

Chapter 1

Introduction

The Commonwealth Guide to Advancing Development through Sport was produced by the Commonwealth Secretariat in collaboration with the Commonwealth Advisory Body on Sport (CABOS) and proactive member countries. Its purpose is to provide support for Commonwealth governments and other key stakeholders seeking to strengthen the contribution of sport to development and peace work.

The guide recognises that the use of sport for development and peace-building has increased rapidly in the last two decades as the broad Sport for Development and Peace (SDP) movement has gained increased profile and credibility. Leading international bodies have formally recognised sport as a contributor, alongside other interventions, to the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and to address social, economic and development challenges and global public health.

Today sport is being widely used from local to international level as a tool that can support beneficial social change. Many Commonwealth member countries are active in this work, and other members wish to develop it. Recognising this and following the Fifth Commonwealth Sports Ministers Meeting (5CSMM) in Delhi in 2010, sports ministers requested the production of an evidence-based resource to support members in their use of sport in these capacities. The guide has been produced in response to this request.

The guide builds on, and is overarched by, the work of the UN Office for Sport for Development and Peace and UN International Working Group on Sport for Development and Peace (SDPIWG 2008). The content has been developed following an extensive consultation process and in collaboration with representatives of member governments, SDP experts and leading non-government agencies.

The guide consists of two sections that are designed to inform Commonwealth members about the relevance of sport within their work (Section I), and to provide a practical tool to support their action (Section II).

Section I provides an evidence-based analysis of the potential contribution of sport to development objectives in the Commonwealth.

Chapter 2 explains how sport has emerged as a valuable tool for development and peace, and outlines its potential application within the Commonwealth. It identifies lessons learned about how to use sport to best effect and manage sports initiatives to guard against unintended negative consequences.

Chapter 3 draws on the substantial policy and research literature on sport development and peace to establish a set of principles on which sport for development and peace work can be based. It recommends that the use of sport should be carefully planned, and integrated with established development strategies.

Chapters 4–9 provide a detailed analysis of six policy domains within the Commonwealth in which sport can contribute to development. The six are youth, health, education, gender, diversity and peace-building. For each of these, the section identifies specific contributions sport can make based on case study examples of existing approaches that have proved effective.

Section II of the guide provides a framework for analysis, planning and monitoring of sport for development and peace. The framework is a practical tool that supports analysis and action planning and proposes different strategies and approaches to strengthen policy environments and support mechanisms for SDP. It can also be used to monitor progress in incorporating sport in relevant development work within different policy domains.

The framework offers Commonwealth members a three-step approach for identifying where sport can be used to strengthen their development work. The three steps involve identifying the Commonwealth development priorities to which sport can contribute; which Commonwealth policy domains address these priorities and can make use of sport within their work; and which stakeholders and actors within these domains will be involved in using sport as a development tool.

A second component of the framework provides a detailed and flexible guide to strengthen the use of sport in development. The approach is based on the two sets of principles introduced in Section I on how sport-based approaches should be closely connected to established policy domains and on managing sport

to maximise positive outcomes and minimise negative consequences of sport-based contributions.

In support of these principles, the main body of the framework offers detailed guidelines for policy options, strategic approaches and implementation mechanisms. These support officials in undertaking the following functions:

Analysis

Officials can use this framework to conduct a baseline analysis of the national SDP policy environment, strategy and support mechanisms. The indicators within the framework can be used as the criteria for analysis.

Planning

The analysis process helps to identify good practice and areas to be strengthened. This provides information that can support a more systematic approach to planning how to develop and strengthen SDP, and utilised to guide prioritisation and investment.

Monitoring

Subsequently the framework can be utilised as a monitoring tool by undertaking periodic analysis of the SDP policy environment, strategy and support mechanisms and reviewing this against initial baseline analysis.

The guide is supported throughout by appropriate references to policy statements and research evidence. It also includes several examples of current initiatives worldwide that illustrate how sport can be applied in support of development and peace. Details of how to obtain further information on these are also provided.