

Darnell, S. C. (2012). *Olympism in action, Olympic hosting and the politics of 'Sport for Development and Peace': Investigating the development discourses of Rio 2016*. *Sport in Society*, 15(6), 869-887.

### **What is it about? (Aim/objectives)**

International development associated with the 2016 Rio Olympic Games legacy did not deliver on grassroots sport-for-development, as 'hard development' is preferred to 'soft development'.

### **Where is it from? (Context/location)**

An Canadian author but the context is Brazil, South America (a development economy in the Global South)

### **Who are involved? (Research participants)**

Review of publications - 201 articles and reports obtained from the media and DJF database

### **What are the readings and main concepts?**

Debates:

- The broader development agenda promoted by the Olympic Movement linked to Rio 2016.
- Messages by commercial media after announcement of Rio as host city.
- Delivering on IOC's Olympism in Action relating to 'softer'/people-centred development agenda linked to Sport for Development and Peace (SDP).

Brazil, development and sport:

- Brazil as third world country and part of BRIC (Brazil, Russia, India and China) group
- Can developing countries afford to host mega events like Commonwealth Games, the FIFA World Cup and Olympic Games?
- IOC and host countries are committed to IOC agenda for development – *Olympism in Action*.
- What development is for the public good?
  - Social and economic benefits – what is the net loss and gains for the public account?
  - Mega-events is more than athletic performance and elite sport.
  - NGOs have a key role to play to deliver on a broader development agenda.
  - Policy development alone is not enough - it is about the delivery on political (and IOC) promises, whilst also listening to the 'voices from below' (NGOs).

### **What are the main findings? (Results)**

The IOC, United Nations and International Development – addressing the components of *Olympism in Action*:

- Development through sport (IOC website) – building a better world through development programmes.
- Act on UN-IOC Forum: The importance of partnerships (including NGOs and academics)
- Act on 19 recommendations 'on how to maximise the impact of various activities in the field of development through sport' (p. 876). Examples of recommendations:
  - #2 – IOC to leverage its relationship with the UN to build better relationships with government authorities and deliver on achieving the (Sustainable) Development Goals.
  - #3 – Maximise the contribution to development 'beyond the competitive character of sport'.
  - #7 - Link to development issues such as combating the spread of HIV/AIDS.
  - #12 – Speak the role that sport can play in achieving gender equality.
  - #15 – Assert the role of sport in creating a climate for peace.

### **What are the main lessons? (Discussion/Reflections/Learnings)**

- Official government projects did not deliver on broad social development in Brazil.
- Olympism in Action (and SDP) is a framework for sport-focused, civil society-led development initiatives but need to deliver sustainable change beyond the promises of political actors on 'hard development' outcomes (e.g. infrastructure development).
- See 'development as growth' to be promoted on commercial, media and political platforms.
- Reshape *Olympism* (philosophy of life and life skill framework) for/by local communities.

### **Is it useful? (Chat room, knowledge sharing)**

What role can the SSCN and NGOs play in claiming a stake in legacy programmes?

What were the benefits of a mega – or national sport event for communities and NGOs?