

SPORT AS A PEACEBUILDING TOOL

Mesure the social impact of sport for development and peace

Study led by Peace and Sport and
the Institute of Social Sciences of Politics of the Université Paris-Nanterre -
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Universal, and popular with youth, sport constitutes an answer to the progression of conflicts by bringing communities together. If it is used with the right intention to achieve life skills objectives, in an appropriate setting and by qualified educators, sport can contribute to peacebuilding.



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Chaire

Measuring the social impact of sport is at the heart of international actions supported by Peace and Sport, such as the Working Group led by the Commonwealth, at the initiative of UNESCO, as part of the follow-up to the Kazan Action Plan.

Through a bottom-up approach, Peace and Sport supports since 2019 selected grassroots organisations, spread over 3 continents, and international athletes who work on a daily basis to promote inclusion and peace through sport. These partners are part of the "Peacemakers Project" international coalition.

In addition to quantitative indicators with a macro or national scope, Peace and Sport sought to experiment a qualitative approach for the evaluation of these programs, at the community level, as close as possible to the beneficiaries. The main objective being to reinforce the impact of the programs from their design and implementation, to providing proof to public authorities.



Aware of the growing importance for the field actors to establish program monitoring and evaluating tools, Peace and Sport and the "Institute of Social Sciences of Politics" of the Paris-Nanterre University are carrying-out an ambitious work, notably within the Peacemakers Project.

This pluriannual partnership launched on January 1st 2022, aims to propose an operational framework and a set of indicators to identify the needs of the communities, to analyze and highlight the good practices and their effects on the areas of intervention.

This first year of collaboration had six specific objectives:

- Immersing in the field;
- Understand the specificities of a reference program in the Peacemakers Project: Alafia by "Terres-en-Mêlées" (TeM), Togo;
- Identify the beneficiaries and their expectations;
- Explore initial data from the field and propose a first set of results;
- Suggests recommendations from this fieldwork;
- Train international project coordinators.

This agreement also falls within the framework of activities of the UNESCO-SPORTSD&P Chair created at the University of Paris Nanterre by Julien Sorez, Teacher-Researcher, of which Peace and Sport is a founding member.



THE TERRES EN MELEES COALITION

Terres en Mêlées is a coalition grouping 4 founding organizations: Terres en Mêlées Burkina Faso, Terres en Mêlées France, Terres en Mêlées Madagascar and Terres en Mêlées Togo. While each association has its own legal existence and governance, they are regulated by a common operational structure, reflected in the Terres en Mêlées coalition charter.

Created in 2011, Terres en Mêlées aims to contribute to the development of quality education and to promote access to fundamental rights through international solidarity actions and educational programs mainly focused on sports practice, intercultural exchange, gender equality, global citizenship and social or professional integration. To do so, TeM supports the African sporting and educational community in using rugby to nurture the continent's future champions of sustainable development.

THE ALAFIA PROGRAM

"Alafia" means "peace" in several west-african dialects. This program on development education through rugby, deployed in school and extracurricular time in Burkina Faso, Madagascar, Morocco and Togo aims to contribute to the emergence of a generation of educators and young leaders open to the world:

- Provide access to quality sports activities
- Promote attitudes that favor living together, citizenship and gender equality
- Reach at least 50% of female beneficiaries
- Strengthen the capacities of local educational teams and school teachers involved
- Promote social cohesion between urban and rural beneficiaries

ACTIVITIES AND BENEFICIAIRES

- Implement two sessions per week of pedagogy through rugby in Lome on the themes of peace and equality
- Organise capacity-building trainings for the "educators of development through rugby"
- Organise a fraternity tournament promoting social and gender diversity
- Establish an "educational refereeing" system
- In February 2022 :
 - 22 locations of intervention
 - 156 sessions
 - 1644 children beneficiaries (of which 44% of girls)



An analysis of the social impact of sports can only be done by taking into consideration and analysing the interactions between the request of monitoring from the donors and what the field actors, involved with the beneficiaries on a daily basis, can concretely implement. Our approach sought to position ourselves halfway between the prescriptions and the realities on the ground.

This micro sociological work makes it possible to be as close as possible to all the stakeholders, in this case in the framework of the Alafia programme in Togo, and thus to reflect all the experiences and opinions expressed during its implementation

To put these considerations into practice, two principles seemed essential to us: a significant presence in the field and not relying exclusively on quantitative data. This qualitative approach, aimed at gathering the views of the main actors and observing the interactions as close to the field as possible, seems to us to be the best way of grasping, understanding and interpreting the social effects of a peace through sport program.

The investigation thus relied on several phases conducted as closely as possible to the program's stakeholders. After a first phase of observation of the activities led on the field, a series of interviews was undertaken, first exploratory and then more in-depth. The analysis of the data and reports produced by the organization was then crossed with other information collected.

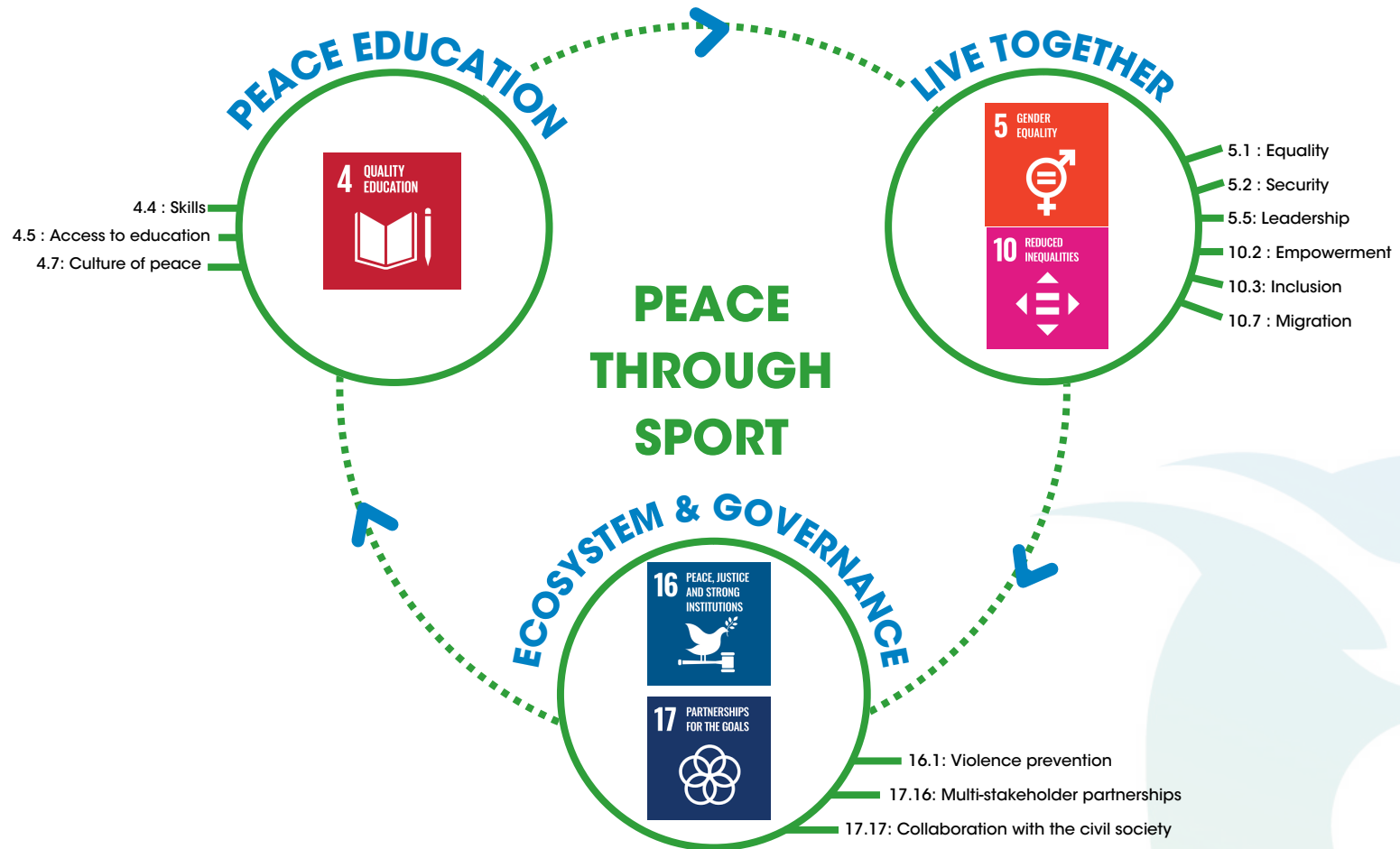
This approach relies on the counterpoint provided by a bottom-up approach, based on the reality of implementation, revealing the contradictions of the top-down logic of the programs calibrated on international standards, which is sometimes unsuited to the wide variety of social conditions and the availability of data.

The aim of the research is thus to provide contextualized data, which will make it possible to present as reliably as possible the issues at stake in a program that is rooted in the realities of the community.



INITIAL HYPOTHESES, FINDINGS AND QUESTIONS

The study's hypotheses, findings and questions are the result of several years of research, skills development and expertise from both Peace and Sport and the University of Paris-Nanterre. This long-term work has made it possible to outline the initial paths that will be explored in greater depth, adjusted and optimized in order to be coordinated with the realities on the ground at the core of the three major components of Peace through Sport.



Sport for peace refers to the intentional use of sport to achieve specific objectives to build a culture of peace. Sport enables physical activity to be taught and makes education more attractive. Therefore, sport and the self-expression it encourages can be excellent entry points to facilitate the acquisition of peace values.

SPORT: AN ADAPTABLE PEDAGOGICAL TOOL TO TRANSMIT VALUES TO CHILDREN...

Just like traditional school work, sports sessions are codified, technicised and didacticised, and require more effort and a more advanced learning process from the participants than simple spontaneous play. In addition, sport is based on a more inclusive approach that takes into account the expectations, opinions and needs of children, thus challenging the rigidity of some traditional pedagogies. This study observes that sport not only works for the development of motor skills, but also behaviours, that promote the construction of a culture of peace.

Moreover, the well-being of children is positively affected by those pedagogical innovations. Thanks to its playful dimension, sport allows to ease the relationship between educators and pupils, thus motivating them to pay more attention. Sport is a more enjoyable and motivating way of learning for the youth who may sometimes have difficulties finding their way in the current school system.

... AND TO THE EDUCATORS THANKS TO CUSTOMIZED CAPACITY BUILDING

The beneficiaries of peace through sport programs are not limited to the children and young adolescents taking part in the sport activities; individual benefits are seen in the teachers, educators, and managers of the program. Just like for the young people, they benefit from improved self-confidence and even a better self-image as a result of their involvement in programs.

There is an alignment between the values they advocate for and the behavior they adopt with children. Sport promotes values of respect, positive communication, and mutual support, which oblige teachers and educators to put them into practice in their classrooms and in their interpersonal relationships with their pupils.

Moreover, the additional trainings provided to the teachers and educators enables them to develop new skills and knowledge not present in their initial academic training. Thus, the program allows educators, teachers, and program managers to develop skills and abilities that will not only help them in their professional life, but also in their personal life, such as respect for rules.

TO MAXIMISE THE POTENTIAL: CONSOLIDATE RELATIONS WITH THE EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM

However, there may be a certain lack of involvement from teachers in the schools where the program is implemented.

The program offers teachers the opportunity to participate in educators training provided by TeM, through three training cycles throughout the school year, capacity-building sessions in small group, and the distribution of a pedagogical booklet.

On the one hand, the sessions provided by educators from external organizations such as Terres-en-Mêlées Togo, can create a perverse effect leading to a disengagement of teachers, who find an opportunity to disconnect from their class by delegating it completely. This can be explained by various factors (lack of familiarity with the sports culture, the teacher's position at stake, less vertical pedagogy, risk of effervescence threatening the discipline, among others).

On the other hand, there is the possibility of a generational effect that may put younger teachers in opposition to older ones, with the former being rather favourable to the project while the latter would be blocking it.

Also, the researchers were able to observe a very different level of preparation among the many educators who received training. For example, many teachers in the schools where the program is being implemented have no or very little knowledge of sports, so this initial deficit must be compensated. It will therefore be necessary to integrate different levels of certification in order to have training adapted to the different levels of knowledge and skills of the beneficiaries.



Sport forms relationships between individuals and social groups that are more or less divergent. This social interaction allows people to experience a way of living together that goes beyond the strict framework of the intra-social group.

SPORT: A TOOL FOR WOMEN AND GIRL'S EMPOWERMENT

This study notices progresses in a range of areas linked to the awareness of the values of sustainable development and peace. The relations and communications between boys and girls are facilitated by the mixed teams, which require cooperation and make avoidance situations disappear. We also observe a greater autonomy and self-confidence, not only in the sporting activities but also in other moments of daily life. As indicated by Nadège*, 29 years old: "I saw positive changes because before I was someone very reserved, someone shy. When I started rugby... In fact, that is what pushed me to play. The joy that animated them, and all of that. Playing with girls as well as boys. All of that made me want to play and I pushed myself. I was no longer in my old skin. Now I have become a new person. The shame is gone. The shyness too."

Furthermore, the peace through sport programs favours a participatory mode of transmission, which stimulates creativity, expression and personal affirmation. Raising awareness on values results in transforming the pedagogical relationship and the school atmosphere. This is what Pamela, 30 years old, a young educator in charge of the program's activities, has noticed: "We come, we discuss with the child and we get the child to ask themselves some questions and to give some answers. This is participatory teaching, where the child is encouraged to ask themselves questions and to find answers". These changes are reflected in a greater degree of participation in the class life. The study notes a decline in the use of harsh authority-based approaches such as vexation, humiliation, and corporal punishment.

Finally, the participation in the life of the association and in the educational activities allows the young female educators of the program a path to social emancipation.

TO MAXIMISE THE POTENTIAL: STRENGTHEN THE INVOLVEMENT OF FAMILIES TO CONVICT

Nevertheless, there is a reluctance in family settings; with ideologies and traditions strongly rooted in their culture, some people still have reservations about girls and women participating in sports. For example, Pamela faced her father's disapproval at the beginning of her sporting career: "But I really wanted to go, even if that was difficult, and sometimes I would sneak out to go. Sometimes, I said I was going out for tutoring but in reality I was going to play. (...) Girls don't really have a place in sport in Togo, it's only now that things are starting to change a little, but unfortunately our leaders still have this in their minds ." There is also a double standard for women and men playing rugby, like indicated by Fatoumata: "A lot of people say that it's a dangerous sport for girls and all that... Well, I don't think it's dangerous for girls, because it can be dangerous for boys too. If it's a dangerous sport, it's a dangerous sport and that's it. Girls can do it too. In all sports people get hurt, not just girls when they play rugby. A game is a game, injury is part of the game."



Sport is too often missing from the programs to which it could contribute. Ever since its creation, Peace and Sport develops a coalition approach by building bridges between decision-makers in sport, development, and peace. Today, the importance of multi-stakeholder partnerships and coalitions is widely recognized as a factor that enhances the impact of sport; the IOC, for example, within the Olympism 365 approach, or UNESCO through the "Fit for Life" initiative.

MULTI-STAKEHOLDER PARTNERSHIPS TO MAXIMIZE EXPERTISE

The integration of "Togo-en-Mêlée" in the "Terres-en-Mêlées" coalition combined with the expertise of Peace and Sport allows to observe the first benefits of multi-stakeholder partnerships, particularly in terms of deepening knowledge and bringing in the external expertise necessary for the proper functioning and sustainability of peace through sport programs. Thus, at the program management level, the additional expertise provided in terms of fundraising and activities' implementation has allowed for increased structuring, and a growing involvement of certain members. Furthermore, the training courses followed by the educators and teachers enable them to develop skills and know-how that they can then use and promote outside the program. Rugbymen and rugbywomen can thus begin the professionalization of their profile and promote their approach within other organizations, such as the Togolese Rugby Federation. Likewise, within schools, this program serves as initial and ongoing training. The status of TeM educator obtained by the beneficiary teachers enhances the value of their skills in front of their peers and their hierarchy, while benefiting the students in the framework of their regular teaching. Finally, the growing support from the school principals, the rallying of additional teachers and schools to this coalition demonstrates the relevance of these partnerships.

TO MAXIMISE THE POTENTIAL: DEPLOYING "INSTITUTIONS-CIVIL SOCIETY" COLLABORATIONS

To reach its full potential, this coalition of civil society actors will need to work in close collaboration with local institutions. These actions would provide career opportunities and ensure the sustainability of operations. To ensure that the skills developed during the training courses are recognised and truly valued, they must be certified by decision makers at national and international level. Such training, certified by governments and federations, would enhance the visibility and legitimacy of actions taken at national and international level, promote the employability of young rugby educators, and reinforce the teachers' skills.



1 MAKING SPORT A PRIORITY OBTAIN THE AUTHORITIES' SUPPORT

Support from the Ministry of Education of the countries where the programs and trainings are implemented is critical. It implies an advocacy plan towards the institutions and administrative staff; both at the ministerial level and among inspectors and educational advisors, the latter being key information relays.

2 ENHANCING LOCAL CAPACITY DEEPEN AND CERTIFY THE TRAININGS

The lack of formal recognition undermines the possibility of enhancing the skills acquired during the training and harms the visibility of the program. The concretization of a certified training course for peace through sport is an essential step for any expansion.

3 CLUSTERING AND SHARING RESOURCES POSITION TRAINED EDUCATORS AS LOCAL FOCAL POINTS

Teachers who are particularly involved in the schools, who are trained, motivated and have experienced the Methodology, could act as facilitators for their colleagues. As they are in the best position to understand the local specificities of the schools, they would act as focal points for the other teachers and adapt the training course according to the context.

4 ENSURING EDUCATIONAL CONTINUITY CENTRALIZE AND STRUCTURE WITH DIGITAL TOOLS

Providing digital tools and training course on how to properly use them would allow to improve the support provided to educators on the field, and their pedagogical follow-up. By providing easy-to-use contents, the pedagogical continuity of educators would be ensured. Finally, these tools would facilitate the access of school directors and parents to the monitoring of the program, which would considerably increase its visibility and legitimacy among the communities affected.

5 DEVELOPPING AN HOLISTIC APPROACH INSTITUTIONALIZE PILOT PROGRAMS

Key information relays, school principals, other educational advisors and Ministry of Education inspectors must be informed of the program taking place in their institution. Such an irrigation of the official networks would open the door to the institutionnalisation of those peace through sport programs.

6 PROMOTING AN EVALUATION CULTURE SHARE MONITORING METHODS

In order to document the circulation of values and messages transmitted during sports sessions, it is necessary to include all those who play a pedagogical role in the lives of the children, beyond sport. At school, methods such as classroom observation sessions can, for example, contribute to verify the impact of sports sessions and attest the appropriation of the values and messages transmitted, both by the teachers and the pupils



1 MAKING SPORT A PRIORITY

The Member States of the United Nations agree on sport's exceptional capacity to contribute to education, peacebuilding and violence reduction policies, especially in the post COVID-19 context [2]. Despite this international consensus, on average, governments only allocate 2% of their budgets to physical education. The mindsets need to change in order to break down the barriers and to maximize the positive effects of the peace through sport initiatives already underway.

3 CLUSTERING AND SHARING RESOURCES

Development banks, governments financial sectors, major sporting events organizers and international organizations must coordinate their approaches, programs and policies in order to make the funds proposed to the field actors more effective and efficient. This includes sport's investment in educational policies and the mobilization of teachers and educators who can be involved during the work time.

5 DEVELOPING AN HOLISTIC APPROACH

Peace and Sport calls for greater convergence between supervising ministries and their departments and recommends to develop distinctive offices dedicated to this coordination. In order to integrate the sport, education, employability, health and youth sectors, together with cross-cutting interventions and programs, a systemic change is imperative. [4]

7 SCALING UP

The previously mentioned recommendations are essential prerequisites to scale up peace through sport programs at the community level. The deployment of pilot programs on a national scale must be based on intermediate administrative levels designated by the State, adapted calls for projects and institutional supports that are responsive to the needs and realities of project owners.

2 REINFORCING THE LOCAL CAPACITIES

The recognition of peace educators as a qualified and employable workforce is decisive. The professionalization of their status implies putting in place appropriate remuneration, providing dedicated training and orientation tools to accompany these men and women on whom the impact of the programs relies.

4 EVALUATING THE IMPACT OF PROGRAMS

The causal relationships between sport and peacebuilding, conflict and violence prevention remain to be demonstrated [3]. Moreover, the evaluation methods currently available are essentially dedicated to the national level. These requirements imply a new paradigm, by focusing on the community level, on a long-term vision and on the impact criteria which add the qualitative to the quantitative.

6 MENTORING ATHLETES

Models, heroes and sources of inspiration for young people around the world, athletes have a unique capacity to contribute to the development of a culture of peace through sport. It is essential to mentor them simultaneously with their sporting careers in order to raise their awareness from an early age and to offer them frameworks for action and expression, in order to strengthen their impact as peacemakers.



[2] Report of the Secretary-General of the United Nations A/77/161
 [3] UNESCO source, Policy Notes for Quality Physical Education , 2021
 [4] Inter-Agency Group on Sport for Development and Peace (IAGSDP), 2022



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Direction of the publication

Jean-Jérôme PERRIN-MORTIER
CEO

Ludovic DAU
Head of Field Programs

Pauline JOHANET
International Relations Manager

Peace and Sport

« AIGUE MARINE »
24, avenue de Fontvieille - Bloc B
98000 Monaco
+377 9797 7800





 @peaceandsport

contact@peace-sport.org
WWW.PEACE-SPORT.ORG

Scientific direction

Julien SOREZ - Senior lecturer and head of the UNESCO-SPORTSD&P Chair
Olivier LE NOE - Director of the Institute of Social Sciences of Politics

