

Sport for social development

Sport for Social Development is a method of bringing about social change through the use of sports. Sport refers to the physical activity and development in any individual, health, social, and economic benefits. Sport and play are used as tools for peace and development. Sport and play help children learn lifelong skills, empower women and communities, and remove discrimination.

More than six hundred million people tuned in to watch FIFA's World Cup Final. This amazing figure demonstrates how sports captivates our lives. Across the world, sport competitions activate a collective spirit that enhances community participation among children, adolescents, and adults. The International Olympic Committee (IOC) President, Thomas Bach, regularly emphasizes that 'sport is not just physical activity; it promotes health and helps prevent, or even cure, the diseases of modern civilization. It also is an educational tool which fosters cognitive development; teaches social behavior; and helps to integrate communities'. Sport for Social Development is a method of bringing about social change through the use of sports. Sport refers to the physical activity and development in any individual, health, social, and economic benefits. Sport and play are used as tools for peace and development. Sport and play help children learn lifelong skills, empower women and communities, and remove discrimination.

In recent years, the international community has increasingly recognised and drawn on the power of sport as a means to promote development and peace. The United Nations has promoted sport as a cost-effective tool to accelerate the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals and to promote peace. It has been proved that the systematic and coherent use of sport can make an

important contribution to Public health; Universal education, Gender equality, Poverty reduction, Prevention of HIV and AIDS and other diseases, Environmental sustainability, Peace-building and Conflict resolution.

Global Organizations promoting Sport for Social Development and Peace International Olympics Committee – The Olympic Games

The International Olympic Committee (IOC) was founded in 1894 on the belief that sport can contribute to peace and to the harmonious development of humankind with a view to promoting a peaceful society concerned with the preservation of human dignity. The practice of sport is a human right. Every individual must have the possibility of practicing sport, without discrimination of any kind and in the Olympic spirit, which requires mutual understanding with a spirit of friendship, solidarity and fair play.

Olympic Values – Friendship, Respect and Excellence

Paralympics values – Determination, Inspiration, Courage and Equality

These values underpin the Games as a set of universal principles, but they can be applied to education and our lives, as well as to sport itself.

Spirit of the Olympics

The Olympic spirit is best expressed in the Olympic Creed: ‘The most important thing in the Olympic Games is not to win but to take part, just as the most important thing in life is not the triumph but the struggle’. The essential thing is not to have conquered but to have fought well. The Olympic Movement philosophy advocates using sport not just as a physical activity but also

as a means of educating people. According to this philosophy, good sportsmanship, sense of fair play, and respect for fellow athletes that is developed through participation in sports, teaches men and women of different races, religions, and nationalities to work peacefully together in competition toward common goals, without discrimination of any kind, such as race, colour, sex, sexual orientation, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status. For the first time in the history of the Olympic Games in 2016, there were women participants from all countries thereby breaking the gender bias barrier. The Olympic Movement works to expand such lessons beyond the sports arena in the hope of promoting peace and a sense of brotherhood throughout the world.

United Nations

Sport has historically played an important role in all societies, be it in the form of competitive sport, physical activity or play. But one may wonder: what does sport have to do with the United Nations? In fact, sport presents a natural partnership for the United Nations (UN) system: sport and play are human rights that must be respected and enforced worldwide.

Sport as a fundamental right

The right of access to and participation in sport and play has long been recognized in a number of international conventions. In 1978, UNESCO described sport and physical education as a ‘fundamental right for all’. But until today, the right to play and sport has too often been ignored or disrespected.

Sport has been increasingly recognized and used as a low-cost and high-impact tool in humanitarian, development and peace-building efforts, not only by the UN system but also by non-

governmental organizations (NGOs), governments, development agencies, sports federations and the media. Sport can no longer be considered a luxury within any society but is rather an important investment in the present and future, particularly in developing countries. The UN system draws on the unique convening power of sport as a cross-cutting tool for: Fundraising, advocacy, mobilization and raising public awareness: in particular by appointing celebrity athletes as ‘Ambassadors’ or ‘Spokespersons’ and leveraging the potential of sports events as outreach platforms. The mobilizing power of sport is often used as a ‘door-opener’ to convey crucial messages about HIV/AIDS, child’s rights, the environment, education, etc. Development and peace promotion: in grassroots projects sport is used in an extremely wide range of situations – whether as an integrated tool in short-term emergency humanitarian aid activities, or in long-term development cooperation projects, on a local, regional or global scale.

Sport plays a significant role as a promoter of social integration and economic development in different geographical, cultural and political contexts. Sport is a powerful tool to strengthen social ties and networks, and to promote ideals of peace, fraternity, solidarity, non-violence, tolerance and justice. From a development perspective, the focus is always on mass sport and not elite sport. Sport is used to reach out to those most in need including refugees, child soldiers, victims of conflict and natural catastrophes, the impoverished, persons with disabilities, victims of racism, stigmatization and discrimination, persons living with HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases.

The United Nations Office on Sport for Development and Peace (UNOSDP)

.UNICEF

UNICEF works on the understanding that play has the power to transform lives. It has spent more than 60 years advocating for children’s rights. UNICEF’s Sport for Development (S4D) is

grounded in its mission to ensure that every child has the right to play and sport in a safe and healthy environment – a right founded in Article 31 of the Convention on the Rights of the Child and other international treaties.

UNICEF recognizes that around the globe there is a force that can attract billions of people around a single event and motivate billions of others in collective or individual active participation – young and old, rich and poor, girls and boys alike – this is the unique power of sport. Team UNICEF attempts to unite UNICEF's sports-related activities and partnerships to drive and enhance change for children. The initiative is built around the idea that sport can change children's lives by helping break down barriers, promote participation, alter attitudes and include the excluded. UNICEF's goal is to amplify its existing sport-related programmes and partnerships to improve the lives of children globally.

Sport contributes to healthy child development; it builds self-esteem and life skills. Sport can mobilize communities; foster peace and tolerance; and teach important life lessons about respect, cooperation and leadership. Above all, play and sport help all children, even the poorest and most marginalized to enjoy their childhood.

Today, UNICEF is a leader in the sport for development field with more sport-based initiatives than any other UN organization. It is forging innovative partnerships with a broad range of sport organizations, athletes and networks that have an impact on child survival, development, education, and protection to mobilize resources for children.