



Enhancing the Contribution of Sport to Sustainable Development



The Commonwealth



The Commonwealth Secretariat supports member countries to develop policies and strategies to maximise the contribution of sport to national development objectives and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

This work focuses on the intentional use of sport as a tool in advancing sustainable development and strengthening governance, gender equality and the protection and promotion of human rights.

The Commonwealth is recognised as a global leader in this sector and plays a key coordination role with international intergovernmental organisations and the Commonwealth sports movement, as well as business, academia, non-government groups and civil society.

There are three main areas of focus for sport for development and peace in the Commonwealth:

- 1) Sports impact on the SDGs
- 2) Developing national policies and strategies
- 3) Building capacity of leaders and officials



In the Commonwealth, we are harnessing the role of sport as a development tool, supported by strengthened governance, sport integrity and the protection of human rights in sport, towards more inclusive and sustainable development.

The Rt Hon Patricia Scotland QC
Secretary-General of the Commonwealth

① Sport's Impact on the SDGs

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development recognises sport as an enabler of sustainable development and peace.

The Commonwealth supports member governments, the Commonwealth sports movement and key stakeholders to maximise the contribution that sport can make to the SDGs in areas of health, education, gender equality, social cohesion, good governance and building strong institutions.

By aligning national sports policy to the SDGs, countries can help maximise the impact and contribution of sport to national development objectives. This contribution can be realised through the use of sport as a tool in advancing development priorities and by strengthening governance, gender equality and the protection and promotion of human rights in sport.

Sport can make an effective contribution to these SDGs:



② Developing National Policies and Strategies

Tailored Commonwealth support assists countries with policy design, strategy development, consultation, research, training and evaluation, through expert technical assistance, as well as the provision of toolkits and guidelines.

The Commonwealth's assistance in bolstering the intentional use of sport to deliver non-sport development outcomes is already making a difference in many countries. More people and communities are healthier, more connected and more prosperous as a result of participating in sport, especially women, young people and people living with a disability.

The Commonwealth works closely with member governments and other stakeholders to ensure technical assistance is tailored to suit each country, the local environment and also reflects government priorities and aspirations. There is also a strong focus on identifying good practice locally to share with other Commonwealth countries.



Sport's Impact in the Commonwealth

The Commonwealth Secretariat provides technical assistance to strengthen national sport and sustainable development policy in member countries.



A new approach in Mauritius is getting the whole country involved in sport and physical activity.

Mauritius: The Commonwealth supported the development of a national 'Sport for All' policy, with the strategy delivering better health and wellbeing and promoting social cohesion in Mauritius. Mauritius now allocates dedicated funding and resources to encourage more Mauritians to participate in sport as a way to advance good health, youth development and active ageing.

Zambia: The Commonwealth supported a review of the national sports policy to align with national development priorities strengthened the contribution of sport towards these aims. Sport is being used to promote physical and mental health as well as supporting education, boosting employment prospects and improving social cohesion.



Sport is playing a major role in helping promote social and economic development in Zambia.

Botswana: The Commonwealth is supporting Botswana to use sport to promote gender equality through the production of national guidelines and implementing a strategy for gender mainstreaming in sport. More than 100 officials, sports leaders, athletes and coaches from national sporting groups have taken part in gender mainstreaming workshops.



Workshops highlighted the contribution of sport to achieving gender equality and empowering women and girls.



Bangladesh will work to align the national sport policy to the country's Five Year Development Plan and SDGs.

Bangladesh: The Commonwealth is supporting the mainstreaming of sport in national development planning in Bangladesh. A key part of this approach is to revise and update Bangladesh's national sport policy with a focus on maximising the contribution sport can make to the achievement of the SDGs in the country.

Sri Lanka: The Commonwealth is supporting the implementation of the National Sports Policy of Sri Lanka through the development of a delivery strategy and measurement and evaluation framework. This is focused on assisting the government, sporting organisations and key stakeholders to position sport to contribute to the country's socio-economic development objectives and prioritised SDGs.



Participants from government, NGOs and sport and non-sport stakeholders took part in the workshop.

③ Building Capacity of Leaders and Officials

The Commonwealth builds the capacity of leaders and officials, supporting them to develop skills and knowledge to use sport to contribute to sustainable national development. By bringing together Ministers, senior officials and experts, the Commonwealth promotes cooperation between member countries to build consensus on sport and sustainable development, and promote improved governance, integrity and human rights in sport.

Supporting this approach, Commonwealth Sports Ministers meet every two years before either the Commonwealth or Olympic Games. At these meetings, Ministers consider key sport policy issues and work to advance Commonwealth cooperation on linking sport and development. Advice is given by the Commonwealth Advisory Body on Sport (CABOS), an independent body providing advice on sport policy issues, particularly as it relates to Sport for Development and Peace, and protecting the integrity of sport.

This work is further enhanced by the Commonwealth Youth Sport for Development and Peace Working Group that promotes participation and input of sport for development youth leaders in Commonwealth decision making platforms.

Massive Open Online Course (MOOC) for Sport for Development and Peace

The Commonwealth, working in partnership with the International Platform on Sport and Development (sportanddev.org) and the Australian Government, is developing a sport for development and peace (SDP) Massive Open Online Course (MOOC).

The SDP MOOC will develop skills and capacity of government officials, international and national sports federations and other key partners. It aims to build learner's knowledge and understanding on maximising the contribution of sport to identified development objectives.

Global Recognition of Sport and the SDGs

The leadership of the Commonwealth in framing global policy and strategy on sport and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) has been recognised through the key United Nations forum for sport policy makers. The Commonwealth provided detailed guidance on the implications for sport policy and the adoption of the SDGs, with this work endorsed by the 8th Commonwealth Sports Ministers Meeting in August 2016. It was supported by a landmark commitment to align future sport policy architecture in the Commonwealth to the SDGs.

This decision provided impetus for broader international commitment at the 6th International Conference of Ministers responsible for Physical Education and Sport (MINEPS VI). This commitment is reflected in the Kazan Action Plan, which was adopted by more than 100 countries in July 2017 and focuses “on supporting action orientated policy implementation that strengthens alignment between sport policy and the SDGs”.

The MINEPS VI working document that supported adoption of the Action Plan and Framework emphasised that it was through “the leadership of the Commonwealth Secretariat (that) SDGs to which sport can make a significant contribution (were identified)”.

Model Indicators on Sport and the SDGs

The Commonwealth Secretariat is coordinating international efforts to improve measurement and evaluation of the contribution of sport, physical activity and physical education to prioritised SDGs. A set of draft model indicators and indicative data collection tools to measure and evaluate the contribution of national sport policies to the SDGs has been developed, and once agreed, will inform future Commonwealth and international efforts to frame common indicators.

More Information

A range of discussion papers, guidelines and toolkits are available for member governments, sports movement and other stakeholders to assist in strengthening sport for development policy and strategy.



Enhancing the Contribution of Sport to the Sustainable Development Goals



Strengthening Sport for Development and Peace National Policies and Strategies



Sport for Development and Peace and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development



Policy Guidance to Commonwealth Governments on Protecting the Integrity of Sport



The Commonwealth Guide to Advancing Development through Sport



Sport for Development and Peace Youth Advocacy Toolkit



Strengthening Sport-Related Policy Coherence



States' Obligations Under International Human Rights Conventions

For more information on the Sport for Development and Peace work, visit the Commonwealth Secretariat website or email sdp@commonwealth.int



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