

## Chapter 10

# Make Cities and Human Settlements Inclusive, Safe, Resilient and Sustainable (SDG 11)

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### 10.1 Introduction

The *2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development* recognises that ‘sustainable urban development and management are crucial to the quality of life of our people’ (UNGA 2015, para. 34, 9). The concomitant adoption of SDG 11 represents an important extension of the MDGs, which did not give specific attention to global trends of increasing urbanisation. Fifty per cent of the global population currently live in cities (United Nations Sustainable Development Solutions Network [n.d.]), and urbanisation is expected to continue over the timeframe of the SDGs. Demographic and geographical changes mean that, by 2030, it is estimated that as many as 60 per cent of all urban dwellers will be under the age of 18 (UN-Habitat [n.d.]).

SDG 11 therefore represents recognition of the need to adopt a systematic approach that addresses infrastructure implications of population-level changes, in order to realise the full scope of the *2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development*. For example, there is strong and increasing evidence of the impact of the physical urban environment, and the provision of green space, on various aspects of health and well-being, and on patterns of health inequalities (Smit *et al.* 2011). UN-Habitat guidance indicates that a minimum of 15 per cent of an urban area should be allocated for open and green spaces and public facilities (United Nations Conference on Housing and Sustainable Urban Development 2015), which, in many cases, could include those for sport and active recreation. The benefit of such spaces ‘where residents can gather [is that they] will promote social connectivity and diversity, thus making neighbourhoods more cohesive, lively, and ultimately more attractive to residents and investors alike’.

It is therefore clear that SDG 11 and its specific targets have particular relevance to sport, and significant implications

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### Box 10.1 Enhancing the contribution of sport to Sustainable Development Goal 11: Key policy implications

- The provision of appropriate spaces and facilities for sport and active recreation can have wide-reaching and long-term impacts on participation, with resultant contributions across other development goals.
- Spaces and facilities for sport and active recreation should be designed to offer safety and accessibility for all.
- Multiple benefits can be drawn from integrating spaces for sport and active recreation into facilities for health, education and other services.
- Environmental principles and considerations of sustainable and community usage should inform the design of all spaces and facilities for sport, especially large-scale sport stadiums.
- Policies should encourage widespread involvement in the planning, design and management of spaces and facilities for sport and active recreation across the full range of national-level stakeholders and potential users.

*SDG target 11.7 identifies the importance of designing and maintaining all spaces, including those suitable for sport and active recreation, in a way that provides safe and inclusive access for all in society.*

for its contribution to other goals considered in this guide (see Box 10.1). SDG target 11.7 identifies the importance of designing and maintaining all spaces, including those suitable for sport and active recreation, in a way that provides safe and inclusive access for all in society. Planning and management of such spaces must be participatory, integrated and sustainable. SDG target 11.3, therefore, indicates both the importance and potential contribution of adopting such approaches within sport.

## 10.2 Analysis of sport and specific SDG targets

*Target 11.7 By 2030, provide universal access to safe, inclusive and accessible, green and public spaces, in particular for women and children, older persons and persons with disabilities.*

*Policies that ensure that physical environments are conducive to participation can have long-term and population-level impacts.*

The availability of spaces and facilities that are accessible, both by their proximity and design, is vital for participation and inclusion in sport and other forms of active recreation (Nicholson *et al.* 2010), which, in turn, is fundamental to contributions across the range of SDGs. For example, overall effects of urban planning and design on levels of physical activity and a range of related health outcomes are now well evidenced, especially in developed countries (Smit *et al.* 2011). Therefore, policies that ensure that physical environments are

conducive to participation can have long-term and population-level impacts, extending what may be achieved by sport-based programming (Kaczynski and Henderson 2007). Such policies may be especially important in low- and medium-income countries where rapid urbanisation and related developments have resulted in the loss of outdoor spaces conducive to sport and active recreation (Akindes and Kirwan 2009).

Further work is required to enhance the evidence regarding the benefit of particular types of spaces or facilities for sport and active recreation (Kural 2010). However, spaces that allow both structured and unstructured engagement in sport and active recreation, alongside other leisure pursuits, can encourage wider family and community engagement, and more sustained use (McCormack *et al.* 2010). Furthermore, the integration of spaces for sport participation with facilities for health, education and other services can enable innovative approaches to collaborative provision, which have been recognised as important across multiple SDGs. In addition, such approaches may help to enhance community cohesion and foster greater engagement among user groups. In respect of schools in particular, there is recognition of both the challenges and significant possibilities of designing multi-purpose spaces that can be suitable for physical education, enable young people to engage in informal and inclusive activity outside of the curriculum and, where feasible, be available for use by the wider community (Fahlén 2011).

There is also growing recognition that integrated approaches to urban design and planning can promote access and enable physical activity to be built into daily routines (Heath *et al.* 2012). For example, there has been much interest in ensuring that urban infrastructure offers safe and accessible opportunities for walking and cycling, both to increase physical activity and reduce air pollution caused by other forms of transport (McCormack and Shiell 2011). Integrating messaging into the fabric of key community sites and into specific infrastructure – such as stairs, for example – to prompt immediate choices towards physical activity has also proved effective (Heath *et al.* 2012). Sporting facilities and spaces have also often been adorned with messages designed to educate participants and spectators about key health and social issues.

Ongoing societal changes can give rise to opportunities and challenges with regard to providing appropriate spaces for

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sport-based activities. Patterns of participation in different types of sport vary considerably across and within different countries. Evidence from developed countries, especially, points to links between changing work–leisure patterns and increasing interest and participation in individualised and non-competitive forms of sport and active recreation (Kural 2010). As a result, innovative utilisation or re-orientation of existing outdoor community spaces for non-traditional forms of sport can be a feasible option in high-density urban environments (Kural 2010). For example, emergent evidence suggests that the allocation of small ‘pocket parks’, which allow safe participation in activities such as dance and informal exercise in urban areas, can be cost effective for promoting physical activity (Cohen *et al.* 2014).

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Inclusion, accessibility and safety for all groups in society need to be key considerations in the design of all spaces and facilities. When close consideration is given to the needs of specific groups, this can result in improved and inclusive access for all (English Federation of Disability Sport 2013). For example, key barriers to participation by people with a disability can be overcome through suitably designed spaces and facilities which are appropriately equipped and provide appropriate external access (English Federation of Disability Sport 2013). These requirements link to more general design imperatives to ensure the availability of safe and accessible transport options, appropriate signage and information, secure lighting and visibility, and suitability for seasonal climate variations.

Linking to SDG 5, urban planners and sport policy-makers need to consider the particular needs of females, especially so in contexts in which dominant masculine cultures are deeply embedded. A balance needs to be struck to ensure that spaces and facilities are considered culturally acceptable for girls and women to participate in sport, while offering them appropriate levels of security and privacy (Brady 2005). Similarly, young people have emphasised the value they attach to spaces where they can gather in safety (Spaaij *et al.* 2014; UN-Habitat 2015), and it has been recognised that the provision of such spaces can act as a deterrent against community crime (Smit *et al.* 2011).

Beyond community-based spaces and facilities, the development and design of larger sport stadiums and venues, especially when connected to the hosting of sporting events, can have significant implications for the urban environments in which

they are situated. Well-designed stadiums can become focal points in cities, readily identifiable by both residents and external stakeholders (Ahlfeldt and Maennig 2010). The potential environmental impacts of stadiums have also been increasingly recognised, and have become central to selection criteria for the hosting of sporting events (Cornelissen 2009). There are now numerous examples of stadiums that have been designed and constructed in line with environmental principles regarding material sourcing and use, energy conservation, and waste and water management (McCullough *et al.* 2015).

Linking with SDG 3, there is emerging interest across some developed countries in the contribution that stadium design and management can make to health promotion among users (Drygas *et al.* 2013). Ensuring sustainable usage of stadiums, in part through community-oriented design and programming, is now regarded as a priority in respect of stadiums constructed for specific events. More broadly, as considered in the following section, policy-makers need to give consideration to the integration of stadium development and design into various national and municipal policy agendas, including those related to urban regeneration.

*Target 11.3 By 2030, enhance inclusive and sustainable urbanisation and capacity for participatory, integrated and sustainable human settlement planning and management in all countries.*

Enhancing urban environments and realising the benefits of spaces and facilities that are appropriate for sport requires well-considered planning and management from the national to community level. The importance of infrastructure for progress towards a variety of SDGs emphasises that the contributions of stakeholders from various sectors need to be aligned and, in some cases, reconciled. Conversely, dislocation between planning processes that influence the location, design, funding, management and programming in sporting spaces and facilities can result in significant under-utilisation and undermine their potential contribution across a variety of development goals (Fahlén 2011).

Although national policy-makers and stakeholders may not have immediate responsibility for planning in particular urban areas, the policy instruments available to them can help to ensure appropriate provision of suitable spaces and facilities. National-level data and analysis on the geographical distribution

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of particular types of spaces and facilities, both for participation and high-performance sport, can support effective planning by all stakeholders through identifying priority areas where new or additional developments may be located (Paramio-Salcines 2014). National policies and the regulatory frameworks enforcing them can also ensure the preservation of spaces that may be utilised for sport and active recreation in urban areas (see Figure 10.1). Utilisation of expertise within sport federations can also contribute to specifying quality design criteria for different types of spaces and facilities.

**Figure 10.1** Making safe, accessible spaces for sport and physical activity available to all



**Source:** Akindes and Kirwan (2009); Brady (2005); Cohen *et al.* (2014); Heath *et al.* (2012); Paramio-Salcines (2014)

Roles in providing, securing and directing investment in infrastructure and urban environments may span national, sub-national and local levels. Although some responsibilities for public spending can be devolved, national funding initiatives can prioritise the integration of provisions for sport and active recreation into infrastructure projects in other sectors, such as education, health and transport. As addressed under SDG 4, for example, national guidelines and requirements can ensure that school facilities include appropriate specifications for physical education and sport. National analysis can also enable inward investment in sport facilities to be best directed to address national and local development needs and goals.

National funding may contribute to the development of community-based sporting facilities and spaces, but overall responsibility for this type of provision most commonly resides with sub-national and local government. Return on investment, which may encompass wider benefits of improved community well-being and safety, can be particularly evident in respect of local developments. As such, it is at the local level that public-private partnerships to generate investment in sporting facilities and spaces may be realised.

At the levels of sub-national and local government, there are different models through which the development of sporting infrastructure can be integrated with, and contribute to, overall urban planning goals (Davies 2010). In a 'sports-led regeneration' model, event hosting and/or the construction of sport stadiums represent catalysts for broader urban planning and development projects. The high-profile nature of sport-led regeneration can stimulate collective action and bring forward timescales for infrastructure developments that are of benefit beyond the specific sport stadium or event (Smith 2012).

An alternative 'sport regeneration' model is centred on cross-sector, area-based strategies for urban development which integrate planning for sporting spaces and facilities from the outset. Sporting events and stadiums can be associated with this model, but it also provides greater scope for the integrated development of a range of spaces and facilities identified earlier in the chapter as offering potential to increase sport participation and address other SDGs. In practice, the connection between urban planning and the development of sporting infrastructure has often been more ad hoc than could be achieved by the adoption of either of the suggested models

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(Davies 2010). The planned instigation of a Commonwealth Sports Cities Network (Commonwealth Games Federation 2015) may offer encouragement towards more strategic approaches to integrated infrastructure development by contributing to sharing cross-country and cross-municipality learning.

The processes of urban planning and management can benefit from engaging the full spectrum of stakeholders and population groups that are involved in or are affected by developments (AlQahtany *et al.* 2013). Public consultations can demonstrate and garner support for the development of sporting spaces and facilities. Participatory and inclusive approaches to community engagement can be especially valuable, as urban planning processes are often the preserve of adult males (UN-Habitat 2015). Gaining input into the design of spaces and facilities from young people of both genders may be challenging, but it can result in creative innovations and greater ownership and use, and reduce any likelihood of subsequent vandalism (CABE Space and CABE Education 2004; UN-Habitat 2012). Beyond design issues, sport and development organisations are often well placed to contribute to community-based management and use of spaces and facilities. The value of doing so can also be enhanced through specific sport-based approaches that have been used to educate and enlist participants in the maintenance and improvement of environmental conditions in their own communities (Coalter 2010).

### 10.3 The means of implementation: Policy options for Sustainable Development Goal 11

*Contributions towards funding for spaces and facilities can be drawn from national and local governments, and can also be levered through partnerships with private and civil society organisations.*

Policy development and effective implementation that provides valuable, accessible, safe and inclusive spaces and facilities for sport and active recreation require the involvement of a range of stakeholders at national, local and community levels. National-level policy-makers can guide, regulate and monitor the planning and design of all spaces, including those that can be used for sport and active recreation. Contributions towards funding for spaces and facilities can be drawn from national and local governments, and can also be levered through partnerships with private and civil society organisations. The engagement of local stakeholders and potential users allows valuable contributions to the effective design and management of spaces and facilities, and their ongoing usage.

Table 10.1 Policy options to enhance the contribution of sport to SDG 11

	Government-led Implementation	Structured implementation partnerships	Complementary Implementation	Autonomous Implementation
Country-leadership and policy coherence	Co-ordinate planning and resourcing of spaces and facilities for sport and recreation across different levels of government, with clarification of respective roles			
	Develop spatial planning models for spaces and facilities for sport and active recreation and utilise these to inform all stakeholders involved in new and existing developments			
	Provide design guidance for spaces and facilities for sport and active recreation and identify minimum standards that enable inclusive and widespread participation within schools and other locations as appropriate			
	Develop locally appropriate strategic planning that is informed by models that link sport, the provision of community services and urban regeneration			
	Plan, design and develop sport stadiums to maximise ongoing and community-based usage and legacy			
			Engage sport-based and community organisations that can contribute to participatory approaches to the design and management of local spaces and facilities for sport and active recreation	
Mobilising financial and human resources	Utilise differentiated models of finance for spaces and facilities that draw on public, private and civil society sources of finance funding where relevant and available			
	Include and integrate provision for sport and active recreation in nationally funded infrastructure programmes			
	Draw on international and national expertise to inform the design of large-scale sport stadiums and alternative approaches to integrate opportunities for participation into the urban environment			

(Continued)

Table 10.1 Policy options to enhance the contribution of sport to SDG 11 (cont.)

	Government-led Implementation	↔	Structured implementation partnerships	↔	Complementary Implementation	↔	Autonomous Implementation
Country-specific and disaggregated 'measures of progress'	Differentiate spaces and facilities for sport and active recreation within those national and local measures that are used to calculate the geographic provision and distribution of open and public spaces						
	Consider the design of measures and systems of data collection to triangulate the distribution of spaces and facilities with measures of participation in sport and physical activity with						
	Utilise Social Return on Investment and other relevant methodological approaches to calculate the value of investments in particular spaces and facilities for sport and active recreation						

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