

Strengthening civil society and promoting social and political participation through sport

Sport for Development in Togo

The challenge

With its return to democracy in 2005, Togo initiated a state modernisation process involving economic reforms, decentralisation and democratisation. Despite this, there have so far been few opportunities for the population – and for children and young people in particular – to take part in this process. A youth unemployment rate of over 30 per cent and a lack of opportunities for the country's youth to play a part in shaping the democratic process together give rise to a high potential for conflict. That is why German development cooperation activities in Togo are focused on promoting decentralisation and good governance. The great enthusiasm for sport on the African continent also creates opportunities for German development cooperation. However, the potential to reach development goals, such as education, violence prevention, good governance, gender equality, promotion of health as well as environmental awareness through sport, is not sufficiently used so far.

Our approach

The United Nations recognises sport internationally 'as a means to promote education, health, development and peace'. German development cooperation also uses the opportunities offered by 'Sport for Development'. Sport allows children and young people to lead healthy lives, and it teaches them to take on responsibility, behave fairly and resolve conflict peacefully. These are key skills that will later help them gain a foothold in the working world. German development cooperation trains coaches for this purpose.

Project title	'Sport for Development in Africa' (S4DA) Regional Project
Commissioned by	German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ)
Project region in Africa	Multi-state project in Togo, Ethiopia, Kenya, Mozambique and Namibia, as well as individual smaller-scale measures in other African countries.
Project region in Togo	Lomé, Tsévié, Sokodé, Kara, Kpalimé
Partners	Togolese Ministry of Communication, Culture, Sports and Civic Education; municipal governments of Lomé, Sokodé, Tsévié, Kara, Kpalimé; Don Bosco Mondo e.V.; SOS Kinderdörfer weltweit e.V./Hermann-Gmeiner-Fonds Deutschland e.V.
Overall term	2014 to 2018

They are role models and figures the young people can trust. The coaches give the children and young people a stronger sense of self-esteem and help them develop prospects for the future. During training, they address health-related topics such as HIV prevention and alcohol abuse. Sport is not just physical exercise, it is part of their education.

Together with local and international partners from the fields of policy-making, civil society, business and academia, German development cooperation has built up a sustainable sport portfolio that also helps strengthen civil society and promote democracy. In this way, sport serves as an innovative instrument that drives change and sustainable development – for each individual child and for society as a whole.



S4DA provides access to sports activities in municipalities and in so doing promotes the active participation of civil society in municipal development.



In collaboration with its partners, S4DA trains sports coaches to organise sports activities that promote social skills such as cooperation, tolerance, honesty and team spirit among children and young people.

The project

The S4DA project began establishing sport as a tool for achieving development goals in selected African countries in 2014, when the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH was commissioned by the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ). S4DA makes an important contribution to implementing 'More Space for Sport – 1,000 Chances for Africa', the initiative launched by Federal Minister Dr Gerd Müller in 2014.

The integration of the 'Sport for Development'-approach into municipal youth work in Togo is improving social and political participation and strengthening civil society at the local level. Democratic participation structures in the municipalities are being promoted in cooperation with the German development project 'Good Governance and Decentralisation' (ProDeG). By involving citizens in the selection of sports grounds and development of concepts for sporting activities, S4DA is encouraging strengthened collaboration between local authorities and civil society. The stakeholders involved are provided with training measures to hone skills required to develop sustainable and regular 'Sport for Development'-activities. Subsequently, the project promotes the integration of disadvantaged groups – women and girls in particular – into social and political life in the municipality.

'Sport is simply more than a game! Over a twelve month period working with young people I experienced that participants improved their team work skills and their ability to overcome challenges. I witnessed how sport develops a country's economy and I insist on its ability to improve self-respect and one's respect of public space. I am certain that it will contribute to making Togo a more prosperous place.'

Koffi Ahondo, 'Sport for Development'-
Coach in the SOS Children's Village

Results achieved so far

Results achieved to date in collaboration with partners include the following:

- Five sports grounds have been rehabilitated or newly constructed in Lomé and Kara in collaboration with representatives of civil society and municipal governments. The sports grounds are for use both by schools, NGOs and the community as a whole. They benefit around 12,000 children and young people.
- Local organisations, municipalities and relevant institutions, including the Ministry of Communication, Culture, Sports and Civic Education and regional representatives of the Ministry of Education, are building up their networks. Space has been created for exchanges on civil society participation. On-site multi-stakeholder committees ensure that management, maintenance and the use of the sports grounds are in line with the 'Sport for Development'-approach.
- A pedagogical sports handbook is being developed in collaboration with municipal representatives, coaches and teachers. It focuses on promoting civic education.
- 42 coaches from the municipalities of Kara and Sokodé have been trained in the 'Sport for Development'-approach and use sporting activities to promote key social skills. Two trainers have received advanced training as 'Sport for Development'-instructors. They co-organised a coaches' workshops in Togo, passing on their knowledge to other coaches.

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