



# Implementing development goals: Sport for employability

## 1. Sport for Development

One of the goals of German development policy is to harness the power of sport and exercise more effectively in international development cooperation activities. The aim is to create opportunities for personal development for people of all ages and to strengthen social cohesion.

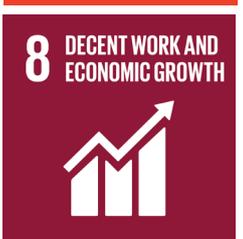
Sport activities with a social and educational component can raise awareness in a wide range of areas – not only among the children and young people taking part, but also among coaching staff. These areas include education, health, peace and the environment as well as cross-cutting issues such as gender and inclusion. By creating structured opportunities for participation, activities in the field of sport can also help to strengthen civil society; a further priority area in German development cooperation.

When used in a targeted way, sport can play an important role above and beyond the development of physical skills. It can promote the transfer of learning and can be used as an instrument of education. It can contribute to preventing HIV/AIDS and violence and has a positive impact on the physical and mental well-being of children and young people in general. And finally, it

provides participants with the opportunity to learn life skills that will help them overcome difficult situations in their everyday lives and improve their prospects for the future.

The German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) commissioned the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH with the implementation of the sector programme ‘Sport for Development’ with the aim of making a significant contribution in this area and developing effective ways of using sport in German development cooperation activities.

In a total of five country components across three continents, approaches and methods have been tested and further developed together with the project’s partners. The ‘Sport for Development’



approach is also being implemented in two new regional projects.

The United Nations outcome document ‘Transforming our World: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development’ highlights the important role sport has to play in enabling sustainable development and emphasises the contribution it can make to development, peace, health, education and social inclusion.

Promoting sport as a means of enhancing young people’s employability makes a direct contribution to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), in particular SDG 4, ‘Ensure inclusive and quality education for all and promote lifelong learning’, and SDG 8, ‘Promote inclusive and sustainable economic growth, employment and decent work for all’.

This paper provides practitioners and theorists operating in the field of development cooperation with an overview of the ways in which sport can be used in the context of displacement. It introduces the different approaches and priority areas, offers insight into the practical lessons learned and results achieved so far and presents example projects. The sector project ‘Sport for Development’ also offers additional materials as well as advice on mainstreaming the approach in the context of displacement and migration and on the use of sport in other sectors.

## 2 Background

Unemployment and underemployment are two of the most serious problems facing partner

countries of German development cooperation. Young people, and young women in particular, are among the worst affected. According to statistics from the International Labour Organization (ILO), over 71 million young people between the ages of 15 and 24 were unemployed worldwide in 2016. This means that two out of every five unemployed people were younger than 24

---

*Sport can facilitate access to vocational training and make it more appealing.*

---

years old. In addition to unemployment, developing countries in particular face major challenges from underemployment and inhumane working conditions. In some countries, the proportion of NEETs (young people not in education, employment or training) is alarmingly high. This is worrying, since this key marker indicates the potential disconnection of large numbers of young people from the labour market.

The dearth of educational opportunities and lack of information about the labour market make it difficult for many young people to get started in working life. Moreover, in many countries there is only a low level of acceptance in society for vocational education. At the same time, in many partner countries of German development cooperation the private sector suffers from a shortage of qualified skilled workers.

High youth unemployment not only causes great economic damage in individual countries, it also results in high social costs. Young people without work are often unable to develop future





prospects. They feel frustrated, worthless and socially excluded. Such feelings harbour serious potential for conflict and violence. On the other hand, creating prospects in the education system and in the labour market specifically for young people can make a significant contribution to peaceful and stable development. For this reason, promoting youth employment plays a prominent role in the context of German development cooperation. To this end, German development cooperation pursues an integrated approach to employment promotion. Not only does it use training measures to improve the skills and capabilities of young people, it also supports their placement on the labour market. Moreover, by promoting start-ups and company growth, it leads to the creation of new and better jobs.

German development cooperation has been promoting the expansion and improvement of vocational education and training in partner countries for over 50 years. Vocational training fits seamlessly in the concept of lifelong learning, which embraces all learning processes from early years education, primary and secondary schooling, to vocational training and university education.

Sport plays a supportive role in all of this. Sport can facilitate access to vocational training and make it more appealing. Furthermore, sport activities can give young people the opportunity to learn skills relevant to the labour market and acquire invaluable initial practical and work experience. Of particular value is the fact that sport offers a means of addressing young people who are otherwise difficult to reach.

---

*Participation in sport opens up new horizons and opportunities when it comes to choosing a career.*

---

### 3. Approaches and priority areas

Sport can be used in various ways to prepare young people for the labour market:

- Skills relevant to the labour market such as decision-making, communication, target orientation and teamwork can be integrated into sports coaching and acquired by participants on the sports field.
- Building on sports programmes, participants can also acquire important practical skills for the labour market that go beyond the sports field, e.g. as youth coaches, referees, team ad-

## Ethiopia Sport2Work

In addition to having a high unemployment rate, Ethiopia suffers widely from a shortage of skilled labour. Consequently, the expansion of the vocational education system is a high priority for both the Ethiopian Government and German development cooperation.

The regional programme 'Sport for Development in Africa' works closely with an existing vocational education project that forms part of German development cooperation. The construction and restoration of sports grounds at state and private vocational schools and the integration of the 'Sport for Development' approach into school activities strengthens the acquisition by young people of key skills relevant to the labour market. These include a sense of responsibility, the ability to work in a team and determination. Furthermore, the approach helps to improve teaching quality, promotes a healthy lifestyle among students, and facilitates their entry into the labour market.

The sports facilities at vocational school are also used by clubs and community groups. This creates points of contact through which young people can be motivated for the services offered by vocational schools, and enables the vocational schools to open up to the community. Moreover, extracurricular activities linked with sports events help to provide job orientation.

The project has developed the 'Sport2Work' methodology to promote vocational education through sport. It provides a basis for the further training of coaches. The Addis Ababa Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) Agency helps the project to equip and set up sports departments and sports clubs, and it supports the deployment of properly trained staff in vocational schools. This ensures that the



'Sport for 'Development' approach is integrated in the vocational education system in the long term. So far, the approach has reached around 20,000 children and young people in Ethiopia. 35 sports grounds have been rehabilitated or newly constructed. These benefit more than 32,800 children and young people.

ministrators and organisers of tournaments and sporting events.

- Enthusiasm for sport can also be used to make existing vocational orientation activities more appealing and more interesting to young people and to reach target groups that are otherwise difficult to access. Sports coaching sessions can be integrated into vocational orientation activities (e.g. orientation days or job fairs). Conversely, sports events (summer camps, sports festivals) can also be used as a means of con-

---

*Sport enables young people to gather a wide range of experience that is relevant to the labour market.*

---

veying information about training opportunities to young participants or to give young people a chance to gain their first practical experience of certain jobs.

- Coaches are important role models for children and young people, since players attach great importance to their judgement. Building on their coaching activities, trained coaches can help young people with their integration into the labour market. For example, they can advise their players on important life choices, or support them in writing CVs and job applications, or show them where to look for further information, orientation and advice on employment.

- The integration of high-quality sports coaching in vocational schools can increase those schools' appeal. Regular sports activities also reinforce participants' learning ability, motiva-

tion and healthy lifestyle, and they improve the social climate at vocational schools.

- It is possible to help young people develop their own sport-related business ideas, e.g. as organisers of sports programmes or manufacturers of sports equipment. Jobs in the sports sector, such as working as a sports coach or in sports clubs, also offer young people a point of entry into the labour market.

#### 4. Lessons learned and results achieved

Using sport in the context of youth employment promotion and in vocational schools is still a new approach in global terms. The early experiences gained through the country activities of the sector programme 'Sport for Development', as well as other sports projects in German development cooperation or run by other organisations, have shown how successful the approach can be.

One example of this is the A Ganar and Vencederas programme which is running in several

---

*Regular sport at vocational schools supports young people's learning ability and motivation.*

---

countries of Latin America. This is aimed at young people who have left school, but have not yet found a training placement, further school education or employment. To begin with, sports lessons are provided in four related phases, with a focus on job-related skills. Following this, the young participants complete a course of voca-



## Palestinian territories

### Sport for employability

In the Palestinian territories German development cooperation uses sport as an instrument to reinforce the appeal of vocational training and to improve opportunities for young people in the labour market. In cooperation with the Training and Employment Promotion programme (TEP), measures are taken to raise the levels of acceptance of, and interest in vocational training, by providing career information at sport events and integrating the 'Sport for Development' approach into national training programmes. For the TEP programme, the 'Sport for Development' approach has the benefit that it facilitates simple and direct access to the target group. Sport makes it possible to reach young people in refugee camps, as well as early school leavers and unemployed youths, who are otherwise difficult to reach.

In cooperation with national and international partners the manual 'Kicking Youth Competencies' has been developed in 2016 and the manual 'Learn to Play - Play to Learn' in 2017. The manuals serve as a pedagogical and practical reference for coaches wishing to impart vocational and social skills through sport. The first manual focuses on football, the second manual on other team sports (e.g. Ultimate Frisbee and Touch Rugby) and includes a wide range of simple 'small games'.

Sport is used, furthermore, to provide information to young people about opportunities to pursue vocational education and training. So far over 2,000 young people attending summer camps and orientation days (12 to 17 years old, over 30% of them female) had received information about vocational training



opportunities. They could try out some of the occupations for themselves in short practical sessions, and took part in educational sports activities.



tional training which is geared to the labour market and also includes advanced training in entrepreneurship. The programme then assists them in finding work experience and appren-

---

*Coaches are important role models and figures of trust. They can support the entry of young people into the labour market.*

---

ticeship placements, and finally with their job searches or reintegration into the (vocational) education system. Thus, sport can open up channels for young people either to reintegrate with the education system or enter the labour market. Within a year of completing the programme, 67% of the 14,000 young participants either found a job or continued with their education.

In the sector programme 'Sport for Develop-

ment', for a project in Namibia a partnership was established with Futouris e.V. and the TUI Care Foundation in the tourism industry. This offers training and employment activities in the hotel and catering sector for young female athletes living in the Girls Center of the Namibian Football Association, and in the neighbouring municipality of Katutura, Windhoek. They also receive assistance in finding internships in tourism enterprises. In this way, alongside their sports activities, they can develop career prospects in Namibia's dynamic service sector. After all, the ability to work as part of a team, communicate and show respect are essential not only on the sports field, but in the workplace too. These approaches highlight the extent to which sport can be used creatively in the context of vocational education and employment promotion.

---

***For further information and advice, please do not hesitate to contact us!***

***E-Mail: [sport-for-development@giz.de](mailto:sport-for-development@giz.de)  
Website: [www.giz.de/sport-for-development](http://www.giz.de/sport-for-development)***

---



**Published by:**  
Deutsche Gesellschaft für  
Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH

Registered offices Bonn and Eschborn, Germany

Friedrich-Ebert-Allee 36+40 53113 Bonn, Germany T +49 228 4460-0 F +49 228 4460-1766	Dag-Hammarskjöld-Weg 1-5 65760 Eschborn, Germany T +49 61 96 79-0 F +49 61 96 79-11 15
---	---

**Contact:**  
sector programme 'sport for development'  
sport-for-development@giz.de

GIZ is responsible for the content of this publication.

**On behalf of:**  
Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development  
Division for culture; creative industries; media; sport

**Photocredits:**

Page 1: GIZ/ Ridvan Yumlu  
Page 2: GIZ/ Ray Ochieng, GIZ/ Ridvan Yumlu  
Page 3: GIZ/ Alea Host  
Page 4: GIZ/ Lena Schuldt  
Page 5: GIZ/ Oliver Becker, GIZ/ Mulugeta Gebrekidan  
Page 7: GIZ/ Ruth Lumbasi  
Page 8: GIZ/ Alea Host

On behalf of



Federal Ministry  
for Economic Cooperation  
and Development