

# Sport for development and peace

A scientific and bottom up approach to  
impact measurement

# Technical Reports

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## **Sport for development and peace**

### **A scientific and bottom up approach to impact measurement**

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#### **Abstract**

Since the turn of the century, sport has gained legitimacy in the field of international development. As institutions have gradually recognized its role and the number of grass-roots initiatives has increased, sport-for-development initiatives have arisen in a growing number of regions. Although stakeholders in the field of sport are increasingly aware of the added value of sport for achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), a more thorough analysis of the impact of sport is needed in the academic literature.

In this context, a review of existing research and relevant indicators presents a two-fold advantage for understanding the social impact of sport in development projects. First, it shows how sport can provide concrete added value for development projects. Second, it is important to identify robust indicators that prove the social impact of sport.

This report is divided into three main sections.

The first section analyzes the social impact of sport, drawing not only on experiential evidence from field projects, but also on an examination of the mechanisms that explain how sport can have broader social, cultural and economic benefits.

The second section provides an initial overview of the impacts of sport on several dimensions: social cohesion, gender equality, education, beneficiary

participation, urban development and health.

Meanwhile, the third section explores how social impact bonds can encourage dialog and greater involvement of public authorities in sport-for-development projects. An assessment of the quality of indicators that can be used for social impact bonds is therefore provided.

Through this research paper, we seek to contribute to discussions on the impact of sport in development projects in two ways: by creating better conditions for dialog between the various stakeholders in the field – in particular between the worlds of academia, sport and evaluation – and by helping stakeholders gradually move towards developing a framework, i.e. a common set of sport-for-development indicators.

#### **Keywords:**

sport, development indicator, impact measurement, social sciences, methodology.

#### **Geographic area:**

multi-country

# Introduction

The specific impact of sport in development projects has gained international recognition recently, although it encompasses a wide range of realities in terms of goals, approaches and types of activity.<sup>1</sup> The academic community, particularly in English-speaking countries, is seeking to understand the conditions and mechanisms underpinning the social impact of sport. Civil society organizations (CSOs) are also increasingly using sport as a tool in their educational, social and environmental projects.<sup>2</sup> As a result of the greater legitimacy sport has acquired within the United Nations<sup>3</sup>, international development and cooperation policies act alongside these CSOs, sometimes in collaboration with stakeholders in the growing sports industry.<sup>4</sup> As such, the international development and sport ecosystems are increasingly looking at how sport can contribute to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

The aim of this technical report is therefore to identify the relevant indicators for understanding the social impact of sport-for-development projects. We faced at least three challenges in our research. First, it was important for us to identify and select robust indicators that capture the direct effects of sport-for-development activities, and to avoid selecting indicators that are intangible or hard to demonstrate. Second, we needed to identify indicators that were aligned with academic research, in order to ensure the evaluations led to useful learnings. Finally, it was essential to select indicators that are widely understandable, beyond the geographic, social and cultural diversity of development projects.

Within a development project or program, stakeholders often have to develop a monitoring and evaluation framework – that is, a set of indicators to monitor and evaluate the project or program. In this report, we draw on various examples of development projects and programs to suggest a set of indicators that capture the added value of sport for development according to several dimensions (social cohesion, gender equality, education, civic participation, health and urban development). For each indicator, we analyze the quality of the indicator and show whether the indicator has been referenced in the literature and/or by international organizations. The report is therefore divided into three main sections.

The first section presents a new way of thinking about the social impact of sport. The idea is to go beyond the values and life skills learned through sport to show how sporting practices and pedagogical approaches can be designed to increase the positive impacts of sport for certain types of beneficiaries and in certain social contexts. This section also suggests making greater use of “bottom-up” approaches to identify and compare concrete indicators that most closely reflect the realities of implementers and beneficiaries of sport-for-development projects.

The second section of this report takes these aspects into consideration to provide an initial overview of the impacts of sport on several outcomes: social cohesion, gender equality, education, beneficiary participation, urban development and health. For each of these areas, we identify the main debates and insights from academic literature and relevant indicators to capture the added value of sport in

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<sup>1</sup> Simon Darnell, Russell Field, Bruce Kidd, *The History and Politics of Sport-For-Development*, Palgrave MacMillan, 2019

<sup>2</sup> Per Svensson, Hillary Woods, *A Systematic Overview of Sport for Development and Peace Organisations*, *Journal of Sport for Development*, vol. 5, n°9, September 2017

<sup>3</sup> Simon Darnell, Russell Field, Bruce Kidd, *op. cit.*

<sup>4</sup> Jean-François Bourg, Jean-Jacques Gouguet, *Économie du sport*, La Découverte, 2012

development projects. The list we provide is not exhaustive; it can, nevertheless, serve as a basis for dialogue between project managers and international donors regarding social change models or monitoring and evaluation processes. While these efforts to identify indicators may suggest that the impact of sport and social change remains at the level of the projects and programs themselves, it is important to involve local and national governments in developing, supporting and recognizing projects and programs.

The third section therefore focuses on identifying the success factors for social impact bonds, a new type of instrument designed to bring together governments and donors to maximize the impact of sport in the long term. This section stresses the need for dialogue between stakeholders in order to develop sport-for-development indicators that take into account the social and human realities at the local and national levels. It also highlights the importance of developing indicators that are both robust (i.e. that measure the direct effects of activities) and reliable (i.e. that are realistic in terms of data collection). Most importantly, it highlights the need to select indicators that are academically relevant, i.e. that the initial assumptions and hypotheses are supported by social science research.

Throughout this report, we insist on the fact that indicators must remain widely understandable, in particular by the non-profit sector, local and national governments and citizens of the countries involved. Ensuring that sport-for-development indicators are understandable and easy to use will ease the adoption of new standards and public policies to increase the impact of sport.

This report therefore lays the basis for dialogue between international donors, researchers and practitioners, offering an opportunity to create ties and develop new opportunities for cooperation.

## **1. The impact of sport in development projects: the importance of adopting a new conceptual framework**

Sport is a general concept that encompasses a wide range of realities.<sup>5</sup> It may refer, among other things, to grassroots sports, leisure activities, elite sports, health, or physical and sports education. It may take the form of a game, a performance, a strategy promoted by institutions, or an ideology.<sup>6</sup> In recent years, the scope of thinking on sport has broadened to include more relaxing, everyday physical activities.

It therefore seems appropriate to use the definition adopted by the World Health Organization for the purposes of this report. The WHO has defined the notion of physical activity as "any bodily movement produced by skeletal muscles that requires energy expenditure. Physical activity refers to all movement, including during leisure time, for transport to get to and from places, or as part of a person's work."<sup>7</sup> This broad approach to sport, encompassing both sport and physical activity, is important since it allows us to expand the scope of the impact of sport to include "traditional" sports stakeholders, development stakeholders, and organizations that are strongly active in both sectors.

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<sup>5</sup> Fred Coalter, *Sport for Development, What Game are We Playing?* Routledge, 2013

<sup>6</sup> Michaël Attali, Jean Saint-Martin, *Dictionnaire culturel du sport*, Armand Colin, 2019

<sup>7</sup> <https://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/physical-activity>







identification of new, qualitative indicators; and second, it allows for the identification of indicators that can be more easily adopted by the initiators of development projects and programs, since they are more grounded in their professional practices <sup>11</sup>. This approach is thus based on two specific principles.

### **1.2.2. A "bottom-up" approach for identifying indicators that best reflect the realities of project leaders**

The advantage of using "bottom-up" indicators (i.e. arising from programs and projects on the ground) is that they can inform a more operational evaluation of the impact and added value of sport. In our view, developing this kind of approach means paying special attention to the logical framework of projects and the quality of the indicators identified.

A number of methodological frameworks have been developed as a result of evaluating development projects, and they can help with the task of identifying indicators to measure the impact of sport. As a general rule, development projects and programs are based on identifying a specific problem and designing a logical framework. This framework outlines the overall goal of the project or program (scope of change to which it seeks to contribute), its specific goals (goals that may be assessed or measured within the timeframe of the project or program), and expected outcomes (contributing to the specific goals), and describes how these outcomes and goals will be achieved.<sup>12</sup> This logical framework may be developed through a multi-stakeholder approach, informing the development of indicators for evaluating projects and programs. Based on this methodological framework, our study of the impact of sport in development may draw a distinction between two main types of indicators:<sup>13</sup> output indicators and outcome indicators.

Output indicators are indicators for understanding or measuring what project leaders produce over the duration of a project or program. For example, for a program that develops training courses to boost the self-confidence and leadership skills of young women in amateur and professional sports, output indicators would include the number of training sessions carried out, the number of young women who actually begin this training, and the number of young women who complete the training. Output indicators implicitly provide an overview of how resources and methods are implemented throughout a project or program.

Outcome indicators are indicators for understanding or measuring the effects of projects or programs on the direct or indirect beneficiaries, once the activities, projects or programs have been completed. Going back to the previous example of the leadership program for young women, outcome indicators might include the level of leadership skills (initiative-taking, public speaking) achieved by the women, or the number of women who reach leadership positions or roles in the sports sector. Given the difficulty of attributing impact, we propose approaching this notion in terms of the "contribution" of projects and programs to SDGs. In the field of academia, SDGs are now internationally recognized as an authoritative set of overall goals. They identify goals and targets that development projects, and particularly sport-for-development projects, can help achieve.

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<sup>11</sup> As well as other initiatives, such as those led by Paris 2024 or the Laureus Foundation, which also address the added value of sport for key issues such as education, employment, health and combating inequality

<sup>12</sup> AFD, "Le cadre logique. La logique de construction du cadre d'un projet" Worksheet. 2018.

<sup>13</sup> AFD, "Le cadre logique", Worksheet.



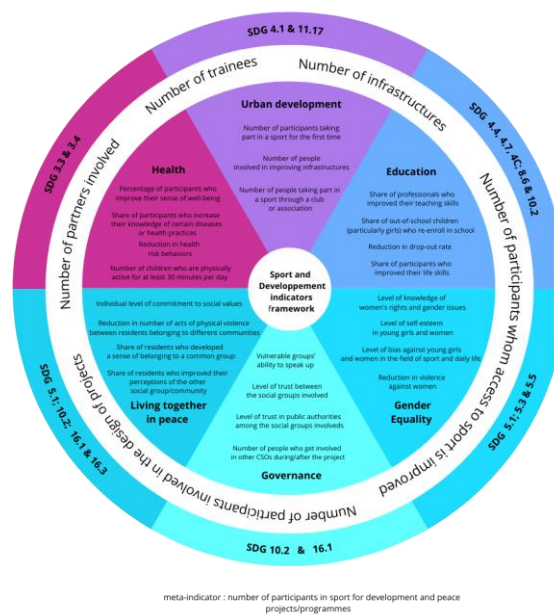


- What issues does the development project or program seek to address?
- What key indicators for sports can the project or program be related to (first circle, starting at the center)?
- What main output indicators can these indicators be associated with (second circle)?
- What SDGs do these outcome and output indicators contribute to (third circle)?

While the goal of this report is to provide a strategic review of indicators to evaluate the social impact of sport for development projects, the diagram below can also serve as a guide for project initiators and program managers who wish to implement a specific approach to evaluate the extent to which sports projects can contribute to building social ties, education, urban development and health. The benchmark work by Peter Taylor, Larissa Davies, Peter Wells, Jan Gilbertson and William Tayleur provides examples of how sport & development indicators can be used in specific logical frameworks.<sup>15</sup>

**Diagram 2. Sport-for-Development Indicators Framework (MISD)**

Source: Authors' original work



Given that this framework is not intended to be imposed on stakeholders, but instead provides a set of relevant indicators for measuring the impact of sport on development projects, in the next section we will look at some real-world examples to illustrate how sport-for-development projects can use these indicators in specific national and local contexts.

<sup>15</sup> Peter Taylor, Larissa Davies, Peter Wells, Jan Gilbertson and William Tayleur, "A Review of the Social Impacts of Sport and Art", CASE: the culture and sport evidence programme, 2015

## 2. An overview of key indicators from field projects

Our work to identify indicators focused on six areas we considered essential, given their prevalence and importance in the field of international development: social cohesion, gender equality, beneficiary participation, education, urban development and health. For each of these areas, we provided a precise definition and/or outlined the academic debates on the impacts of sport for the communities and regions involved. On the basis of these academic discussions, we suggested relevant indicators to measure the potential added value of sport in each area. This list of indicators is not meant to be imposed on stakeholders, nor is it intended to replace efforts to develop logical and evaluation frameworks that are specific to each project.

In other words, while the indicators listed below are often key indicators in international development due to their prevalence and robustness, they are not necessarily the right indicators for every type of project. Moreover, they vary in terms of ease of implementation. In the tables below, we therefore indicate whether there are academic or international references for the topic, and specify the feasibility of data collection: level 1 indicates that project or program leaders may collect the data themselves, while level 2 indicates that they will need to call on an external provider. That being said, we believe that this section of the report can provide a benchmark and a set of useful indicators for project or program leaders and international donors.

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### 2.1 Social cohesion

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Sport-for-development initiatives can be particularly useful for encouraging different communities to live harmoniously together, and for building social ties between different groups in the most socially vulnerable communities. Social cohesion is a broad, multifaceted concept that can be defined in various ways depending on the chosen focus.<sup>16</sup>

Social cohesion is often associated with issues relating to social connection. While some international organizations, such as the OECD,<sup>17</sup> address social connection as an indicator of well-being and "quality of life" (distinct from material living conditions), social connection in the sense of social capital can also be understood as individuals' progress in a number of social relationship skills and challenges (self-confidence, self-reliance, cooperation and reciprocity, a sense of belonging) and as individuals' **level of participation, willingness to volunteer and civic engagement** in sports events or activities.<sup>18</sup> At the community level, an analysis of social connection, and of social cohesion, focuses more on the

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<sup>16</sup> Peter Taylor, Larissa Davies, Peter Wells, Jan Gilbertson and William Tayleur, "A Review of the Social Impacts of Sport and Art", CASE: the culture and sport evidence programme, 2015, Pp.47-48

<sup>17</sup> The OECD suggests measuring social connection through two indicators: the time people report spending socializing with friends or relatives over various periods (per week, per month), and the percentage of people who report having someone whom they can count on to help them, OECD, Compendium on OECD Well-Being Indicators, 2011, p.26.

<sup>18</sup> Peter Taylor, Larissa Davies, Peter Wells, Jan Gilbertson and William Tayleur, "A Review of the Social Impacts of Sport and Art", CASE: the culture and sport evidence programme, 2015, Pp.47-48







While the above indicators provide insights into the benefits of sport for civic engagement and for bringing together different social or ethnic communities, several studies have identified additional factors that may contribute to these impacts.<sup>23</sup> First, indicators on participation in sport events and volunteer engagement are often very robust, since sport activities can improve trust and reciprocity between participants when activities are organized with this intention. Second, sport can help strengthen social ties between people and help them develop a sense of belonging, although this is more likely to occur in groups that are already relatively homogeneous from a social, economic or ethnic point of view. It should be noted that these studies have also identified ways in which sport can encourage negative outcomes, such as reinforcing nationalism, to the detriment of minorities.

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## 2.2 Gender equality

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Reducing gender inequality and supporting the education and empowerment of girls and women is a central focus of many international development strategies. Sport-for-development initiatives can make a significant contribution to SDG 5.

One fundamental issue is securing access to sport for girls and women, and access to certain sports in particular. Sociologists Norbert Elias and Eric Dunning emphasize how modern sport has been built on the exclusion of girls and women since the 19th century.<sup>24</sup> Sport was initially developed by and for men. Women are still excluded from some physical activities and sports, sometimes explicitly so. Women have fought to gain access to sport for over a century, and continue to do so today.<sup>25</sup> Although data is lacking, especially for Africa, gender inequality in sports is a significant issue.<sup>26</sup> A study based on data from 1.6 million students between the ages of 11 and 17 published in *The Lancet Child & Adolescent Health* showed that overall, girls participate in sports less than boys do. Regina Guthold, one of the authors of the WHO study on this topic, asserts: "Urgent policy action to increase physical activity is needed now, particularly to promote and retain girls' participation in physical activity".<sup>27</sup>

Our analysis of sport-for-development projects shows that they promote sports activities for girls and young women in two ways: by creating or strengthening clubs or associations for women, and by promoting gender diversity in existing clubs and associations. However, our review shows that while projects focus on young women's access to sports referred to as "gendered" sports historically associated with boys (football and rugby, for example), they never focus on young men's access to "gendered" sports associated with girls (dance, for example). In other words, these projects and programs regard gender diversity as a matter of leveling the playing field for girls and women – who are indeed removed from the world of sport – and more rarely as a matter of boys being more open to sports typically associated with girls. This is an important observation, since transforming gender inequalities in the sports sector through sports participation relies on addressing the motivations and practices of both girls and boys.

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<sup>23</sup> Peter Taylor, Larissa Davies, Peter Wells, Jan Gilbertson and William Tayleur, "A Review of the Social Impacts of Sport and Art", CASE: the culture and sport evidence programme, 2015, Pp.47- 48

<sup>24</sup> Norbert Elias, Eric Dunning, *Sport et civilisation, la violence maîtrisée (Quest for Excitement: Sport and Leisure in the Civilizing Process)*, Fayard, 1986

<sup>25</sup> Michaël Attali, Jean-Saint Martin, *Dictionnaire culturel du sport*, Armand Colin, 2019

<sup>26</sup> PWC, *Study on gender and development in Africa*, 2021

<sup>27</sup> <https://www.who.int/news/item/22-11-2019-new-who-led-study-says-majority-of-adolescents-worldwide-are-not-sufficiently-physically-active-putting-their-current-and-future-health-at-risk>



**Table 2. Examples of indicators of Gender Equality**

EXAMPLE OUTPUT	OUTPUT INDICATOR	OUTCOME INDICATOR	ACADEMIC REFERENCE	INTERNATIONAL REFERENCE	CONTRIBUTION TO SDG	FEASIBILITY LEVEL
<i>Awareness - raising activities for women and men about women's rights, combating gender bias and promoting sport for women</i>	Number of awareness-raising initiatives organized around sports activities	Level of knowledge of women's rights and gender issues	Yes	Yes	5.1; 5.3; 5.5	Level 1
	....	Level of self-esteem in young girls and women	Yes	Yes	5.1; 5.3; 5.5	Level 1
	Number of people informed/trained about respecting women's rights and gender issues <sup>30</sup>	Level of bias against young girls and women in sport and daily life	Yes	No	5.1; 5.5	Level 2
	....	Level of bias against young girls and women in sport and daily life	Yes	No	5.1; 5.5	Level 2
	Number of young girls and women who participate in sports activities	Reduction in violence against women	Yes	No	5.1; 5.5	Level 2
....	Level of gender diversity in "gendered" sports activities	Reduction in violence against women	Yes	No	5.1; 5.5	Level 2

<sup>30</sup> The projects studied address the following issues: protection against forced pregnancy and marriage, gender equality, gender-based violence (GBV).

Sport may therefore contribute to increasing gender diversity in activities involving young girls and boys. It may also increase people's knowledge of women's rights and gender equality in the medium or long term, improve young girls' self-esteem, sense of safety or leadership abilities, and reduce levels of bias or stereotypes against women at the social group level.

Other types of indicators identified through our study are relevant and robust, but were not selected for several reasons. One reason is that data collection might be especially difficult for project leaders. A project led by the School of Hard Knocks uses an indicator to measure a decrease in acts of violence against young women. These data are largely qualitative, and require setting up sophisticated survey protocols. Another reason is that while projects often seek to inform different stakeholders (young people, residents, civil society organizations focusing on women's rights, gender equality or gender-based violence), no attempt is made to assess their impact on reducing forced marriage or unwanted pregnancy, since these outcomes are not always directly related to the activities and/or may be related to other social and economic factors. Academic research<sup>31</sup> has concluded that although sports projects offer increased opportunities for women, they are not in themselves sufficient to promote the social inclusion of young girls and women: other resources are needed, especially in the area of education.

Lastly, we did not select indicators related to leadership skills in women, since this category encompasses very different situations, depending on the context and type of sport-for-development projects studied. The notion of leadership covers a broad range of skills that have been comprehensively researched in the context of organizational management but, in our view, have not yet been widely tested in the field of sport.<sup>32</sup> However, it would be useful to monitor the proportion of girls and women who take on responsibility in sports projects or associations.

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## 2.3 Education

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The interaction between sport and education raises two main challenges. The first is access to physical and sports education. This is the basis of UNESCO's commitment to sport, set out in the International Charter on Physical Education, Physical Activity and Sport and included in the Kazan action plan: "Physical literacy provides the basis for lifelong participation in physical activity and the associated health benefits, making it essential for young people's development and an important learning outcome across educational settings".<sup>33</sup>

This is also the goal of actions carried out by other organizations, such as the International School Sport Federation, founded in 1972 by twenty-five States with the aim of organizing sports events to promote sports education. From UNICEF's perspective, access to physical and sports education is also a fundamental right that must be upheld, especially for children who are most removed from sports participation, including girls, disabled children and those from ethnic minorities.

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<sup>31</sup> Waring, A. and Mason, C. (2010). Opening doors: promoting social inclusion through increased sports opportunities. *Sport in Society: Cultures, Commerce, Media, Politics*, Volume 13, Issue 3, Pages 517–529.

<sup>32</sup> The Monrovia Football Academy project therefore alludes to the research and six dimensions of leadership proposed by Alan Murray, *The Wall Street journal essential guide to management: lasting lessons from the best leadership minds of our time*, 2010.

<sup>33</sup> Kazan Action Plan, 2017 II.3

It is therefore important to understand what sports education projects and programs can be created to enable sports professionals to conduct activities in schools, or to teach staff to teach sport, so that both categories of professionals can offer more sports activities to children. It is also important to understand whether and how certain schools could be provided with sports facilities. This type of output indicator, where relevant to the aims and characteristics of sport-for-development projects and programs, provides a broader view of the scope of activity and a better understanding of the level and changes in the number of students – in particular young women – who are practicing a sport for the first time and/or daily.

The second issue relates to how sport can be a learning resource for educational objectives that go beyond the scope of the sports activity itself. For example, UNICEF teamed up with the FC Barcelona Foundation for a research project to collect scientific evidence on the educational impact of sport, physical activity and play, in order to identify areas where more research is needed.<sup>34</sup> The study showed how a number of sport and development initiatives result in greater student engagement in their education and the development of life skills. According to this analysis, initiatives like these have the potential to "address the challenges education systems face by contributing to positive educational outcomes, such as student engagement, attendance, their overall enjoyment in school, and improved behavior and relationships with teachers and peers, which is key to a positive teaching and learning environment".<sup>35</sup>

Education is also a tool for social inclusion, and that applies to education by or through sport, which can promote the acquisition of certain skills that help people develop social ties. One example is the Ejo project led by PLAY International, which uses the "playdagogy" and "socio-sport" methods – two +sport approaches – to promote the development of the ten life skills defined by the World Health Organization (WHO) as: "the ability of an individual to deal effectively with the demands and challenges of everyday life. They enable individuals to maintain a state of mental well-being and positively adapt to the situations encountered, while interacting with others and his/her culture and environment in a constructive way".<sup>36</sup>

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<sup>34</sup> Unicef and FC Barcelona Foundation, Getting into the Game, 2017 2017 <https://www.unicef.org/media/51556/file/%20Getting-into-the-game-summary-2019.pdf%20.pdf>

<sup>35</sup> Getting into the Game, op. cit.

<sup>36</sup> [https://solidarites-sante.gouv.fr/IMG/pdf/dgos\\_developpement\\_competences\\_psychosociales.pdf](https://solidarites-sante.gouv.fr/IMG/pdf/dgos_developpement_competences_psychosociales.pdf)



It should be noted that few of the projects reviewed in this study directly sought to improve academic or learning skills (such as concentration) or academic performance. Research in this area has shown that it is important to distinguish between intermediate and final outcomes of the impact of sport on education. Since physical activities can help lower pupils' stress at school<sup>38</sup> and increase their motivation, concentration, and even their engagement in homework,<sup>39</sup> in some cases sport can contribute to a decrease in absenteeism or school dropout rates.<sup>40</sup> To date, however, the relationship between sport and improved educational outcomes has not been sufficiently proven. Although regular sports participation can help some students improve their grades, most research has shown that there is no robust evidence of a direct relationship between the two phenomenon. These indicators cannot therefore be selected for social impact bonds (see below).<sup>41</sup> Where positive effects are observed, they are not due solely to participation in sport, but to a combination of factors (and in particular the types of teaching methods used).

### **Box 2. The "Ejo" program**

"One of the Ejo project's goals is to foster the development of skills related to self-esteem and interpersonal skills. For example, children learn how to interact effectively with others, how to cope with stress and emotions, and how to make decisions. It's an inclusive education program since, in addition to the learning content, it seeks to provide safe spaces for marginalized groups to come together, interact and take part in social life."

Julie Delaire, Operations Manager, PLAY International.

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## **2.4 Beneficiary participation in the governance of sports projects**

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Governance has become a major concern in the field of international development as stakeholders increasingly recognize its importance.<sup>42</sup> It encompasses the issues of participation, ownership, accountability and inclusion. Although these issues were absent from the Millennium Development Goals, they were included in the Sustainable Development Goals following intense negotiations.<sup>43</sup> One of the issues addressed in SDG 16 is improving public participation in decision-making to make institutions more accountable to citizens.

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<sup>38</sup> PISA, "How is Participation in Sports Related to Students' Performance and Well-Being?", 2015.

<sup>39</sup> Broh, B.A. (2002). Linking Extracurricular Programming to Academic Achievement: Who Benefits and Why? *Sociology of Education*, Volume 75, Issue 1, Pages 69-95

<sup>40</sup> Marvul, J.N. (2012). If You Build It, They Will Come A Successful Truancy Intervention Program in a Small High School. *Urban Education*, Volume 47, Issue 1, Pages 144-169.

<sup>41</sup> Rees, D.I. and Sabia, J.J. (2010). Sports Participation and Academic Performance: Evidence from the National Longitudinal Study of Adolescent Health. *Economics of Education Review*, Volume 29, Issue 5, pp.751-759.

<sup>42</sup> Jean-Pierre Cling, Mireille Razafindrakoto, François Roubaud, SDG 16 sur la gouvernance et sa mesure, *l'Afrique en tête (SDG 16 on Governance and its Measurement, Africa in the Lead)*, *Afrique Contemporaine*, 201

<sup>43</sup> Jean-Pierre Cling, Mireille Razafindrakoto, François Roubaud, op. cit.



Determining the extent to which residents are involved in developing activities and projects remains challenging from a human and methodological standpoint. Indeed, community involvement is now seen as a driving force for creating fairer and more inclusive societies.<sup>44</sup> Civic participation is increasingly seen as a way to create social and economic value for projects on three levels:<sup>45</sup>

- instrumental benefits: participation increases the effectiveness of decisions since the parties involved are more willing to apply or comply with them
- substantial (or cognitive) benefits: the participation of ordinary people (non-experts) provides information and insights that can enhance the knowledge base
- normative benefits: participation is its own justification as it satisfies democratic ideals, regardless of its impact on implementing decisions

Participation may take many forms (information, consultation, co-creation of activities with stakeholders, participatory governance). It is a robust and realistic indicator because project leaders can easily indicate the number of people actually involved in developing activities or in building or renovating facilities. It is also an indicator that is easy for other international partners and the general public to understand. Taking community participation into account allows us to measure the contribution to SDG 16, Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions, more effectively.

We therefore recommend selecting the "Level of public participation in building equipment and developing project activities" indicator as a specific output indicator. It can help to clarify how development stakeholders can support community involvement in receiving, understanding and designing sports and development projects. The decision as to whether or not to choose this specific indicator must nevertheless be left to project leaders' discretion, so as to avoid imposing an unrealistic and unworkable demand, if they do not have the means to promote meaningful participation by local communities. The important thing for stakeholders is to define exactly what participation means, since it can take various forms (information, consultation, co-creation of activities with the community, participatory governance).

Furthermore, sport's potential to promote better project governance is a tangible reality at the community level. MYSA (described below), for instance, is unique in that it involves young people directly in the governance of the organization. As this initiative shows, involving young people in developing activities and project governance can help them develop social capital (i.e. by increasing young people's sense of responsibility) as well as fostering young people's engagement over the long term by building collective capital (training young people to develop and lead activities). This youth engagement in governance can also help young people better understand how institutions work, and increase their trust in institutions. It can also reduce forms of violence and the mortality rate.

Strengthening local authorities is regarded as an important factor for the success of sport projects. This dimension can be found in certain educational projects, such as those developed by PLAN

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<sup>44</sup> AFD, "Participation citoyenne et politique. Un levier d'action essentiel pour l'émergence de sociétés plus justes et plus inclusives", Collection Droits Humains et Développement, June 2021, pp.1-12.

<sup>45</sup> Wesselink A, Paavola J, Fritsch O, Renn O. "Rationales for Public Participation in Environmental Policy and Governance: Practitioners' Perspectives". *Environment and Planning A: Economy and Space*. 2011;43(11), pp.2688-2704. <https://doi.org/10.1068/a44161>



**Table 4: Examples of indicators of Participation**

EXAMPLE OUTPUT	OUTPUT INDICATOR	OUTCOME INDICATOR	ACADEMIC REFERENCE	INTERNATIONAL REFERENCE	CONTRIBUTION TO ODD	FEASIBILITY LEVEL
Setting up and leading/co-leading residents' committees to choose activities for the sport and development project or program	Number of people trained to lead various groups	Vulnerable groups' ability to speak up	No	Yes	10.2 16.3	Level 1
	....					
	Number of residents consulted about the suitability of the activities proposed	Level of trust between the social groups involved	Yes	Yes	10.2 16.1	Level 1
	....					
	Number of residents involved in co-creating activities	Level of trust in public authorities among the social groups involved	Yes	Yes <sup>47</sup>	10.2 16.1	Level 2
....						
Number of learning materials developed with residents	Number of people who get involved in other CSOs during/after the project		Yes	Yes	5.5 16.1	Level 2
....						
	Level of diversity in governance activities/bodies <sup>46</sup>					

Academic research on civic participation and sport governance shows that sport is not the only factor that fosters community participation and improved relationships with public authorities. The interactions that take place before, during and after sports activities between young people, parents, instructors, coaches and institutional stakeholders (officials, elected representatives)<sup>48</sup> also have a significant effect. These officials bring information, resources and recognition to communities, thereby strengthening their acceptance of institutional concerns and rules.<sup>49</sup>

<sup>46</sup> Depending on age, gender or socio-ethnic characteristics.

<sup>47</sup> See the World Bank's Trust in Government indicator: <https://govdata360.worldbank.org/subtopics/h21acc114?country=BRA>

<sup>48</sup> Holt, N. L., Tamminen, K. A., Tink, L. N. and Black, D. E., An interpretive analysis of life skills associated with sport participation. *Qualitative Research in Sport and Exercise*, Volume 1, Issue 2, 2009, pp. 160-175.

<sup>49</sup> Spaaij, R. (2012b). Beyond the playing field: experiences of sport, social capital, and integration among Somalis in Australia. *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, Volume 35, Issue 9, pp. 1519-1538.









#### **Box 4. The Football 4 Wash project**

Watoto Wasoka is a Ugandan association created in 2009 by young people who wanted to contribute to the social and educational development of their country. Football is used to help children living in slums. The Football 4 Wash (F4W) project strives to improve knowledge of hygiene among nearly 3,000 young people in Kampala. Teachers and coaches receive training in F4W methods, and regular activities and community events are organized, providing opportunities to increase families' awareness of good hygiene practices. These tournaments are also an opportunity to reward schools by providing them with equipment including sanitation facilities, water tanks, handwashing kits and water filters.

Overall, we distinguish in this study two categories of projects: some of them use sport to improve children's well-being directly, and others use sport to inform people explicitly about health issues. In the first case, the indicators may be either very specific (reduced stress) or generic (children's sense of resilience, improved independent decision-making ability etc.). They also aim to obtain a subjective measurement of people's sense of well-being. In the second case, the indicators focus on the acquisition of knowledge by participants about health issues (particularly among young people) and on reducing risky behavior (use of tobacco, marijuana etc.)<sup>66</sup>.

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<sup>66</sup> See the study led by the WHO through the HBSC project (Health Behaviour in School-aged Children). For a publication that studies data in a French context: Ehlinger V., Spilka S., Richard J.-B., Godeau E. "La santé des collégiens en France/2014". Données françaises de l'enquête internationale Health Behaviour in School-aged Children (HBSC) ». Méthodologie générale. Saint-Maurice : Santé publique France, 2016





Research has shown that the relationship between sports and health is particularly difficult to prove, since the effects can be extremely indirect at times. Some studies have nevertheless shown a potential link between sports participation and the prevention of health risks, especially in terms of preventing teen pregnancy.<sup>69</sup> It should also be noted that while researchers have thoroughly examined the impact of increased participation in sports on reducing healthcare costs in the United Kingdom<sup>70</sup> and in the United States,<sup>71</sup> this question has rarely been addressed in low-income countries. Up to now, research and evaluation studies have been more focused on measuring how sports projects have a direct impact on people's well-being by building individual and collective social capital.<sup>72</sup>

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<sup>69</sup> Solomon, N.M. (2002), *Girls' Participation in Sports: An Important Tool in Teen Pregnancy Prevention*. Policy Brief. California Women's Law Center, Los Angeles, 2002.

<sup>70</sup> Cox, S. *Game of Life: How sport and recreation can help make us healthier, happier and richer*. The Sport and Recreation Alliance.

<sup>71</sup> Bowles, B., Lankford, J., Lankford, S., Grybovych, O., Fleming, K., Fuller, K., Lankford, J. and Printz, J., (2011), *Economic & Health Benefits of Bicycling in Iowa*. Sustainable Tourism and Environment Program, University of Northern Iowa.

<sup>72</sup> Downward, P. and Rasciute, S. (2011), *Does sport make you happy? An analysis of the well-being derived from sports participation*. *International Review of Applied Economics*, Volume 25, Issue 3, pp. 331-348











avoided by the program after launching the project. These costs, however, are always estimated before it is launched, during the feasibility study or development of the Social Impact Bond."<sup>89</sup>

In conclusion, we advise that the choice of indicators must not be disconnected from the nature of the impact bond's goals. All too often, for example, the strategy and logical framework for the projects and programs are developed before any consideration is given to indicators and evaluation methods. Yet, an examination of the success criteria for projects – and therefore of the indicators for these criteria – can help to define and target the strategy. In other words, we recommend that the choice of indicators be seen not only as a step in developing evaluation methods, but as a step to be carried out in parallel with the development of the strategy and goals of the logical framework itself.

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<sup>89</sup> BNP Paribas, *Guide méthodologique pour un financement par contrat à impact social*, 2020, p.34.



## 4. Conclusion

In recent years, the international development and sport ecosystems have sought to examine the added value and impact of sport-for-development projects, particularly with respect to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). This report is therefore based on two beliefs: first, that consulting academic research alongside the practices and evaluation indicators used in the projects can help to ground thinking on the impact of sport in a concrete and rigorous way; and second, that promoting discussion of the choice of indicators is a way to strengthen dialog between stakeholders, including project leaders and international donors. We therefore conclude that producing an academic overview and creating several frameworks of thematic indicators are complementary steps that will strengthen public policy, initiatives within the business world, and the actions of civil society organizations active in the field. As such, this study aims to build bridges between communities and action plans that are all too often sector-based and compartmentalized.

This report also has a methodological aim. It seeks to reiterate the conditions and precautions that must be taken to identify, compare and produce high-quality indicators. While many initiatives (such as the work carried out by the Commonwealth in association with UNESCO) currently aim to show the impact of sport, we emphasize the need to start with the issues, tools (logical frameworks) and practices of project and program leaders themselves, in order to develop indicators that best reflect the realities in the field – and which, by extension, can be disseminated and adopted by project leader communities. This report also recommends selecting indicators based on several quality criteria: their robustness (do they allow us to measure the direct effects of actions?), feasibility (can data be collected to provide information for these indicators?), and understandability (are these indicators understandable or appealing to local communities, the public, and governments?). Finally, this report argues that the scientific relevance of these indicators must be taken into account (are they discussed by the scientific community, have the effects been proven or disproven?). This technical report is therefore complementary to existing initiatives such as that of the Commonwealth, which focus on national quantitative indicators.

Bringing together these various aims, this report outlines the academic debates and indicators for measuring the impact of sport in development projects in six areas: social cohesion, gender equality, beneficiary participation, education, urban development and health. It shows that sport-for-development projects are rarely limited to just one sector, whether in their practices or potential impact: on the contrary, they often combine objectives and indicators from different areas. For example, some projects use sport activities in the education sector to achieve health-related outcomes, while others use urban development and education initiatives to advance gender equality issues. In this respect, this report shows that sport is an especially cross-cutting area of action, since its main impact is to strengthen a sense of social cohesion and commitment to peaceful coexistence, which can also pave the way for advances in other areas, such as civic participation and health.

This report draws on various themes and examples to show how sport can be used as a way to raise awareness and engage communities who are removed from the rights and issues that affect them, and can act as driver of impact. Moreover, this report provides insights into the methods for achieving a tangible social impact, beyond the common beliefs about the virtues of sport in general.<sup>90</sup> For example, having people take part in the co-creation of activities and the governance of sport projects

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<sup>90</sup> Michaël Attali, *Le sport et ses valeurs, la Dispute*, 2004

is an especially promising area for innovation. It can strengthen people's sense of belonging to a community, increase the frequency and quality of interactions between beneficiaries, and between beneficiaries and local authorities. Sport can thus be a way of bringing together and mediating between very different groups of people.

In light of its various aims, this report may be of interest to practitioners, researchers, governments and international donors on several levels. First, our research on identifying indicators and academic debates may strengthen dialog about indicators among project initiators, evaluators, and researchers. It may also encourage evaluators and project initiators to consider research insights. Moreover, this overview does not seek to impose indicators, but rather to propose relevant topics for engaging stakeholders in a dialog about the choice of indicators, the goals to pursue and the design of logical frameworks. It emphasizes that the choice and analysis of sport-for-development indicators are never an end in themselves, but are above all a way to encourage dialog, mutual understanding and consensus-building among stakeholders who may have different organizational cultures, goals, resources, and understandings of the impact of sport.

It would be interesting for future research to build on and supplement this overview by adding to the academic debates and indicators discussed. Most significantly, this report does not discuss survey methods or the types of data collected. Future research could also assess the extent to which certain methods are particularly well-suited to collecting data for specific indicators. In addition, the concept of a common framework should be applied to other themes within the scope of this analysis. The educational and operational models used by field practitioners and sports professionals should also be referenced and analyzed.

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## List of acronyms and abbreviations

AFD	Agence française de développement
CSO	Civil Society Organization
DIBs	Development Impact Bonds
FIFA	International Association Football Federation
GIZ	German Agency for International Cooperation
IRR	Internal rate of return
MYSA	Mathare Youth Sports Association
SDG	Sustainable Development Goals
SIBs	Social Impact Bonds
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNICEF	United Nations' Children's Fund
UNODOC	United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime
WHO	World Health Organization



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