

# Sport For Life: Sport as a Tool for Development

**Isabella Grujoska & Bo Carlsson**

Dept of Sport Sciences, Malmö University

Published on the Internet,

[www.idrottsforum.org/articles/grujoska\\_carlsson/grujoska\\_carlsson071107.html](http://www.idrottsforum.org/articles/grujoska_carlsson/grujoska_carlsson071107.html)

(ISSN 1652-7224), 2007-11-07

Copyright © Isabella Grujoska & Bo Carlsson 2007. All rights reserved. Except for the quotation of short passages for the purposes of criticism and review, no part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted, in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording or otherwise, without the prior permission of the author.

Frågan om vem som ska ta ansvar för den sociala utvecklingen i samhället har under senare årtionden varit föremål för ideologiskt och pragmatiskt orienterad diskussion inom ramen för det offentliga samtalet. Det ansågs länge vara statens uppgift att exklusivt svara för att samhällsutvecklingen gick i en riktning som gynnade staten och dess institutioner, marknaden och tillväxten, samt medborgarna, som kollektiv och som enskilda individer. På 70-talet i Sverige talades allt mer om att företagen, särskilt vid nedläggelser, skulle ta ansvar för de sociala konsekvenserna av företagsekonomiskt motiverade beslut. Parallellt pågick en internationell debatt bland företagsekonomins teoretiker om så kallad corporate social responsibility, som dock först under 2000-talet blev till CSR och började manifesteras i praktiskt handling. Det är också först under det senaste decenniet som idrotten börjat anta utmaningen och öppet ta ställning för exempelvis organisationer som kämpar för utsatta grupper och social rättvisa.

I den organiserade idrottsrörelsens självsyn ingår föreställningen att idrott är något i grunden gott och kan bidra till positiv utveckling i alla möjliga sammanhang, till exempel när det gäller etnisk integration, brottsbekämpning, jämställdhetsarbete, och på senare tid också utvecklingen i de fattigaste länderna i tredje världen. I stora delar av Afrika, men även på andra platser, bedrivs olika sportprojekt i syfte att frambringa eller underlätta utvecklingen, med avseende på bland annat utbildning, hälsa, fred, jämställdhet, ekonomisk utveckling, social integration och demokrati. I en skiss till en utvärderingsstudie i syfte att fastställa i vilken utsträckning idrottens förmodade potential som utvecklingsverktyg kan realiseras på fältet, argumenterar Isabella Grujoska och Bo Carlsson för en fyrstegsmodell som tar sin utgångspunkt i en kritisk analys av pågående projekt, en analys som väger idrottens hyllade fördelar mot dess mindre kända, men desto påtagligare negativa sidor.

*People in every nation love sport. Its values – fitness, fair play, teamwork, the pursuit of excellence – are universal. It can be a powerful force for good in the lives of people devastated by war or poverty.<sup>1</sup> Sport can play a role in improving the lives of individuals, not only individuals, I might add, whole communities.<sup>2</sup>*  
Kofi Annan<sup>3</sup>

*The regular practice of sport offers invaluable lessons essential for life in our societies. Tolerance, cooperation, integration are necessary to succeed in both; sport and everyday life.<sup>4</sup> Sport teaches life skills. Sport remains the best school of life.<sup>5</sup>*  
Adolf Ogi<sup>6</sup>

## Introduction

*Sport Matters* is an excellent book title,<sup>7</sup> as well as a common attitude towards the power of sport. Sport, it is stated, holds up a healthy life and public health,<sup>8</sup> generates self-esteem and integrates individuals in society,<sup>9</sup> not to mention its merit as entertainment and excitement.<sup>10</sup> Additionally, sport is expected to create political images of nations as well as city-marketing, tourism and economic growth.<sup>11</sup> Along with these gifts, it is argued, sport contributes to moral learning and to rule-orientation in society in general,<sup>12</sup> and consequently, sport stands out as an interesting educating and moral arena,<sup>13</sup> significant in the development of society and everyday life.<sup>14</sup>

In the Nordic countries sport has played a crucial role in the development of the Welfare Community and the civic organisation of society (in NGOs). In this respect, regardless of the autonomy of sport,<sup>15</sup> sport has received financial support by the public sector, due to its

- 1 United Nations (2005). *Concept, International Year of Sport and Physical Education*. p. x.
- 2 Norges Fotbollsforbund. (2004). *Det er ikke ballen det kommer an på, det er målene. Internasjonalt arbeid for bærekraftig sosial utvikling*. GAN Grafisk AS. p. 10.
- 3 Former United Nations Secretary-General.
- 4 United Nations (2005). *Concept, International Year of Sport and Physical Education*. p. x.
- 5 UNESCO (2003). *Round Table of Ministers of Sport and Physical Education*. Paris. p. 3.
- 6 United Nations Special Adviser on Sport for Development and Peace
- 7 Dunning, Eric (1999) *Sport Matters: Sociological Studies of Sport, Violence and Civilisation*. Routledge.
- 8 Waddington, Ivan (2000) *Sport, Health and Drugs*. Routledge.
- 9 Rheker, Uve (2000) *Integration Through Games And Sport*. Meyer & Meyer,
- 10 Horne, John (2005) *Sport in a Consumer Culture*. Routledge.
- 11 Smith, Aaron & Westerbeek, Hans (2003) *Sport in the Global Market Place*. Palgrave Macmillan
- 12 Morgan, William J (2006) *Why Sports Morally Matter*. Routledge.
- 13 Foster, Ken (2006) "The Juridification of Sport"; in Greenfield, Steve & Osborn, Guy, *Readings in Law and Popular Culture*. Routledge; Macaulay, Stewart (1987) "Images of Law in Everyday Life: The Lessons of School, Entertainment, and Spectator Sports;" *Law & Society Review*, 21:185-218; Ewick, Patricia & Silbey, Susan (1996) *The Commonplace of Law: Stories from Everyday Life*. University of Chicago Press; David Fraser (2005) *Cricket and the Law: The Man in White is Always Right*. Routledge
- 14 Coaklay, Jay (2006) *Sport in Society: Issues and Controversies*. McGraw-Hill Education.
- 15 The Nordic Sport Model builds traditionally and ideologically on a conception where the sport federation is self-regulated and not directly connected to either the market or the political system. Cf., Norberg, Johan (2003) *Idrottens väg till folkhemmet [Sport and the Way to the Welfare Community]*. Malmö Studies in Sport Science, no. 1.

effects on social integration, public health, moral fostering and civic learning. Besides, the sports clubs in the Nordic countries are organised in sport federations, based on formal democracy, from the top to the grass roots. In this light the structure of voluntarism and idealism is regarded as a helpful support to the development of a Welfare Community, to formal democracy and civil society.

Notwithstanding its beneficial virtues and societal impact, sport carries a paradox.<sup>16</sup> Sport can be cruel as well as enjoyable: one becomes a champion, the other a loser. However, this is a natural condition in sport, and even a vital principle that contributes to the excitement and entertainment in sport. But sport might be more malicious than a defeat in a particular game. It might stimulate confidence and optimism among individuals, or, on the other hand, reduce optimism and cause a lack of self-command and self-assurance among young people. In general, we talk cheerfully about the positive impacts of sport, such as happiness, friendship and integration, whereas its dark sides, such as exclusion, harassment and exaggerated training, are disgracefully neglected.<sup>17</sup> Besides, in a political perspective, sport carries the dangers of nationalism and post-colonialism. In addition, the increasing commercialisation – “Westernisation” – of sport, in light of expected economic growth, runs the risk of reducing individuals to commodities and challenges the intrinsic virtues of sport, in a traditional sense.<sup>18</sup> Furthermore, despite a focus on democracy, women have been systematically discriminated against in the history of sport.<sup>19</sup>

Still, the combination of sport and development is extremely hard to argue against.<sup>20</sup> In this respect, the optimistic attitudes towards the positive impact of sport on developing countries has grown increasingly, and in its wake several organisations appear to work more and more with sport as “a tool” of development. However, it is essential to have in mind “the paradoxes in sport”.

## Background

In 1978 the United Nations for the first time announced the importance of sport for all, and Article 1 of *The International Charter of Physical Education and Sport* states: “The practice of physical education and sport is a fundamental right for all.”<sup>21</sup> And in 1989, in the Convention on the Rights of the Child, Article 31, the UN upholds the importance of play and leisure.

In Resolution 58/5, from 2003, UN holds up sport as an instrument to improve health and education as well as development and peace. And in 2003 the first reports, *The UN Task Force Report on Sport for Development and Peace*, were delivered in which sport is

16 Eitzen, Stanley D. (2003) *Fair and Foul. Beyond the Myths and Paradoxes of Sport*. Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc.

17 According to Jay Coakley there are actually no empirical data supporting sport’s positive or negative effects on personal development. Cf., Coakley, Jay (2003) *Sport in Society*. McGraw-Hill Education.

18 Horne, a. a.; Morgan, a. a.

19 Pfister, G (2002) *Sport And Women: Social Issues in International Perspective*. Routledge

20 Hall, C. Michael (2004) “Sport Tourism and Urban Regeneration”, pp. 192-205, in *Sport Tourism: Interrelationships, Impacts and Issues* (eds) Ritchie, Brent W. & Adair, Daryl. Clevedon: Channel View Publications, p. 194.

21 UNESCO: [http://www.unesco.org/education/nfsunesco/pdf/SPORT\\_E.PDF](http://www.unesco.org/education/nfsunesco/pdf/SPORT_E.PDF). Accessed: 2007-03-19

supported as a complement to ordinary instruments to promote health. In 2004, in *Harnessing the Power of Sport for Development and Peace*, sport is regarded as important in the work for peace. The UN focus on sport was accentuated in 2005, in *The International Year of Sport and Physical Education*, by the following policy: “The International Year of Sport and Physical Education aims to facilitate better knowledge-sharing among different stakeholders, to raise general awareness, as well as creating the right conditions for the implementation of more sport-based human development programmes and projects.”<sup>22</sup>

Indeed, in these documents and reports we find huge trust in sport and its impact: “Sports are very beneficial for individuals, local communities and society as a whole.”<sup>23</sup>

Besides, sport is referred to as a universal language: “Sport really is a universal language that everyone understands. It has a unique capacity to cross borders and get people together.”<sup>24</sup> Moreover, sport contributes to fair play, friendship and peace, and, in addition, sport might stimulate economic growth: “Sport is a catalyst for economic development. Individually, each of the various sectors of the sports economy can create activity, jobs and wealth.”<sup>25</sup> Finally, sport is crucial in the work to improve public health.

As an instrument in developmental work sport has a noteworthy benefit, because “[s]port is an effective way to reach children and adolescents who are often excluded and discriminated against, [...]”<sup>26</sup> And the spirit of sport is leisure and happiness, and sport, as a developmental tool, is not expensive: “Sport is rapidly gaining recognition as a simple, low cost and effective means of achieving development goals.”<sup>27</sup>

However, and this is important to stress, sport is not a universal solution to problems. We will find problems in sport similar to those in society in general, to quote: “But as great as its potential is, sport is not a cure-all for development problems. As a cultural phenomenon it is a mirror of society and is just as complex and contradictory.”<sup>28</sup> Besides, it is important to understand local diversities<sup>29</sup> and to create sport structures that are sustainable without external support in the future.<sup>30</sup> In this respect “foreign models shouldn’t be imported”.<sup>31</sup> Another subject, which is also important to focus on in relation to sport and the organisation of sport, involves the problems of politics and corruption.<sup>32</sup>

22 United Nation (2005) *Concept, International Year of Sport and Physical Education*. p. 4.

23 Norwegian Football Association (2004). Det er ikke ballen det kommer an på, det er målene. Internasjonalt arbeid for bærekraftig sosial utvikling. p. 64.

24 Development and sport: [http://www.development-and-sport.org/en\\_developmentsport.html#202](http://www.development-and-sport.org/en_developmentsport.html#202). Accessed: 2007-01-25

25 UNITED NATION. (2005). *Concept, International Year of Sport and Physical Education*. p. 9.

26 UNICEF. (2004). *Sport Recreation and Play*. p. 19.

27 Right To Play. (2004) *Harnessing the Power of Sport for Development and Peace*. Athens. p. 5.

28 SDC. (2005). *Sport for Development and Peace*. p. 16.

29 Sport Development: <http://www.sportdevelopment.org/uploads/binnenwerk%20IEM%20verslag.pdf> Accessed: 2007-03-21. p. 17.

30 Hamel Jacques L. (2005) “Knowledge for sustainable development in Africa: towards new policy initiatives” *World Review of Science, Technology, and Sustainable Development*.

31 Sport Development: <http://www.sportdevelopment.org/uploads/binnenwerk%20IEM%20verslag.pdf> Accessed: 2007-03-21. p. 24.

32 *ibid.* p. 26.

## Categorising Sport as a Tool for Development

An examination of a number of different field projects with a sport and development focus, gives the following six main features:<sup>33</sup>

### *Individual Development, Education and Social Integration*

“Sport is a ‘school for life’, teaching basic values and life skills”<sup>34</sup>. Individuals discover the importance of responsibility and co-operation. Individuals who are peripheral to society might become integrated in social life by sport. The commitment to training and education is progressing for anyone engaged in sport. Furthermore, “sport has a positive impact on education; physical activity has proven benefits to a child’s ability to learn, and increases concentration and overall achievement.”<sup>35</sup> Examples of projects include *Youth Education Through Sport (YES)*<sup>36</sup>, a project in Zimbabwe, and *Education through Sport (EduSport)*<sup>37</sup>, an organisation in Zambia, two examples combining sport, education and individual progress.

### *Health*

Starving is not the only world-wide problem. Obesity has increased, and over one billion people suffer from fatness. Albeit a Western disease, countries in Africa, Asia and Latin America have experienced this depressed health condition in society in general. Physical activities will become important, not only in the Western societies, but also in the developing countries in order to strengthen the public health. By focusing on the physical status and a healthy life style, the use of drugs or alcohol might decline.

The thesis is that “improving public health through increasing opportunities to participate in sport offers large economic benefits, particularly in developing countries, where health resources are already stretched, making prevention especially essential.”<sup>38</sup> Besides, “sport can be a/the vehicle to help mitigate the spread and impact of HIV/AIDS.”<sup>39</sup> Examples of organisations are *Kicking Aids Out*<sup>40</sup>, *Breakthrough Sports Academy*<sup>41</sup> and *KickAIDS*.<sup>42</sup>

### *Peace and Conflict Resolutions*

By a universal language “the power of sport can be used both as a tool for preventing conflict and as an element for building sustainable peace.”<sup>43</sup> In this respect, sport has an

33 cf., Grujoska, Isabella (2007) “Soccer or Food, Sport or Life, a Choice to Make?” Conference paper presented at *Sport in a Global World: Past Present Future*, Copenhagen July 31, to August 5.

34 UNITED NATION. (2003) *Sport for Development and Peace. Towards achieving the Millennium Development Goals*. p. 8.

35 IBLF/UK Sport. (2005) *Shared Goals. Sport and Business in Partnerships for Development*. UK. p. 9.

36 UK Sport: [http://www.uksport.gov.uk/pages/youth\\_education\\_through\\_sport/](http://www.uksport.gov.uk/pages/youth_education_through_sport/) Accessed: 07-03-22

37 EduSport: <http://www.edusport.org.zm/> Accessed: 2007-01-15

38 UNITED NATION. (2003). *Sport for Development and Peace. Towards achieving the Millennium Development Goals*. p. 6.

39 UNITED NATION. (2003). *Sport for Development and Peace. Towards achieving the Millennium Development Goals*. p. 19.

40 Kicking Aids Out: <http://www.kickingaidsout.net/> Accessed: 2007-01-12

41 Breakthrough Sports Academy: <http://www.geocities.com/bsazambia/menu.html> Accessed: 2007-02-22.

42 Street football world: [http://www.streetfootballworld.org/Projects/pdpsportsclub/index\\_html/en](http://www.streetfootballworld.org/Projects/pdpsportsclub/index_html/en) Accessed: 2007-01-12.

43 *ibid.* p. 14

important benefit: it has the ability to reach all individuals - poor or rich, young or old, and appear as a neutral arena. By nature, "sport is apolitical". Therefore, "it can serve as a neutral platform where individuals and social and political groups meet."<sup>44</sup> In *Sport for Development and Peace* it is stated that sport is a training camp in democracy, where individuals learn the civic structure and valuable democratic virtues. Organisations such as UNHCR (the *UN Refugee Agency*)<sup>45</sup>, Peace Players International<sup>46</sup> and CCPA (*Cross Cultures Project Association*)<sup>47</sup> use sport as a bridge between cultures and ethnic groups.

### Gender

Sport is also used in order to strengthen women's position in society. The present focus is on gender equality through sport, not on equality in sport. Different prejudices, in relation to the status of women in society in general, are the targets. Sport projects focusing on gender issues are *Sports Development AID*<sup>48</sup>, *Moving the Goalposts Kilifi*<sup>49</sup> and *U Go Girl (Score)*.<sup>50</sup>

### Economic Development

In fact, "the sport, leisure, recreation and entertainment industry is economically the third largest industry in the world [...]"<sup>51</sup> Sport creates economic growth and employment and is supposed to give cities an image. However, "in the countries of the South, economic underdevelopment goes hand in hand with underdevelopment in sport."<sup>52</sup> One sport project working with an economic perspective is IOC's (International Olympic Committee) focus on *Olympafrica*,<sup>53</sup> in which the intention is to integrate sport, education and economic development. The 2010 FIFA World Cup, the first in Africa, is supposed to generate and stimulate economic growth and the infrastructure in South Africa.<sup>54</sup>

### Communication

Due to its popularity and visibility sport will work beneficially as a communication channel: "...sport is an effective instrument to convey development messages to a broad range of population groups."<sup>55</sup> Projects and campaigns in which sport is used as a "transistor" are

44 SDC. (2005). *Sport for Development and Peace*. p. 41.

45 UNCHR Ninemillion organization: <http://www.ninemillion.org/Donate.aspx?localID=en> Accessed: 2007-03-01.

46 Peace Players: <http://www.playingforpeace.org/> Accessed: 2006-12-22.

47 Cross Culture Project Association: <http://www.ccpa.dk/default.asp?body=english/> Accessed: 2006-12-22.

48 Sports Development AID: <http://liike.fi/sda/> Accessed: 2007-02-07.

49 Moving the Goalposts Kilifi: <http://www.mtgk.org/> Accessed: 2007-02-22.

50 Sport and Development: <http://www.sportanddev.org/en/projects/see-all-projects/u-go-girl.htm> Accessed: 2007-03-23.

51 Westerbeek, Hans & Smith, Aaron (2003) *Sport Business in the Global Marketplace*. Palgrave Macmillan. p. 47.

52 SDC. (2005) *Sport for Development and Peace*. p. 62.

53 IOC: [http://www.olympic.org/uk/organisation/missions/humanitarian/activities/projects\\_uk.asp](http://www.olympic.org/uk/organisation/missions/humanitarian/activities/projects_uk.asp) Accessed: 2007-03-25.

54 Swart, Kamilla (2005) "Strategic planning – implications for the bidding of sport events in South Africa"; *Journal of Sport & Tourism*; Bohlmann, Heinrich R. (2006) Predicting the Economic Impact of the 2010 FIFA World Cup on South Africa. University of Pretoria. *Department of Economics Working Paper Series*

55 SDC. (2005) *Sport for Development and Peace*. p. 66.

UNDP's (United Nations Development Programme) campaign *Teams to End Poverty*<sup>56</sup>, or ILO's and FIFA's (International Labour Organization) *Red Card to Child Labour*<sup>57</sup>.

To sum up: Several projects consist of a mixture of these six features and are expected to get the advantage of different synergy effects. In some projects democracy and civic structure turn out to be interesting issues, however rather implicitly; something that will "develop in the process". Accordingly, very few projects place the main focus on the development of the civil society and civic structures.

Furthermore, the UN and various non-governmental organizations (NGOs) have, in line with these subjects, related sport to the Millennium Development Goals (MDG)<sup>58</sup> for 2015. Sport will not only be included in these objectives but is supposed to contribute to the realisation of the goals. The goals are formulated in eight objectives, several of which direct attention to sport and development, for instance, combating HIV/AIDS, promoting gender equality, and developing global partnership for development.<sup>59</sup>

## Moving Forward: A Critical Research Design Focus on the Civil Society and the Organisation of Sport

In a historical perspective, sport has doubtlessly had an important position in the development of the democratic structure of the Nordic Welfare Community.<sup>60</sup> This quality, in line with sport's influence on public health, is certainly the main reason behind the annual financial support from the State (see above). The development of formal democracy in everyday life (the Association Act) is related to the organisation of sport in a substantial mixture of sports associations with formal self-regulation.<sup>61</sup> In this light, the empowerment of individuals, in relation to civic virtues and democratic skills, is related to the practices of the Nordic sports associations. Despite the potential of the Association Act we will find in sport a lack of democracy in relation to gender and ethnicity. Still, the Association Act cannot be held responsible for that.

By taking a departure in the increasing use of sport as a tool of development, in relation to the potential formal democracy of sports associations, we intend to design a research project in order to study and analyse sport's and sport organisations' significance as a resource in the enlargement of civic structures in the everyday life of developing countries and the empowerment of individuals, linked to formal democracy in sport. In order to make such an investigation we have to design a project in four steps:

56 Teams to End Poverty: <http://www.teamstoendpoverty.org/> Accessed: 2007-03-25

57 International Labour Organization: <http://www.ilo.org/public/english/bureau/inf/pr/2002/1.htm> Accessed: 2007-03-25

58 MDG: <http://www.un.org/millenniumgoals/> Accessed: 2007-03-25

59 United Nations: <http://www.millenniemaalen.se/index.asp> Accessed: 2007-03-25

60 Norberg, Johan (2003) *Idrottens väg till folkhemmet* [Sport and the Road to the Welfare Community]. Stockholm: SISU Idrottsböcker (Malmö Studies in Sport Science, vol. 1).

61 Malmsten, Krister (2000) *Idrottens föreningsrätt* [The Association Act in Sport], Stockholm: Norstedts Juridik. At the present, in Sweden sport is organized in 68 different associations, with 22 000 sports clubs with 3 million members.

- 1) The project will start by examining the character and status of sport in developing countries, and sport as “a tool”, in relation to its positive impact as well as to its negative consequences, by focusing on “the paradoxes of sport”.
- 2) The second strategy is to systematise various international developmental projects involving sport, in relation to (sustainable) impacts and different problems.
- 3) At a third level the project intends to describe and analyse the development of various sports clubs and sports associations, in order to estimate the character of democracy and empowerment, and the status of the paradox.
- 4) Finally, the project intends to put up several beneficial models in the sport organisations in developing countries that work constructively in order to develop sustainable civic structures in everyday life.

It is important to stress that the project takes its basic point of departure in a political thesis, emphasising everyday formal democracy as a prerequisite for political democracy, and that sports clubs and sports associations, in this respect, might contribute to such a progress.

Before we present and concretise the design of the project we intend to illustrate the increasing emphasis on sport as “a tool for development”, on what kind of subjects different projects may integrate in the sport projects.

In March 25, 2006, the Dept of Sport Sciences arranged and hosted a conference, “Idrotens roll i internationella utvecklingsarbeten” [Sport in International Development], with a focus on sport’s impact on public health and civil society. The subject has ever since become gradually more important in different study courses at University, in relation to sport and society as well as to sport leadership. In order to emphasise this interest, the Department of Sport Sciences is planning a research project dealing with sport as a tool of development, particularly in developing countries.

No doubt we will find several projects, organisations and campaigns dealing, explicitly or implicitly, with sport as a tool for development. It might be connected to health, education, gender issues, peace or/and communication. However, we will hardly find any systematic or critical studies analysing the general impact of the focus on sport and development and inserting the influence in a broader context, analysing the paradoxes of sport as well as the societal impact.

By formulating a strategy focusing on the status and the character of sport in developing countries, as well as its formalisation into sports clubs and organisations, the intention in our project is to systematically describe and analyse sport’s influence on the development of formal democracy, mutual understandings and individual civic empowerment in everyday life. Consequently, in the end it will be possible to define several models, suitable for building up sports organisations in developing countries that include and compare the Nordic development of sports associations and its impact on the community, as well as taking care of and considering local customs and models. However, this approach needs caution, both as a political and as an ethical question, because we must consider the problems of implementing Western sport (and its paradoxes) in a context of post-colonialism and the general lack of a sport culture.<sup>62</sup> Actually, “the negative side of sport should not be export-

---

62 Bale, John & Cronin, Mike (red., (2002) *Sport and Post-Colonialism*.Berg Publisher.

ed to the countries of the South.”<sup>63</sup> In this respect, the first perspective in the project – the investigation of the sport paradox – stands out as essential, to enable us taking the next step and analysing the formalisation of sport and sport organisation.

### *A Mixture of Studies (as a first and preliminary suggestion)*

The empirical studies will be conducted in Kenya, Tanzania and South Africa, the Department of Sport Sciences in Malmö having already established contacts with universities in Dar es Salaam and Cape Town, and:

- a) The empirical studies will be based on interviews and observations in local sports clubs, during field works (by a PhD student) and complemented by several student theses, such as Minor Field Studies, conducted either by students from the University of Dar es Salaam, the University of Western Cape and/or Malmö University.
- b) In addition, several sport officials will be interviewed. The interviews will focus on sport at the governmental level as well as in the sporting/civic community.
- c) Furthermore, several star athletes in Kenya, Tanzania and South Africa will be interviewed in order to analyse the integration of athletes, and their experiences, in the civil society.
- d) As an another departure, different international developmental projects in Kenya, Tanzania and South Africa, involving sport as a tool, will be illuminated and analysed, in a social and cultural context, regarding the project’s impact and problems.

The theoretical importance of the study is related to an examination of the interaction between the idealistic conception of sport, and the virtue of sport, implemented through the belief in sport as a tool for development, in relation to the problematic “Westernisation” of sport and the sport paradoxes. In fact, is it possible to use the positive elements in sport, and at the same time avoid its harmful sides in the developmental conception? The practical significance of the study originates in the possibility to analyse and trace different problems in the organisation of sport, and its impact on formal democracy and the improvement of civic structures; thereby, in the end, supporting different beneficial relations between sport, sport organisations and political, social and civil development.

Besides, we are – ideally – given a possibility to reveal sport in its original form, due to virtues and phenomenology, before the materialisation of the “paradoxes of sport”.

## **Reflection and Discussion**

Without doubt, sport has had a huge impact on the development of Western society, in a positive perspective as well as negatively. When implementing sport as a tool in developing countries we have to observe different qualities in and aspects of sport in relation to historical values and the present form.

Doing research in relation to sport and development is complicated, particularly when linked to developing countries. Several critical questions thus call for attention:

---

63 SDC. (2005) *Sport for Development and Peace*. p. 60.

Why focus on sport as a tool for development and equality, in, for instance, Tanzania, Kenya, and South Africa, when almost comparable problems exist in Western society regarding integration and empowerment and sport as a lever for individuals and groups in the civic society. In Western societies indigenous people (i.e., Aboriginal, Navajo, Sami) are more or less excluded from sport,<sup>64</sup> and gender and ethnic discrimination exist among those individuals that are part of the sport context.<sup>65</sup> Why specifically lifting women as a target group, in the perspective of sport and development? On the contrary, sport has, in a historical and Western perspective, not been an ideal environment for supporting women and gender equality. Surprisingly, it is stated that women's sport participation in developing countries might work as a method of detecting the discrimination of women in society in general.<sup>66</sup> However, at the grassroots levels there exist strong organisational and cultural customs, in society in general, and particularly in developing countries, that prevent women from actively participating in sport. In Tanzania, for instance, "most of the women's teams do not manage to reach the club registration stage because they do not satisfy the conditions that are needed, such as owning a training ground".<sup>67</sup> Besides, sport training occurs in the morning and the evening. "This is also the time when most women are expected to be at home to serve their families".<sup>68</sup> In South Africa, "the newly democratised National Department of Sport and Recreation prioritises race above gender".<sup>69</sup> Consequently, race and sport have periodically become a national problem, while gender inequalities remain a problem for women to resolve".<sup>70</sup> In South Africa, as well as in Tanzania, "social stereotypes, religious beliefs and cultural norms still prevent many from pursuing a sporting career".<sup>71</sup>

Another excluding process in sport is the focus of modern sport on young people's active participation, which has been exaggerated by our consumer-centered culture. It is to be hoped that sports-related development in Africa does not sidestep the older generations, a segregation that is already strong enough.<sup>72</sup>

Yet, the signs of problems of discrimination in sports illustrate the need to reflect on internal problems in the Western sport model, before exporting sport as a tool of development in developing countries. Despite a deeper focus on internal problems in Western sport, a progressive perspective on sport in developing countries could stimulate the learn-

64 Stirbys Patricia (1999) "Child's Play: In the Best Interests of the Child". Papers from the First International Conference on Sports and Human Rights 1-3 September 1999 Sydney, Australia <http://www.ausport.gov.au/fulltext/1999/nsw/p55-59.pdf>. Accessed: 2007-05-02.

65 King, Colin (2004) *Offside Racism: Playing the White Man*. Oxford: Berg Publishers.

66 Cf., Moving the Goalposts Kilifi (MTGK); <http://www.mtgk.org/aboutus.html>. Accessed: 2007-05-04.

67 Fastig, Kari & Massao, Prisca (2003) "Women and sport in Tanzania". In Hartmann-Tews, Ilse & Pfister Gertrud, eds., *Sport and Women. Social issues in international perspective*. Routledge, p. 119

68 *ibid.*, 125.

69 Jones, E. M, Denise. "Women and sport in South Africa: shaped by history and shaping sporting history". In Hartmann-Tews, Ilse & Pfister Gertrud, eds., *Sport and Women. Social issues in international perspective*. Routledge, p. 137.

70 *ibid.*

71 *ibid.*, p. 139.

72 Giulianotti, R (1999) "Sport and Social Development in Africa: Some Major Human Rights Issues", Papers from the First International Conference on Sports and Human Rights 1-3 September 1999 Sydney, Australia. <http://www.ausport.gov.au/fulltext/1999/nsw/p18-25.pdf>. Accessed: 2007-05-02.

ing process in the local (Western) milieu, and start an internal reflection on the paradoxes in sport.<sup>73</sup>

Nonetheless, developing projects – or “campaigns” – run the risk of “post-colonialism” and “paternalism”; and have a resemblance to missionary actions. Besides, the development of sport in general is historically based in the “westernisation of sport”, which implies competitions in Western settings and the Western ideal of fair play, historically rooted in the aristocracy and transformed instrumentally through the working class to its present form of commodification through the market. In this respect, it is important that the West should not seek to transfer its late 20<sup>th</sup> century European-based values onto a separate cultural context, without reverting to “a philosophical-based retreat into cultural relativism, or by an abandonment of the issues of human rights and development”.<sup>74</sup>

Sport, in Western societies, has undergone a history of metamorphoses, which is hard to comprehend in postcolonial nations. Notwithstanding the problem of “the Westernisation of sport” and an inherent danger of colonialism, the evolution of sport in developing countries can involve a symbolic power, a symbolic empowerment. By beating the former colonial rulers in Western sports (such as cricket, basket and football) the nation receives moral recognition and identity by “beating them at their own game”.<sup>75</sup> In the case of Africa and decolonisation, “sports were quickly mobilised in this effect (national identity), and as early as 1970s became an important vehicle of national pride and solidarity”<sup>76</sup> and recognition. Or to depict it radically: “To be a nation recognized by others a people must march in the Olympic Games opening ceremonies”.<sup>77</sup> In this light sport might strengthen the identity of nations and the recognition of a nation.

The important question in our perspective is: How will this national pride and recognition become converted into the organisation of the civic society and everyday life in developing countries? Will the pride in sport, in a Marxian perspective, only work as a political and social sound-absorber? And, subsequently, will pride and the struggle for recognition through sport end up in nationalism, contrary to the vision of sport as a peace-maker and a resource in dispute resolution processes?<sup>78</sup>

The third world as labour market is also relevant, when discussing sport and development in colonial and economic terms. The expansion of talented players (athletes), in some cases rather youthful Africans, moving to the European and North American market, is a crucial topic.<sup>79</sup>

73 Carlsson, Bo & Fransson, Kristin (2005) “Youth Sport in Light of the Swedish Sports Confederation and the Children’s Right in Society, e.g.” *idrottsforum.org*. [http://www.idrottsforum.org/articles/carlsson/carlsson\\_fransson/carlsson\\_fransson051130.html](http://www.idrottsforum.org/articles/carlsson/carlsson_fransson/carlsson_fransson051130.html)

74 Giulianotti, a. a.

75 E.g., West Indian success in cricket. Cf., Morgan, William J. (2000) “Sport as the moral discourse of nations”, in Tännsjö, T. & Tamburrini, C. (eds.) *Values in Sport*. E & FN Spon, p. 67.

76 *ibid.*, s. 67.

77 MacAloon, J. (1991) “The Turn of the Two Centuries: Sport and the Politics of Intercultural Relations”, in Landry F., et al (eds.) *Sport, The Third Millennium*. Les Presses de l’Université Laval; quoted from Morgan, a. a. p. 72

78 Gasser, P. & Levinsen, A. (2004) “Breaching Postwar Ice: Open Fun Football Schools in Bosnia and Herzegovina”, in Mc Ardle, D. & Giulianotti, R. (eds.) *Sport and Human Rights in the Global Society*. Routledge. Cf., Kapuscinski, Ryszard (1992) *The Soccer War*. Vintage. Cf., <http://www.onwar.com/aced/data/sierra/soccer1969.htm>. Accessed: 2007-05-02

79 Andreff, W. (2006) “Sport in developing countries”, in Andreff, W. & Szymanski, S. (eds.) *Handbook on the Economics of Sport*. Edward Elgar, p. 318.

When arguing about the organisation of sport we have to consider the possibility of an existing African model, in relation to Western or Nordic sport models; an immature model depending on *nomenklatura* (bureaucracy), with corruption, bribery, embezzlement and money laundering.<sup>80</sup> Besides, why is regular football – with its customs and images – the alternative that turns up in a range of developing projects?<sup>81</sup> In this respect, “football is the gateway”.<sup>82</sup> But football alone cannot solve AIDS or clean water; and football’s (or other sports’) influence on power hierarchies, and the problems of building a sustainable civil society, has been very limited.<sup>83</sup>

In brief, it is impossible to find a simple recipe that can cure sporting underdevelopment and underdevelopment in general. Regardless of the power and the image of sport, the choice in favour of more pressing priorities, such as food, health and education, will maintain a hard budget limit on sporting development. Practical projects as well as academic studies of sport in developing countries ought to be sensitive and responsive to the local context and the prerequisites, and not automatically apply general and externally produced models upon local projects and sports organisations. “[O]ffering maximum local control in all aspects of running a programme”,<sup>84</sup> as well as “heavy input from local actors at all stages of planning and implementation” are crucial.<sup>85</sup> It is important to stress the familiar problem that the projects are often limited in time and that the local environment generally lacks the infrastructure and capability to make the projects survive or progress into permanent practice.

When scrutinising the aspects of local control and time, several projects could unfortunately, contrary to official intentions, be regarded as a) a recognition of the merits of Western society, and as a celebration of Western society’s virtues and of the kindness of modern missionaries, or as b) a way to demonstrate social responsibility as a method to improve the brands of sports clubs, such as FC Barcelona (UNICEF) and Chelsea (Right to Play), or in a Swedish perspective, Hammarby IF (UNICEF) and Brommapojkarna (Save the Children),<sup>86</sup> or c) the sportification of African society may, as elsewhere, be a further vehicle for cultural Westernization.<sup>87</sup>

---

80 *ibid.*, p. 313.

81 Cf., Armstrong, G. & Giulianotti, R, eds. (2004) *Football in Africa: Conflict, Conciliation, and Community* Palgrave Macmillan.

82 Armstrong, G (2004) “The Lords of Misrule: Football and the Rights of the Child in Liberia, West Africa”, in Mc Ardle, D. & Giulianotti, R. (eds.) *Sport and Human Rights in the Global Society*. Routledge.

83 *ibid.*

84 Gasser, P. & Levinsen, A., a. a., p. 470.

85 *ibid.*, p. 471.

86 Manchester United and FC Barcelona support UNICEF, Chelsea supports Right to Play, organisations working with developing countries. Cf., Carlsson, Bo & Fransson, Kristin (2007) “Global Missioners, but Domestic Blindfolded! Marketing Sport, Social Responsibility, and the Paradoxes of Youth Sports and Ethics”. Paper presented at *Children and Sport: Philosophical Dimensions*, May 31–June 2, 2007, London, Ontario, Canada

87 Giulianotti, a. a.