

UNESCO recently launched the Social and Human Science Sector's new sport-based flagship, **Fit for Life (FFL)**. This project comes at a critical moment, as recent data demonstrates a **decline of 41% in physical activity since the beginning of the pandemic**, with the most disadvantaged social groups worst hit. This rapid decline is especially alarming considering that **80% of youth already led sedentary lives pre-pandemic**, now adding a **200% increases in mental health conditions** amongst youth, and **70% of PE teachers polled by UNESCO** reporting worsened mental and physical health of students during the pandemic. Beyond the current health situation, sport is a **high yield investment** for building socio-emotional resilience, **mental health and well-being**, **academic performance**, and **physical health**. These are core focuses of the UN Sustainable Development Goals, and bring cross-sector benefits locally.

The core work of Fit for Life will be **data collection and consolidation**. Data gaps and siloes are a major obstacle to effective funding strategies in this sector. FFL aims to examine, address, and overcome gaps, including **the lack of globally coherent datasets**, as well as the **absence of a unified and systematized methodology** on data collection, policy development, and impact measurement. These efforts will be carried out across UNESCO's network of 11,000 schools, 180K+ young leaders, 2600+ inclusive policy experts, 193 Member States, 53 country offices and 830 affiliated universities. Beyond this network, UNESCO has also partnered with the Global Observatory on Women and Sport, Wu Tsai Human Performance Alliance, WHO, the Commonwealth Secretariat, and Yunus Sports Hub.

In its earlier stages, Fit for Life will create a **curated and interlocking international data ecosystem** to advance knowledge, address data gaps, and deliver high-impact interventions. By measuring the impact of sport funding with this cutting-edge model, FFL will advance overall data insights in sport-based investment. In these ways, FFL will curate international data on sport for development in order to **stimulate greater investment in sport and systematize approaches from data collection to policy development and programme implementation**.

The final outcomes of UNESCO's work will center on the **increased operationalization of this data**, via the Fit for Life champion country change programme and the **launch of an accreditation system**. This standard-setting comes at a vital moment, as powerful new financial devices such as Social Outcomes Contracts are beginning to show the full significance of coherent international data. These tools will allow Fit for Life to build capacity in a manner tailored to each country's own context.

### Three concrete phases of Fit for Life

#### Phase 1: Scoping study to produce a scenario for the baseline measurement (2022 Q1)

- Outputs include:**
- **Map of existing methodologies**, datasets, indicator frameworks.
  - **Sport stakeholder matrix** in order to translate data collected into “real world” impact at national levels.
  - **Draft data collection methodology** including primary data collection instruments, key domains of focus, and theory of change modelling for the baseline study.

#### Phase 2: Baseline study (2022 & repeat in 2024)

- Outputs include:**
- **Global standards-setting dataset** on inclusive sport policy and grassroots participation.
  - **Digital platform for research capacity**, including new metrics, equitable data representation, and a roadmap for further integration needs.
  - **Evidence based publications** including a Global Status Report on Sport Policy and Practice, Policy Brief, Infographics and video.

#### Phase 3: Data operationalization, scaling of partnership & implementation. (2023-2032)

- Outputs include:**
- FFL data, methodology, and standards **implemented in champion countries**.

#### Opportunities to partner and associated responsibilities:

**Financial responsibilities:** supporting the implementation of FFL scoping and baseline studies

**Participatory responsibilities:** providing both data and insight through our studies and advisory panels. Proposing high-impact case studies for scale and nominating ambassadors.