



COMMONWEALTH ADVISORY BODY ON SPORT  
REPORT JANUARY 2006



# CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION	5
CASE STUDIES AND EXAMPLES	5

## HEALTH BENEFITS OF SPORT AND PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

Tackling obesity	CS: Obesity Prevention In Communities	Pacific	9
Increasing awareness and breaking down prejudice of HIV/AIDS	CS: Kicking aids out!	Africa	11
Well being and longer quality life expectancy	CS: Kools	Scotland	13
	EX: Healthy Lifestyle Project (HLP)	Caribbean	15
Increasing awareness and breaking down prejudice of HIV/AIDS	Olympic Youth Ambassador Program	Lesotho	15

## EDUCATION THROUGH SPORT

OBJECTIVE	CASE STUDY/EXAMPLE	COUNTRY	PAGE
Raising educational standards/aspirations	CS: Physically Active Youth (PAY)	Namibia	17
Improving behaviour and reducing truancy	CS: Living For Sport	UK	19
	CS: Score goals	Scotland	21
Improving literacy and numeracy	CS: Playing for success	UK	23
Cultivating citizenship and personal responsibility	EX: Project Strong	St Kitts, Caribbean	25
	EX: Midnight basketball	UK	25

## USING SPORT TO DEVELOP LEADERSHIP AND PARTICIPATION IN THE COMMUNITY

Developing leadership, coaching, officiating, volunteering skills	CS: Step into sport	Pacific	27
	CS: African 2010 Dreams project	Africa	29
	CS: IDEALS	S Africa, Zambia, UK	31
	EX: Super V	Trinidad	32
Improving school-community links			
Developing and sustaining a club structure	CS: Dreams and Teams	Malaysia	33
Developing leadership, coaching, officiating, volunteering skills	CS: Coach Education, Training and Development Programme	Scotland	35
	EX: Mathare Youth Sport Association (MYSA)	Kenya	37

## BUILDING INCLUSIVE COMMUNITIES THROUGH SPORT

Community development and cohesion	CS: Active community clubs (acc) initiative	Australia, Africa	39
Community development and cohesion	CS: Community clubs	Scotland	41
Empowering women	CS: Go Sisters	Zambia	43
	CS: MYSA: letting girls play	Nairobi	45
	CS: National Women Games	Malaysia	47
	EX: Women and Sport Botswana	Botswana	48
Community safety	CS: Magic bus	Mumbai, India	49
	CS: Positive futures	England & Wales	51
Including people with a disability	CS: Healthy paralympians:	Uganda, Rwanda & Tanzania	53
	EX: Pacific Sport Ability Programme	Australia, Pacific	55



:: 01

# Introduction

Sport is a powerful tool for developing people, teams and whole communities; it can change lives. As sport is the most popular activity for young people, it can help to motivate young people, build teams, develop leadership, promote volunteering, educate young people as well as promote fitness and healthy lifestyles. It can therefore be used as a tool in a whole range of programmes and for a number of purposes.

It has also been increasingly recognised by International Development agencies such as the UN that sport can be one channel governments can pursue their National Development Plans, whether it be to pursue health, education or youth development objectives. In particular, it is encouraged that sport is integrated within a country's Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers (PRSPs) as a viable vehicle for contributing to the Millennium Development Goals.

Sports organisations and activities are an important part of civil society and can be a powerful tool for outreaching to and engaging with target groups such as vulnerable youth **namely youth, girls/women, disabled and those socially excluded** that other civil society organisations may not have the capacity to do. This can feed into poverty reduction on a number of levels as suggested in this document.

In addition to this sport can provide an opportunity for mutual co-operation between aid agencies as well as being a catalyst for enhancing networks and partnerships across communities and regions and for assisting in building a global civil society.

To believe that sport can be a panacea of many complex social problems is naïve to say the least. However, if used effectively, sport can be part of the solution. Sport can be a stepping-stone towards changes in attitudes and building awareness as well as developing a civil society. Sport can also challenge the perception of many people about the ability of the poor and excluded. There are already numerous examples across Africa of where the young, even in the most dire circumstances can become empowered by sport, shown initiative and helped themselves. The Mathare Youth Sports Association case study highlighted in this document is a prime example of this.

As the world's issues are increasing youth related, sport is an attractive vehicle for providing young people with the opportunity to shape their own lives. It is a tool that can outreach, engage, inspire, motivate and empower young into the leaders of tomorrow. It is a resource efficient and cost-effective approach that can be easily replicable to adapt to local contexts.

This report provides illustrations of case studies and projects established throughout the Commonwealth showing how sport can be used to:

- promote health by tackling obesity, increasing awareness of HIV/AIDS and reducing the stigma surrounded by such diseases, promoting healthy diets, wellbeing and quality life expectancy
- educate people by raising education standards and aspirations, improving behaviour, truancy, literacy and numeracy and cultivating citizenship and personal responsibility
- develop leadership and participation in the community by developing leadership, coaching, officiating and volunteering skills, improving school-community links and buy developing and sustaining club structures
- build inclusive communities by developing more cohesive communities, promoting community safety, reducing discrimination to marginalise groups including women and people with disabilities and providing an enabling environment to empower them.

:: 02

## Health Benefits of Sport and Physical Activity

It offers advice on how to set up similar projects in your country by engaging the government and other partners to establish coherent and sustainable schemes that can build communities and change people's lives.

There is substantial evidence to show that the regular practice of sport and physical activity provides men and women of all ages with a wide range of physical, social and mental health benefits. It can contribute to strategies to improve diet, discourage the use of tobacco, alcohol and drugs; help reduce violence, enhance functional capacity and promote social interaction and integration. Sport is such a popular activity for young people and can therefore also be used as a catalyst for change and education in health initiatives, HIV/AIDS awareness and drug abuse programmes. It can therefore have significant economic benefits especially in terms of reduced health care costs, increased productivity, and healthier physical and social lifestyles and environments. The following recommendations stem from the case studies illustrating how sport can be used for health benefits:

**Benefits:**

- Better health (through supportive environment, improved diet and nutrition and increased physical activity) for individuals and the community as a whole.
- Reduction in spend on health care
- Provides a positive input in the lives of those already infected and affected by HIV/AIDS
- Offers life skills that can prevent diseases such as HIV/AIDS
- Sport is an effective medium and outreach tool for communication and peer education on taboo subjects such as HIV/AIDS
- Sport is also an effective breakdown of stigma attached to diseases such as HIV/AIDS focusing on prevention for youth and a change in behavioural attitudes.

**Policy recommendations:**

- **Communicate across Government:** ensure that all relevant Government departments, in particular those covering health and education, understand the impact sport can have and the need to reflect it in future policy planning and budgets
- **Target the Young:** deliver programmes that attract young people in particular, to ensure their own participation and that of future generations
- **Make it part of school life:** build sport and physical activity into the curriculum and make it part of everyday life in schools
- **Make it sustainable:** think national but act local in delivery; community projects will ensure more ownership and buy in from everyone involved.

**:: 03**

## Education Through Sport

Sport can play a significant role in young people's personal and social development and is a great way to re-engage those at the margins of the education system. Sport has been shown to be a powerful catalyst in re-engaging young people in education and so keeping people in school longer with the consequence of improved employment opportunities and reduced incidence of anti-social and criminal behaviour of those who drop-out of full-time education early.

**Benefits:**

- Improved academic attainment in key skills such as numeracy and literacy
- More youths stay in education so affording them better employment opportunities
- A decrease in the incidence of drug-taking, HIV/AIDS and anti-social behaviour. prevalent in school drops outs and the unemployed
- Community safety benefits in terms of a reduction in criminal activity.
- Health benefits through an increase in positive physical activity amongst young people providing a greater incentive for eating a healthy diet and refraining from taking alcohol or drugs.
- A reduction in truancy and improvements in behaviour and educational attainment

**Policy recommendations:**

- **A Priority for Education Departments:** ensure that Government education departments understand the impact sport can have in raising standards in schools, and build it into the Curriculum
- **Be flexible in the approach to Schools:** allow schools to fit sports programmes around their own needs and circumstances, and share best practice
- **Engage the Students directly:** build direct involvement in sport to re-engage the disaffected, build self esteem and motivate them to achieve
- **Deliver Role Models:** use sports stars within schools to motivate and inspire and act as mentors.

**:: 04**

## Using Sport to Develop Leadership and Participation in the Community

Sport is a very powerful tool and has a great deal to offer to everyone – it can engage the talented and the less coordinated, the able and those with disabilities, youth and elderly, boys and girls, men and women. It can bring challenge, adventure, excitement and fun. It can also provide personal development, leadership and team-work skills. It can foster volunteering through coaching, officiating or administration and so develop citizenship and a sense of community responsibility and involvement.

**Benefits:**

- Builds community capacity
- Increases employment opportunities
- Reduces anti-social behaviour.

**Policy recommendations:**

- **Cross Government Working:** involve relevant government departments by demonstrating how the programme fulfils wider agenda – promote collaboration on future projects
- **National Coordination:** develop a national infrastructure that enables key partners to work together effectively, building on the structures and best practice that already exist
- **Make it about people not organisations:** ensure all development programmes are suited to the need of participants rather than the delivery organisations
- **Ensure relevant training and education:** coach training should be an integral part of the programme, but must be suited to local community needs.



# Building Inclusive Communities Through Sport

Sport can have a far reaching influence across all individuals and communities. Sport has the potential to promote a positive image of disability and can enhance self-image, success, strength and friendship in those with a disability. It can be a tool to empower women, promoting their independence and developing their leadership skills, confidence and assertiveness. It can help build communities and build cohesion and a sense of citizenship.

## Benefits:

- Improved health and quality of life
- Improved community harmony and unity
- Improved delivery systems, programmes and services
- Increased performance of athletes, coaches, administrators and technical officials
- Increased employment opportunities for youth
- Contribution to poverty alleviation at community level
- Establishment of clubs and building of local infrastructure, such as multi-sports facilities and community centres
- National government agreement to build multi-purpose indoor sport and community centres
- Proves a vehicle for building community cohesion
- Increased employment opportunities, and contribution to poverty alleviation at community level
- Increased awareness of programmes and activities for persons with a disability in the region
- community-based support networks for persons with a disability to become active participants in, and to contribute to, society
- Integration of persons with a disability with the greater community
- increased and better opportunities for persons with a disability to participate and advance in society, including in sport
- Include people with a disability in all educational activities and sensitization programmes
- Put pressure on Governments to include persons with a disability in HIV/AIDS education and sensitization programmes
- Continue to educate women about the importance of participating in sport as a means to maintaining and improving health
- Continue to advocate for people with a disability to get more involved in community life, including sport
- Increased awareness about diversity in society

## Policy recommendations:

- **Encourage Diversity:** create a wide range of sports and activities to attract and engage all groups in society to become and stay involved
- **Focus on Role Models:** actively recruit sport stars to act as appropriate role models and mentors to various groups, to ensure their greater commitment and motivation
- **Local Community Planning:** create structured programmes for sport and physical activity in the local community and ensure they are incorporated into wider community planning and infrastructure
- **Proactive Communication:** Ensure that all opportunities to get involved within sports clubs and local communities are known about and understood by a wide range of groups in society.

