. Self-confidence and self-respect are main issues at grass roots level and natural conditions for growth. And sport has all those potentials when it's really practised in the fields!

Cees Versteeg

The statement is true, but an organisation cannot be sustainable if they do not consider their financial sustainability.

Astrid Aafjes

You need both financial sustainability and a closer relationship with local structures and local practices. Partners can have great relationships locally and be embedded into structures etc, however if there is no funding this could put the project at risk.

Emmanuel Madonda

S&D Agenda largely determined by donors?

All but two e-Debaters agree that the S&D Agenda is still largely determined by donor priorities and needs. The majority of visitors agree as well on this statement. However, e-Debaters explain that an increase in transparency of programmes has taken place; they also confirm that there is more emphasis on local priorities. Local circumstances are increasingly being taken into account than in the beginning. The following quotes illustrate the opinions:

In the current economic climate there has been increased pressure on partners to demonstrate return on investment, which - if not handled sensibly - could compromise projects. There are however projects who are not willing to compromise their needs to fulfill founders objectives which is great to see however there needs to be a healthy balance between projects and donor priorities.

Emmanuel Madonda

A bottom up approach will always find sceptics, especially from donors. Of course they first agree, but in the end they never will commit themselves fully to a bottom up approach, because they will loose power when doing so!

Cees Versteeg

When we are able to use new centres of knowledge on Sport for Development which I suggested to set up, it will be easier to determine the priorities of developing countries and there will be more guarantee for stability in financing.

Jan Rijjstra

My feeling is that the S&D community is largely driven by S&D practitioners. In as much as these may represent the donors, I do not have the impression that S&D practitioners are too much led by them.

Jouwert van Geene

3 TALKING ABOUT MISTAKES A TABOO?

The e-Debaters agree that communicating about programmes and projects which failed or which could have been more effective, is important. Opinions differ if it is still a taboo to talk about mistakes.

The majority of the participants experience the taboo to talk openly about weaknesses. Behind closed doors however, organisations do reflect on their experiences. In Sport and Development, competition for scarce resources leads to the tendency to communicate mainly positive messages and experiences.

However, a tendency to be more open, is noticed by several e-Debaters. This tendency can be further stimulated by rewarding openness and rewarding the reflection on projects that missed targets. Jouwert van Geene states it clearly: we need motive, means and opportunity for reflection². Other participants also stressed that we need a common interest to learn as a sector. Other measures suggested by e-Debaters to stimulate learning, are:

- Conferences and workshops where participants truly exchange experiences and lessons learned and truly interact instead of just telling and listening to promotional stories.
- Not only focusing on mistakes and failures but simultaneously on guidelines and best practices.

² Tagline from Bruce Britton's weblog on learning and development in NGOs. Source: <http://thelearningngo.wordpress.com/>

- Rigorous (peer) reviews of programmes and projects, stronger emphasis on monitoring and evaluation.
- 'Intervention': colleagues from other organisations reflecting and sharing experiences.
- Donors should form long-term partnerships with implementing organisations and should be accountable for both successes and failures.
- Open discussions like this e-Debate on the International Platform for Sport and Development.

The following quotes of the e-Debaters illustrate the opinions in the field:

I don't think that the learning culture in S&D programmes is much different than in many other development programmes. In general I believe that reflection and learning (from both mistakes and successes) has improved a lot in the last decade. As Bruce Britton (2005) rightly stated, learning for development needs both motive, means and opportunity. So first we need to explain again and again why reflection is needed, for accountability, for improvement, for innovation, for impact. Then we need tools, methods, capacity for learning that are comprehensive and creative (combining qualitative and quantitative tools). Finally we need the chance, the time and the space for reflection: a culture that encourages learning from mistakes, stimulates innovation and risk taking (safe-trials). As always, the first step is for us all to lead by example: by showing our sensitive side, by admitting weaknesses and mistakes openly, by discussing what could be improved and what we learned. By seeking advice.

Jouwert van Geene

Of course we discuss challenges that we and our partners in Haarlem and in Mutare meet when managing and developing a project. I believe this is the only way to achieve progress. It is also important to be transparent to your donors; it is a prerequisite to be a reliable partner. Another aspect to consider is the 'tone' with which you make your statements. Think of the proverb: 'the tone makes the music'. Sharp criticism as a form of entertainment is now often seen in the Netherlands in many debates. I believe that criticism should be constructive; respecting the criticized party. Without respect, reflecting on mistakes will be counterproductive.

Dik Bol

It is not a taboo to talk about mistakes. First of all there are a lot of examples where partners do openly discuss about their programmes, including their challenges and mistakes (although often behind closed doors). Second, open debate depends on

power relations between the involved parties. If there is a strong dependence on the donor, a lot of competition between organisations (for funds), etc - visibility and a positive image are crucial, and openness about mistakes will not be rewarded. A key for more openness is to increase the value of, and reward for, 'learning' in the programmes - and not to focus on accountability only.

Frank van Eekeren

Because I am not in a position to judge on the context of current S&D programmes I can only answer that in principle to keep silent about mistakes has never proven to be a good idea. An analysis of mistakes may be the start of a better and more founded initiative. Moreover it is an underestimation of the capability of the public and the relevant sponsors to evaluate projects in a balanced way.

Yves Vanden Auweele

The only way to overcome challenges is to talk them through – however in the business world we are taught to 'sell', and you can't 'sell' a product when you speak negatively about the outcomes. In the field of Sport and Development we need to be realistic, we are all working for a common goal, and we have a lot to learn from one another, therefore there is a NEED for dialogue on 'what went wrong'. We often speak of the need for stronger Monitoring and Evaluation tools – however what are the benefits of using these tools if we only highlight the positives of the outcomes. Programmes that are strong today have become this way because they have discussed and talked openly about all aspects of the programme – the positives and negatives.

Kate Cowan

Based on anecdotal evidence, I believe it is uncommon at best, taboo at worst, to talk openly about mistakes or failures in S&D projects. In general, a lack of self-reflexivity and honest analysis is typical of development initiatives in many other fields, including farming, governance, and gender equity. From the practitioners' perspective, fear of losing funding and political support, as well as potential embarrassment, are powerful disincentives to talk candidly about errors. Overcoming this challenge is difficult, but openly discussing what went wrong can teach us valuable lessons and help foster transparent and equitable partnerships between donors, S&D programmes and participating communities.

Peter Alegi

Using sport to achieve development and peace objectives is a new and innovative way to promote positive social change. As with all new innovations, there are always early lessons to be learned. Instead of sweeping these lessons under the

rug, we should acknowledge, share and evaluate them. By learning from our collective experiences, we can ensure continuous improvement within the sector. We must continue to speak openly with one another, to share our stories, monitor and evaluate our programmes, and to make the results from those evaluations accessible. The credibility and effectiveness of our sector depends on it. It is natural in sport to look at mistakes and what can be improved and we can take the normal practice from sport into the Sport for Development area.

Johann Olav Koss

From our perspective it is of course not a 'taboo'. In fact it is totally unproductive to refrain from a progressive discussion of previous failures. However talk of mistakes does remain a sensitive area because of fear about disappointing prospective donors/funders. The current model of a donor-recipient relationship puts too much weight on the donor's strategic objectives as opposed to the mission and programmatic needs of the recipient, in most cases the local organisation meeting the needs of the respective community. It should not be a taboo as long as acknowledging mistakes is part of a constructive criticism/evaluation process – followed up by concrete measures to improve these mistakes.

One way to overcome any such sentiments is to build a sense of common interest – it is in all our interests as a global S&D movement that we are open with each other, and even more importantly, donors and funding bodies need to ensure the focus is as much on transparency and monitoring as it is on 'success'. S&D organisations should not be in competition, and we should be open about sharing our strengths and weakness and about offering and accepting help and criticism. Only by confronting 'what went wrong' can we know where to improve.

Vladimir Borkovic and William Rook

As individuals and organisations in the Sport for Development arena start to get to know each other better and programmes are reviewed more rigorously, the tide seems to slowly be starting to turn in terms of quality of information that is shared. A few ways to make more progress are:

- 1. The role of athlete ambassadors needs to extend beyond simply promoting benefits of sport or telling their personal story to contributing well evidenced information to building the case for sport. It would be ideal to see fewer athlete ambassadors who have a greater commitment to and more thorough understanding of Sport for Development.*
- 2. Conferences, forums and platforms need to be places of debate, discourse, and learning not simply self-promotion. Organisers of these forums need to set the agenda in a way that encourages sharing of opinions about challenging issues rather than simply reports on activities. This means the stage needs to be given*

- to people at the coal face, not just high level representatives or athletes.*
3. *Programmes should undertake rigorous reviews which incorporate the observations of an outside party and ideally, share information with the Sport for Development community.*
 4. *Donors should form long term partnerships with implementers of programmes and share responsibility for both the success and failure of the activities.*

Kylie Bates

Reporting mistakes and failures will never be the most popular part of S&D. However, with an increased focus on monitoring and evaluation, and having created a more qualified environment for exchange of knowledge and experiences, I believe we move towards a more open discussion of successes and mistakes. I think this is one process that the Platform clearly assists and supports.

Mogens Kirkeby

At CIOS College in Haarlem, the Netherlands we are using the concept of 'Train the Trainer at the Job'. We train sport leaders to become Sport & Development trainers and coaches using the methodology of 'intervision': to learn from each other; students, trainees and teachers in practice and on grass roots level. This is a very effective and transparent method, accepted in a natural way by all involved on basis of reciprocity, equality and dialogue.

Yes, there is a taboo in S&D programmes and we should be ashamed of that because at the same time, organisations are using slogans as 'changing life by sports' but keeping 'how we are doing that' exclusively for themselves.

Let's have real 'intervision meetings' on grass roots level and let's really use a bottom up approach. There is too much focus on organisational and institutional development; 'managers' are forgetting that it is the sport leader on grass roots level - often with old equipment and leaking balls - who at the end makes the difference!

Cees Versteeg

It should not be a 'taboo' to talk about mistakes, you have to face it when things went wrong because you can learn from it. Unfortunately, media pay a lot of attention to mistakes. News magazines, TV and Internet often put mistakes as headlines. It's better to openly speak about things that went wrong and at the same tell how mistakes will be avoided in the future. Be honest about what went right and what went wrong. I believe that if organisations tell each other openly about mistakes and failures, future mistakes can be prevented.

Jan Rijpstra

In general organisations prefer to not discuss mistakes or failures. They fear sanctions from donors or a 'bad' reputation. Women Win realizes that 'sports' is a relatively new strategy. Therefore, it is important to acknowledge mistakes and failures, but also to identify 'good practice' and 'success stories'.

Women Win documents good practices in close collaboration with our programme partners in the field, this will enable other organisations to learn from existing good practices, designs and strategies. This will prevent reinventing the wheel and will contribute to the bottom up development of clear guidelines. Only when organisations are able to identify their mistakes and failures, they are also able to identify their good practices and learn from it all. Therefore, it is important that organisations share, exchange and are ready to adapt and revise.

Astrid Aafjes

By not talking about previous mistakes and what went wrong, how will we be able to grow? And improve? Since being involved in this debate I started reading a lot more about Sport and Development programmes- I was surprised as to how little scientific evidence/research exists on what has been proven to be correct (implementation)- if you take all the various comments from all the participants in round 1 and 2 – it seems that we all have very different ideas of what should and shouldn't be done.

How do we overcome the taboo to talk about mistakes? Through discussions like this and through innovation in research into what actually does and doesn't work in S&D programmes, especially longitudinal studies.

Maya van Gent

There is perhaps still a large amount of resistance towards openly discussing mistakes, especially ones own. But we should ask ourselves why we are talking about mistakes: is the purpose of sharing these experiences simply limited to 'naming and shaming' certain interventions or will this information be used in a fruitful way to help improve the interventions and find solutions?

There is a certain amount of competition in the field of S&D and sharing learning experiences (because making mistakes is a part of learning) could be seen as potentially detrimental to the image or approach of the organisation in question. Furthermore, this competition sometimes prevents organisations from sharing their experiences in order to avoid giving up their 'intellectual property'.

Nevertheless, there is definitely movement towards recognising the strength in sharing experiences (good and bad) within the field of S&D – we are maybe not yet at the stage of rewarding those who choose to be open about their experiences... this might be one way to break the taboo.

Daniela Preti

I always talk openly about mistakes, otherwise we can not improve. For overcoming this challenge I propose that everybody else does the same. Some organisations keep quiet in order not to scare funders off and funders don't like to talk openly about mistakes as they see it as a weakness. Critical thinking skills are basic to the success of any programme or undertaking. Critical evaluation applied from an external source or critical self reflection are processes to be honoured and never feared. Maybe sports awards should include the category: 'Best identified challenge and proposed solutions'.

Marion Keim

4 ACTIVE MEASURES FOR THE FIELD OF S&D

With the final question of the Sport & Development e-Debate we hoped to draw an agenda for the near future: What three active measures do you recommend the S&D community to take as a collective in the next 3-5 years to address the biggest challenges outlined earlier in the discussion?

A wide range of measures is recommended by the e-Debaters, summarised below and followed up with illustrative quotes.

Professionalism demands interdisciplinary curricula and education

When planning for a year, plant corn. When planning for a decade, plant trees. When planning for life, train and educate people.

Chinese Proverb

The field of S&D is young, this becomes clear when analysing the answers. There is not yet an accepted body of knowledge nor guiding principles backed up by scientific research. Bridges between disciplines still have to be built. A mutual language needs to be developed. It is crucial to develop curricula for education and training on all levels: coaches and sport leaders, programme designers, managers of NGOs, and academics. Clearly the most important challenge and active measure to be undertaken - the mantra for coming years - is: educate, educate, educate!

This is a process not accomplished overnight. However, this is the time to make the effort. After two decades of programmes and projects, the field can still hardly prove the impact scientifically. There are only a few true interdisciplinary S&D courses. Academics specialised in Sport and Development are scarce. So it is urgent to join forces, move forward to professionalise the field and offer organisations strong training and education for all levels, both in developed and in developing countries.

Rally expertise around education programme

Yves Vanden Auweele pleads to rally expertise around an educational programme to be developed by S&D stakeholders. Currently, there is a lot of expertise, but it remains scattered. We need to bundle it. We need a strategy and plan to attract and focus the S&D expertise, mine it and develop building blocks suitable for the global dissemination. A collaboration to develop an education and training programme seems a suitable way for overcoming many challenges in the field.

- 1. My major recommendation is a plea for (an) educational programme(s) (Masters programme?) for both NGOs working with sports programmes and sports organisations (management level and grassroots level) both in the North and in the South. There is enough expertise (both academic knowledge and practical experience) available to develop such a program, however the expertise is scattered.*
- 2. My second recommendation therefore is to rally the existing expertise round an S&D educational program.*
- 3. To realise the former recommendations, Universities, NGOs and sport organisations should create a workable consortium.*

Yves Vanden Auweele

Reflection requires monitoring & evaluation

The field still needs to gain insights on what works and what does not work. Monitoring and evaluation is crucial to get these insights. Not only should we make M&E an integral part of programmes and projects from the start; we should also use M&E efforts on the programmes already implemented. We need to start to improve our ability to learn today, using not only our future experiences but also our past experiences, stresses Maya van Gent. Many lessons to be learned are out there waiting for us to extract them.

Developing a educational curriculum – it seems that many institutions do this on Master and PhD level- however I doubt that these graduates will go back to the community and work at grass root level. Maybe developing short courses for some community members and educating and teaching them to assist and contribute to these programmes might also help....

Developing longitudinal research and collecting data from S&D programmes- I do realize that to measure some of these variables/components is very difficult, however I think an effort needs to be made to try and measure as much as possible. Even programmes that have run for a couple of years can maybe have retrospective interviews with participants that were involved- what did the programme contribute to their development? Maybe data that is collected can be

compared to others- what is the correlation? What are the differences? I would like to see more integrated approaches- not just sport Or just health- but maybe all of it combined?

Maya van Gent

Beware of bureaucracy

A remarkable experience of Dik Bol, is that the stress on accountability can lead to bureaucracy and data reporting without truly learning and improving. Beware of measuring only for accountability. Learning should be the main motive, according to Dik:

I experience that there is a big pressure from outside to be accountable. As a result, nowadays we all use formats, logical frameworks, Planning-Monitoring-Evaluation-Tools, etcetera. But we must realise that those instruments are what they are: instruments and mostly developed for the World Bank and not for small organisations. More and more it seems likes accountants are ruling the world. Good administration and control of finances are important, but it is also important that the men and women on the ground are involved in the policymaking process and that the project stays their project.

For instance, the Mutare Haarlem sport leaders in Zimbabwe have now established their own organisation. The youngsters themselves formed the association and are the owners. This is difficult but much more favourable than when this grassroots organisation was controlled from the Netherlands. I believe that ownership is essential for development cooperation – give people in Mutare or Sudan control of their own situation.

Dik Bol

Educate staff and trainers

On the management level and on the grass root level – and all levels in between – organisations and personnel active in the S&D field, need to reflect on their capacities and need to learn new know-how and skills.

Government capacity building

Johann Olav Koss stresses the need to educate policy makers. This is necessary to ensure funding and to ensure high quality policies and programmes backing S&D efforts.

In order to ensure that key decision-makers recognize and invest in Sport for Development and Peace, we need to act collectively. In the next 3-5 years our efforts should be focused on:

- 1) Building the evidence-base to support the use of Sport for Development and Peace by investing in scientific research, monitoring and evaluation.*
- 2) Designing and launching large-scale quality programmes and ensuring outcomes are measurable and attainable.*
- 3) Investing in government capacity-building (i.e. training ministries of health and education) to ensure that policy priorities support the scale-up of successful Sport for Development and Peace programmes.*

Johann Olav Koss

Strategic partnerships and consortia

To realise the measures mentioned above, strategic partnerships are needed. We should develop consortia of NGOs, donors, sport organisations, universities and other education institutes. Consortia can help built bridges between disciplines needed to tackle the issues the field faces. Unfortunately, due to competition many organisations still operate in isolation instead of cooperation. Pro-active measures to lift the field to a higher level remain scarce. Equitable partnerships on different levels should be initiated to tackle identified obstacles.

Transparency and networking

Vladimir Borkovic believes that we also need a commitment within the S&D community for transparency and networking. We need to work towards a situation where information and expertise is freely available and cooperation is intrinsic to our work. It is both a matter of culture change and of (re-)organising ourselves in new partnerships and networks. Rewards and allocation of resources for these efforts would speed up these processes. Collaboration between government, civil society and academia is crucial. The corporate sector should be involved as well.

Earlier in the discussion we identified, from our perspective, the biggest challenges to be:

- i) Developing specific knowledge of how sport can be used on the ground to affect positive social change.*
- ii) Having adequately qualified staff to implement S&D projects.*
- iii) Producing comprehensive curricula.*

We also commented that the S&D community needs to make concerted efforts to broaden the knowledge base about how programmes can and do operate on the ground, invest a significant amount of time in monitoring and evaluation, and put a great deal of effort into generating curricula that incorporate realisable lessons into sports. On this basis, the active measures required are a logical development from these earlier points.

Firstly, we need to strengthen our understanding of what can at times seem an

amorphous field. This requires dedication within the community towards in depth monitoring and evaluation. M&E programmes will allow organisations themselves to assess their strengths and weaknesses (providing the above mentioned link to constructive criticism to mistakes) and develop their capacities internally. A prerequisite for meaningful (or 'relevant') M&E is the understanding by the organisations themselves of why they use sports (and even more so a specific sport) as opposed to a different principle to address a given social issue; this understanding is unfortunately not always given per se.

Secondly, we need research and analysis of consolidated M&E outcomes so we can a) produce the curricula and the training guides that are required on the ground, b) prove the effectiveness of programmes, and c) present the S&D community in the best possible light to potential funders.

Finally, we need a commitment within the community to transparency and networking. Ensuring that information and expertise are freely available and co-operation is intrinsic to our work is the only way to develop the capacities and sustainability of S&D programmes.

Vladimir Borkovic and William Rook

Involve local communities

Abundantly stressed in previous rounds is the importance of local ownership. Programmes need to be tailored to the context. There is no one-size-fits-all S&D recipe.

- 1. Learn from previous projects and be culturally informed.*
- 2. Form equitable partnerships with local people, communities, and institutions.*
- 3. Develop a multidisciplinary, balanced approach and set realistic aims.*

Peter Alegi

Public Recognition

Kate Cowan points to the lack of public recognition of the field, caused by the lack of synergy of efforts and of public communication. When we communicate similar messages and when we focus our communication power, much can be achieved.

Creating Sport and Development Programme Standards – This field needs standards, this will provide a framework by which Sport and Development programmes are designed and executed. These standards would foster discussions aimed at creating policies for Sport and Development programmes. Recognizing potential value and putting aside political differences for the benefit of strengthening our programmes for children and communities - Everyone has some value to add, however recognizing this value can often be challenging as we become attached to our programmes and develop connotations about other

programmes. As a field we are stronger together than we are apart therefore developing a holistic approach in S&D programmes means recognizing the values of others and the importance of working together.

Public Recognition – As a fraternity, we have great programmes that accomplish remarkable results, however the field of Sport and Development has not been able to achieve the level of public recognition that it deserves – We are all committed to what we do yet we don't always market our accomplishments to the world – we need to start talking loud and proud!

Kate Cowan

More illustrative quotes on recommended measures

The quotes below illustrate more active measures recommended by e-Debaters to address the biggest challenges outlined earlier in the discussion:

- 1. Develop and support strategic partnerships between the various stakeholders (North-South, South-South, North-North) – to influence power relations and to 'learn'.*
- 2. Invest in structural academic research and M&E – to 'learn' and (indirectly) influence power relations.*
- 3. Invest in partnership and exchange of knowledge with other sectors, such as health care and education. –to 'learn' and (indirectly) influence power relations.*

Frank van Eekeren

- 1. Strengthen arguments for development benefits inherent in a quality sport program. That is, if it can be shown sport increases people's ability to organise, lead, network, communicate, co-operate, administer, evaluate, self determine, become more active, inform each other and develop a sense of responsibility and fair play, then there is a strong argument for the support of sport from a development perspective.*
- 2. Apply high quality community development principles to implementation of activities.*
- 3. Put sport on the agenda in the mainstream aid sector.*

Kylie Bates

- 1. Over the last years S&D has reached a certain level of acceptance and recognition. I believe it is time to define the next level of S&D and go for it.*
- 2. To commit to and strengthen the existing structures of S&D, such as the Platform, to utilize the available knowledge and resources most efficiently.*
- 3. To spread the ownership of S&D effectively to both the development sector and the sport sector. A lot more organisations and institutions need to feel ownership for the S&D.*

Mogens Kirkeby

Real intervention on basis of fair reciprocity starting from grass roots level, full equality of all partners and open dialogue.

Being a global learning organisation. Nobody has the 'magic stick'. We have and we can learn from each other; let's do that!

Any competition between S&D organisations should be tackled by naming and shaming.

Cees Versteeg

- 1. Show more what you do and what the results are. Publish not only in our 'self fulfilling prophecy' magazines and websites! Use also opinion magazines/papers, glossy magazines and information magazines/papers which are read by millions of people. Use internet forums as well.*
- 2. Organise a centre/body of knowledge S&D in each country (developing countries and donor countries) and develop educational studies S&D for Colleges and Universities. Make a network around one, two or three centres of knowledge in developing countries simultaneously with a few centres of knowledge from donor countries.*
- 3. Let well known sportswomen and sportsmen adopt S&D and make couples from sportswomen and sportsmen from developing countries with their colleagues from donor countries. They can also be linked to the centres of knowledge. The international sports world will be obliged to fill in the policy for S&D in cooperation with the network of centres of knowledge.*

Jan Rijkstra

- 1. The S&D community needs to build their expertise around sports programmes for girls and women, because they have specific needs and challenges. If the programme aims to improve the lives and position of girls and women, we need to take into account what challenges, cultural barriers, stereotypes girls and women face in everyday life. If this is clear, we can also design a better programme for this special target group.*
- 2. Organisations should actively involve the community and relevant stakeholders in the community in their programmes to ensure sustainability, outreach and impact (e.g schools, youth organisations, women's organisations, etcetera).*
- 3. Organisations should train, recruit and involve skilled experts in their programmes who are able to deal with the specific needs of their target group. When organisations include girls and women in their programmes, or work only with girls and women, they have to make sure that the staff and volunteers (coaches, peer educators, referees, etcetera) are well-equipped and skilled to work with them.*

Astrid Aafjes

1. Capitalise on the recent trends in S&D – e.g. awards, competitions and other forms of public recognition, to reward organisations who actively share their experiences and knowledge with the rest of the S&D community.
2. Strengthen regional (e.g. Africa, Asia, Latin America, etc.), thematic (disability, gender, peace-building, etc.) and methodology (research/M&E, social entrepreneurship, programme implementation, policy development) based networks in S&D to build capacities in various areas of specialisation. This should facilitate the deepening of knowledge and building of expertise using synergies instead of starting from scratch.
3. We should aim to continue to help programme designers and implementers to monitor and reflect on their activities and ensure they have the tools and support necessary to measure the extent to which they are reaching their objectives.

Daniela Preti

- Clear understanding of S&D for funders, organisations in development aid and beneficiaries
- Promote a collaborative approach of NGOs and other partners in S&D: formation of local networks.
- Clarify and define common values of participating organisations.
- Participatory research for S&D including civil society, youth and academics.
- Global interuniversity network of those engaged in S&D research and programmes.

Marion Keim

Follow up strictly the report presented to UN SG In March 2004.

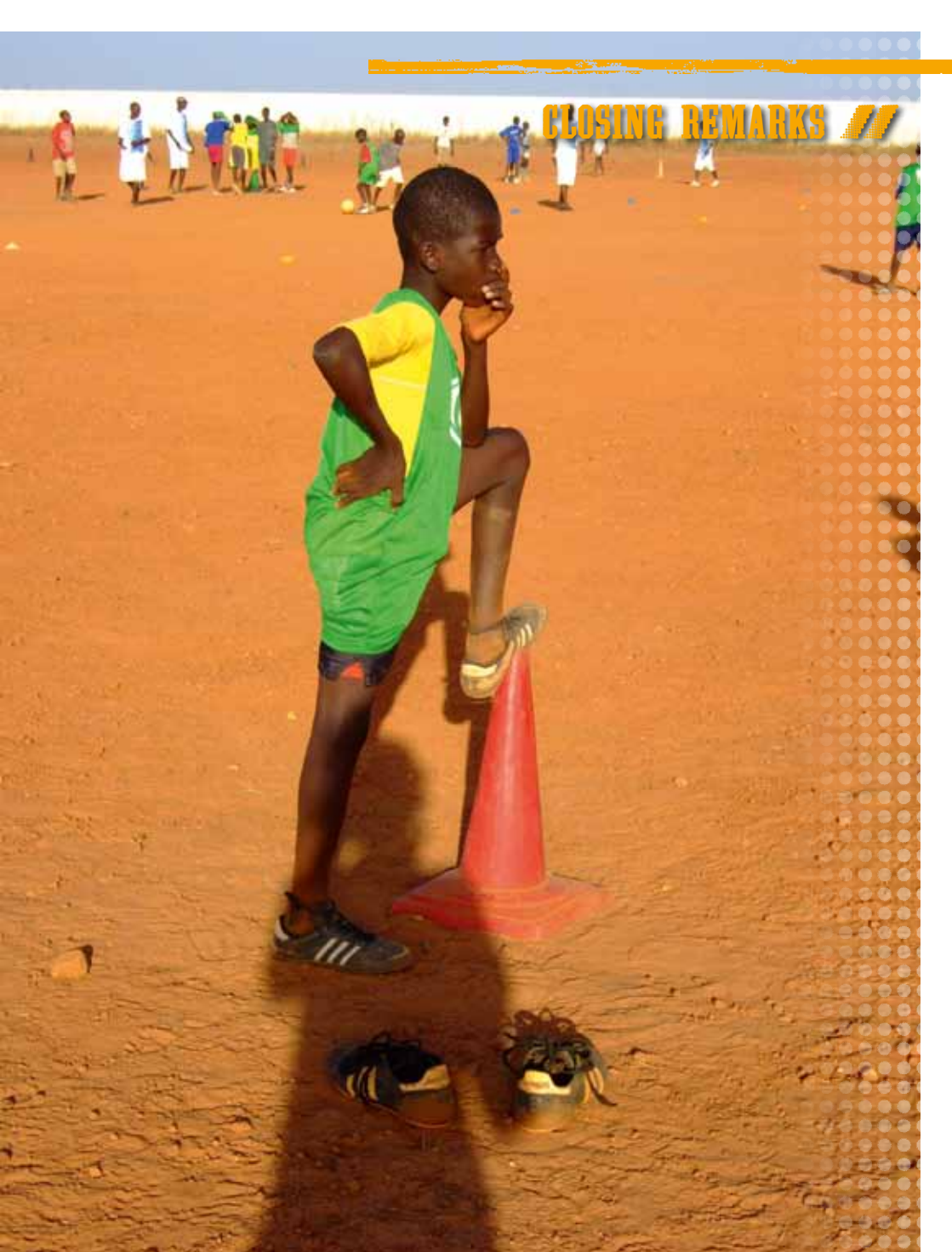
Giovanni di Cola

1. There could be better relationships between partners in the field. Project exchanges should be encouraged where partners spend time with each other sharing ideas and areas that are not working in a safe environment.
2. There needs to be great focus on research and documentation on best practices that can be shared within the network.
3. There needs to be a step beyond conferences. Although conferences are great there should be a focus on dialogue around gaps in the network. Smaller networks could be developed regionally or thematically that programmes can connect to.

Emmanuel Madonda

5 WAYS FORWARD

Important challenges have been identified during the final round of the S&D e-Debate: the need to be open and transparent and to learn from each others' mistakes. Active measures to move the field of S&D to the next level have been suggested. These include key elements such as developing curricula and courses as well as strengthening capacity, know-how and skills. These developments are vital steps to reach the necessary level of professionalism according to the majority of e-Debaters. To accomplish this, partnerships are needed. We need to collaborate, search for support and resources and evolve to the next stage. Hopefully, the e-Debate has inspired this process.



1 LEARNING FROM THE E-DEBATE

Much can be learned from mistakes and successes of the past. However, best practices are often not shared; bad practices are virtually never shared: it is 'easier' to keep 'failure' behind closed doors. This explains why 'bad-approaches' remain common despite having been proven to be detrimental.

NGOs need to be empowered and supported in developing capacities in S&D. Knowledge, skills, and methods need to be shared and disseminated. Examples of strategies that proved effective can be useful. New strategies need to be developed and field tested on a small scale. Balancing S&D interventions with other interventions, developing an interdisciplinary approach and setting realistic aims are essential building blocks.

It is a challenge for the field to apply lessons learned and to change ineffective practices. For example, proven success factors that are still often disregarded in practice are:

- To involve beneficiaries, stakeholders and local communities from the start;
- To use experience from other organisations, local expertise but also bring in your own competencies;
- To apply monitoring & evaluation (because no feedback means no learning).

Besides the willingness to be open, transparent and to learn from each other's mistakes, other important challenges were identified during the S&D e-Debate. Several participants recommended active measures to move the field of S&D to the next level. For instance: curricula and courses that develop capacity, know-how and skills are vital building blocks to reach the necessary level of professionalism. To accomplish this, partnerships are needed. We need to collaborate, search for support and resources and move to the next stage.

2 FINAL WORD OF THANKS

We would like to thank the e-Debaters for their time, energy and inspiring input. Hopefully, this publication will inspire new initiatives focused on progress in S&D interventions.

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SPORT & DEVELOPMENT E-DEBATE

Twenty-six experts discussed the challenges faced in the field of Sport & Development on www.sportanddev.org. The aim was to explore success factors of programmes and to search for solutions that can improve interventions. View all contributions, comments and the full profiles of all expert e-Debaters on www.sportanddev.org/edebate

The e-Debate was held in three rounds:

Round 1: In search for the optimal balance between sport and education in health awareness programmes.

Round 2: Aims and challenges for Sport & Development interventions.

Round 3: How do we progress? Active measures to overcome the major challenges for Sport & Development interventions.