

Chapter 9

Promote Sustained, Inclusive and Sustainable Economic Growth, Full and Productive Employment and Decent Work for All (SDG 8)

9.1 Introduction

The Millennium Development Goal (MDG) target of halving the proportion of people living in extreme poverty was met five years ahead of schedule. Overall, the number of people living on less than US\$1.25 per day fell from 1.9 billion in 1990 to 836 million in 2015 (United Nations 2015). While SDGs 1 and 10 represent a continued focus on poverty and all aspects of inequality, SDG 8 gives broader attention to ‘sustained, inclusive and sustainable growth’ as a foundation for prosperity and sustainable development more generally.

SDG 8 also continues to prioritise ‘full and productive employment and decent work for all’, an aspiration for which there has been a lack of progress since its inclusion in the MDGs. Globally, the proportion of the working-age population who are employed has fallen, and the 204 million people who were unemployed in 2015 represented a significant increase both from 1991 and since the 2008 global economic crisis (United Nations 2015). The International Labour Organization (ILO) has identified that young people, and especially young women, across the globe have been significantly and particularly affected by a ‘prolonged job crisis’. Globally, estimated figures for youth unemployment stood at 12.6 per cent in 2013, with as many as 73 million young people being without work (ILO 2013). Youth unemployment and underemployment are especially acute in developing regions, where particular problems with the quality, stability and regularity of work are recognised (ILO 2013).

The potential for sport to contribute to SDG 8 is connected to recognition by the World Economic Forum’s Global Agenda Council on the Role of Sports in Society that it has become ‘one

of the top ten industries globally (that) has truly achieved a global presence (and) is uniquely placed to provide long-lasting effects that support economic growth' (World Economic Forum 2009). Moreover, progress towards other SDGs could also have a broader economic impact. For example, increases in sport-based participation associated with SDG 3 can reduce the direct and indirect costs of physical inactivity, which are projected to reach US\$7.5 billion and US\$26 billion in India and the United Kingdom, respectively, by 2030.

In relation to SDG targets 8.1 and 8.9, it is especially important to recognise the varied economic activity that may be generated at different levels of sport and in different country contexts through participant and spectator costs; facility construction; equipment and clothing manufacturing; media and sponsorship; and events, travel and tourism. Employment in all of these areas can contribute to SDG target 8.5, and the particular properties of sport make it suitable for contributing to SDG targets 8.3 and 8.6 – associated entrepreneurship and youth unemployment, respectively. However, concerns with regard to labour rights and migration within the sport industry means that attention must also be given to SDG targets 8.7 and 8.8.

Box 9.1 Enhancing the contribution of sport to Sustainable Development Goal 8: Key policy implications

- The sport industry may make a valuable contribution to economic growth and employment, but capacity-building for the collection of precise data on the scale of this impact is required in many countries.
- Place-based sport event and tourism policies have been particularly prominent in seeking to derive economic benefits from sport.
- Sport-based approaches to employment training, entrepreneurship and enterprise have emerged and need to take account of opportunities within the broader economy to maximise their potential.
- Strategic planning is required to leverage economic benefits through sport and to link sport-based approaches to potential job markets.
- Policy-makers have responsibility for ensuring that labour rights are enforced within and around sport, particularly for employees in sports construction and manufacturing and for young people seeking careers in professional sport.

9.2 Analysis of sport and specific SDG targets

Target 8.1 Sustain per capita economic growth in accordance with national circumstances and, in particular, at least 7 per cent GDP growth per annum in the least developed countries.

Target 8.9 By 2030, devise and implement policies to promote sustainable tourism that creates jobs and promotes local culture and products.

Findings have pointed to the growing economic value of sport while also indicating the financial value derived from sport-based interventions that deliver social benefit.

Informed economic policy-making related to sport requires measurement of the value of the sport industry. The complexities associated with the collection of such data are magnified when recognition is given to the diverse range of economic activities that are directly and indirectly associated with sport. In countries where there are expertise and available data to undertake such economic analysis, findings have pointed to the growing economic value of sport while also indicating the financial value derived from sport-based interventions that deliver social benefit (Crabbe 2013; Fujiwara *et al.* 2014). Indeed, one global estimate puts the value of the entire sport industry at US\$700 billion per annum, a figure that represents 1 per cent of global GDP (Kearney 2014). Taxation from sport commonly exceeds sport-related government expenditure, and the economic scale of professional sport has increased rapidly in many countries (Gratton *et al.* 2012). There are, however, significant variations in national access to, and expertise for, economic analyses of sport, with constraints in low- and medium-income countries being particularly acute. Even in high-income Commonwealth countries, there can be concerns about the reliability of estimates and data at sub-national and local levels (Davies 2010).

These limitations are especially pertinent because of the policy impetus to promote sport-based economic activity, and impact has often centred on place-based and event-oriented approaches. Significant claims have been made for the economic impact of major sport events. For example, the Durban Commonwealth Games in 2022 are predicted to generate economic impact worth £502 million (Ernst and Young 2014). However, strategies for bidding and hosting major sport events must be developed and pursued with care; the evidence for the economic benefits of major sport events is not unequivocal (Gratton *et al.* 2012), and pre-event predictions of economic impact have commonly been far greater than post-event

analysis has found (Kasamati 2008). Concerns have also been raised about the relative distribution of economic benefits, both geographically within countries and across sections of the population (Cornelissen 2009).

While there has been an increasing trend for some developing countries to bid for and host major sport events, this is not a viable strategy for many Commonwealth countries. However, there has been growing interest in hosting the increasing range of smaller, so-called non-mega sport events. Hosting such events may be more feasible in many contexts, as they may not involve the construction or renovation of facilities, and other related infrastructure requirements are less onerous (Agha and Taks 2015). Reduced infrastructure costs may make non-mega sport events a better policy approach for achieving optimal economic impact (Taks 2016; Gibson *et al.* 2012), although there remains a need for further rigorous analysis of such claims.

Promotion of place-based sport tourism can also contribute to economic impact and can take a variety of different forms. A high profile has been accorded to spectator tourism linked to hosting of sport events. Given the variety of different events and hosts, conclusive evidence of their economic impact is not available. Major and smaller-scale events can have different impacts in respect of the quantity of incoming spectators and the extent to which these may crowd out other tourist visits and spending (Gibson *et al.* 2012; Taks 2016). Consideration also needs to be given to the potential of sport events to improve the international image of cities and as a stimulus to develop tourism infrastructure (Gratton *et al.* 2012).

Sport tourism opportunities also include those based on more active forms of participation. In this regard, sport can be either the sole reason for tourism or an important factor that influences tourists' choice of destinations. Different locations may be better suited to single- or multi-sport tourism, but opportunities for sporting activity can often be included effectively in place-based tourism marketing (Hinch and Higham 2008). All approaches to garnering economic impact through sport tourism may be best realised through drawing on capacities across public-private and civil society partnerships (see Figure 9.1).

Overall, enhancing the economic impact of sport through place-based and event-oriented approaches requires strategic planning

Smaller non-mega sport events may represent a more optimal policy approach to achieve economic impact from hosting sporting events.

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and implementation that is co-ordinated across the sectors of national and local government responsible for economic development, infrastructure and regeneration, as well as tourism and sport. There is evidence that long-term incremental strategies for sport-based economic development, which may culminate in the hosting of major events, can be particularly productive and enable greater alignment with the principles of sustainable development (Kasamati 2008; Cornelissen 2009). Regardless, strategies must seek to leverage maximum economic benefit through public–private partnerships, prioritising the use of local suppliers and labour, developing specifically oriented tourism marketing, and encouraging longer visitor stays and increased spending (Challip and Heere 2014).

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Target 8.5 By 2030, achieve full and productive employment and decent work for all women and men, including for young people and persons with disabilities, and equal pay for work of equal value.

Target 8.3 Promote development-oriented policies that support productive activities, decent job creation, entrepreneurship, creativity and innovation, and encourage the formalisation and growth of micro-, small- and medium-sized enterprises, including through access to financial services.

Target 8.6 By 2020, substantially reduce the proportion of youth not in employment, education or training.

Data on trends in employment within sport are more limited than for overall sport-based economic activity. However, some analyses point to concerns that secure, long-term employment may not be the norm in some parts of the sport industry (Camy 2006; Primault 2006), although progress has been made in particular countries towards professionalising some sport-related jobs. Some indicators also point to a high proportion of part-time jobs within the sport industry (Camy 2006).

Permeable boundaries between volunteering and paid employment in sport can bring the potential for exploitation (Primault 2006). Nevertheless, the strong culture of volunteering in sport brings many benefits. Where calculated (Australian Sports Commission 2010), the economic value of sport-based volunteering is significant and, for individuals, volunteering in sport can provide accessible routes into paid employment. Participation and, especially, volunteering in

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sport can contribute to the development of core skills such as communication, teamwork and problem solving. As recognised by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) and the ILO, using the popularity of sport as an engagement tool can enhance policies and practices that seek to address the priority of youth unemployment through working with those who have not attended or completed school (ILO 2013).

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Education and training towards employability has been an integral part of a number of sport-based initiatives. For example, initiatives associated with the Glasgow 2014 Commonwealth Games provided specifically targeted training and opportunities to support young or previously unemployed people into work (Commonwealth Games Federation 2014). Across other Commonwealth countries, similar sport-based initiatives have varied in both scale and duration, and have sought to enable employment across a range of industries beyond, and in, sport. It is therefore vital to ensure that participants and volunteers in such initiatives gain technical, job-specific skills and qualifications in addition to other generic and transferable skills. This requires sport-based initiatives to be oriented towards current and future opportunities in identifiable job markets beyond sport and to complement actions by employers and training providers in other industries.

Sport-based approaches that are specifically focused on entrepreneurship and enterprise have gained increasing prominence and can be a source of both social and economic value (Ratten 2011). Sport-based NGOs and other types of civil society organisations have developed different models of entrepreneurial practice and development, including:

- the creation, marketing and sale of innovative sport-based products and services, which may also include distinctive and ethical models of employment or procurement
- the initiation of business enterprises to generate funding to deliver sport-based initiatives and thereby increase sustainability and reduce dependency on external donors
- the provision of specific education and training to develop entrepreneurial skills or enterprise opportunities for participants in sport-based initiatives.

Sport-based approaches may have particular value as they can support the development of collective approaches and networking that can enable entrepreneurship and enterprise, especially in developing countries (Ratten 2014). Examples from Commonwealth countries whereby young females have used sport-based skills to develop their own income-generating activities may be particularly relevant, given that degrees of economic self-sufficiency may be important in addressing female empowerment more generally (Hayhurst 2014).

Again, these agendas are best pursued through cross-sectoral approaches, as recognised in the joint Commonwealth Secretariat and United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) *Policy Guide on Youth Entrepreneurship* (Commonwealth Secretariat and UNCTAD [n.d.]). Sport-based approaches can benefit from integration with relevant developments and policy in other sectors, not least to improve understanding about effective practices and contextual enablers for entrepreneurship and enterprise (ILO 2013). Access to finance for small- and medium-sized enterprises is a widespread problem, especially in developing countries, but care must also be taken to minimise risks that external funding can contribute to pressure for unsustainable expansion (UNESCO 2013). More generally, broader progress towards good governance and reducing bureaucracy is important for removing potential barriers to entrepreneurship and enterprise (Ratten 2014).

Target 8.8 Protect labour rights and promote safe and secure working environments for all workers, including migrant workers, in particular women migrants, and those in precarious employment.

Target 8.7 Take immediate and effective measures to eradicate forced labour, end modern slavery and human trafficking, and secure the prohibition and elimination of the worst forms of child labour, including recruitment and use of child soldiers, and by 2025 end child labour in all its forms.

The need to institute and effectively implement measures to protect workers is emphasised, as exploitation is increasingly recognised in some parts of the sport industry, especially in areas that have been transformed by globalisation. Opportunities for employment and economic development in low- and medium-income countries have resulted from the widespread outsourcing of sport manufacturing by transnational companies and in the construction of sport stadiums and

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infrastructure for the hosting of major events. However, ongoing and multiple concerns have been raised about employment practices, pay and conditions for local and migrant workers in different countries in both of these sectors (Cottle and Rombaldi 2014).

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If there is potential for exploitation, national governments bear a particular responsibility for ensuring that international standards for human and workers' rights are adhered to. Further intervention may be required in cases where self-regulation enacted through private sector manufacturing supply chains proves ineffective (Thibault 2009). Ensuring recognition of trade unions and working with other civil society networks for workers' rights has also proved to be important in identifying and addressing abuses where they occur (Giulianotti 2011).

The rights of young people seeking careers in professional sport also need to be protected, especially given the increasing number of 'academies' in developing countries that may purport to offer local and global pathways into such employment (Akindes and Kirwan 2009). Potential for exploitation exists because careers in professional sport are achievable for only very few young people, but are highly attractive to many. There is evidence of different standards of ethical practice among academies (Darby 2012), and there are some cases of young people spending significant sums to pursue opportunities sold under false pretences. A more general risk is that the pursuit of professional sport careers may divert young people from alternative education and employment routes.

Some academies have developed innovative models that integrate education and sport development activities and offer dual-career preparation for young people.

There is also diversity in the legal status of academies, especially within and across developing countries (Darby *et al.* 2007). Within the scope of governmental intervention allowed by the statutes of the IOC, FIFA (Fédération Internationale de Football Association) and other international sport federations, there are examples where national agencies have sought to identify and classify all academies, and this offers a route towards adherence with relevant laws and legislation, and integration into regulated sport development structures and systems. There may, therefore, also be scope to encourage the spread of existing examples of good practice, especially as some academies have developed innovative models that integrate education and sport development activities and offer dual-career preparation for young people (Darby 2013).

9.3 The means of implementation: Policy options for Sustainable Development Goal 8

Both national-level economic policy and more targeted implementation can be important in enhancing and ensuring the contribution of sport to SDG 8. This reflects the breadth of possibilities associated with sport, ranging from economic growth within the sport industry to utilising sport-based approaches to enhance wider agendas of employability, entrepreneurship and enterprise. As a result, a range of policy instruments may be usefully employed by policy-makers. Fiscal instruments and investment can directly and indirectly stimulate sport-based economic development. Further development of organisational links between stakeholders across sport and other industries, and providing regulation to protect labour rights and address exploitation, may be appropriate in particular cases. Finally, evidence-based policy-making requires improved data to indicate the scale of, and prospects for, economic development in different sectors of the sport industry.

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Table 9.1 Policy options to enhance the contribution of sport to SDG 8

	Government-led Implementation	Structured implementation partnerships	Complementary Implementation	Autonomous Implementation
Country-leadership and policy coherence	Develop well-targeted, long-term cross-government and public-private investment strategies that may enhance and leverage the economic impact of sport and related industries			
	Base policy decisions regarding hosting mega-events, and those of a smaller scale, on in-depth analysis of prospective costs and economic impacts			
			Draw on broader policies and resources that support entrepreneurship and enterprise to enhance similar sport-based approaches	
			Design and implement sport-based employability approaches based on thorough analysis of current and future job markets and associated training needs	

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Table 9.1 Policy options to enhance the contribution of sport to SDG 8 (cont.)

	Government-led Implementation	↔	Structured implementation partnerships	↔	Complementary Implementation	↔	Autonomous Implementation
Mobilising financial and human resources	Use available fiscal policy instruments to support local supply chains to provide goods and services required at all levels of sport						
	Leverage resources for investment in sport-based approaches through cross-sectoral engagement across sport, tourism, infrastructure, regeneration and economic development						
			Support solidarity in sport through influencing and supporting professional sport to pool and best utilise a proportion of their financial resources in support of grass-roots sport and other sport-based approaches				
			Utilise specific expertise in broader tourism sectors to promote and develop sport-based tourism opportunities				
Country-specific and disaggregated 'measures of progress'	Develop systems to monitor and share good practice and, where appropriate, intervene to protect labour rights across those sectors of the sports industry where problematic practices may be identified						
	Draw on international expertise to enhance national capacity for differentiated analyses of the economic value of all aspects of the sport industry, including that from sport-based employment and volunteering						
				Apply appropriate methodologies to estimate the economic return generated by various and particular types of sport-based initiative			

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Implementing a National Sport for Development and Peace Strategy

Sierra Leone

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The Sierra Leone Ministry of Sports published a new national sports policy in early 2015. One of the primary objectives of this policy is 'to provide for the use of sports as a cost effective means for development and peace initiatives' (Sierra Leone Ministry of Sport 2015).

To advance this objective, the Ministry of Sports has developed a National Sport for Development and Peace (SDP) Strategy and Action Plan. These documents articulate how sport will contribute towards the country's national development goals, including those related to peace-building and community cohesion (including Ebola recovery); health; education; equality and inclusion; and youth unemployment. Improving co-ordination and collaboration among ministries, departments and statutory agencies is a feature of the strategy. Together, the strategy and plan respond to SDG targets 17.14 and 17.15, which highlight the importance of nationally led and enhanced policy coherence for sustainable development.

Implementation is now underway, with a number of early successes. SDP initiatives are beginning to impact on people's lives and contribute to building stronger communities in Sierra Leone.

The successful hosting of the National Sport Jamboree, which included education and messaging on Ebola recovery, has increased confidence, improved social interaction and reduced stigma towards Ebola survivors. These efforts are positioned to contribute to SDG target 3.3, which is focused on combating communicable disease. In addition, basketball programmes aimed at promoting interaction among Sierra Leone youth have helped ease tensions and promote mutual respect between those loyal to different political parties. This work is contributing to SDG target 16.1, aimed at significantly reducing all forms of violence.

Meanwhile, in support of SDG target 4.7, focused on promoting a culture of peace and non-violence in education institutions, sports-based programmes are part of an overall strategy to address violence in academic institutions and reduce dropout, and through this increase skilled labour and literacy rates.

A linked initiative, the National Sport for All Commission, is tasked with promoting the ability of sport to contribute to the country's health objectives, including those linked to SDG target 3.4 related to reducing premature mortality from non-communicable disease. Citizens are encouraged to keep active and healthy through the Play for Life programme, which also aims to help keep some of Sierra Leone's traditional sports alive and pass them on to future generations.

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Implementing a National Sport for Development and Peace Strategy (*cont.*)

Successes have been achieved as a result of strong governmental will and co-operation. The establishment of a National Steering Committee to oversee SDP activities has helped bridge the gap between the Ministry of Sports and other government agencies, and has led to more effective collaboration. Funding has been introduced, specifically for inter-community events that will promote social coexistence. Finally, the programme ensures that programme delivery occurs at accessible facilities.

If the objectives of the National Sports Policy are to be met, more facilities will need to be provided to encourage people to participate in physical exercise. Limited financing of course also remains a challenge, although early successes have led other public and private entities to express an interest in providing funds and upgrading sport facilities in communities.

SDP initiatives are beginning to improve lives and build stronger communities in Sierra Leone. The Ministry of Sports encourages other countries to explore its approach for their own use, and will share more SDP success stories with the international community in the future.