The Sports and Development field (SDP) has grown immensely and been given a greater role to play over the past decade in development work. Dr Mwaanga in his presentation was to critically discuss the merits and demerits of the past decade in the Sport and Development field, from an African perspective and to inspire a new vision emerging from alternative discourse of SDP.

Dr Mwaanga argued that the SDP field had not been as progressive as its potential and that it has mainly ended up following a trend of mainstream development. He mentions that a number of European programs have been created and implemented in the South, these can be good, but they have their core and genesis in the north. SDP conferences are often led, supported and hosted by Northern partners with voices of Northern ‘development experts’ speaking, whereas the African voice is often confined within the framework of the reports.

Dr Mwaanga argued that there is need for all actors within the field, from the North and the South to critically reflect upon their perceptions of the South as this will lay the foundation for how actors approach its work within the South. If the traditional negative onesided view of Africa as the ‘dark continent’ persists, the work will continue to be based upon aid, donors and a continuation of a neo-colonial ‘supremacy’ of Northern knowledge, values and world view. Dr Mwaanga argued that there is need to look at the resources, knowledge and wealth which exist within Africa as the starting point and question what type of SDP opportunities would derive from this perspective instead. This requires a change of roles both within the South and North and the way in which they relate to one another as the traditional neo-colonial donor-recipient model would be outdated. Dr Mwaanga gave the example of the leadership of Norway in its fight against apartheid in South Africa as one type of global leadership and stand which he challenged Northern actors to critically reflect upon to transfer into the SDP field. The African voices and alternative SDP programs need supporters in the north.

Within the South, Dr Mwaanga argued that there is need to stop looking outwards for solutions and resources, but rather look within and scramble for resources to implement local
programs. Actors within the South have for far too long been relaxed and dependent on donors that they have allowed the process to be decided upon by outsiders. By not owning their struggle, sustainability of programs has been sacrificed and many programs are following donor objectives rather than empowering people and communities to gain control of their own situation. Dr Mwaanga promoted two initiatives growing out of EduSport as examples of programs that are challenging the mainstream development paradigm.

Fair Game Football is a program which aims to challenge unjust practices and promote Fair Trade principles within the footballing world. It refuses to rely on external donors and aims to build players holistically to become a future resource and income for the community.

Zambian Institute of Sports (ZIS) is a newly started institute in Lusaka which aims to provide internationally certified courses for people involved in SDP in Zambia as Northern NGOs in Zambia have for years given training workshops/seminars that are not recognized in Zambia and internationally. ZIS has its core and genesis in Zambia hence fronting Zambian interests.
Debate
Two sides of neo-colonial power relations emerged from the discussion, the way the north engages with the South and the liberation of the formerly colonized through SDP. Whereas some argued that Dr Mwaanga blackpainted the picture and that a number of progressive changes have been made from previous practices, others argued that there is still a strong neo-colonial heritage within the field. Participants raised issues such as the promotion of local identity within international programs, whether the SDP field could do without Northern donors and the need for working to decolonize the practices, processes and minds of donors, practitioners and program participants within SDP partnerships. The conclusion from the debate was that all actors within the field need to take time out to critically reflect more upon their roles, practices and values if the SDP field is to reach more of its potential. The discussion further agreed to bring post –colonial critique and approaches to the center of SDP research, practice and partnerships.