STARTING A FOOTBALL FOR DEVELOPMENT PROJECT

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Football is one of the few things which engages and excites people across the vast divides of national, regional, racial, religious, ethnic, gender, social and economic differences. It is a universal language which most people speak freely, one of the few times when they can understand each other. Having that magic, iconic status - at the same time as passion, energy, desire, motivation and ambition - makes it an exciting conduit through which development can take place, with people from all over the world working together to achieve a common good, spurred on by their passion for the people's game.

But the glamour, glitter and high theatre of the great game contrasts with the poverty-ravished lives of the countless millions who play or watch the game. The inevitable question is: how can we make things better? And can football be the catalyst? Can it provide a stable and effective foundation? Every great movement starts with individuals. What can you do to make things better? The purpose of this paper is to consider the fundamentals involved in conceiving, building, nourishing and sustaining poverty-busting organisations, as part of the Football for Hope movement inspired by FIFA and Streetfootballworld. The paper is designed for persons able to provide the time input involved in setting up, nurturing and supporting a brand new organisation, as well as persons having less time or resources and would simply like to assist by helping an existing organisation or project - for instance by providing funds, fund raising, sponsoring, volunteering or supporting - or just being kept informed with a view to future involvement.

My objective is to identify and explain the key ingredients in building a successful organisation for development through football. What are the main building blocks? What are the fundamental characteristics, systems and structures? I aim to provide a starter's tool kit for building organisations which make a small but significant developmental difference. An aid for ordinary concerned people with a conscience to start doing extraordinary things.

Goal
The development objective you may seek to attain will be a matter for you, your insights, priorities and preferences. You could start by considering the eight Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) which are international targets to halve world poverty by 2015, agreed upon by all 189 United Nations member states at the UN Millennium Summit in 2000. The goals are: Goal 1: Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger. Goal 2: Achieve universal primary education Goal 3: Promote gender equality and empower women. Goal 4: Reduce child mortality. Goal 5: Improve maternal health. Goal 6: Combat HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases. Goal 7: Ensure environmental sustainability. Goal 8: Develop a Global Partnership for Development. Where you will be operating, at the micro level, you could target specific basic projects capable of making life-changing differences, such as those relating to: food, drinking water, sanitation, health, education and energy.

With football as the raison d'être of the organisation, you next need to consider the role football will play. Two distinct approaches come to my mind:
- Football providing the funds - where the project is set up from funds or donations from football clubs, organisations and sources worldwide. In this situation, the organisation or project established with money from football may have nothing to do with football directly, such as a project for the supply of drinking water, a sanitation programme or a fair trade initiative for small farmers.
- Football providing the context - where a football team or project is the starting point for the development project and is its hub, its nerve centre, and its fountain of loyalty, commitment, resources and work input.

Both models have their advantages and it is clear that they are not mutually exclusive.

Type of organisation
Consideration has to be given to the type of organisational vehicle to be used to deliver the project goals. You will need to consider the organisation you will create at your end ("the creator organisation"), and the organisation which will deliver the project goals in the chosen location ("the location organisation"), where the legal requirements may be quite different. Generally, you will be
looking at two main types of organisations: unincorporated associations which are run via a management company and have a membership, and incorporated associations such as limited companies, corporations or limited liability partnerships where there is board of directors and shareholder membership. Both types of organisations if they have charitable aims can proceed to register as charities, securing the tax, funding and publicity benefits usually associated with charitable status. With the location organisation, you will need to seek specialist advice as to the specific options available having regard to the prevailing legal system, and due regard must be paid to local customs and practices. A balance has to be achieved between providing the framework in which beneficiaries, facilitators and managers can benefit whilst at the same time protecting and using effectively the funds and resources of the organisation.

If your are looking to be involved at a lower level of time commitment, remember that you can link up with others and join existing organisations to provide a smaller but no less valuable input. For instance, you could be involved in single specific programme of an organisation or project, putting in whatever time you can afford. At this level, your involvement could include: helping with websites, sponsoring, fund raising, training, volunteering, mentoring and sharing any specialist expertise you have.

**Funding**

Project funding can arise from a wide spectrum of sources - from world wide organisations and governments to businesses and individuals. Funding should be viewed as two distinct types: start up funding and continuation funding.

You will need start up funding to prepare a project plan, to establish and service the organisational structure you choose to use, to develop website and new media profile and to secure ongoing funding. Once the project has been set up and is in play, ongoing funding will be needed to ensure its continuation and growth, and to create reserves to deal with the unexpected.

It is also important to distinguish between donation funding, which is obtained from third parties through your funding efforts and which may have restrictive criteria or other requirements, and earned funding which you bring in by your own fund-raising endeavours and which can be more freely targeted and used. The Internet makes the funding process easier than it once was, allowing affordable worldwide access to countless potential donors and participators at the same time as offering a multi media tool for inter-linking the full spectrum of participators including beneficiaries, stakeholders, organisers, managers, multipliers, fund raisers and the general public.

Where your possible time input is limited, fund raising may be a particularly valuable involvement on your part. Apart from contributing financially yourself, you may be able to organise fund raising events such as: bring and buy sales, promotions, book sales, clothes sales, raffles, sponsorship events and appeals. You can target charities and other fund givers, as well as companies and individuals. Remember that your time or labour is one of the most valuable things you can give, particularly if you have knowledge, skills or expertise which you can make available to existing organisations and projects.

**Management, supervision and support**

To deliver maximum benefits to beneficiaries, you will need to address the crucial topics of management, supervision and support; both in terms of the donor organisation and the beneficiary organisation. A prerequisite for good management is training and review. Whatever your goal, it will be better achieved if the service providers, the managers, the supervisors, the facilitators, the people on the ground - whatever their title - are empowered by good training, supervision and support and are able to pass on their knowledge and skills to others, thereby increasing management strength and deep rooting the organisation both horizontally and vertically. The greater the training the more the likelihood that the local organisation will meet beneficiaries' needs and become independent, self-sustaining and self-replicating. Training can be achieved by accessing online resources as well as contacting local organisations, experts, institutions and specialists who may be willing to assist.

It is advisable to study a wide cross section of existing development organisations and projects by looking at their websites as well as contacting them directly, to see how they deal with operational issues. There are thousands of such organisations you can study, and it is almost unfair to single
out any. You can track them down easily yourself by doing an Internet search. However, as a
starting point, links to several organisations are provided at the foot of this article.

**Partnerships & Publicity**

Central to the establishment of the beneficiary organisation is the extent to which it is able to
successfully build partnerships of all kinds which can provide it with funds, human and material
resources, and support and assistance at all stages and levels in its development and growth.
Partnerships make you stronger, the saying goes. They also help to spread publicity. Football
partners are especially important, and the more input and resources you can attract from FIFA,
UEFA and national football associations the better. Then there are world wide funding
organisations such as the UN, UNESCO, the EU, the World Bank and the like. Further there are
governmental organisations, both national and local, as well as non governmental organisations
such as global and national charities, foundations, companies, associations, groups, and
benevolent individuals in sports, music, entertainment and business. Partners should be chosen
not just for their funding opportunities but also for a range of non financial resources which you
may need such as time, manpower, legal input, red tape removal, local know how, marketing,
advertising, publicity, networking and website profiling. Further outreach, exposure and publicity
can be achieved by targeting radio stations, schools, colleges, universities and community
organisations, and focusing on PR and branding.

**Multipliers**

A key aspect for you to consider is the extent the set up organisation and the service delivery
organisation can multiply their size, profile, functioning and above all efficiency and effectiveness
by “the multiplier effect”. This involves encouraging the full compliment of partners involved with
both organisations to extend and grow both horizontally and vertically. By this method, maximum
publicity, exposure and performance can be more readily attained. By bringing together,
beneficiaries, managers, facilitators, stakeholders, funders, supporters, and the media, and by
making creative and innovative use of websites and new media inter-activity, the impact can be far
reaching, profound and even stunning. The multiplier effect can also be achieved on the ground
amongst the beneficiaries, users and facilitators by encouraging training and peer teaching, as well
as encouraging inter-school and other sporting competitions, events and festivals.

**Feedback**

To both engage beneficiaries, participators and managers and to interest and incentivise potential
backers, donors and the general public, regular and ongoing feedback on issues, performance and
success is essential. This can be readily achieved by a good website, with the usual interactive
features such as email, blogs, articles and especially photographs and short videos. It is said a
photograph tells a thousand words. An effective website - along with other new media interactive
devices such as Facebook, MySpace, Twitter and the like - allow all interested parties, including
future potential backers, to view and review a project, and can be tools for securing future funding,
ideas and projects.

**Sustainability**

Whilst any resource is good, a resource which is self sustaining is better. As the old saying goes:
give a man a fish and you feed him for a day, teach him to fish and he feeds himself for a lifetime.
You may therefore want to make sustainability one of the priorities of your project.
Central to sustainability is having managers, supervisors, partners, supporters and multipliers on
tap - knowledgeable, fired up and ready to go. The key to this is a thorough and ongoing training
programme to ensure that projects do not simply survive but flourish, evolve and excel. The project
should have an ongoing purpose or appeal, and the resources and means to be self renewing. If it
can generate an income or profit to replenish its resources as well, and even grow new projects, so
much the better. All enterprises have hard times, even great countries – witnesses the current
recession - and so there is also need for a security blanket, a reserve of funds which the founding
organisation can release to the beneficiary organisation whenever needed. Attempt should also be
made to create non financial reserves, such as pools of people, advisers, trainers, experts,
specialists and stakeholders who can be called on when needed.
Examples
There are already many football for development type organisations up and running and doing great work, putting in action the power of football as a catalyst for development. Examples include:

Streetfootballworld - links various actors in the field of Development though Football and comprises more than 80 local initiatives worldwide and works with governments, businesses and NGOs to develop approaches to social challenges, and provide advice on development, investment and business strategy: www.streetfootballworld.org

Playsoccer - is a sports inspired program committed to empowering children and young people to lead change in the world's most underserved communities: www.playsoccer-nonprofit.org

MYSA - is a youth based self help organisation based in Kenya linking sports with environmental clean ups, AIDS prevention, leadership training and community service activities and involves approximately 20,000 young people: www.mysakenya.org

Onwards and upwards!
This short guide can do little more than sketch the broad outlines of setting up, running and helping a football for development organisation or project. There is a wealth of information, resources and assistance available online to help you learn more and to decide the level and type of involvement right for you. A list of website resources is given at the end of this article. As ever with the Internet, the range of available information can be bewildering. However, you could start by looking at the Football for Development section on the FIFA website followed by the tool kit for sport development to be found at: www.toolkitsportdevelopment.org

Conclusion
With the scale and number of problems facing the world – in areas such as poverty, underdevelopment, food production, water shortages, health, education, human rights, the environment and politics - it is easy to be put off, to be disillusioned into thinking our efforts are likely to be so small as to be an insult. But the reality is quite different. The tiny steps which individuals and small organisations make are part of an unstoppable momentum - even if slow and uncertain at times - which will help us get closer to the millennium develop goals in particular and the taming of worldwide poverty and underdevelopment in general. With so few years to go to 2015, it is already clear that the millennium development goals will not be met. However, these goals will continue to be fundamental and will be targeted by other initiatives and in other ways. Every little step we can take will get us closer to making things better. Football for development projects offer the chance for even the smallest of steps to make a big impression. What can you do?

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**SELECTION OF WEBSITE RESOURCES**

**WORLD WIDE**
- www.worldbank.org
- www.un.org
- www.un.org/millenniumgoals
- www.unesco.org

**FOOTBALL**
- www.fifa.com
- www.uefa.com
- www.cafonline.com
- www.the-afc.com
- www.concacf.com
- www.worldfootball.org
- www.streetfootballworld.org

**FOOTBALL AND DEVELOPMENT - INFORMATION**
- www.footballfordevelopment.net
- www.sportanddev.org
- www.football4community.org
- www.toolkitsportdevelopment.org
- www.euractiv.com

**SOME DEVELOPMENT ORGANISATIONS AND INITIATIVES**
- www.asap.org
- www.concern.net
- www.childrenincrisis.org
- www.kenako.at
- www.mysakenya.com
- www.playsoccer-nonprofit.org

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