

Game on for Equality: Empowering Children and Youth through Sport!

Project Title	Game on for Equality: Empowering Children and Youth through Sport!
Client	Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ)
Implementing Organisation	Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH
In Partnership with	adidas Foundation gGmbH
Partner Organisation	Ministry of Federal Education and Professional Training, Pakistan, Elementary and Secondary Education Department, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa
Implementing Country	Pakistan
Total Duration	December 2023 – September 2025

Effectively Meeting Global Challenges and Using Opportunities with Sport

Sport allows children and young people to lead healthy lives, and it teaches them to take on responsibility, behave fairly and resolve conflict peacefully. This is exactly where Sport for Development (S4D) begins. Through an educational approach, children and young people can experience, learn and reflect on values, life skills and lessons in a playful way through guided sporting activities - the S4D training sessions. The Sport for Development approach is based on five basic principles and offers more than mere physical exercise. It is about the pedagogical and sustainable personal and social development of young people.

This approach has been a fundamental part of GIZ's work for several years and will be an integral part of the project "Game on for Equality: Empowering Children and Youth through Sport!" in this regard. Moreover, it uses sport and physical activity to promote gender equality, develop resilience, and promote peaceful conflict resolution among young people. "Game on!" is funded by the adidas Foundation and the German Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ).

The new partnership between GIZ's Sport for Development programme and the adidas Foundation, with funding provided by adidas AG, marks a cornerstone between a foundation funded by a private sector company in the sporting goods industry and German development cooperation on the topic of international education work and sustainable development.

The adidas Foundation is an independent non-profit entity that maintains strong connections with adidas AG yet is completely autonomous and not owned or governed by it in any manner. Its mission is to leverage the transformational power of sport to address some of the most pressing social and environmental challenges facing our world today.

Combining the foundation's expertise and resources within their Sport for Development programme, aiming to harness the power of sport to foster peace and sustainable development in communities facing socio-economic challenges with GIZ's experience and pedagogic competencies on how to convey and strengthen the life skills of children and youth through sports, this partnership will make a meaningful contribution to the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).



Background

With over 230 million people, Pakistan is the fifth-largest country in the world. Despite its immense potential, more than 30% of Pakistan's population lives in poverty, which is reinforced through natural disasters and the effects of climate change. Pakistan ranks poorly on global indices, such as 161 out of 191 countries on the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) Human Development Index and 142 out of 146 countries on the Global Gender Gap Index by the World Economic Forum.

Disadvantaged children and youth, especially girls from communities with low income, experience these realities even harsher, leading not only to stark income disparity but also gender disparities.

These vulnerable groups therefore have limited access to quality education, including Physical Education (PE) and sports programmes. As a result, girls and women lack safe spaces and are facing prevailing stereotypes that hinder their participation in sports and the decision-making processes.



Empowering Youth and Children to Shape Their Future

The project region Khyber Pakhtunkhwa in Pakistan has experienced several societal weaknesses in recent years, including poverty, malnutrition, lack of educational opportunities and the oppression of women and minorities. Therefore, the government has taken steps in collaboration with international organisations such as the United Nations and the World Bank to improve infrastructure and social and economic development of young people in the region.

Through the Sport for Development approach, boys and girls between 10 and 14 years will learn to strengthen their psychosocial well-being and resilience, peacefully resolve conflicts and gain a deeper understanding of equal rights in their communities in the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa region.

Activities:

Capacity Development of Government Schools on the S4D Approach

Both male and female Physical Education (PE) teachers learn in workshops how to use the Sport for Development approach to sensitise students in schools. Therefore, teachers develop an understanding and the necessary skills how to teach children to overcome prejudices, promote positive male images, peacefully resolve conflicts and cope with gender-based violence and psychosocial stress through a series of S4D activities.

Capacity Development of Young Leaders on S4D Approach and Community Engagement and Mobilisation

30 young leaders with equal representation from both genders take part in a series of training courses on the S4D approach. Within this course, the young leaders develop skills on how to effectively engage, mobilise communities and develop leadership skills. Equipped with these skills they will be able to connect schools and communities and carry out S4D activities on playgrounds and public spaces within their communities.

Participation of Youth in S4D Activities, Initiatives, and Tournaments

Each young leader develops a group of youths from their respective communities and involves them in S4D activities in their community and through sports tournaments. Through their active participation, community members learn valuable skills. After learning and developing these skills, youth, students and teachers can act as role models and multipliers for more inclusive and cohesive communities. Thus, these young leaders play the role of multipliers in their community for the approach and as the change agents for promoting gender equality, peaceful conflict resolution, and strengthening the resilience of children and young people.

Measuring the Impact of the Project – Impact Study

Groups of students from schools and communities in the Peshawar and Mardan districts will take part in an impact study to measure the effectiveness of the interventions regarding gender equality. Interviewers will collect data on how knowledge, attitudes and intended behaviours have changed when it comes to gender stereotypes or the perception of masculinity for example. In collaboration with the consultancy Mainlevel, the gathered data will be analysed to report on the long-term effects of the S4D initiatives. The findings from the impact study will also guide Khyber Pakhtunkhwa's government development planning for children and youth.

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