

Aims and challenges for Sport & Development interventions

- Draft results of Round 2 of the Sport & Development e-Debate -

November 18, 2009

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Round 2: aims and challenges for S&D interventions

I Introduction

During Round 2, there were 32 registered participants; 24 answered the statements and 20 answered the open questions (63%). In this Summary of Round 2, we analyse their answers and highlight conclusions with their quotes. Please join the discussion and give your feedback!

Questions

The questions in Round 2 focused on how to set realistic aims and how to follow a holistic approach. Our experts responded to the following main questions:

- Delivering a balanced or holistic approach in S&D programmes is often advised, but difficult to implement. In your opinion, what are three main challenges we face in trying to maintain a balance between sport and other components?
- Can you describe a bad example of trying to embed sport in other interventions aimed at addressing health issues?

Participants' responses to the statements

Participants were asked to what extent they agree to the following two statements:

- Setting realistic aims in Sport & Development requires aiming low and starting small.
- Sport for Development programmes which are developed for communities instead of with communities, are doomed to fail.

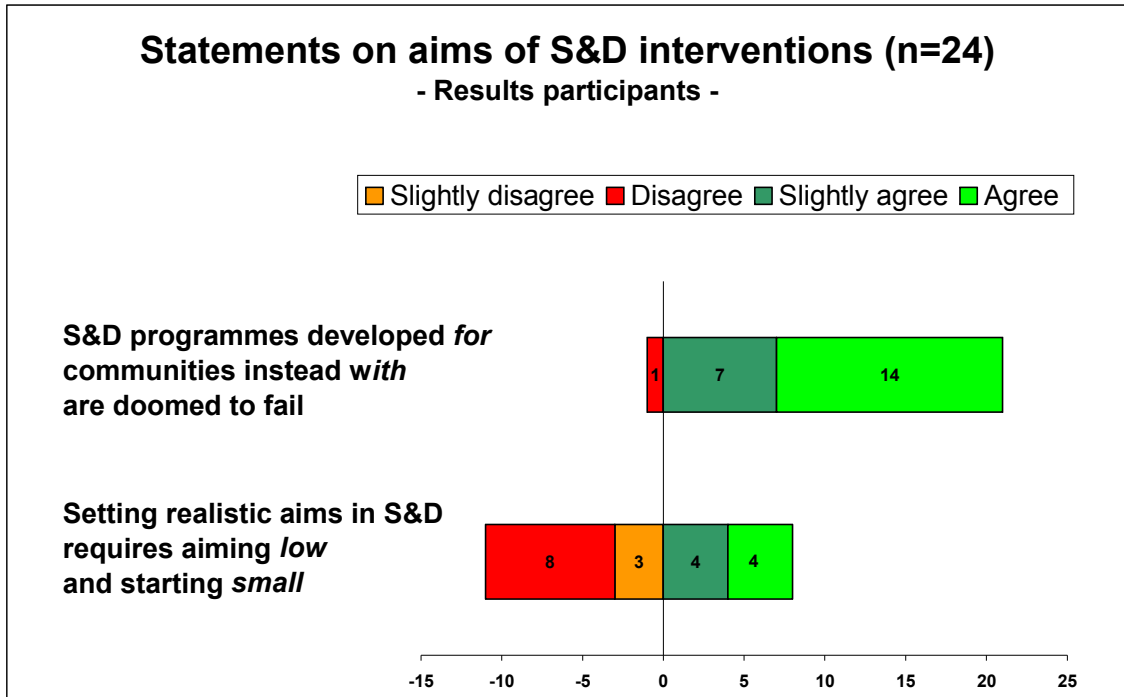
Answer categories:

- I agree
- I slightly agree
- I do not agree/disagree
- I slightly disagree
- I disagree

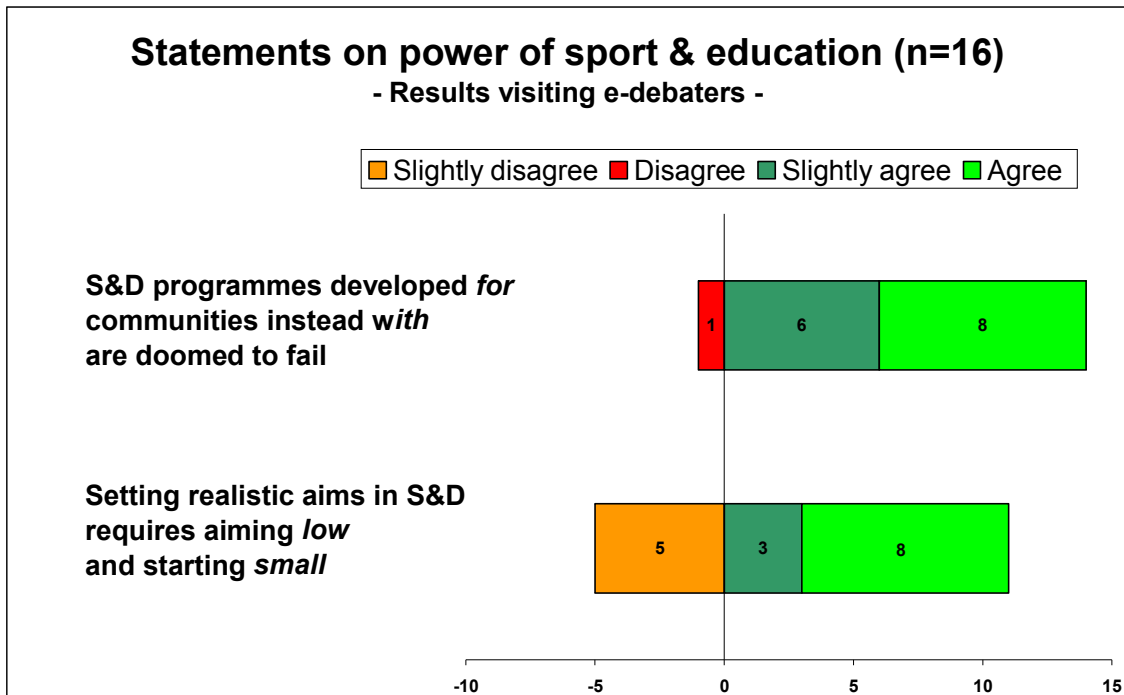
2 Statements to spice up debate

The statements we use each round are actually meant to 'spice up' the debate. We intentionally formulated controversial statements in order to provoke a strong response, which indeed we got!

The figure on the next page shows the results of the votes of participants. Please note that the 'neutral' category has been left out to highlight differences (this explains why the number of participants varies).



Visiting e-Debaters also voted on the two statements (the S&D e-Debate is open anyone to vote on statements or comment on input). The graph below shows results (n=16 for the first statement; n=15 for the second statement).



The graphs show that registered participants more often than visiting e-Debaters disagree with the statement that 'Setting realistic aims in S&D interventions requires aiming low and starting small.'

Involving communities is key

There is consensus that S&D programmes should be developed for communities instead with communities: only one e-Debater and one visitor disagree with the statement on this subject. Local involvement in programmes design and implementation is crucial. The majority of participants is convinced that without ownership of the project by beneficiaries, social change will not be realised. However, some participants mention that there are exceptions to this rule.

Pelle Kvalsund: Particularly if sustainability of the activities is a goal, it is crucial to involve communities. If the S&D intervention is a once event to raise awareness for a particular issues, this is less important.

Marleen Romeny en Matthijs Huizing: Yes, I agree. Although there will always be exceptions –that programmes developed for communities can work too- I am convinced that participation of the communities in design and implementation of the programme is crucial for its success.

Johann Olav Koss: I agree. 'Doomed to fail' is perhaps too harsh, but certainly any programme that seeks to improve the health and well-being of individuals and communities will need to ensure that the community in question plays an integral role in the development and delivery of that programme.

Cees Versteeg: I agree with the statement. How far do we have to go before we fully understand and except that only 'bottom up' approaches will survive. Ownership from grass roots level is essential!

Astrid Aafjes: I agree, it is important to have ownership. In that respect, sport is no different than any other development programme. It needs to buy in and support of the beneficiaries.

Maya van Gent: Many communities might not have the knowledge or know how of how to implement a S7D program- so experts/masters might have to guide them- not dictate- but guide.

Start small and aim low?

The votes on this statement prove different point of views among the e-Debaters and visiting e-Debaters. Eleven participants believe that S&D interventions should start small and aim low; eight e-Debaters disagree and five vote neutral. As this topic is controversial, it is interesting to explore in further detail in the Round 3.

Actually, the statement consists of two elements. Some participants stress that S&D interventions should indeed start small but should not aim low. It is not wrong to have high ambitions as long as they are realistic. Programmes need something to fight for. Aiming low from the start could kill ambition and drive, is stressed by several e-Debaters.

Another point made is that realistic goals can be combined with large scale projects. Field tested strategies can in some cases be up scaled successfully if certain conditions are met; for instance field tested activities, sufficient resources, staff and capacity.

Peter Alegi: Small is beautiful, local is better. Avoid top-down approaches and 'outsider knows best' attitudes.

Pelle Kvalsund: *There are numerous examples of national projects that have managed to maintain both reach and quality. It has more to do with starting right than starting small (e.g. YES Zimbabwe).*

Marleen Romeny en Matthijs Huizing: *No, I don't think you should start small and aim low. I believe, the sport and development movement should be less modest in general when it comes to what aims can be set.*

Johann Olav Koss: *I disagree. If we aim low, how can we achieve something great? While it is important to start small, conduct proper needs assessments, and take the time to pilot projects before scaling up, our aims should be as high as realistically possible. Governments and organizations will forever think about you related to the aim you have set and if you aim low you will never be able to change the perceptions that you are aiming low. Obviously if you only want to have small impact and create a small project then you should aim low.*

Kylie Bates: *The argument here is not about the magnitude of the goals but whether the programme is designed and resourced in a way that makes reaching these goals realistic.*

Cees Versteeg: *I disagree, aiming low and starting small is the excuse at the end that you will say: 'I tried but I...'*

Astrid Aafjes: *Programmes have to come from the grassroots but that does not mean that projects always have to start small. If the design is right and appropriate skilled staff/volunteers are available, it can start big.*

Maya van Gent: *Starting small and making it work effectively makes a module reliable and useful- then this can be duplicated to other communities and tailor made for them. I think a truly South African module still needs to be developed, implemented and evaluated effectively- unfortunately this takes time.*

Marion Keim: *I do not like the question as it ignores the fact that one is required to work in different ways with different styles in different times and what matters is the intent and the inclusion of stakeholders of all levels.*

Emmanuel Madonda: *At times you can find organisations who have the resources and capabilities to implement huge programmes that deliver however most of the time starting small is more effective.*

'Planners' versus 'Searchers'?

Maybe the comparison of two different approaches to development aid by Bill Easterly provides some guidance in the discussion. Easterly compares Searchers versus Planners approaches in his book 'The White Man's Burden: Why the West's Efforts to Aid the Rest Have Done So Much Ill and So Little Good' (Easterly, 2006). Planners don't start small and don't aim low; they design grand utopian schemes for change. Searchers in contrast look for existing local activities with potential and start from there, slowly building and evolving along the way. The route unfolds as you go; from this perspective there are no set recipes or roads to success. Analysing the answers, it seems that the majority of e-Debaters agree with Easterly and propagate the 'Searchers approach' while some believe in the potential of (elements of) the 'Planners approach'.

Bill Easterly: *Searching can work in foreign aid by following some simple maxims: experiment, evaluate, and learn. The basic principles are much easier to state than to actually make happen. Agents of*

assistance have to have incentives to search for what works to help the poor. If you want to aid the poor, then:

(1) Have aid agents individually accountable for individual, feasible areas for action that help poor people lift themselves up.

(2) Let those agents search for what works, based on past experience in their area.

(3) Experiment with the results of the search.

(4) Evaluate, based on feedback from the intended beneficiaries and scientific testing, and learn what works.

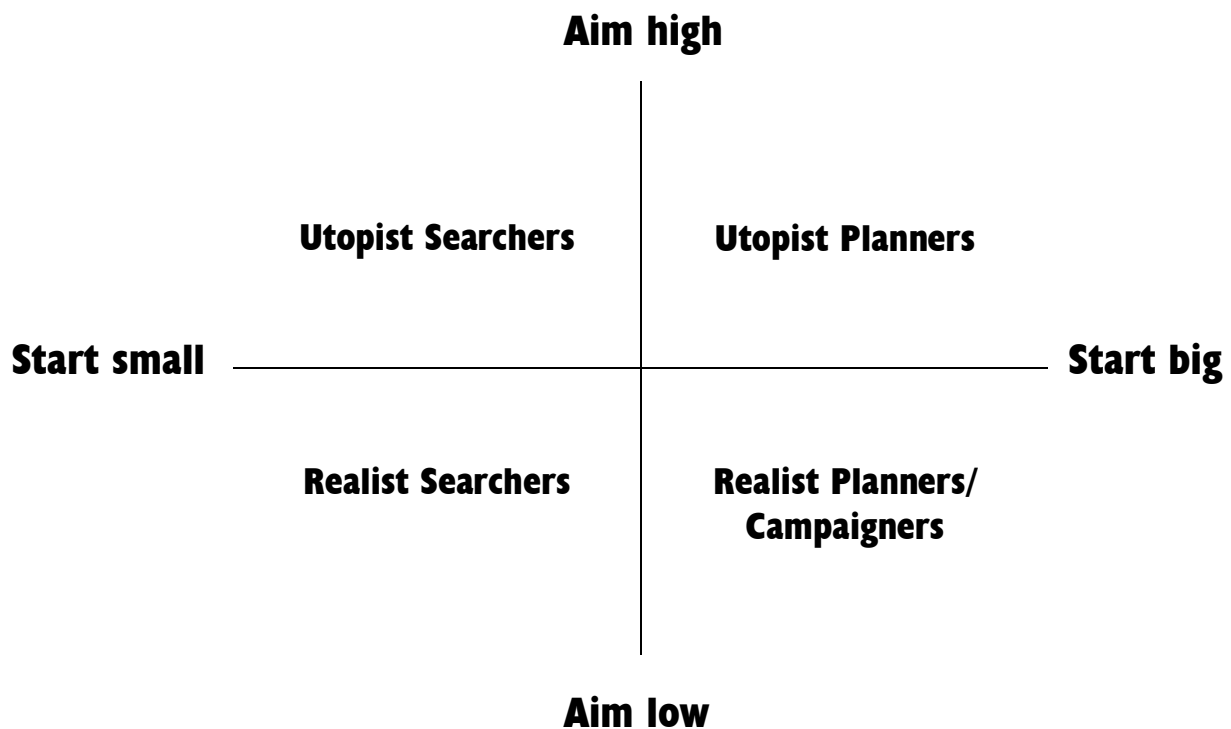
(5) Reward success and penalize failure. Get more money to interventions that are working, take money away from interventions that are not working. Each aid agent should explore and specialize further in the direction of what they prove good at doing.

(6) Make sure incentives in (5) are strong enough to do more of what works, then repeat steps (4) on. If action fails, make sure incentives in (5) are strong enough to send the agent back to step (1). If the agent keeps failing, get a new one.

It's so obvious, I'm embarrassed to even lay it out. It's worth laying out only because it is the opposite of the present methodology of foreign aid.

(Source: Bill Easterly, 2006: www.adb.org/Economics/speakers_program/easterly.pdf. For a video of Easterly's lecture about the Planners versus Searchers approach, go to Authors at Google: www.youtube.com/watch?v=o_H0g30YwQ8)

If we view the two aspects of the statement as axis on a continuum, a quadrant can be drawn which might be a useful model for positioning current believes, as shown below:



3 Challenges for a balanced/holistic approach in S&D programmes

Introduction and main challenges

First open question of Round 2 was: *Delivering a balanced or holistic approach in S&D programmes is often advised, but difficult to implement. In your opinion, what are three main challenges we face in trying to maintain a balance between sport and other components?*

- Once again, there is great diversity in answers. Some of the participants' answer elaborate on the exploration in Round 1 on the key to optimise the balance between sport and educational components in health awareness programmes. The **dilemma of too much focus on sport** (as a primary goal) **versus too much focus on education and other components** (thus dominating true sport & play experience), is mentioned once more.
- Another recurring challenge is the **multidisciplinary character of S&D interventions**; demanding professional cooperation, capacity building and building bridges between different working fields and skills. According to three e-Debaters, this is The Crucial Challenge. If the field does not overcome language barriers between professions involved (sport, health, education, development, social change), we will keep missing targets and risk doing more damage than good.
- A parallel challenge mentioned by eight e-Debaters, is **capacity of organisations and staff** designing and implementing S&D programmes. Education and training is needed to acquire knowledge and skills. Because specialised expertise from a diversity of fields is required, either intense cooperation between organisations is needed and/or training staff and organisations in new realms of expertise is required. Knowing how sport works is not sufficient. Understanding development and social change processes is essential as well. Depending on the focus of the project, other specialists will be needed (gender, inclusion, trauma, etc.).
- Knowing **local circumstances and involving communities** is another major challenge the field is facing.
- Other challenges mentioned are:
 - setting of realistic goals;
 - keeping focus on achievable components and avoiding to try to change the whole universe;
 - sufficient resources;
 - independence from donor's agendas;
 - sustainability;
 - monitoring and evaluation;
 - equal partnerships;
 - mutual understanding of a Theory of Change ;
 - quality of programmes, projects and staff.

In this chapter these opinions of the e-Debaters on how to achieve a balanced approach are explained and highlighted with quotes.

Knowing local circumstances

A substantial number of participants identify knowing local circumstances as main challenge for a balanced approach in S&D programmes. Involving the community is key, as the votes on the statements already illustrated. Different aspects of this challenge are mentioned: formulating objectives which are valuable from local perspectives and designing programmes which take context into account. Creating feedback loops during programme's implementation by listening and through monitoring & evaluation is also seen as challenge.

Social change starts bottom up. Don't start with preconceptions about reality based on Western models and current practices in 'the system'. Follow a community based approach instead of an institutional approach. Communities need to be involved from the start; not only in the implementing phase of programmes and projects, but also in the designing phase. What is the ambition, what are development targets? Teaching the community during development processes to prevent dependency on development workers is mentioned as challenge as well.

The following quotes from e-Debaters illustrate the challenge to take local circumstances into account and to involve communities:

Pelle Kvalsund: First challenge is not knowing and or understanding the needs or the culture of the target population. Second challenge.....

Kylie Bates stresses to use existing structures and practices: "Building on what works is a main challenge. While many communities may not have experience regular participation based sports programme or have a sports infrastructure they will have a way of making decisions and getting things done. In creating change, the easiest place to start is where the energy and activity already exists. For example, if rural villages in Vanuatu already have a way of running festivals for special days during the year then it makes more sense to developed a inter village sports programme that is based on regular festivals rather than a weekly league.

Frank van Eekeren: First main challenge: to have a mutual understanding about your objectives (what are you trying to achieve or change). Second challenge is to have a mutual understanding of the specific context in which you operate. Thirdly.....

Marleen Romeny en Matthijs Huizing: Thirdly, continuously listen to and talk with the community and beneficiaries to make sure the programme is still targeting the right needs.

Peter Alegi:(1) Time -- programmes often try to cram too many sporting and educational activities into too short a time; (2) Practitioners rarely have enough understanding of the local history, culture, and languages to be able to truly deliver a holistic S&D program; (3)

Astrid Aafjes: 1) Getting the community involved and supportive to the sports programmes is key. If you deal with gender based violence or HIV/Aids or other development issues it is important to include the whole community and not just work with a small selective group.

Kate Cowan: Finding creative ways to introduce and demonstrate community issues through age-appropriate active games - some of the health challenges communities face are often difficult (sometimes taboo) to speak to children about. Therefore as professionals and practitioners working with S&D programmes it is often difficult to know how to approach these issues at an age appropriate level and develop sports centred activities that speak to these challenges.

Equal partnerships

Beware for 'the arrogant white mans' approach'. An equal relationship with beneficiaries and partners is a crucial fundament for success.

Kylie Bates: *Creating a partnership based on trust, mutual benefits and transparency. A arrangement where the funder's main responsibility is to hand over money and review reports creates an unequal power balance which can result in impractical designs, selective reporting and missed opportunities. Although sometime more difficult to get started, an approach that is based on trust, organisations sharing responsibility and making decisions together can lead to a stronger long term impact.*

Unrealistic and/or wrong goals? Too much sport versus too much education & social change

Trying to achieve too much, integrating too many components in programmes, is a challenge mentioned by several e-Debaters. The votes for the statements in Round 1 and Round 2 showed that opinions differ on what realistic and justifiable goals should be for S&D interventions.

A group of e-Debaters stress that goals should be related to sport. They point out that this is a major challenge because S&D interventions tend to use sport as a carrier, sacrificing quality sporting experiences for other components. According to this point of view, sport has intrinsic value. Practicing sport is healthy, gives hope, empties heads of traumatised people and teaches social skills. That is enough. However, to deliver quality sport, quality sport structures and capacity need to be developed. That should be the main challenge of S&D interventions according to this perspective.

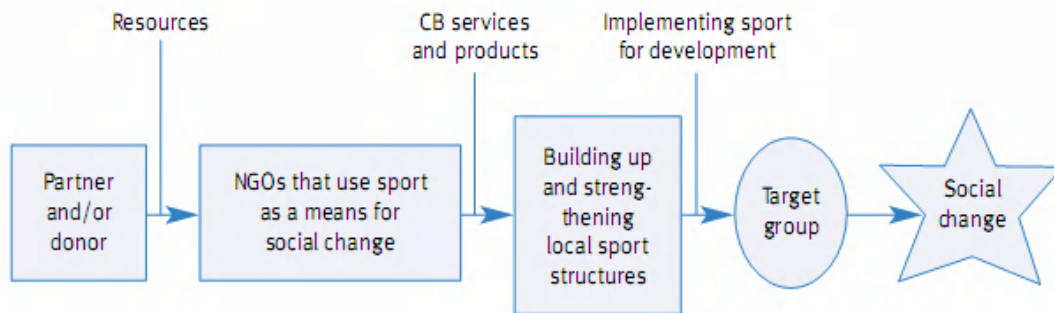
On the other hand, a substantial number of participants disagree with this point of view. They argue that lack of integration of other components in S&D interventions leads to lack of effect 'just sport' has not enough development value, a broader approach is needed. A substantial number of e-Debaters believe that sport should not be an end in itself but should be the vehicle for social change and education. According to them, the main challenge for quality programmes is to add enough 'development aspects' and to realise the right balance between components.

What is the role of sport?

The position and role of sport in S&D interventions have been discussed since the field emerged. Do we first have to develop local sport structures before we can add other components? Or can we simply implement integrated programmes at once? Is quality sport an adequate ambition for S&D interventions because the intrinsic value of sport? Definite answers and consensus still have to be found.

First aim: developing sustainable local sport structures?

An expert consultation in the Netherlands resulted in the following findings: *Is building sport capacity in developing countries the same as capacity building in other sectors of development cooperation? In other words, is the development of sport a development goal in itself, or is sport a means by which to achieve specific development objectives? Consultation of experts brought forward the conviction that sport can only be used as an instrument if the sport in itself has already become sufficiently developed (i.e. if sport capacity has been built up). So even if one sees sport simply as a vehicle for teaching life skills, for example, the first step is developing a sustainable sport structure and organisation. This implies that if development organisations want to work with sport, they will need specialised sports organisations to lay the foundation. Capacity building is aimed at strengthening the NGOs that use sport as a means for social change. The central question is how to ensure that these organisations can service their target groups and local partner organisations creating social change in the end. This chain is illustrated below.*



(Source: Lessons Learned, 2005)

The following quotes illustrate the opinions on sport as a goal or as an instrument

Kate Cowan: *Delivering a holistic approach in S&D programme is difficult, the main challenges that must be faced are: Keeping sport our focus rather than a tool to attract participants - it is sometimes difficult to avoid getting overwhelmed by the challenges communities face; we want to fix them all. However, we have to recognize that sport is our delivery method and we need to remember that this needs to remain our focus. Secondly,*

Caroline Gutton: *The first challenge is ,without a doubt, not to consider sport as an end in itself or as a simple recreational activity but as a complementary tool to a development project. The second challenge...*

Mogens Kirbey: *First challenge: to be realistic on short and long term goals. Secondly, do not overestimate the power of the sport activity - the settings are more important. Third challenge: ensure that the educational/learning aspects are the top priority - not the sport activity itself.*

Jan Rijpstra: *In my opinion you have to take a sports programme as the base. At that base you can build up the other components like gender, social inclusion, health. The challenge is to develop methods for change of behaviour by using sports. The other challenges are:...*

Helen Alderson: *Integrating the benefits of sports/physical activity into other key development components such as education, gender equality, health is difficult as the latter are often considered more "serious" issues that need to be addressed.*

Kylie Bates: *Making it a quality sport experience is a challenge. If the sport experience is not valued by the target audience then it is unlikely to have power to create social change. A quality sport experience usually means that the sport activities need to be fun, exciting, inclusive, well organised and challenging. It can also mean that the type of activities need to be valued by the participant. For example some participants may be more drawn to activities that are higher risk and individualist such as surfing or BMX riding while others may value belonging to a team or group.*

Maya van Gent: *It always comes back to the same old question- what is the aim of the programme? Is the aim to develop sport or to use sport for development? And if it is the latter- what development wants to be achieved? My experience with S&D programmes is limited; however the ones that I have been involved with try to focus on too much. And sometimes even the focus is based on what funding is available- if funding is coming from the department of health, then it will be connected to HIV/AIDS or obesity etc. It should be kept in*

mind that by simply participating in sport a lot of soft skills are learnt like how to work in a team, discipline, commitment, perseverance etc. So skills like these should not be the main aim. A big gap that I see in a lot of development programmes is the lack of attention to the motor and physical development of the participants- a lot of these programmes are happening on a volunteer basis and many of the programme leaders have very little or no experience in this field.....

Daniela Preti: *First main challenge is setting priorities in the curriculum. Most of the organisations working in the field of S&D face challenges on many different levels such as health, gender inequity, environmental pollution etc. Trying to tackle all these issues at once often leads to a lack of expertise in specific thematic fields. At times, 'less is more' and a clear focus on one additional topic might help to maintain the balance between sport other components. A third challenge is directing attention away from sport by other components. It is a simple fact that children come to the sessions because they want to do sports, not because they want to be taught about other topics. Once children start playing, it is quite challenging for coaches to direct the participants' attention to other subjects. Creativity, playful learning methods and diversified activities might help to tackle this problem.*

Johann Olav Koss: *Holistic Sport for Development and Peace programmes are not necessarily difficult to implement – provided they are specially-designed and carefully delivered by well-trained coaches and leaders. We should not think about having to balance sport with other programming components, but instead should focus on using sport as a vehicle to achieve a wide range of key programmatic outcomes. It is therefore crucial that Sport for Development programmes be designed to ensure that sport and play are central to the experience – and that coaches and leaders work to ensure participatory practices are favoured.*

Vladimir Borkovic and William Rook: *Our point in round one was that the key to optimising the balance between sport and development lies in overcoming the distinction between them and working towards integrated programmes that utilise sport as a method of delivering other components.*

The first challenge here then is to ensure that there is a fundamental understanding on the ground of how sport is being used. It is crucial to understand and communicate the scope of the specific sport used as a tool in addressing a specific social issue. This perception of using sport to produce quantifiable positive outcomes needs to run through the coordinators, implementers and beneficiaries of a given programme, and getting the balance right surely just means using sport no more than is proven useful.

Balancing sport and other health components

Beware to only focus on sport to achieve healthier lifestyles. It remains a challenge to integrate other lifestyle components in S&D interventions, for instance nutrition:

Helen Alderson: *It is very often a challenge to ensure that there is a balance between sport (physical activity) and healthy nutrition. i.e. calories in calories out. Please see the bad example and related comments hereunder. The promotion of sport cannot be a substitute for a healthy diet! Another challenge: sport often conflicts with competing priorities such as classroom time, learning languages or computer skills.*

Insufficient Monitoring and Evaluation

In many cases, programmes are not evaluated sufficiently, thus hindering the learning capacity of the field. Several e-Debaters mention as major challenge the ability, capacity and willingness to gather quality data about the effectiveness of S&D interventions.

Peter Alegi: Third challenge is that outcomes are hard to measure. This makes holistic approaches difficult to both devise and implement.

Pelle Kvalsund: A pitfall is trying to achieve too much, major challenge is to be able to measure and back up results.

Vladimir Borkovic and William Rook: The use of sports in development is still very much a growing field, and one without much grassroots analysis. As an opportunity it represents a logical and exciting means of development; it clearly makes sense to those of us passionate about it, but much of the impact from sports that we know is out there comes anecdotally, which is totally insufficient as our community moves forward. We need to make concerted efforts to broaden the knowledge base about how these programmes can and do operate on the ground, invest a significant amount of time and resources in Monitoring and Evaluation, and put a great deal of effort into generating curricula that incorporate realisable lessons into sports. Through in-depth research and the production of innovative techniques for delivering education through sports, we can consolidate the great work already being done on the ground, clarify how sports fits in with wider issues, and also ensure all stakeholders are making the best use of their efforts. It should be a duty for all of us to test, evaluate and innovate so that all are aware of practices that work best in maintaining the balance between sport and other components.

True multidisciplinary programmes

A major challenge is to integrate skills, expertise and knowledge from different disciplines in S&D interventions. Often, there is sufficient capacity in one field – for instance sport - but other capacities such as development, social change, education are lacking. Bridging the gaps between disciplines is not easy. There are professional language and culture barriers.

Astrid Aafjes:Secondly, it is important to have experts in specific areas (shelters, social workers, counsellors, legal support) involved and have partnerships with other support organizations who can provide counselling, advise or medical support to address the issue in a holistic way.

Daniela Preti: Another challenge is expertise in sport and development. Practitioner delivering sessions on the ground often have a background as a sports coach and sometimes lack expertise in other thematic fields. It's thus advisable to collaborate with other organisations with specific expertise in these topics in order to capitalise on each others expertise and use synergies.

Cees Versteeg: The main challenge of the implementing of S&D programmes is that you need experts from two sides: one, an expert in sport and sport development for the interest of sport itself and two: an expert who is a social or health scientist who fully understands the problems related to health issues and how to create awareness of it etc. Where do you find this expertise in one person or in one organisation? Understanding and implementing the dynamics of sports and creating understanding and implementing awareness of vital social and health problems are hardly found in one person or one organisation. So, in my opinion we

need highly qualified experts and organisations in sports and from social and health sciences who have to work together from their own discipline without handing in their specific level of quality. Sport should not give in (be abused) for social or health reasons and health awareness should not rely on 'spin off' effects of sport mainly. It is not win-win situation, but a + + situation which is the challenge.

Caroline Gutton: The second challenge for educational project, to me, it seems essential to build a project with local partners from other fields sharing the same objectives. Each can therefore use a specific tool (sport is only one of them) which together will enable to answer a problematic, some needs or a defined audience.

Jouwert van Geene: 'A shared 'language' is the main challenge - different disciplines use different vocabularies and jargon, coming from different backgrounds. Balancing all components assumes we all understand each other. Furthermore, resources are an important challenge: often we work with limited resources, for which different components will compete. Thirdly, 'interconnectedness and synergy' is a challenge: the sum of all components should be bigger than that of all individual components. We have to face up to understanding what each discipline can contribute to the other.

Capacity building

Many e-Debaters stress the importance of need for capacity building. Sport for Development and Peace is a relatively new field. Because of the scope and ambition of many programmes, expertise from a wide range of sources is needed. In many cases, certain skills are insufficiently developed, leading to ineffective projects. The field needs clear standards, comprehensive curricula and tailor made courses for programme designers, project leaders and coaches.

Vladimir Borkovic and William Rook: This leads on to the second challenge, which is adequately qualified staff – what we need are coaches and instructors trained in delivering educational content in a vibrant and involving way. This requires not only skills as a coach and an educator, but also an appreciation of the Development through Sport vision. This point goes hand in hand with meeting the third main challenge – comprehensive curricula based on considered knowledge of using sports based activities to deliver social and educational messages. This is the area that presents the greatest ongoing challenge to those of us in the Development through Sport community, requiring a great deal of pedagogical and physical education research.

Astrid Aafjes: ...Thirdly, to guarantee a good balance you need both high quality coaches and referees to implement the sports component, but you also need to have people who have the skills and knowledge to facilitate the discussion groups and provide a safe space. Sometimes, this can be the same person, but mostly it requires a different skill set. You have to create safe spaces on the field as well as off the field.

Kate Cowan: Quality volunteers for quality programmes – One of the main challenges S&D programmes face is providing quality training of volunteers, peer leaders, teachers, staff etc.. These are the people that our children will look up to, therefore we need to ensure they have the technical skill, embrace our philosophies and understand their position as a role model.

Yves Vanden Auweele: The third challenge is that the existing sport organisations should be more interested in developmental work; should be more aware of the fact that they have an enormous influence/impact on sport practise in developing and emerging countries whether they want it or not.

Maya van Gent: *I also think that this is a relative new concept for South Africa and a lot of assistance has been coming from the North- however South Africa needs to develop and find ways that suit the people of South Africa. Challenges also exist if government sees this as an important part of strategic development for the country- will they support such initiatives? Financially and/or in principle? Qualifications? People with passion are needed to sustain and continue with initiatives of this nature. A lot of group leaders are not educated/qualified for this specific job- they learn as they go- and many lose interest and also time is wasted. Qualifications-some are offered in small scale- needs to be development in South Africa equipping these individuals. Seeing that this is till such a new concept in South Africa many individuals/institutions are not sure where sport development lies- does it lie within sport science/ development studies/ local governance or government/ education? A lot of these programmes are run by individuals/NGO that work alone with little support/assistance from other sectors- they sometime are funded by one main funder and it this funder withdraws the financial support most of these projects end- thus sustainability is compromised.*

Theory of Change

In Round 1, Jowert van Geene stressed the need for a Theory of Change as fundament for the design and implementation of programmes. In Round 2, this stand point is defended by other e-Debaters:

Yves Vanden Auwele: *The first main challenges is a listing of the 'working' elements in sport that may unlock the positive potentials of sport and lead to positive effects, i.e. a sport quantity (intensity, duration) and quality elements of sport delivery including the context of delivery (communication style, motivational climate, obtain feelings of competence, self efficacy and enjoyment etc.). We certainly do not want to avoid sport to be a catalyst or facilitator for negative tendencies such as egocentrism, abuse, violence and corruption.*

Frank van Eekeren: *Three main challenges are:*

- 1) Have a mutual understanding about your objectives (what are you trying to achieve or change).*
- 2) Have a mutual understanding of the specific context in which you operate.*
- 3) Have a mutual understanding about the theory of change (for that specific project or program).*

Resources and donor agendas

A major challenge mentioned by several e-Debaters is sustainable financing of programmes. A long term commitment is important. Real social improvement can not be accomplished in a period of 2-4 years, the average length of most contracts in the field.

Marion Keim: *Main challenges are: sustained funding; parental involvement for youth programmes and interference by international organizations who want to own programmes.*

Carla Thachuk: *1) Donor restrictions / requirements. 2) Funding restrictions. 3) Limited organizational capacity.*

4 Examples of bad examples

Introduction

Much can be learned from mistakes and successes of the past. There are many enthusiastic and highly competent development workers active in the field of S&D, but monitoring and evaluation is often disregarded. No feedback means no learning. However, best practices are often not shared; bad practices are virtually never shared. In this light we asked e-Debaters: *Can you describe a bad example of trying to embed sport in other interventions aimed at addressing health issues?*

Are mistakes still a taboo in the field of S&D?

Only a few e-Debaters describe a specific project which did not succeed. Mostly, a general mistake is described as a bad example. Several e-Debaters state that they do not know *any* bad examples. Is this really the case or does this prove that there is still a taboo surrounding 'bad development projects'? Looking at the number of programmes and projects implemented the last few years, it seems inevitable that mistakes were made and ambitions not realised in some cases. Actually, for new and emerging fields of expertise, mistakes are not only good but are absolutely necessary to progress. No mistakes means no learning. No mistakes means no innovation. To innovate one has to experiment; mistakes need to be an integral part of this process.

In this chapter, the 'bad examples' mentioned by e-Debaters are illustrated with quotes.

Donor priorities

To let the agendas of donors be leading for programmes goals instead of local agendas is mentioned as a recurring mistake. What Western organisations value is different than what communities and target groups in developing countries value. This implies that projects need to be developed with the beneficiaries, not for.

The votes on the statements prove that the majority of e-Debaters agree with this stand point. Indicators of success should be defined by target groups and not by donors. And effects should be estimated by beneficiaries and internal stake-holders, not by external Western experts. If these conditions are taken into account, S&D interventions will be more effective.

Marion Keim: The difficulty can come when organizations chase after money and follow the mandate of funders rather than the long term needs of their communities and thereby shifting their priorities on a semi- annual basis.

Pelle Kvalsund: Focusing on HIV/AIDS in a areas where there are other more urgent issues because it is what the donor-partners easiest can access financial support to do.

Obstacles for social and behaviour change

Realising social change is not an easy affair. Often, a complex context causes certain behaviours. There are barriers for behaviour change. S&D need to take the context, barriers and drivers into account to be effective. This is not always the case, leading to failing projects. Also, the sporting activities need to be tailored to the specific situation and target groups (gender, age). Inclusion needs attention, beware of groups not being able to participate because of cultural or other obstacles.

Frank van Eekeren: *Sport is a great entry point for making youngsters aware, for instance about HIV/AIDS. But ... in many countries awareness about HIV/AIDS is not the main issue (any more). People are aware, but there are other elements that prevent them from changing behaviour - like gender relations, stigmatization, etc. In other words: the use of sport in these programmes is quite useless. A better notion of the theory of change (what interventions could lead to behavioural change) is needed.*

Carla Thachuk: *Hmmm... I have always relied on sport to resolve implementation concerns or difficulties within other interventions – i.e. if something isn't working, add sport! However, when adding sport it is essential to ensure the sports based activities are age/stage appropriate.*

Daniela Preti: *If sport is embedded in an intervention mainly addressing health issues, it is crucial to ensure an inclusive environment for the sport activities. A bad example would be to provide 'health for all - but sport only for the healthy' interventions. In order to have inclusive sport sessions, however, the coaches need to be carefully sensitised and trained in inclusive activities and games.*

Sport as an instrument to attract attention

In some cases, sport is only used to attract children and youth. It is not an integral part of the educational components, but a separate activity. In this case, there is no synergy.

Kate Cowan: *I have witnessed situations where sport is used as a tool to attract children to an event or activity. When the children show up they are given 15 minutes of activity, the ball is then hidden and the event is turned into a lecture or inactive discussion period on health issues that may or may not be a concern to the community. This is a bad example of how to use sport to address health issues. I would have to agree with Frank van Eekeren and Cees Versteeg in the first round of this debate- sport should be the core of S&D projects, not just a means for attraction.*

Maya van Gent: *I was aware of one programme that wanted to bring HIV/AIDS awareness to rural areas with sport- thus they would start with a soccer game to bring all the youth together and then give some info on HIV/AIDS- after this initial visit the kids just started showing up for soccer- which was just done by throwing a ball on the pitch and all 40 kids would run after that for about 40 minutes. Some kids later said after a feedback session after 16 weeks that all they wanted to do was play soccer- which was not wrong- but even if this part of the programme was run more effectively at least some soft skills would have happened.*

Cees Versteeg: *E.g. Kicking AIDS out games are only for one time in one situation useful. A youngster or a team who plays football every weekend and in every tournament will not complain. But when he or the team has to play a Kicking Aids Out Game for the second time, the response will be: 'We already know this game!' Don't underestimate the power of the official recognised sports.*

Insufficient attention for other health aspects

Only sport is not enough for a healthy and better lifestyle. Other aspects like nutrition and social factors are sometimes disregarded. Not involving relevant experts to address the factors causing the situation that the project aims to change, is a well known pitfall. A multidisciplinary approach is needed.

Helen Anderson: *Bad example: www.foodmagazine.org.uk/press/cadbury_get_active/ Cadbury promoting chocolate consumption in a scheme to promote sport and physical activity. Although this is a worst-case scenario, fast food, confectionary and other industry promotion of physical activity is often designed to develop brand loyalty to unhealthy foods or distract or discourage attention to issues like marketing practices, or inappropriate availability of fast foods (vending machines) for children. They can also subtly give the message that as long as you exercise, it is ok to eat junk food by associating brands with health imagery and activity. The take away is that physical activity promotion in children should NOT be a substitute for addressing causes of unhealthy diet, and the two should always be linked.*

Caroline Gutton: *The main point, not to forget, is that sport on its own can't resolve everything, especially if it's about a health issue. Sports is only a tool that can be used as therapeutic support ,it can also be a tool used as awareness to public health matters. The biggest mistake would be to organize a health project not consulting specialists in that matter (psychologists or specialists in the concerned topic...) through all the different steps of the project : from the conception until the youth follow-up.*

Johann Olav Koss: *Sport, play and physical activity are excellent tools to promote good health and to instil positive values about healthy lifestyle choices. Sport for Development programmes also provide an excellent platform from which to raise awareness about targeted health issues and can provide participants with access to information to help reduce risky behaviour. Good health, however, is impacted by many factors, including nutrition, sanitation, access to health services and state of mind. Whenever possible, Sport for Development programmes should be offered in tandem with other supports in order to ensure that the health needs of targeted beneficiaries are met. For instance, a programme that aims to help people overcome drug addiction will not succeed by using physical activity as the sole intervention. In this case, physical activity should be combined with other physiological and medical interventions, including addiction counselling and treatment. Sport for Development programmes in these situations will be more likely to succeed if they are designed and delivered using integrated approaches.*

Beware of negative side effects

S&D interventions which fail sometimes not only miss their targets; in worse case scenarios effects are detrimental. An example is sport activities offered to women without involving men. It is not possible to emancipate women without emancipating men. Changing social roles which have evolved over centuries is not a simple 'trick'.

Kylie Bates: *The mantra of 'first do no harm' should be observed in the design of all programmes. For example if large groups of people are travelling for days by foot to an event or festival then the safety of the women and children and possibility of the spread of disease needs to be considered. While training young females as sports leaders in the community might tick a lot of inclusion boxes for a development agency, thought needs to be given to how their new job will be perceived by their husbands and families. When you throw a rock into a river there is a ripple effect. Sport needs to be aware of the impact, good and bad, it may have.*

Limited value of general campaigns

History has proven again and again: behaviour change is very difficult to accomplish. This is backed up by scientific evidence. There is a huge gap between awareness and behaviour. Often,

target groups already know what's right and wrong. Context and social structures are dominating factors which should be addressed as well to realise social change.

Mogens Kirbey: I would mention the area of 'General Campaigns'. We have unfortunately seen a lot of general campaigns with simple messages on how to improve your health. Despite the fact that we know that there is a long way from "knowing to doing". Overall campaigns with simple messages has very little effect on changing behaviour. So let me say, that each time I meet such overall campaign, I tend to be rather sceptical.

5 How can we progress?

We need to challenge the field to apply lessons learned and to change in-effective practices. Recent publications highlight these lessons:

- Start with humility, start small (N.B. e-Debaters don not have consensus on this standpoint).
- Involve beneficiaries, stakeholders and local communities from the start.
- Use experience from other organisations, local expertise but also bring your own competence: stay involved.
- Organisations show lack of learning from mistakes in the past. There are many enthusiastic and highly competent S&D workers but monitoring & evaluation is often disregarded. No feedback means no learning. Make sure to integrate monitoring and evaluation in programmes. Make mistakes and learn from them.
- Take your time: it's a long time affair. If limited to a period of two to four years, projects mostly create more havoc than good. If you can not stay involved for ten to fifteen years, don't do it! Sustainable social change will not be the result. (N.B. This standpoint has not been discussed yet by the e-Debaters).

Hopefully, the e-Debate can contribute to the progress of the field by highlighting opinions & perspectives and unlocking visions and expertise. We hope the second round shone light on challenges facing the field and mistakes that should be avoided. Again, we would like to thank the e-Debaters for their inspiring input!