

WHAT IS SPORT FOR DEVELOPMENT AND PEACE?

Sport for Development and Peace refers to the intentional use of sport, physical activity and play to attain specific development and peace objectives, including, most notably, the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). Successful Sport for Development and Peace programs work to realize the rights of all members of society to participate in sport and leisure activities. Effective programs intentionally give priority to development objectives and are carefully designed to be inclusive. These programs embody the best values of sport while upholding the quality and integrity of the sport experience.

Strong Sport for Development and Peace programs combine sport and play with other non-sport components to enhance their effectiveness. They are delivered in an integrated manner with other local, regional and national development and peace initiatives so that they are mutually reinforcing. Programs seek to empower participants and communities by engaging them in the design and delivery of activities, building local capacity, adhering to generally accepted principles of transparency and accountability, and pursuing sustainability through collaboration, partnerships and coordinated action.

Sport alone, however, cannot ensure peace or solve complex social problems. Instead, sport should be positioned as a highly effective tool in a broader toolkit of development practices, and should be applied in a holistic and integrated manner with other interventions and programs to achieve optimal results.



CONTRIBUTION OF SPORT TO THE MILLENNIUM DEVELOPMENT GOALS (MDGs)

Sport represents a significant source of potential for enhancing and even accelerating development and peace efforts worldwide, particularly those related to attaining the MDGs. Sport's attributes make it a valuable component of broader, holistic approaches in reaching the eight MDG benchmarks with targets aimed at: (1) Eradicating extreme poverty and hunger, (2) Achieving universal primary education, (3) Promoting gender equality and empowering women, (4) Reducing child mortality, (5) Improving maternal health, (6) Combating HIV and AIDS, malaria, and other diseases, (7) Ensuring environmental sustainability and (8) Developing a global partnership for development.

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

SPORT'S UNIQUE VALUE AS A TOOL FOR DEVELOPMENT AND PEACE

The concept of Sport for Development and Peace is rooted in the recognition that sport possesses unique attributes that enable it to contribute to development and peace processes. These attributes include:

- ✓ **Universal popularity** – transcending of national, cultural, socio-economic and political boundaries, when done right, sport is enjoyable for participants and spectators alike and can be invoked in virtually any community in the world.
- ✓ **Capacity as a powerful global communications platform** – Because sport events offer the capacity to reach vast numbers of people, they are effective platforms for public education & social mobilization.
- ✓ **Ability to connect** – sport is an inherently social process bringing together players, teams, coaches, volunteers & spectators.
- ✓ **Cross cutting nature** – sport can be used to address a broad range of social and economic challenges.
- ✓ **Potential to empower, motivate and inspire** – sport has the natural ability to draw on, develop, and showcase individual strengths and capacities.

DEVELOPMENT AND PEACE BENEFITS ACHIEVABLE THROUGH SPORT

Promoting health and preventing disease

- Prevents and manages chronic disease
- Prevents and manages infectious disease
- Enhances mental health
- Reduces direct and indirect health care costs

Enhancing the inclusion and well-being of person with disabilities

- Reduces stigma
- Enhances socialization
- Enables independence and participation
- Contributes to empowerment
- Fosters greater inclusion

Enhancing social inclusion, preventing conflict, and building peace

- Promotes social inclusion
- Provides respite in periods of conflict
- Builds trust and establishes bridges between groups in conflict
- Builds peace in a post-conflict situation
- Promotes a culture of peace

Strengthening child & youth development and education

- Enhances physical health and development
- Fosters psychosocial health and development
- Builds life skills and positive values
- Helps children and youth recover from trauma
- Strengthens education

Promoting gender equity and empowering girls & women

- Enhances girls' and women's health and well-being
- Fosters self esteem and empowerment
- Facilitates social inclusion and integration
- Challenges gender norms
- Provides opportunities for leadership and achievement

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TABLE 1 CONTRIBUTION OF SPORT TO THE MILLENIUM DEVELOPMENT GOALS

MILLENNIUM DEVELOPMENT GOAL	CONTRIBUTION OF SPORT
<p>1. Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participants, volunteers and coaches acquire transferable life skills which increase their employability • Vulnerable individuals are connected to community services and supports through sport-based outreach programs • Sport programs and sport equipment production provide jobs and skills development • Sport can help prevent diseases that impede people from working and impose health care costs on individuals and communities • Sport can help reduce stigma and increase self-esteem, self confidence and social skills, leading to increased employability
<p>2. Achieve universal primary education</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School sport programs motivate children to enroll in and attend school and can help improve academic achievement • Sport-based community education programs provide alternative education opportunities for children who cannot attend school • Sport can help erode stigma preventing children with disabilities from attending school
<p>3. Promote gender equality and empower women</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sport helps improve female physical and mental health and offers opportunities for social interaction and friendship • Sport participation leads to increased self-esteem, self-confidence, and enhanced sense of control over one's body • Girls and women access leadership opportunities and experience • Sport can cause positive shifts in gender norms that afford girls and women greater safety and control over their lives • Women and girls with disabilities are empowered by sport-based opportunities to acquire health information, skills, social networks, and leadership experience
<p>4. Reduce child mortality</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sport can be used to educate and deliver health information to young mothers, resulting in healthier children • Increased physical fitness improves children's resistance to some diseases • Sport can help reduce the rate of higher-risk adolescent pregnancies • Sport-based vaccination and prevention campaigns help reduce child deaths and disability from measles, malaria and polio • Inclusive sport programs help lower the likelihood of infanticide by promoting greater acceptance of children with disabilities
<p>5. Improve maternal health</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sport for health programs offer girls and women greater access to reproductive health information and services • Increased fitness levels help speed post-natal recovery
<p>6. Combat HIV and AIDS, malaria, and other diseases</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sport programs can be used to reduce stigma and increase social and economic integration of people living with HIV and AIDS • Sport programs are associated with lower rates of health risk behavior that contributes to HIV infection • Programs providing HIV prevention education and empowerment can further reduce HIV infection rates • Sport can be used to increase measles, polio and other vaccination rates • Involvement of celebrity athletes and use of mass sport events can increase reach and impact of malaria, tuberculosis and other education and prevention campaigns
<p>7. Ensure environmental sustainability</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sport-based public education campaigns can raise awareness of importance of environmental protection and sustainability • Sport-based social mobilization initiatives can enhance participation in community action to improve local environment
<p>8. Develop a global partnership for development</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sport for Development and Peace efforts catalyze global partnerships and increase networking among governments, donors, NGOs and sport organizations worldwide

Source: *Harnessing The Power of Sport for Development and Peace: Recommendations to Governments*, ©Right To Play on behalf of the Sport for Development and Peace Working Group, Toronto: 2008.

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