

Forum: Special Conference on Children

Issue: Supporting sport for development and peace

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INTRODUCTION

“Sport has the power to change the world”. It was with this phrase Nelson Mandela kicked off his speech during the 2000 Laureus sport awards opening ceremony. “It (sport) speaks to youth in a language they understand. Sport can create hope, where once there was only despair”, he continued. Sport is indeed known to be extremely popular with all ages, especially younger ones. Thus, the movement known as SDP (Sport for development and Peace) can and will, in the future, be one of the most important cornerstones of our society. It is therefore important, that we structure this initiative correctly now, when it is still in its developing stages, so that the finalized edition can be as flawless as possible, in order to provide the next generations with outstanding policies and ideas, on which to base their next steps.

Just the following year (2001) there was a special UN office created, the United Nations Office on Sport for Development and peace (UNOSDP). Its instructions were to help coordinate the member states actions in helping promoting sport for Development and Peace, to encourage dialogue between all members involved in that process and to support international sport organizations that were seeking to engage themselves with the SDP idea. The agency was, however, closed in 2017, after it was deemed that a partnership between the IOC (International Olympic committee) and the UN would yield greater results. Even though SDP has been an idea for more than a century, it has only been addressed and entertained as a viable idea during the last twenty years. Thus, previous attempts to implement the SDP concept are to be left out of the spectrum of this study guide.

The UN special office has made vast progress in the field of SDP in the last twenty years, introducing multiple new sport based initiatives for promoting peace and development, as well as developing the 4 lines of action which all member states are urged to follow and that will ensure the integration of Sport for Development and Peace in each government’s agenda.

Serious doubts have, however, been expressed, against the new partnership between the International Olympic Committee and the UN, in which the latter serves as a supplementary body, thus granting the IOC command over the initiative of SDP. This is allegedly a problem, seeing as the IOC exerts far less influence over member states, and can therefore easily be ignored and disobeyed. Critics have also brought forth

allegations of scandalous behavior by the International Olympic Committee, which remain unaddressed to as of the time of this writing.

DEFINITION OF KEY-TERMS

SDP: Sport for Development and Peace. This abbreviation is used in resolutions as well as almost all official UN papers. Sport for Development and Peace can easily be defined as “the process of bringing about social change in less economically developed areas/countries of the planet, using forms of physical activity that contribute to physical health and mental well-being”. Events organized under SDP usually involve mainly children and young people, since they are going through the most influenceable and impressionable period of their lives, where inculcating values into their mind can be easy and effective, especially with games and sport. These events are organized by various groups that follow specifically tailored (for each region) SDP programs and strategies.

UNOSDP: United Nations Office on Sport for Development and Peace. This is the United Nations Agency responsible for coordinating the various different member states and organizations actions in promoting sport for development and peace.

IOC: The International Olympic Committee. The IOC is responsible for organizing the winter and summer Olympic games, as well as generally manage worldwide elite and professional sport initiatives. After the 2017 announcement of the closure of the United Nations Office on Sport for Development and Peace, the IOC was set to take over its tasks.

Millennium Development Goals: The eight Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) – which range from halving extreme poverty rates to halting the spread of HIV/AIDS and providing universal primary education, all by the target date of 2015 – form a blueprint agreed to by all the UN’s member states and all the world’s leading development institutions¹.

Sustainable Development Goals: The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, adopted by all United Nations Member States in 2015, provides a shared blueprint for peace and prosperity for people and the planet, now and into the future. At its heart are the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), which are an urgent call for action by all countries - developed and developing - in a global partnership¹.

¹www.un.org.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Origins

Origins and development of the idea

The idea of SDP emerged in 1894, shortly before the first modern Olympic games, when French educator and founder of the IOC, Pierre de Coubertin, envisaged a new version of the ancient Greek Olympic Games, that would bring nations closer around sports. His dream failed to materialize, however, due to the, at the time, widespread societal phenomenon of nationalism, as well as the lack of support from any international and influential organizations. His vision was revived in 1995, when South African president Nelson Mandela managed to rally his recently desegregated nation under the power of rugby, in the historic 1995 Rugby World Cup final, in what was celebrated as the real end of segregation in South Africa. Thus, Nelson Mandela drew attention to the topic of SDP once again, with that attention eventually culminating in the 2001 creation of the United Nations Office on Sport for Development and Peace (UNOSDP). The UNOSDP's attempts to promote SDP can closely be tracked through its attempts to help meet the MDG's (2000 - 2015), as well as the SDG's (2015 - 2030).

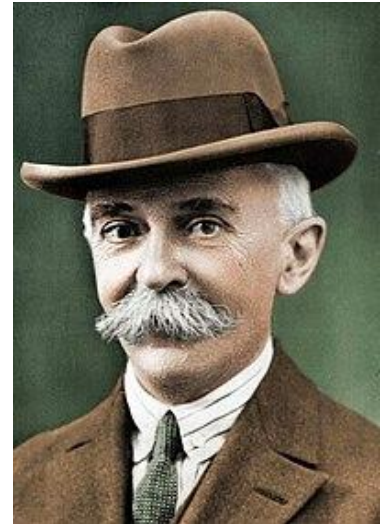


Image 1: Pierre de Coubertin, founder of the IOC.

The UNOSDP its actions and successes

The United Nations office on Sport for Development and Peace and the Millennium Development goals (2000 - 2015)

Multiple projects were drawn up and set in motion when Kofi Annan, the 7th UN Secretary General, announced the creation of the UNOSDP in 2001, prompting the materialization of Pierre de Coubertin's vision. The Office strived to help meet the Millennium Development Goals (2000 - 2015) (before 2015) and the Sustainable Development Goals (2015 - 2030) (after 2015). More specifically, the agency sought to achieve the 4th Millennium Development Goal (reducing child mortality) through lecturing and event organizing, in which parents were encouraged to participate with their children, learning about the benefits of sport on a person's physical health and mental well-being. The UNOSDP also took up an active role in meeting the 3rd Millennium Development Goal, seeking to empower women and promote gender equality through their Youth Leadership Program (YLP), which was launched in 2012. The YLP basically consists of 21

camps in 8 locations worldwide, which take on young people, especially children, and attempt to develop them as youth leaders and role models in and through sport. The YLP became one of the most successful UNOSDP programs, with around 760 participants as of 2016, 400 of which were girls (the majority). Thus, the UNOSDP helped in promoting the empowerment of women. This part of the UNOSDP's achievements would not, however, be complete, if there hadn't been made mention of one of the agency's greatest achievements: attempting and succeeding in bridging a small part of the gap between the two Koreas. The Youth Leaders Camp (YLC) located in the city Gwangju, in the Republic of Korea, hosted participants from the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (North Korea) as well as from the Republic of Korea (South Korea), giving these youngsters the opportunity to get to know each other, while developing leadership skills. The YLP program launch was followed by UN resolution

67/296, proclaiming April the 6th as the "International Day of Sport for Development and Peace", thus helping draw even more attention to the movement.



The 8 Millennium Development Goals.

The United Nations office on Sport for Development and Peace and the Sustainable Development goals (2015 - 2030)

The Sustainable Development goals (SDG's) were adopted with the UN general assembly Resolution 70/1 in 2015. The UNOSDP took active interest in helping meet the proposed targets by 2030, especially the 5th, the 10th and the 11th. The 5th SDG prompted the continuation of the Youth Leaders Program, since it reads exactly the same as the 3rd Millennium Development Goal, namely calling for gender equality. The YLP's work was, however, continued under new leadership, since the UNOSDP was shut down in 2017. The 10th SDG, which calls for reduced inequalities within and among countries, was being addressed before 2015, as a separate venture of the UNSDP, by organizing events that promoted equality within countries that were/ are in need of such. One example of this type of event was the 2010 Football World Cup, which was directed by the UNOSDP to take place in South Africa, a society deeply scared by the segregationist policies that applied until recently. The posters and advertisements in the run up and during the event strongly supported a multicultural scene and promoted anti-racist statements from well-known figures of African public life, such as the first

freely elected South African president Nelson Mandela and Cameroonian national team captain and striker Samuel Eto'o. The World Cup's slogan "say no to racism" became hugely popular. Finally, the UNOSDP also went for achieving the 11th SDG, which reads "Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable", by striking the problems people with disabilities have. The YLP played, once again, the leading role in this endeavor, by including around 50 role models with disabilities in its activities. People with disabilities represented around 6,5% of the YLP's participants in the 2016 census.

The International Olympic Commission and Sport for Development and Peace

The IOC has, for the best part of the past century, proven itself as a worthy ally for the development of sport and SDP in LEDC's (less economically developed countries). There was, however, a small time period (1952 - 1972), during which the IOC discontinued a great many of its programs, like the Third World sport development project, and distanced itself from the UN, because of fears that the United Nations, and especially UNESCO (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization), would limit the IOC's self-rule. The IOC has since then recognized the irrationality of its fears and has been granted, since 2009, the Observant status in the UN General Assembly, in order to help coordinate all efforts made in the sector of sport. The IOC's help mainly consists of offering organizational and coordinative aid to the various groups already working on the implementation of SDP. Implementing SDP programs by itself would be notoriously hard for the IOC, seeing as it lacks the skill and knowledge in doing so. After all, the IOC is known for supporting elite and professional sport, making it less well suited for helping on the field. International Olympic committee officials have noted that their task is "to make SDP a key element of sustainable social and human well-being for individuals and society"². The IOC's critics are, on the other hand, condemning its attempts as mere "attention grabbing stunts", in order for the IOC to place itself at the forefront of the international sport scene. The truth lies somewhat in-between, with there being strong evidence that the IOC is willing to help promoting SDP, whilst also wishing to retain its elite position in the sports world. Even though there are currently no discussions about the reinstatement of the UNOSDP, the event is probable according to many analysts, who see the IOC's performance as lackluster, or even downright scandalous².

² The History and Politics of Sport-for-Development: Activists, Ideologues and Reformers.

MAJOR COUNTRIES AND ORGANIZATIONS INVOLVED

UNOSDP:

The United Nations Office on Sport for Development and Peace. This is the UN's main agency dealing with the idea of SDP. It was discontinued in 2017, in favor of a collaboration between the IOC and the UN under the lead of the IOC. The UNOSDP left an impressive legacy behind it, not least of it being the YLP (Youth Leadership Program), which was so extremely successful, that it's model of operations was recreated and used in other UN affiliated YLP's.

IOC:

The International Olympic Commission replaced the UNOSDP in cooperating with the UN for sport matters after 2017. The collaboration between the UN and the IOC has been criticized as "weaker" than the United Nations Office on Sport for Development and Peace, seeing as it doesn't bear the same gravity on the international scene, and can therefore affect the promotion of SDP less. The IOC has some advantages over the UNOSDP in undertaking the promotion of SDP, since it, unlike the UN, not only bears close ties with the world of sport for the last 150 years, but has also taken active interest in the last 50 years to help with the advancement of SDP.

TIMELINE OF EVENTS

DATE	DESCRIPTION OF EVENT
1894	Pierre de Coubertin founds the IOC, and the modern Olympic Games, envisaging sports bringing about global peace and cooperation.
1995	South African president Nelson Mandela rallies his nation with the power of sport, helping develop closer ties between the minorities of the recently desegregated nation.
2001	The United Nations Office on Sport for Development and Peace (UNOSDP) is founded, leading to the development of projects and programs designed to promote SDP, as well as the launching of attempts to meet the Millennium

	Development Goals (MDG's).
2009	The IOC is granted Observer Status, thus opening the way for closer cooperation between it and the UN.
2010	The 2010 World Cup takes place in South Africa, helped and directed by the United Nations office on Sport for Development.
2012	The hugely successful UNOSDP Youth Leadership Program (YLP) is launched, helping promote sport and achieving 5 of the MDG's and the SDG's, as well as introducing sport to hundreds of children and young people, who then carried their knowledge to their respective communities.
2015	The first overall report on the effectiveness of the YLP is drafted, indicating great success. The worlds progress regarding MDG's is evaluated, granting an overall favorable view, and the new SDG's are decided upon.
2017	UN General Secretary Antonio Guterres announces the closure of the UNOSDP, and its replacement by the IOC.

RELEVANT UN RESOLUTIONS, TREATIES AND EVENTS

United Nations General Assembly resolution 55/2

Adopted on the 8th September 2000, this resolution announced adoption of the 8 Millennium Development Goals (MDG's), set to be met by 2015. The resolution was voted upon by all 191 member nations and 20 Organizations.

United Nations General Assembly resolution 67/296

Adopted on the 23rd August 2013, this resolution called for the 6th of April to become the “International Day of Sport for Development and Peace”, thus helping drawing even more attention to the topic.

United Nations General Assembly resolution 67/17

Adopted on the 28th November 2012, this resolution urged member states to provide funds to the UNOSDP and its YLP program, resulting in donations by 13 member states and organizations, including the IOC, which in turn led to the introduction of the YLP program.

United Nations General Assembly resolution 70/1

Adopted on the 25th September 2015, this resolution officialized the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG's) and officially announced the meeting of the Millennium Development Goals.

POSSIBLE SOLUTIONS

The idea of SDP still remains relatively unexplored, opening up possibilities for multiple new guidelines and programs to be established. Some parts of the SDP movement are deeply flawed, such as the incomplete methods of rating individual programs success. Another problem is the lack of a centralized agency which will organize and support all the various groups, as well as commit itself to further research regarding SDP. Other parts just need to be improved upon, or reworked, such as the need of clarification of SDP uses, which are not clearly enough divided, in order for the above-mentioned agency to commit researchers and scientists with greater accuracy. A more specific analysis of the possible solutions for the aforementioned problems:

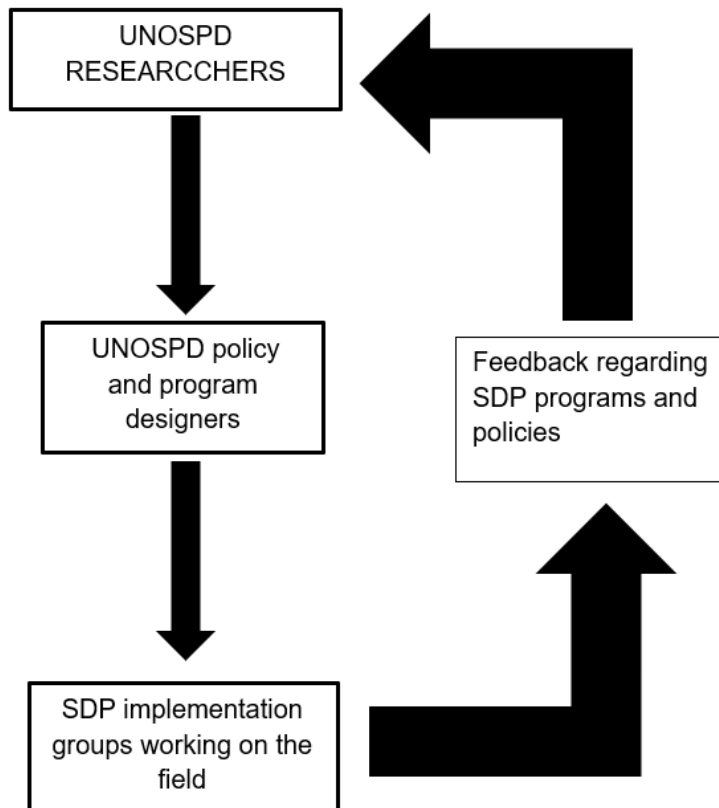
1. The creation of a specialized agency can be solved easily through the reinstating of the UNOSDP, albeit a little expanded, so that it covers the requirement of research. The research ought to be independent from the groups working on the field, and should be released in yearly reports. The reports will then be used to draw up better and more complete programs.
2. There is also a need for picking new criteria, with which to evaluate SDP groups effectiveness, seeing as current criteria are lackluster. The UN proposes three approaches:
 - Apply an evidence-based approach: use evidence gathered by researchers working for the UNOSDP in order to evaluate each SDP's program effectiveness,³
 - Adopt a rights-based focus: helping young people and children inform themselves about all their rights, as well as how to work together in order to be granted these rights,³

³ 2013 UNOSDP report

- Commit to learning and development: the people working toward materializing SDP should share their experiences and lessons learned with policy makers, so as to better SDP programs³,

These approaches should serve as criteria for the evaluation of each SDP group's effectiveness, as well as each programs effectiveness.

3. Finally, there should be a clearer classification of SDP means⁴ used in each program, so that researchers from the UNOSDP can determine how to commit researchers and staff to aid in the completion and betterment of the program.



New UNOSDP work concept: UNOSDP researchers provide data to policy and program makers, who design programs to be used by the groups promoting SDP on the ground. The programs are then evaluated and the data collected sent back to the researchers, in order for them to improve contemporary programs.

⁴ Means: different sport types, special exercises, competitive or cooperative sport types

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