

***‘Sport for Development & Peace’ – its integration in the  
Commonwealth Youth Programme, the wider work of the  
Commonwealth Secretariat, and across the governments of the  
Commonwealth***

Concept Paper for the  
Commonwealth Sports Ministers' Meeting (CSMM)  
Delhi, India, October 4, 2010

*This paper sets out the underlying assumptions and principles of Sport for Development and Peace (SDP) in the Commonwealth, and outlines the directions that will be suggested to the CSMM by the Commonwealth Secretariat (CS) and the Commonwealth Advisory Body on Sport (CABOS). It will form the basis of the draft communiqué.*

1. The Commonwealth is an important site of the growing movement to use sport to address the most difficult challenges of human society, Sport for Development and Peace or SDP. While the power of sport to instruct and empower is age-old, increasingly it is being planned, carried out and evaluated as an explicit strategy to realize the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) of universal education, gender equality, child and maternal health, the anti-stigmatization and prevention of HIV/AIDS, global partnerships, and the Commonwealth goals of democracy and development.
2. CABOS reports to the 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> CSMMs documented successful programs in every corner of the Commonwealth. The 'logic models' of successful programs are based upon the cultural fascination and popularity of sport, the embodied learning and strengthened health of doing sport, the confidence, social legitimacy and mutual respect that sport provides, especially for subordinate or vulnerable groups, the intercultural interactions that sport affords and the social networks that grow up around sport.
3. The 4<sup>th</sup> CSMM in Beijing 'acknowledged and agreed to consider' the policy recommendations with respect to sport and youth development adopted by Commonwealth Youth Ministers in Colombo in April 2008, namely that

Youth Policies should

- *include universal access to sport education in schools, in curricular and extra curricular time.*
- *ensure that all teachers and coaches are supported with professional development opportunities to ensure that they are equipped to deliver high quality programmes that provide a positive experience for young people.*
- *provide sport activity guidelines for community providers, including sports federations, so that they can complement and supplement provision in schools.*
- *be founded on research to determine the most important factors influencing participation of youth with special needs, and they should develop customized national strategies and programmes to address these issues.*

- *include specific provisions to prevent the physical, psychological and sexual exploitation of young people participating in sport.*
- *ensure that young people have a voice in shaping youth sport strategies, and that they are meaningfully involved in the implementation of any action plans.*
- *include provision for community play environments that are safe, clean, accessible, and that encourage enjoyable physical activity. Moreover, they should promote sport which is affordable.*
- *recognize the power of sport for development, and should target programmes at those groups that can most benefit from intervention, and which are least likely to have access to other opportunities.*
- *draw together key departments at national and local level – education, health, sport, gender, culture, law and order, social inclusion – to ensure an integrated youth sport strategy.*

4. These remain vital policy recommendations. But they are just recommendations. Few such policies exist or have been effectively implemented. The evidence shows that the benefits of sport participation are enjoyed by only a small minority of children and youth across the Commonwealth. Those from higher income groups enjoy significantly more opportunity than those from lower income groups. In some Commonwealth countries, sport participation may actually be falling.

5. Moreover, the benefits of sport participation do not occur automatically. The quality of programs and the circumstances in which they are conducted are vital to effective outcomes. As the above recommendations of the 2008 CSMM and CYMM implied:

- ▶ Participants must feel that programs meet their needs, i.e. that it's 'their program', and have genuine access, including equipment and transportation. Effective programs directly involve youth in planning and implementation.
- ▶ Participants must feel physically safe, personally valued, socially connected, morally and economically supported, personally and politically empowered; and hopeful about the future. Programs should be clean, affordable and enjoyable.
- ▶ There must be skilled and committed administrators, coaches and volunteers, who enjoy the confidence of the intended beneficiaries and their communities.
- ▶ The benefits of sport participation and sport initiatives cannot be understood in isolation from other social and material conditions. To be successful, sport programs should be closely linked to other interventions, especially in education, health, employment and youth development.
- ▶ Programs must be sustained to have a lasting impact.

6. It is also important to recognize that there is no evidence that the oft-claimed 'inspiration effect' of outstanding athletic performances upon participation actually takes place. While it is certainly the case that children and youth people are inspired by the dazzling performances of Commonwealth and Olympic champions, such performances do not automatically lead to increased participation; unless those so inspired enjoy full access to sustainable programs the take-up is short-lived and ineffective.

**7. It is clear that much more needs to be done to ensure that every young person in the Commonwealth enjoys the rights, benefits and cultural participation of sport and physical activity set out in the declarations of previous CSMMs and CYMMs. It is not enough to proclaim the importance of SDP. The challenge is to provide it. When 60% of the total population of the Commonwealth is under the age of 30, sport for youth development is an urgent priority.**

**We recommend that by the 2012 CSMM in London, the Commonwealth and Commonwealth sports ministers agree to (1) clear, measurable targets for participation in sport and physical activity, along the lines of the MDGs, (2) a strategy for achieving those targets, and (3) appropriate reporting of results by member governments.**

8. We believe that during the next two years, the appropriate planning and target setting can be achieved by 'mainstreaming' and strengthening sport policy analysis within the Commonwealth Youth Programme and other departments of the Commonwealth Secretariat, while member governments 'mainstream' sport in their own policies, provide data on the extent of policy, programs, and actual implementation (including 'best practice'), and contribute, through regional and ministers' meetings, to the target setting.

#### 8.1 The Commonwealth Youth Programme (CYP)

The CYP has already included sport in its Strategic Plan 2008-2012:

*Sport can inspire young people and engage them effectively especially in circumstances where all hope of engaging them in other areas has failed due to socio-economic and/or security circumstances.*

*Current initiatives in the Commonwealth indicate how sport has proven to be a useful tool for community development and peace. Moreover, sport can also serve as a tool for tackling key health issues, improving educational attainment as well as developing leadership and citizenship thereby contributing to greater social cohesion. (p. 17.)*

CABOS has increased its membership to include two representatives of the Pan Commonwealth Youth Caucus to strengthen collaboration between the two advisory boards.

But much more needs to be done to take this work into the realm of actual practice.

To advance this work, the CS commits to strengthening the capacity for sport policy analysis, development and implementation in the Commonwealth Youth Program (CYP) and the integration of youth and sport policy.

In the first place, the complement of sport development advisors will be increased, as the CYP has long requested, and all CYP staff, in London and in the four regional CYP offices will be trained in the principles, methodologies and 'best practices' of SDP,

drawing upon the expertise of CABOS, member governments, the United Nations Office of Sport for Development and Peace, and leading NGOs.

A key task is to analyze existing elements of the CYP (youth mentoring, youth leader training, youth enterprise and micro-financing, youth vocational training, youth 'voice', etc) and determine where sport might supplement these activities.

Secondly, the CYP will begin to collect (or commission) country-by-country, region-by-region baseline data on children and youth participation in sport, physical activity and physical education, drawing upon existing international and national data bases, and the expertise of academics and other researchers in the Commonwealth. It will then prepare a baseline document to inform the strategic plan.

Thirdly, the four regional CYP centers will hold conferences and consultations to discuss and set priorities and targets for their respective regions of the Commonwealth, drawing upon the expertise of CABOS, PCYC and member governments, and recommend the ways in which the targets can be met. While the priorities for policy and intervention should be determined by member governments, we suggest four such priorities:

- youth education through sport, including physical education
- youth protection in sport
- youth employment through sport
- gender equity in sport

These four priorities are convergent with the previous recommendations of the CSMM and the CYMM. Moreover, the first three of these are the priorities of the recently established UN Working Group on Sport for Children and Youth, which was largely a creation of Commonwealth countries, and which is chaired by two Commonwealth countries, UK and Ghana. At the founding meeting of the Working Group in Geneva in May 2010, it was suggested that CABOS and the Commonwealth Secretariat take leadership on these priorities among Commonwealth countries. Moreover, the focus on youth protection would enable the CYP regional offices to strengthen their relations with the Regional Anti-Doping Organizations which the Commonwealth Secretariat helped establish. The Commonwealth Secretariat has announced that 2011 will be a year of strengthening the inclusion and empowerment of girls and women.

The funds for these activities can come out of the CYP's existing budgets, new allocations from the CS base budget, and special project applications to the CFTC.

## 8.2. Commonwealth Secretariat

Other divisions of the Commonwealth Secretariat can contribute to the realization of SDP in the Commonwealth as well, especially STPD (Social Transformation Programmes Division i.e. Education, Health, Gender) and possibly PAD (Political Affairs Division) and HRU (Human Rights Unit). The evidence is clear that effective physical education and after-school sports contribute to academic achievement, school retention and safe

schools and communities, so the implementation of physical education contributes to the realization of basic education. Healthy physical activity contributes to the reduction of non-communicable diseases, especially cardio-vascular disease, diabetes and obesity and some cancers, so it contributes to basic health. Commonwealth sport has long been an arena for the struggle for human rights. These links need to be strengthened.

The first step is to 'mainstream' sport in all policy areas, through appropriate training and communication. At the same time, there is much that the CYP could learn from staff in other divisions who wrestle with similar challenges. During the forthcoming months, the CS should conduct a one-day joint workshop involving CYP and staff from STPD and possibly other divisions/units, to consider how sport can contribute to their goals, and likewise how those divisions/units can contribute to SDP.

A second step is to ensure that where appropriate, SDP is on the agenda of the Commonwealth Education Ministers' Meetings (CEMM), the Commonwealth Health Ministers' Meetings (CHMM) and, of course, the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meetings (CHOGM).

A third step is to ensure that SDP is regularly featured in Commonwealth communications.

Lastly, in keeping with the Commonwealth Partnership Platform Portal (CP3), the CS should develop an e-repository of policies, programs and examples of 'best practice' in SDP in its window on 'Youth as National Builders', coordinating such efforts with the International Platform on Sport for Development and Peace and other agencies. As 2011 will be a year of recognizing and strengthening efforts to include and affirm women in the Commonwealth, we suggest that the first use of the CP3 for this purpose be focused on the use of sport to enhance the inclusion and empowerment of girls and women. The CYP should develop an e-template for Commonwealth countries to report on their policies, programs and achievements for this purpose, and where appropriate, assist countries in training staff to report.

Deputy Secretary General Masire-Mwamba will give leadership to these tasks during the next two years.

### 8.3 Commonwealth Governments

In order to realize the benefits of SDP, member governments will also have to strengthen their commitments. We think it appropriate that they do so in two ways.

In the first place, it is important that they 'mainstream' sport policy in major government departments, especially in education, health, youth development, tourism, labour and employment, and foreign aid. The research is clear that sport can contribute to the realization of major governmental goals in these areas.

The CYP would like to develop a 'Sport for Development Mainstreaming Guide for Governments' in time for 6-CSMM in 2012, similar to the 'Youth Mainstreaming Guide for Governments' which was requested by Heads of Government at CHOGM 2009. (An element of this would be the dissemination of research results, as described above in 8.2.)

For this reason, it is important that member governments commit reporting on the extent of the policy and programming links between sport, health, education, youth development and other fields, including examples of 'best practice' in collaborative work, within the next year. The CYP is also committed to help them develop and use an appropriate e-template for such reporting.

We also believe that member governments should be prepared to report fully on policies, programs and implementation/compliance in the priorities of SDP, and commit to an aggressive strategy of target setting and monitoring and evaluation by the next CSMM. Again, the CYP will help develop an appropriate template for such reporting.

#### 9. The Commonwealth Games Federation(CGF)

The CGF is a non-governmental, volunteer-led body responsible for staging successful Commonwealth Games (CWG). Its focus has historically been upon fostering excellence in athletics and the development of high performance sport within the Commonwealth countries and in this it has been remarkably successful. The tremendous popularity of the CWG and the athletes it showcases, arguably the most visible aspect of the Commonwealth, is a testament to its dedication and wisdom.

But in recent years, the CGF has contributed to sport development in Commonwealth countries. It has supported the International Federation of Netball Associations in the development of netball in sub-Saharan Africa, organizing national and regional competitions, strengthening coach education and increasing the number of African teams in the Commonwealth Games. It has also supported Commonwealth Games Canada in its Capacity Support Program (CSP) designed to strengthen Commonwealth Games Associations. Seven CSP interns from African and Caribbean countries will accompany their teams to the Commonwealth Games in Delhi.

The CGF should further these efforts and use its considerable influence to strengthen SDP within the Commonwealth. The Games have never been just a sporting event, but a political projection as well designed to strengthen the values and ties of the Commonwealth countries. Given the importance of development to the Commonwealth, it is timely that the Games actively support development through sport. We thus encourage and value the partnership of the CGF so that there is a significant, sustainable contribution to sport development and SDP through future Games, and that the expectations for awarding and monitoring the Games reflect this priority.