



# COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

## OUR COMMITMENT TO COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

At Right To Play, community development is fundamental to our work. As an international humanitarian organization working in 23 countries affected by war, poverty and disease, we use sport and play to promote health, develop life skills and foster peace for children and communities alike.

We work hard to deliver programming that is relevant to expressed community needs and we seek to ensure our efforts are embedded within the existing community structure. Our approach emphasizes capacity-building of individuals and communities. This approach, over time, helps to equip people and communities with the skills and resources needed to confront challenges associated with socio-economic development.

## THE ROLE OF LEADERS

At Right To Play, our leaders (both coaches and school teachers) are the heart and soul of our work. We train community members to be leaders to implement our programs at the local level. These leaders are carefully selected and expertly trained to be positive role models for children. Leaders reach out to children and youth using experiential learning techniques, such as the 'Reflect-Connect-Apply' methodology. These methods give children a chance to reflect on the lesson at hand, to connect their learning to real-life situations, and to apply their knowledge to their everyday experiences. Exposing children and youth to positive adult role models teaches them to communicate more effectively and openly with peers and families, to exemplify healthy attitudes with respect to inclusion and cooperation, and to develop leadership skills – all traits which position them to be productive contributors to their communities.

Right To Play leaders stimulate cross-generational exchanges between children, youth and adults, which can enhance community spirit and citizenship. Through their experiences, leaders themselves develop the transferable life and job skills needed to access other opportunities in their lives. As a result, many go on to become influential contributors to the development of their communities on a much broader scale.



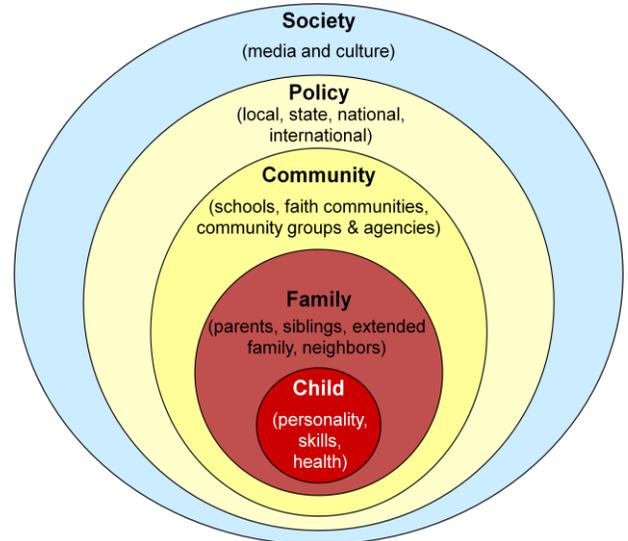
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**Right To Play's vision is to create a healthier and safer world through the power of sport and play**

## OUR MULTI-LEVEL APPROACH

Effective and long-lasting approaches to sustainable development require the participation and support of diverse stakeholders at many different levels. This is why our approach goes beyond the reach of individuals to also include activities to strengthen the capacities of various parties. In addition to building the capacities of children and leaders through our programming, we also aim to build the capacities of families, communities, governments and key decision-makers at large.

Right To Play uses the convening power of sport to engage families and communities. At the household level, our programming helps to ensure that family members and other caregivers have access to the information they need to make informed decisions about healthy childhood development. At the community level, our programs help to create a space for dialogue. Community members come together to take collective action and generate solutions to common problems. At the political level, our programming has the added effect of helping to build awareness about diverse community development challenges. And, at the societal level, we act as global advocates for social change – helping to position sport not only as a tool for community development, but also as a tool for the achievement of international development objectives on a much larger scale.



Adapted from Urie Bronfenbrenner,  
*The Ecology of Human Development, 1979.*

## OUR COMMITMENT TO SUSTAINABILITY

Our work is guided by the principles set out in the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness and generally accepted best practices in the international development and humanitarian sectors. Our commitment to sustainability begins at the earliest stages of program design. When developing our programs, we actively consult with key stakeholders and community members to ensure that our programs are locally-driven and relevant to expressed community needs. We also work in partnership with local leaders, organizations and governments to build community infrastructure to support our work and deliver our programming.

In many regions, we also convene networks and associations of community leaders, teachers and parents to identify issues of local importance and to encourage solutions to address them. These



community groups often become an integral component of the community's social fabric independent from our programming, and enhance the social capital of the communities where we work.

Ultimately, as an organization, we are committed to decentralization. We therefore work to ensure that the appropriate staff and structures are in place locally to help sustain the impacts of our programming over time. We emphasize institutional capacity-building, not only for our own staff and volunteers, but for our local partners as well.

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