



SPORTS



Guide for Policymakers for the use of Sport for the Prevention of Violent Extremism

Global Programme on Security of Major Sporting Events and Promotion of Sport
and Its Values as a Tool to Prevent Violent Extremism



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SPORTS

Guide for Policymakers for the Use of Sport for the Prevention of Violent Extremism

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and Promotion of Sport and Its Values as a Tool
to Prevent Violent Extremism

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FOREWORD

Sport and its values have been harnessed across the globe as a powerful force in peacebuilding efforts and in preventing violent extremism (PVE). As a fundamental human value, sport should be embraced, reinforced and used as a generator of positive values with unparalleled unifying power: it can transcend civilizational and cultural barriers. For this reason, sport and sporting events play a significant role in addressing PVE, by promoting the empowerment of youth and women, and by facilitating integration. Sport pushes people to be better, to aim higher and further. It promotes tolerance and gender equality, strengthens communities, builds resilience and channels natural competitive instincts in a harmonious way. Such sport values allow it to be a compelling force in efforts to PVE.

These powerful values embodied in sport are complementary with the values enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations of 1945 and those at the root of the establishment of the United Nations Office of Counter-Terrorism (UNOCT) by way of General Assembly Resolution 71/291 in 2017. UNOCT continues to emphasize sustained focus on prevention, especially initiatives that address the underlying conditions conducive to violent extremism. In these endeavors to make the world a better place and to prevent violent extremism, there are few allies as powerful as sport and its values.

It is for this reason that UNOCT is proud to present the *Guide for Policymakers for the Use of Sport for the Prevention of Violent Extremism*. This Guide was developed as part of the UNOCT's Global Programme on the Security of Major Sporting Events and the Promotion of Sport and its Values as a Tool to Prevent Violent Extremism (the "Global Sports Programme"), with the invaluable partnership and support of the United Nations Alliance of Civilizations, the United Nations Interregional Crime and Justice Research Institute, and the International Centre for Sport Security. This *Guide* is based on the input provided from the international community, together with evidence-based practices, and a range of PVE and sport-for PVE reports and resources. The *raison d'être* of the Guide is to help senior officials within policy and decision-making authorities in their efforts to adopt sport-based policies aligned with their PVE objectives, ensuring a successful integration of sports in their action plans and national strategies dedicated to fostering resiliency to violent extremism.

This publication greatly benefited from the contribution of international and regional-level organization experts, athletes, sports associations, foundations, academia, think tanks, civil society, and youth-led and youth-oriented organizations, with special thanks to the Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate

(CTED) and the input provided by the national focal points, designated to represent Member States within the Global Sports Programme, who are key actors in the successful implementation of the Programme and its goals. Building on these inputs, this Guide examines the impact of sport on PVE and outlines considerations and good practices for the development of sport-for-PVE policies.

Finally, I want to express my gratitude to all the officials and partners who have supported the development of this document, as well as my sincere appreciation for the contributions of the People's Republic of China through the United Nations Peace and Development Trust Fund, the State of Qatar and the Republic of Korea for

their generous financial support, which has made possible this publication and the entire work carried out by the Global Sports Programme.



Mr. Vladimir Voronkov
Under-Secretary-General
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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

On the margins of the seventy-fifth session of the General Assembly, held virtually in September 2020, the United Nations Office of Counter-Terrorism (UNOCT) convened a High-Level Meeting on the Prevention of Violent Extremism through Sports. It also held an International Expert Group Meeting jointly with the United Nations Alliance of Civilizations, the United Nations Interregional Crime and Justice Research Institute, and the International Centre for Sport Security through its “Save the Dream” initiative to better understand how sport and its values help strengthen resilience against radicalization and violent extremism conducive to terrorism.

These meetings launched the second workstream of the Global Programme on Security of Major Sporting Events, and Promotion of Sport and Its Values as a Tool to Prevent Violent Extremism (Global Sports Programme), dedicated to the prevention of violent extremism (PVE) and to assist Member States in the pursuit of sport-based initiatives within PVE national action plans. Participants included the national focal points designated to represent Member States within the Global Sports Programme, international and regional-level organization experts, athletes, sports associations, foundations, academia, think tanks, civil society, and youth-led and youth-oriented organizations.

The national focal points, who collectively emphasized the contribution of sport to the PVE agenda across the globe, are paramount to the successful implementation of the Programme and in ensuring national vision, priorities, and specific needs are duly considered. Meeting participants' insights formed a foundation of knowledge at policy and practitioner levels.

Prompted by the good practices and overall expertise, and by the experience on the impact of sport on PVE, this Guide is of policymakers' use for sports initiatives' inclusion in PVE national action plans.

UNOCT and its partners prepared the present *Guide for Policymakers for the Use of Sport for the Prevention of Violent Extremism*, coordinated by Valerio de Divitiis, Head of the UNOCT Global Sports Programme, with the support of Andrea Rodríguez Panagiotopoulos, Luis Ramon Macua Sanchez, Terrence Levens, Inés Sarrado-Helbich, Thaddeus Barker-Mill, Sara Herden, Clara Assunção, Sidonie Roberts, Manuela Brunero, Alice Roberti and Danielle Hull of the United Nations Interregional Crime and Justice Research Institute, Bram Van Haver of UNAOC, Dale Sheehan of Save the Dream, and Martin Kainz. Key contributions from the United Nations entities participating in the Global Counter-Terrorism Compact Working Group on the Prevention of Violent Extremism ensured a One-UN approach. UNOCT is most grateful to the State of Qatar, the People's Republic of China – through the United Nations Peace and Development Fund – and the Republic of Korea for its generous contribution to the Global Sports Programme.

Finally, the *Guide for Policymakers for the Use of Sport for the Prevention of Violent Extremism* will be launched via the UNOCT's [Connect & Learn Platform](#), a tool connecting two communities of practice on the security of major sporting events (MSEs) and on the use of sport in PVE, in order to facilitate the exchange of good practices and sharing of expertise.

ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

MSE	Major sporting event
OSRSG-VAC	Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Violence against Children
PVE	Preventing violent extremism/ Prevention of violent extremism
UNAOC	United Nations Alliance of Civilizations
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNICRI	United Nations Interregional Crime and Justice Research Institute
UNOCT	United Nations Office of Counter-Terrorism
UNODC	United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime
WGA	Whole-of-government approach
WHO	World Health Organization

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INTRODUCTION



Sport is universally recognized as a way to promote diversity, respect, tolerance and other values that support positive relationships between people, regardless of faith, race or culture.¹ Beyond its capacity to unite people at local, national, and global levels, sport is increasingly used as a vehicle to empower women and men of all ages; to improve well-being and health, support education and social development objectives; and to strengthen the resilience of individuals and communities. Around the globe, the power of sport is being harnessed to support agendas for peace, development, and more frequently to PVE.

Global Programme on Security of Major Sporting Events, and Promotion of Sport and Its Values as a Tool to Prevent Violent Extremism

This *Guide* has been developed as part of the multi-year Global Sport Programme. The key objectives of the Programme are:

- To increase Member States' awareness of terrorism-related threats against vulnerable targets in the context of major sporting events (MSEs) and their ability to protect them as a common good of humanity
- To promote sport and its values to build resilience to violent extremism, especially among youth

¹ In 2003, the [Inter-Agency Task Force on Sport for Development and Peace](#) defined sport "as a generic term, comprising sport for all, physical play, recreation, dance, organized, casual, competitive, traditional and indigenous sports and games in their diverse forms". UNESCO, Inter-Agency Task Force on Sport for Development and Peace, *Sport for Development and Peace: Towards Achieving the Millennium Development Goals* (Geneva: 2003). According to the definition of the European Sport Charter (1997): "types of physical activities, which casually, or, in an organized form, serve the development of people's physical and mental abilities and skills, with the aim of establishing social relationships or achieving certain results at different levels in competitions."

- To support Member States to integrate sport-based initiatives within national action plans for PVE

The [seventh review](#) of the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy adopted by the General Assembly in its Resolution 75/291 of 30 June 2021, calls upon Member States “to strengthen efforts to improve the security and protection of particularly vulnerable targets, including religious sites, educational institutions, tourist sites, urban centres, cultural and sport events” (para. 71), and it “encourages Member States, United Nations entities, regional and subregional organizations and relevant actors to consider instituting mechanisms to involve youth in the promotion of a culture of peace, tolerance and intercultural and interreligious dialogue and develop, as appropriate, an understanding of respect for human dignity, pluralism and diversity, including through education programmes, as well as sports and physical activities, that could prevent and discourage their participation in acts of terrorism, violent extremism conducive to terrorism, violence, xenophobia and all forms of discrimination. Furthermore, it encourages Member States to empower youth through the promotion of opportunities and inclusiveness” (para. 19).

Purpose of this *Guide for Policymakers*

The purpose of this document is to guide senior officials and decision-making authorities in the adoption of sport-based policies to pursue PVE objectives. This will ensure the effective integration of sport in strategies and action plans dedicated to fostering resiliency to violent extremism. Based on input from the international community, available evidence-based practice, and a range of PVE and sport-for-PVE reports and researches, this Guide functions as a resource for leveraging sport and its values to impact on behavioural skills and social cohesion, with the ultimate goal of violent extremism prevention.

Stakeholders and target audience

Developing and implementing effective sport-for-PVE policies requires the input and participation of a broad cross-section of Government and non-Government stakeholders to define needs, opportunities and priorities. The target audience is:

- National policy and decision-makers responsible for sport, education, social affairs, health matters, security and justice.
- Legislators and national sport-regulating agencies.
- Local authorities.
- Olympic committees.
- National, continental, and international sport federations.
- Civil society organizations.
- Human rights bodies.
- International, inter-governmental, and regional organizations.
- Development agencies and international cooperation funds.
- Youth and women's associations.

- Private entities with a direct interest in sport.
 - The media and communications sector.
-

By engaging these stakeholders in an inclusive and collaborative approach, policymakers can leverage critical resources and expertise for long-term impact of sport values-based activities as a contributor to national PVE objectives.

Global Sport Programme’s visualization mapping tool to illustrate major sporting events and promote sport for PVE:²

Before moving into the next section, it is worth highlighting a newly created visualization mapping tool. This map offers a holistic approach, enabling viewers to access information on the main international and regional instruments, frameworks, reports, programmes and initiatives that pertain to the leveraging of sport and its values as a tool to PVE, as well as current and upcoming MSEs.

Although this map does not provide an exhaustive database, it is a collection of those sport-for-PVE initiatives and upcoming MSEs currently known by the Global Sport Programme and, as a living tool, the map is continually updated. The map draws upon the Global Sport Programme’s publication entitled: “Compendium of Existing Policies, Projects and Initiatives aimed at making use of sport and its values as a tool to PVE”.³

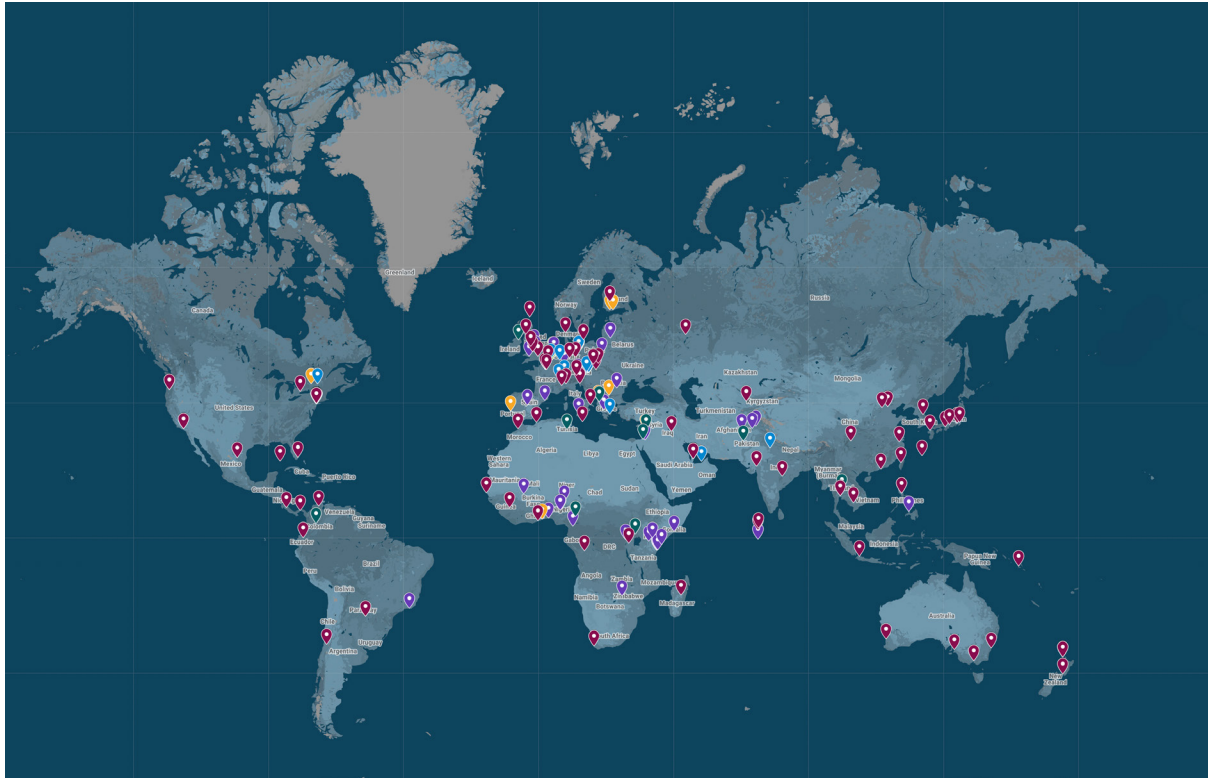
The map is divided into three “layers”, split into subsections including:

- Global best practices and initiatives for sport for PVE at international, regional, national and local level.
 - International sport for PVE frameworks.
 - Upcoming MSEs occurring in 2022–2026.
-

2 The Map is available at www.google.com/maps/d/viewer?mid=1meHtsq62zc18XdK6qaHLzAHpQDHdu-el&hl=en&ll=29.224776734956386%2C-8.095640627398879&z=2.

3 UNOCT, Compendium of existing policies, projects and initiatives aimed at making use of sport and its values as a tool to prevent violent extremism, (2021).

Figure 1
Global Sports Programme's georeferenced map



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The present *Guide* is designed to assist policy- and decision-makers to integrate sport and its values into policies aiming at the prevention of violent extremism. The *Guide* structure is divided into seven chapters:

Chapter 1 – Sport and its values for preventing violent extremism: provides an overview of what violent extremism is, and how sport can contribute to the PVE. It introduces mechanisms for supporting PVE and highlights international frameworks and instruments.

As stipulated in the Secretary-General Plan of Action to Prevent Violent Extremism: "Definitions of 'terrorism' and 'violent extremism' are the prerogative of Member States and must be consistent with their obligations under international law, in particular international human rights law".⁴ The drivers of violent extremism are often described in terms of "push" and "pull" factors. Push factors – which create the conditions that favour the rise or spread in appeal of violent extremism – include issues like weak governance, corruption, lack of employment and other socioeconomic opportunities, marginalization and discrimination, violations of human rights and the rule of law, and conflicts. Pull factors are associated with the personal rewards an individual may experience as part of a group or movement and participation in its activities; pull factors typically enhance that person's sense of purpose, personal empowerment, and belonging.

Preventing violent extremism

There is no internationally agreed-upon definition of PVE.⁵ This *Guide* will be using UNODC's definition, which is "efforts to influence individual and/or environmental factors that are suggested to create the conditions in which violent extremism can flourish, using social or educative, rather than explicitly security-driven measures".⁶ PVE approaches primarily seek to identify individuals and groups that may be vulnerable to radicalization⁷ and to violent extremism and address push factors that aggravate the grievances that fuel violent extremism through various forms of engagement, education and counter-narratives.

Contribution of sport to PVE priority areas

Sport has shown a capacity to address the key priority areas identified in the Secretary-General's Plan of Action to Prevent Violent Extremism. Specifically, sport has applications in:

- Dialogue and conflict prevention.
- Strengthening good governance, human rights, and the rule of law.

4 Plan of Action to Prevent Violent Extremism. Available at document A/70/674, para. 5.

5 The Secretary-General's Plan of Action to Prevent Violent Extremism emphasizes actions including dialogue and conflict prevention, strengthening good governance, human rights and the rule of law, engaging communities, empowering the youth, gender equality and empowering women, education, skills development and employment facilitation as well as strategic communication using the internet and social media.

When it comes to sport and PVE, there is a difference between programmes and initiatives aiming at development, inclusion or anti-discrimination and those specifically aiming at preventing violent extremism. At the same time, the former can definitely also contribute to PVE, same as the latter can contribute to development, inclusion or anti-discrimination.

6 UNODC (2021). *Preventing Violent Extremism Through Sport – Technical Guide*, p. 10.

7 According to a study by the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) "[t]he notion of 'radicalization' is generally used to convey the idea of a process through which an individual adopts an increasingly extremist set of beliefs and aspirations". (UNOCT Reference Guide, p.23)

- Engaging communities.
- Empowering youth.
- Gender equality and women's empowerment.
- Education, skill development and employment facilitation.
- Strategic communications, the Internet, and social media.
- Building bridges between culture and communities.

Although sport can contribute to PVE, it is important to address and acknowledge its potential risks. Sport may be utilized as a mechanism to generate aggression and violence amongst the competitors and their supporters. It may also be used as a tool by extremists to promote conflict by spreading propaganda while attempting to recruit, specifically vulnerable individuals such as young people. Despite such risks, adequate and safe management of sporting activities can ensure the integrity and positive value of the experience.

Chapter 2 – Developing sport-for-PVE policies: addresses key principles for effective policy development, sport-for-PVE policy in national action plans and indicates the need for minimizing potential risks that may appear in the context of sport.

Whole-of-society approach

It brings together government, civil society, and other non-governmental actors to work collaboratively and cohesively in the PVE. This approach fosters greater trust and understanding between all stakeholders and contributes to good governance more broadly.

Whole-of-Government approach

The drivers that fuel violent extremism cross many societal boundaries. In a government context, effective prevention requires cooperation, coordination, and coherence with broader societal actors, between different levels of government (national, regional, local), and between government ministries and agencies.

Human rights and rule of law

Respect for human rights and the rule of law are powerful defences against violent extremism and terrorism, and all policymakers have the responsibility to implement policies that counter discrimination, marginalization, and exclusion. In turn, this helps to address risk factors that are conducive to violence.

Localized context

While sport-for-PVE strategies and policies will be largely guided by the overarching priorities set by the international community, they must be contextualized to address the local drivers of violent extremism and harmonized with other counter-terrorism strategies' implementation.

Do no harm

Policymakers must identify and mitigate any potential risk or negative effects associated with sport-for-PVE activities, particularly with respect to vulnerable or marginalized individuals and communities. Safeguards against the use of sport programmes to identify and expose individuals should be established and all reasonable steps should also be taken to ensure investments and measures do not

inadvertently exacerbate conditions underpinning violent extremism (e.g., deepening divides between rival communities through competition), or cause harm to partners or staff. In addition, there is a risk that sport-for-PVE initiatives may cause stigmatization, especially if beneficiaries are labelled as “at-risk” individuals.

Chapter 3 – Stakeholders in sport-for-PVE policy development: explores the role and key areas of contribution for governments, sport organizations, civil society, public-private partnerships, and the role of youth and women.

Governments, sport organizations and civil society should lead in the development of PVE frameworks. By setting the overarching strategies to achieve PVE objectives and creating the structures that support a whole-of-society approach to PVE, they can leverage a universally relevant and accepted approach to enhance resilience across a variety of sectors and public life. Key areas of contributions include:

- **Sustainability:** Enabling contributions by various civil society groups to coordinate broader implementation efforts.
- **Support integrated and coherent approaches:** Developing more comprehensive, cohesive approaches can help achieve broader national objectives more efficiently. This also entails improving inter-agency coordination and internal communications.
- **Improve legal frameworks for sport-related PVE:** Introducing legislation that recognizes sport as a powerful tool for PVE.⁸

Sport organizations

In a whole-of-society approach, sport organizations are a key stakeholder in promoting and communicating the values and standards that contribute PVE objectives and can contribute to PVE in a variety of ways:

- **Addressing sport-based violence:** including the development of training and awareness-building campaigns.
- **Social responsibility agendas:** to promote positive action and to support local communities.
- **Role models:** collaborating with professional athletes and coaches.
- **Leverage sponsor resources:** PVE-related campaigns and projects.

Civil Society is a key partner in developing successful sport-for-PVE policy. Particularly, they contribute with:

- **Local knowledge and experience:** assess the drivers and impact of violent extremism at the local level and identify opportunities for sport-based mitigation. Furthermore, academia and think tanks can conduct critical research for effective sport-based activities.
- **Reinforce sport-based education and resilience at the local level:** Community-level input is essential for developing age-appropriate sport strategies to support resilience-building at the local level; identifying communities that can benefit most from increased access to sport activities; establishing trust with marginalized populations; and engaging local leaders and different cultural and religious communities.

Strengthening civil society frameworks:

⁸ See Legislation, Regulations, Frameworks and Policies section in UNOCT, Compendium of existing policies, projects and initiatives aimed at making use of sport and its values as a tool to prevent violent extremism, (2021), pp. 9–19, Available at www.un.org/development/desa/dspd/wp-content/uploads/sites/22/2021/05/UN-Global-Sports-Programme.pdf.

- **Consultation:** to address sport-for-PVE initiatives and receive feedback.
- **Coordination** with other civil society organizations and with the Government.
- **Funding:** for groups to develop and sustain their work.
- **Adaptability:** Local civil society actors should be given greater license to design and adapt programmes.

Public-private partnerships (PPPs)

In a sport-for-PVE context, PPPs may enhance skills, experience, resources, and capacity. Policymakers and implementing authorities can engage the private sector to build support and capacity and increase the sustainability of local and national sport-for-PVE initiatives. This could be done through, for example, the incorporation of PVE into corporate sustainability commitments in at-risk communities, linking sport-for-PVE initiatives to companies' core business objectives, or by the encouragement of sport-for-PVE initiatives as key corporate social responsibility objectives.

Women in PVE

Sport is a major contributor to the empowerment of women and girls, as their engagement supports the defiance of traditional gender stereotypes and norms, and levels the playing field for women and men more so than other activities. In turn, sport for PVE has the potential to help women and girls refrain from engaging with violent extremist and terrorist groups, while also addressing notions about gender norms and gender inequality in their communities. In fostering a more equal society, sports-for-PVE also contributes to dismantling notions of violent masculinities, which are often instrumentalized by terrorist groups in their recruitment strategies.

Women must be included as partners in design, development and implementation processes to ensure their unique skills and perspectives are used to create responsive plans that reflect their experiences and needs. This would aid in their ability to share the ownership of those plans, which is essential for buy-in and long-term sustainability.

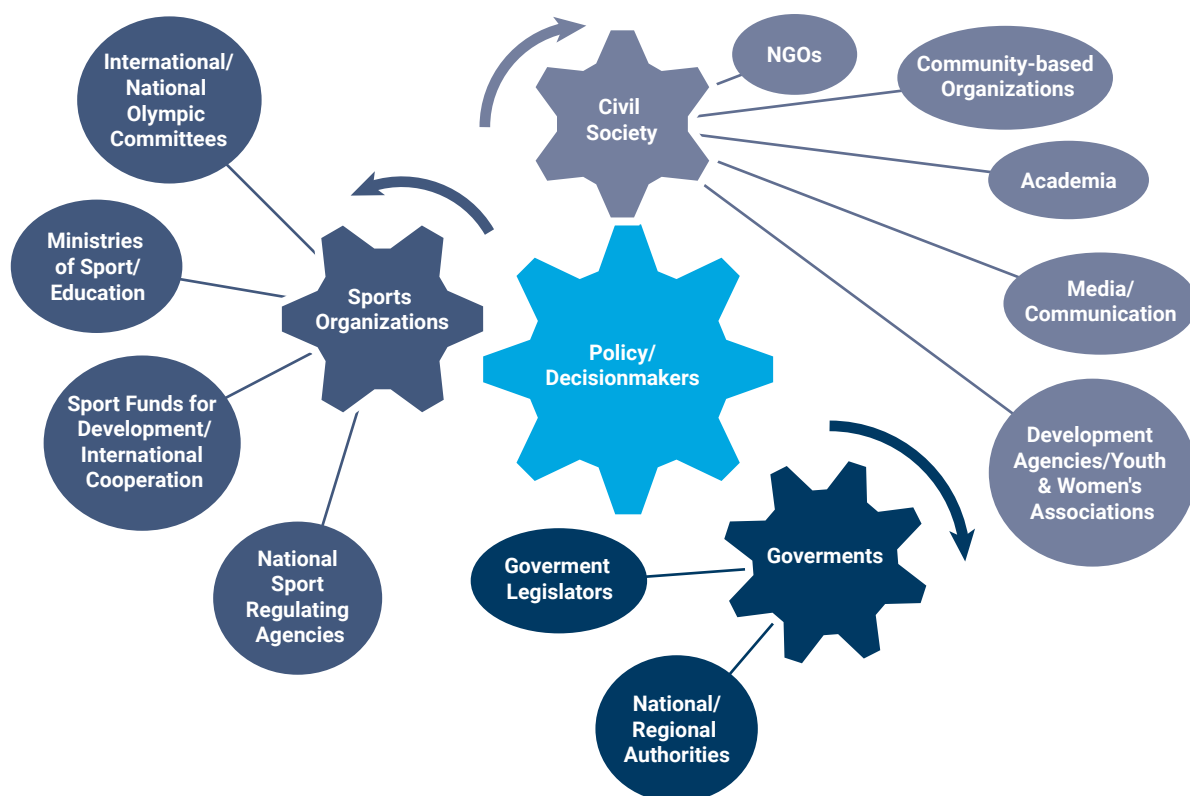
As shown in Figure 2, all of these stakeholders are interconnected and should be part of the entire process of any PVE initiative, while ensuring compliance with human rights and rule of law mechanisms.

Chapter 4 – Maximizing the impact of major sporting events: examines various ways that Member States can support PVE objectives in the design and delivery of MSEs.

From a policy perspective, a few provisions can be incorporated to support PVE objectives in relation to MSEs:

- Incorporate PVE into all stages of MSE.
- Entrench a rights-based model (human, labour, non-discriminatory, gender, environmental).
- Conduct bilateral or multilateral discussions to design measures that can contribute to transnational or regional PVE objectives.
- Consult communities to identify local needs, to enhance PVE-related outcomes.
- Engage with all actors involved to develop coordinated action plans (i.e., awareness-building campaigns) before, during, and after the MSE.
- Develop training programmes for all the participating staff.

Figure 2
Stakeholders in the promotion of sport and its values to prevent violent extremism



- Leverage the experience, capacity and resources of non-governmental stakeholders to support the delivery of PVE-related initiatives and legacies.
- Focus on achievable, realistic objectives for post-event legacies.
- Include post-event measures to adapt infrastructure (i.e., sport facilities) for the local communities.
- Develop benchmarks to measure the impact of MSEs and their legacies in terms of PVE.

Chapter 5 – International cooperation and instruments on sport-for-PVE: looks at various examples and instruments for policymakers to collaborate and support common areas of interest, starting with MSEs, international development and peacebuilding and, consequently, sport as a diplomatic tool.

Through the exchange of PVE dialogue, the international community is able to establish further support to the development of PVE objectives, as well as securing efficient frameworks through international cooperation at the bilateral, regional and global levels. International cooperation is key in generating the required capacity for long-term solutions to underlying issues that contribute to violent extremism, enabling them to be effectively addressed.

Chapter 6 – Planning, monitoring and evaluation: emphasizes the importance of proper planning and design, and the critical need for effective monitoring and evaluation to help policymakers track and adjust policies against their objectives and contribute to a broader evidence-based practice.

Planning, monitoring and evaluation of policy performance is essential to ensure the proper implementation of a public policy and to assess its impact. It helps policymakers track progress and make adjustments as needed, and to ensure a policy is on track to achieve its objectives.

The limited evidence available concludes that sport-based interventions contribute to resilience-building and help achieve PVE objectives.⁹ In particular, sport activities that facilitate other educational, vocational, mentoring, and volunteering activities and opportunities (i.e., “sport-plus” programmes) produce the most effective results and longer-term impacts.

By incorporating a monitoring and evaluation component into strategic plans and programming, policymakers ensure that sport-for-PVE efforts are informed by sound evidence and can meaningfully contribute to long-term PVE objectives. As part of overall sport-for-PVE planning, the integration of M&E is vital for:

- improving the links between sport-for-PVE interventions and their outcomes and impacts.
- ensuring the adequate collection of data and lessons learned.
- ensuring that all activities are mainstream gender, and that their impacts are measured in a gender-sensitive manner.
- improving decision-making.
- increasing transparency and accountability.
- providing legitimacy for the use of public funds and resources.
- securing buy-in from key stakeholders.
- contributing to the broader pool of sport-for-PVE evidence-based practice.

Chapter 7 – Key recommendations: provides an overview of the recommendations for sport-for-PVE policymaking mentioned throughout the *Guide*. Additionally, various featured **examples** showcase best practice initiatives.

The **annex** provides an extensive list of examples of sport-for-PVE programmes from all over the world and provides distinct case studies that deserve special attention.

9 UNOCT, *Compendium of existing policies, projects and initiatives aimed at making use of sport and its values as a tool to prevent violent extremism* (2021).

I. SPORT AND ITS VALUES FOR PREVENTING VIOLENT EXTREMISM



This chapter describes how sport and its values contribute to PVE. It introduces the phenomenon of violent extremism (1.1) and PVE (1.2) and showcases the contribution of sport to PVE priority areas (1.3). It highlights the main prevention mechanisms (1.4.) and international norms and policies (1.5.) that recognize the role of sport in helping to achieve peace, security and development goals, therefore directly contributing to PVE purposes or related efforts.

The focus of international and national strategies addressing violent extremism and, more broadly, terrorism phenomena, in the past two decades shifted from hard security measures alone to combat terrorism, to a more multi-sectoral and preventive approach that emphasizes preventing terrorism and violent extremism by reducing the drivers for support of violent extremist groups and ideologies. While some government policies and strategies for PVE¹⁰ were established and updated for several years, others' strategies and practices are at an early stage.

10 While in the first decade of the Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy, the focus has been more on security-based counter-terrorism measures, PVE stands for a comprehensive approach encompassing essential security measures, "but also systematic preventive measures which directly address the drivers of violent extremism".

Policymakers and practitioners increasingly emphasize the use of preventive or transformative measures that significantly expand the ability of the global community to take actions against the threat of violent extremism, drawing on established practices from fields as education, social welfare, development, and peacebuilding.¹¹ Preventative dimensions invest primarily in national authorities in charge of social development, including sport and education matters. They can engage with and leverage the potential of national and community-level public and private entities, sport federations and associations, and art and critical thinking initiatives directly beneficial to fostering resiliency of individuals to violent ideologies. These can prevent the risk of indoctrination and recruitment by groups pursuing terrorist purposes. In order to avoid stigmatization of target beneficiaries, development-oriented initiatives should not be labelled as PVE-related. However, the positive values in these initiatives can tangentially help PVE-related goals.

Community-level stakeholders are naturally embedded and often more likely than central government institutions to build relationships of trust and respect with disadvantaged, disempowered, or disenfranchised communities. They are multipliers of best practices and can act on citizens, especially youth, with valid and appealing alternatives to a violent path. Progress in the areas of security, human rights and rule of law is critical for sustaining global development in line with the United Nations' 2030 Sustainable Development Goals.¹² Compliance with international human rights law, refugee and humanitarian laws is critical for achieving PVE goals. In its sixth review of the Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy, the General Assembly stressed that when counter-terrorism efforts neglected the rule of law and violated international law, they not only betrayed the values they sought to uphold, but they might also further fuel violent extremism that could be conducive to terrorism.¹³

Sport is increasingly recognized as instrumental in generating better resilience to violent extremism. In January 2014, the European Commission, in its recommendations to the European Parliament,¹⁴ suggested that "sports be included in broader education efforts to build resilience against violent extremism." Specifically on PVE, a study conducted by United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) in 2018 noted that sports-based programmes had the capacity to build in vulnerable youth core life-skills which, in turn, are essential building blocks when it comes to PVE.¹⁵

Furthermore, the appeal of sports to youth and children is a very efficient tool to promote positive values, according to a global survey carried out by UNICEF among practitioners from more than 200 sport-for-development programmes.¹⁶ The survey highlighted the efficiency of achieving sports and non-sports-related objectives, such as creating a culture of positive participation, supporting education, social integration, and girls and women's empowerment.¹⁷

11 The European Commission's Radicalisation Awareness Network (RAN), for example, serves as an information exchange mechanism amongst practitioners who work daily in areas vulnerable to radicalization or with those who have already been radicalized. It adopted a holistic approach to PVE, via the recognition of preventing radicalization, promoting rehabilitation and reintegrating violent extremists, requiring the effort of those working in social and youth work, health-care systems, local authorities, prisons, the police and civil society organizations.

12 General Assembly resolution 70/1, adopted on 25 September 2015, Transforming our world: the 2030 agenda for sustainable development.

13 General Assembly resolution 72/284, adopted on 26 June 2018, [United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy, sixth review](#).

14 European Commission (2014). "Preventing radicalisation to terrorism and violent extremism: strengthening the EU's response", Communication, January 2014.

15 UNODC (2018). Desk Review on Sport as a Tool for the Prevention of Violent Extremism.

16 Refers to the use of sport, or any form of physical activity, to provide both children and adults with the opportunity to achieve their full potential through initiatives that promote personal and social development (UNESCO).

17 UNESCO (2019). Getting into the Game Understanding the evidence for child-focused sport for development. Available at www.unicef.org/reports/getting-into-the-game-2019.

Policymakers need to be aware of inclusiveness as a core part of PVE policies at the local and national level to be effective. For upholding human rights standards, it is imperative to understand and nurture resilience and youth-led activism.¹⁸ Resilience is an inner factor for achieving long-term successful PVE policies, while strengthening youth-led activism as a basis for building and reinforcing inclusive social cohesion. To provide a better basis for comprehending the contribution of sport to such PVE priority areas, a brief outline of associated terms, including “violent extremism”, “radicalization” and “preventing violent extremism”, shall be given.

1.1. Understanding violent extremism

There is no internationally agreed-upon definition of violent extremism. Nor is there an accepted international definition of “terrorism”, “violent radicalization” or “radicalization”. Violent extremism can be viewed as “the **beliefs and actions** of people who support or use violence to achieve ideological, religious, or political goals”.¹⁹ It has also been described as the “use or support of violence”, the “willingness” to use violence; committing, advocating or encouraging acts of violence; and promoting views that foment and incite violence in furtherance of particular beliefs, and foster hatred that might lead to inter-community violence.²⁰

SECRETARY-GENERAL ANTÓNIO GUTERRES STATED:

“The best prevention tool is the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the international treaties that derive from it. ... A focus on the prevention of human rights violations can contribute directly to preventing violent extremism and countering terrorism by avoiding individual experiences of human rights violations ... which have been identified as playing a role in an individual’s path to radicalization”.²¹

In this January 2021 report on the “Activities of the United Nations system in implementing the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy”, the Secretary-General emphasized that human rights should inform a nuanced, context-specific analysis of the conditions conducive to terrorism and guide the development, implementation, oversight, monitoring and evaluation of comprehensive policies and measures to prevent and counter terrorism and the underlying spread of violent extremism.²² In addition, in the UN’s Plan of Action to Prevent Violent Extremism the Secretary-General emphasized that “[d]efinitions of ‘terrorism’ and ‘violent extremism’ are the prerogative of Member States and must be consistent with their obligations under international law, in particular international human rights law”.²³

18 UNDP (2018). Assessing Progress Made, and the Future of Development Approaches to Preventing Violent Extremism: Report of the United Nations Development Programme Second Global Meeting on Preventing Violent Extremism, “Oslo II”.

19 UNESCO (2017). Preventing violent extremism through education: A guide for policy-makers.

20 High Commissioner for Human Rights (2016). Report on best practices and lessons learned on how protecting and promoting human rights contribute to preventing and countering violent extremism. A/HRC/33/29.

21 General Assembly (2019). Report of the Secretary-General on “Protecting human rights and fundamental freedoms while countering terrorism”, A/74/270. Available at <https://digitallibrary.un.org/record/3825580?ln=en>.

22 General Assembly, report on “Activities of the United Nations system in implementing the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy” (A/75/729), 2021.

23 General Assembly, Plan of Action to Prevent Violent Extremism (A/70/674), 2015. Available at <https://documents-dds-ny.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/N15/456/22/pdf/N1545622.pdf?OpenElement>.

The focus of the present publication on sport and its values as a tool to positively impact youth socioemotional learning and cognitive development suggests considering the position of the Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Violence against Children. In its report *A Child-Resilience Approach to Preventing Violent Extremism*, the Office of the Special Representative explains that “The discourse on drivers of extremism focuses principally on youth, and thus fails to capture some of the nuances that apply to children. Violent extremism is best understood as a dynamic process, where intangible phenomena such as marginalization, hopelessness and experiences of violence interact in reinforcing and unpredictable ways. There is increasing evidence linking adverse childhood experiences, weak governance and heavy-handed security policies to subsequent extremism”.²⁴

Radicalization

The prevention of violent extremism lies in the understanding of the process of **radicalization towards violent extremism**. The notion of “radicalization” is generally used to indicate a process through which an individual adopts an increasingly extremist set of beliefs and aspirations. This may include, but is not defined by, the willingness to condone, support, facilitate or use violence to further political, ideological, religious or other goals. States and other stakeholders use various definitions for radicalization, frequently limiting the focus to “violent” radicalization or radicalization leading to terrorism. For example, the European Union Agency for Law Enforcement Cooperation (Europol) has recently recommended referring to a “violent extremist social trend”, rather than using the term “radicalization”. However, such vague concepts risk negatively affecting measures associated with individuals’ human rights, including Article 15 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights. Therefore, the Secretary-General in his Plan of Action to Prevent Violent Extremism, left such definitions to national authorities, cautioning them to be consistent with States’ obligations under international law, in particular with international human rights law.²⁵

Table 1
Resilience and vulnerability factors to violent extremism

Resilience factors	Vulnerability factors
Identity and sense of belonging	Economic injustice
Psycho-social resilience	Lack of opportunities for skill/educational development
Community cohesion	Lack of employments
Trust in governmental institutions	Lack of future prospects
Respect for human rights	Violent environments and disruptive social context
Tolerance and respect for the other	Marginalization feeling (e.g., unequal treatment by law enforcement agencies or social services)

24 Available at https://violenceagainstchildren.un.org/sites/violenceagainstchildren.un.org/files/2020/reports_extremism/un_hq_osrsg_a_child-resilience_approach_to_preventing_violent_extremism_20-01153_lo-res.pdf.

25 UNOCT, *Reference Guide: Developing National and regional Action Plans to Prevent Violent Extremism*, (1st edition), p. 23: “Extremism and ‘Radicalization’; excerpts from the OHCHR Report on best practices and lessons learned on how protecting and promoting human rights contribute to preventing and countering violent extremism (A/HRC/33/29)”. See www.un.org/counterterrorism/sites/www.un.org.counterterrorism/files/unoct_pverreferenceguide_final.pdf.

Most people who hold radical ideas, both moderate and extreme, will not engage in terrorist or violent actions. Even those who claim to defend a “cause” may not be deeply ideological or radicalized. Therefore, the radicalization conducive to violent extremism and the development of beliefs that justify violence is one of the possible pathways into terrorism, but it is not the only one.²⁶ Although it could indicate worrying behaviour, the mere fact of having radical views is not a crime, and it should not necessarily be associated with negative aspects. The phenomenon of violent extremism is also neither new nor exclusive to any region, nationality, or system of belief.

Some scholars agree that radicalization is a process that can be influenced by contributing and protection factors, and that is why the context surrounding the individual is so important. International Alert discovered resilience factors support individual's resilience towards violent extremism and vulnerability factors that make individuals susceptible to violent extremism.²⁷

Drivers of violent extremism

The vulnerability factors are also known as drivers of violent extremism. They are often described in terms of “push” and “pull” factors, as stated in the Secretary General's Plan of Action to Prevent Violent Extremism:

- **Push factors** create the conditions that favour the rise or spread in appeal of violent extremism or insurgency. They include issues such as weak governance, corruption, lack of employment and other socioeconomic opportunities, marginalization and discrimination, violations of human rights and the rule of law, and prolonged conflicts that subject populations to displacement or military occupation.²⁸
- **Pull factors** are associated with the personal rewards an individual may experience as part of a group or movement and participation in its activities; pull factors typically enhance that person's sense of purpose, personal empowerment, and belonging.²⁹

While the push factors mentioned above create fertile soil for violent extremist organizations, indoctrination also requires a social context, often through propaganda and hate speech that is perpetrated and promoted by a wide range of sources, including political leaders and movements, informal family and social networks, social media, and even mass media. Those individuals most at risk of recruitment to violent extremism have often been exposed to some combination of grievance and personal experience (e.g., a lack of opportunity in terms of education, livelihood and income or perceive social inequality) that can push or pull them into embracing violence as a legitimate means of redress. Among young people, radicalization to violent extremism is often about searching for identity, belonging and recognition.³⁰ Understanding how radicalization operates as a process leading to violent extremism allows for a fuller comprehension of the mechanisms underpinning the prevention of violent extremism.

26 Borum, R. (2012). “Radicalization into Violent Extremism II: A Review of Conceptual Models and Empirical Research.” *Journal of Strategic Security* 4, p. 38.

27 International Alert (2018), “Making PVE Programmes Work: Rethinking approaches to the prevention of violent extremism in Lebanon”, Policy Brief.

28 General Assembly, Plan of Action to Prevent Violent Extremism (A/70/674), 2015, para. 27.

29 Khalil, J., and Zeuthen, M. (2016). *Countering Violent Extremism and Risk Reduction: A guide to programme design and evaluation*. London: Royal United Services Institute. USAID (2011). *The Development Response to Violent Extremism and Insurgency Policy*, p. 23.

30 Observatory to Prevent Extremist Violence (2017). Barcelona Declaration: Plan of Action of the Euro-Mediterranean civil society to prevent all form of violent extremism.

Table 2
Push and pull factors in extremism

	Push factors	Pull Factors
USAID Development Response	Social marginalization/fragmentation	Access to material resources
	Poorly governed/undergoverned areas	Social status and respect from peers
	Government repression/violations	Belonging
	Endemic corruption and elite impunity	Adventure
	Cultural threat perceptions	Self esteem/personal empowerment
		Prospect of glory and fame
		Social networks
		Radical institutions/venues
		Extremist involvement in economics

Source: Khalil and Zeuthen, 2014.

Recommendation: Before starting to plan and develop sport-for-PVE policy, explore the forms of violent extremism and the drivers of violent extremism prevalent in the local and national context.

1.2. Preventing violent extremism

In 2018, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) recommended that a programme should clearly articulate what it aims to prevent. This should inform the entire programme, from its objectives, the desired outcome and outputs, indicators of success, hypotheses, assumptions and theory of change,³¹ to the “how” of intervention, and identification of target groups and beneficiaries. This ultimately influences the programme’s potential for achieving its stated aim and its actual impact.³²

A recent attempt by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) to define PVE refers to “the efforts to influence individual and environmental factors that are suggested to create the conditions in which violent extremism can flourish, using social or educative, rather than explicitly security-driven measures”.³³ PVE through sport builds on the unique ability to actively engage individuals, it reports, targeting specifically those who face difficulties in being reached through formal interventions. Human rights should inform a nuanced, context-specific analysis of the conditions conducive to terrorism. It should also guide the development, implementation, oversight, monitoring and evaluation of

31 A theory of change is a method that sets out how a programme or initiative contributes to the expected change that shall be reached through the very programme or initiative and helps identify the programme focus, objectives, target groups, and measures to be implemented. In many cases a robust ToC is the foundation of a targeted and effective programme or initiative.

32 UNDP (2018). “Improving the Impact of Preventing Violent Extremism Programming”. Available at www.undp.org/publications/improving-impact-preventing-violent-extremism-programming-toolkit.

33 UNODC, *Preventing Violent Extremism Through Sport: Technical Guide*, Criminal Justice Handbook Series (Vienna, 2020), VIII, citing Stephens, Sieckelinck and Boutellier, “Preventing violent extremism: a review of the literature”, *Studies in Conflict and Terrorism*, 2 January 2019, pp. 1–16.

comprehensive policies and measures to prevent and counter terrorism, and the underlying spread of violent extremism.

Given the breadth and complexity of PVE, which is further challenged by nuances of use in multisector contexts, the Secretary-General warned that policy frameworks such as national and regional PVE plans of action risk inefficiency, can bolster negative perceptions of governance and can even be harmful, if they do not define the term “violent extremism” in their respective national and regional contexts. Countering violent extremism (CVE) may be understood as “proactive, non-coercive actions to counter efforts by violent extremists to radicalize, recruit and mobilize followers to violence, and to address specific factors that facilitate and enable violent extremist recruitment and radicalization to violence”.³⁴

Several authors and organizations have focused on comprehending the process through the creation of models of radicalization to understand the phenomenon better and provide a plausible definition.

A general approach to countering violent extremism can be envisioned through a separation between levels of impact (macro, meso, and micro-social) and forms of potential effects (prevention, repression, intervention).³⁵ A macro-social level represents an entire country, region, city or district, while meso-social tools target the individual on a community, family or peer group level. The micro level focuses on the individual level. Preventative methods can either be generalized through broad measures such as civil-society activities or through targeted means, dealing with specific treatments of individual groups. Between levels of impact and effect, different tools, methods and programmes can be designed and carried out specifically to the relevant methodologies and requirements. For ideal outcomes, “a national strategy to counter extremism (both violent and non-violent) should implement methods and programs in every ‘square’ that complement each other”.³⁶ This model can be used to explain the three levels of impact and potential effects of PVE.

Table 3
Levels of impact and potential effects of PVE (as per D. Koehler, 2015)

	Macro level	Meso level	Micro level
Prevention	Education, research, civil society, youth and social work	Community cohesion, programs	Workshops with former extremists in schools
Repression	National law enforcement architecture	Community policing, group banning	Incarceration, house searches
Intervention	Counter narrative projects	Family counselling	Deradicalization programs

34 Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, *The Role of Civil Society in Preventing and Countering Violent Extremism and Radicalization that Lead to Terrorism: A Guidebook for South-Eastern Europe*, 2018. See www.osce.org/secretariat/400241.

35 Koehler, D. (2015). “Using family counselling to prevent and intervene against foreign fighters: operational perspectives, methodology and best practices for implementing codes of conduct”.

36 Ibid.

Table 4
Three dimensions of impact (as per D. Koehler, 2015)

Dimensions of impact can be further identified and differentiated into three main groups for sustainable results:

Ideological dimension	An effective deradicalization programme must target the delegitimization of previously learned radical ideology from an individual's or group's narratives, in order to obtain a critical self-assessment of their past.
Pragmatic dimension	Ensuring a pragmatic approach entail addressing the discontinuance and/or prevention of courses of action taken on by individuals or groups working towards reaching their goals through the establishment of alternative pathways.
Affective dimension	Addressing individuals' emotional needs through support mechanisms, such as family counselling, strengthens emotional bonds and creates a positive counter-narrative to the individuals radical environment.

Additional Resources

Koehler, D., (2015). "Using family counselling to prevent and intervene against foreign fighters: operational perspectives, methodology and best practices for implementing codes of conduct".

Stephen, W., Stijn Sickelinck, S. and Boutellier, H. (2019). "Preventing violent extremism: a review of the literature", *Studies in Conflict and Terrorism*.

UNODC (2020). "Preventing Violent Extremism Through Sport".

Recommendation: Violent extremism and its associated concepts should be discussed and defined at the national level as a precondition to developing sport-for-PVE policy. This must comply with human-rights obligations.

1.3. Contribution of sport to PVE priority areas

The positive values generated through sports and MSEs are the key to achieving set PVE goals, operating through the PVE framework outlined above. National strategies and policies for coordinated and impactful action on the ground require greater innovation than previously established. These need to make use of behavioural insights, sports or collaboration with the entertainment industry, as well as empirical evidence and evaluation, to improve effectiveness in relation to PVE objectives. These efforts also need to be integrated with the pursuit of sustainable development, the sustaining peace agenda, and human rights.³⁷

³⁷ General Assembly (2020). Report of the Secretary-General on "Activities of the United Nations System in implementing the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy" (A/74/677) .

For this reason, the United Nations has ensured the inclusion of sport in its “all-of-UN approach” to prevent terrorism and violent extremism. The positive values of sport align closely with the priority areas of the [Secretary-General’s Plan to Prevent Violent Extremism](#) (2015), as outlined in table 4.

Table 4
Three dimensions of impact (as per D. Koehler, 2015)

Plan of Action priority areas	Contribution of sport
Dialogue and conflict prevention	<p>Builds bridges across social, economic and cultural divides by fostering a sense of shared identity and fellowship among groups that might otherwise be inclined to treat each other with distrust, hostility or violence.</p> <p>Opens the door to peaceful dialogue at local, national and international levels.</p> <p>Reduces social tensions and conflicts by addressing the sources of grievances and providing alternative entry points into the social and economic life of communities.³⁸</p>
Strengthening good governance, human rights, and the rule of law	<p>When conducted in accordance with its fundamental values (i.e., tolerance, respect, fair play, non-discrimination, etc.), sport is an incubator for promoting and upholding human rights, good governance, and rule of law. Individuals who experience democratic, accountable, and transparent practice in sport are more likely to expect and apply these values in broader society.</p>
Engaging communities	<p>Builds trust and establishes a sense of ownership at the community level.</p> <p>Encourages multistakeholder engagement at all levels, linking community groups and institutions and connecting these with influential leaders and decision makers.</p> <p>Generates social ties and community infrastructure that help to build peace, stability, and social cohesion by establishing and engaging community sport organizations and volunteers.³⁹</p>
Empowering youth	<p>Builds confidence, self-esteem and leadership skills in young people and helps them learn the values of tolerance, respect and teamwork. These qualities not only build resilience, but also equip young people to enact positive social change in all aspects of their lives.</p>
Gender equality and empowering women	<p>Increases self-esteem, self-confidence and enhanced sense of control over one's body.</p> <p>Encourages leadership opportunities for women and girls.</p> <p>Establishes positive networks for women and men of all ages to build trust and respect for one another.</p> <p>Produces positive shifts in gender norms that give girls and women greater safety and control over their lives.⁴⁰</p> <p>Contributes to gender equality when women are meaningfully engaged as participants and leaders.</p> <p>Supports the construction of non-violent masculinities.</p>

38 Sport for Development and Peace International Working Group (2008). *Harnessing the Power of Sport for Development and Peace: Recommendations to Governments*.

39 General Assembly (2020), “Sport: a global accelerator of peace and sustainable development for all”, report of the Secretary General, (A/75/155). Available at <https://undocs.org/A/75/155>.

40 UN-Women (2020). “Sport for Generation Equality Framework: Driving implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action through the Power of the Sport Ecosystem”. Available at www.unwomen.org/sites/default/files/Headquarters/Attachments/Sections/News%20and%20events/Stories/2020/Sport-GenerationEquality.pdf.

Plan of Action priority areas	Contribution of sport
Education, skill development, and employment facilitation	<p>Improves academic performance and school attendance.</p> <p>Provides a platform for education scholarships to help individuals achieve career goals.</p> <p>Builds a range of developmental, emotional, and social skills that help young people control their emotions and channel negative feelings in a positive way.</p> <p>Improves overall emotional well-being, provides a sense of belonging, and teaches individuals how to follow rules and accept decisions, and to cooperate with others.</p> <p>Enhances employability by teaching teamwork, strategic planning, communication, discipline and adaptability.</p> <p>Education should not be encouraged for PVE, however, but rather should be utilized to develop youth groups which tangentially help PVE goals.</p>
Strategic communications, the Internet, and social media	<p>As a source of global mass entertainment, sport is one of the most powerful and far-reaching communications platforms for public education and social mobilization.⁴¹ Athletes can be extremely influential role models and spokespeople for peace and can create opening for positive dialogues that support a broad range of social agendas and build bridges between antagonistic groups.⁴²</p>

Recommendations:

1. Understand the contribution that sport provides for supporting PVE, and the behavioural insights it offers when integrated into national strategies and policies.
2. Simultaneously seek to improve the evidence-base and effectiveness of sport for PVE.

1.4. Sport-for-PVE mechanisms

Sport-for-PVE activities generally rely on a handful of mechanisms to address the drivers of violent extremism and build resilience, particularly among youth, and in communities against ideological narratives that promote terrorism or violence. The mechanisms described hereafter are personal and social development, social inclusion, social cohesion, and the improvement of well-being.

Personal and social development

Building resilience – or the capacity to successfully cope with significant change, adversity or risk – requires an array of life skills. Sport is used in a variety of social-development models, including crime prevention and peace and development, to develop those skills in an organic way.

In individuals, sport is widely acknowledged to:

41 Sport for Development and Peace International Working Group (2008). *Harnessing the Power of Sport for Development and Peace: Recommendations to Governments*.

42 Ibid.

- Support the development of self-esteem, confidence, critical thinking skills, and other qualities that enhance an individual's overall mental and emotional well-being.⁴³
- Improve academic performance.
- Develop skills and attitudes that enrich social interactions and employability.

In groups and communities, sport:

- Strengthens understanding and tolerance, can help reduce stereotypes, and connects people through a common experience or goal.
- Contributes to the resilience of individuals and communities against the propaganda and rhetoric of violent extremist groups.

While much of the current dialogue around violent extremism centres around young adults, it is important to recognize that activities that build resilience against violent extremism can be more effective when they are initiated with children, defined as people under the age of 18. The Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Violence against Children⁴⁴ notes in *A Child-Resilience Approach to PVE (2020)* that children have heightened vulnerability to polarized message content and that those who grow up in environments of chronic marginalization, violence or social injustice may be more susceptible to the draw of violent extremist groups as a means of connecting with others with similar experiences, asserting power, or exacting revenge. As such, resilience-building strategies that engage children in meaningful activities (rather than those that simply distract), including sports, give children a foundation of “skills, opportunities and tools to build a constructive, compelling and fulfilling social existence” and a way to channel their grievances in a peaceful manner.⁴⁵

Identity fusion

The concept of “identity fusion” sometimes described as a visceral feeling of oneness with a group or as an expansion of the self, offers an opportunity for individuals – particularly those experiencing some form of deprivation – to realign the sense of self and new systems by which people can value themselves (Hamblin, 2019).

Identity fusion has both negative and positive contexts. It is acknowledged as an element of the violent extremist mentality, where allegiance to the group is so strong that individuals are willing to die defending it. While it can also have negative connotations in sport (e.g., hooliganism among fanatical fans), fusion through sport-based activities can contribute to constructive outcomes that support cohesion through shared positive experiences and belonging.

In terms of public policy, by identifying the mechanisms through which group loyalty develops, policymakers are better placed to harness it for practical and positive outcomes, such as acts of charity or the reduction of inter-group violence (Newson et al., 2016).

43 Digweed, L. (2020). “Building resilience in youth sports: Reaching for high performance and beyond”. Available at <http://teamesg.co.uk/blog/>.

44 OSRSG-VAC. (2020). *A Child-Resilience Approach to Preventing Violent Extremism*. Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary General on Violence against Children.

45 Ibid.

- For examples on personal and social development, please see the project [One Win Leads to Another](#) (Brazil) or a [National Taekwondo and Kickboxing Federation of Tajikistan \(NTKF\)](#) and UNFPA project, focusing on gender equality and/or addressing gender-based violence. Both examples, and many others, are listed in Annex I and can be found in UNOCT's "Compendium of existing policies, projects and initiatives aimed at making use of sport and its values as a tool to prevent violent extremism".

Social inclusion

Social inclusion is the process by which individuals, regardless of background or circumstances, are provided with equal opportunities that help them achieve their full potential in life (Department of Economic and Social Affairs, 2018). It is not about bringing "outsiders" into the existing mainstream culture, but rather creating a new and negotiated culture together.⁴⁶

Social, emotional, or perceived isolation, whether arising from rejection, an inability to connect with peers and family, or a perceived lack of support from others, can have a drastic and negative effect on individuals.⁴⁷ Similarly, the exclusion of groups from economic, political, social and cultural opportunities limits access to resources, denies rights and creates imbalances and inequalities within communities and populations.⁴⁸ While neither are causative factors in themselves, they can increase the vulnerability of individuals and groups to radicalization and violent extremism.

Sport is a natural channel for engaging marginalized individuals or populations, creating a forum for social interaction, developing peer relationships, enhancing a sense of belonging to a larger community, and promoting a set of shared values that allows individuals to work together.⁴⁹

- An example for using sport for social inclusion is the **Fédération Française Sports pour Tous**. Find more information in UNOCT's "Compendium of existing policies, projects and initiatives aimed at making use of sport and its values as a tool to prevent violent extremism" and in Annex I.⁵⁰

Social cohesion

Social cohesion refers to the bonds that bring society together and is based on factors such as employment, income, health, education and housing, which facilitate social order, tolerance and safety and create a harmonious society. A socially cohesive society works towards the well-being of all its members, fights exclusion and marginalization, creates a sense of belonging, promotes trust, and offers its members the opportunity of upward mobility. Cohesive communities are less prone to slip into destructive patterns of tension and conflict.⁵¹

46 Frisby, W., and Ponic, P. (2017). "Sport and social inclusion", in *Sport Policy in Canada*, 2017. Available at <http://books.openedition.org/uop/724>.

47 Hug, E.C. (2013). "The role of isolation in radicalization: how important is it?" Available at <https://apps.dtic.mil/sti/citations/ADA620454>.

48 Koser and Cunningham (2018). "Migration, violent extremism and social exclusion", in *World Migration Report 2018*, International Organization for Migration. Available at <https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/pdf/10.1002/wom3.92017>.

49 Coalter, F. (2015). "Sport-for-change: some thoughts from a sceptic", in *Social Inclusion*.

50 UNOCT, Compendium of existing policies, projects and initiatives aimed at making use of sport and its values as a tool to prevent violent extremism, 2021, p. 39.

51 Sport and Recreation Alliance, Game of Life – Social Cohesion. Available at www.sportandrecreation.org.uk/pages/gol-social-cohesion.

Sport and recreation positively contribute to many of the factors that build social cohesion, such as better physical and mental health, attaining higher education, reducing crime and antisocial behaviour, and creating better employment opportunities and earning potential.⁵²

- ▶ Sport can also unite people through a common objective, such as participating in team sports, or through a common passion, such as supporting a national team – both of which can help transcend the differences within a population and enhance social cohesion. The mechanisms behind the resulting phenomenon of individuals taking on a group identity, which is also prevalent in sport and can have both positive and negative effects, can be described through the concept of “identity fusion” (see box). An example of good practice for social cohesion through sport are the **Khyber Peace Games in Pakistan**. For more information, please see UNOCT’s Compendium and Annex I.

Improving well-being

Physical exercise improves people’s physical health and memory, while collective sports can enhance social interactions between participants. These activities enable participants to regain self-control, help them cope better with problems and generate endorphins, which improves one’s general mood, makes people more relaxed, and helps prevent or reduce depression and anxiety.⁵³ Mental well-being also contributes to developing people’s potential, allowing them to be more productive and to work creatively. It also helps to build stronger and more positive relationships with others and their communities.⁵⁴

Those individuals whose living conditions are marked by limited access to housing, labour, culture, education and communal life can especially benefit from the positive outcomes of playing a sport. Increasing access to sports activities can provide individuals with an outlet for the stresses of everyday life, support the development of skills and bonds, inspire future goals and help engage young women and men who have been traumatized by conflict and war.

There is some evidence to suggest that significant numbers of prisoners are being radicalized to violence while incarcerated.⁵⁵ Prisons are often viewed as places where violent extremist ideologies emerge and spread. Researchers have noted the significant role that sports interventions have played in the rehabilitation of individuals radicalized to terrorism, especially when “targeted at those who are searching for group belonging and a sense of identity”.⁵⁶ Sports provide prisoners with a positive way to spend their time, facilitate new ways to engage with staff and other prisoners, and to develop social skills that improve their ability to reintegrate into mainstream society. Upon release, involvement in sports initiatives in the local communities can help sustain positive change and increase the success of leading a normal life.

- ▶ A great example aimed at rehabilitation through sports in prisons is the Creative Skills for Peace project led by **Local Youth Corner Cameroon**. For more information, please see UNOCT’s Compendium and Annex I.

52 Ibid.

53 Muhsen, T. (2020). “The impact of physical activity and sport on mental health”.

54 Beddington, J. and others (2008). The mental wealth of nations. *Nature*, 455, 1057–1060.

55 UNODC (2016). *Handbook on the Management of Violent Extremist Prisoners and the Prevention of Radicalisation to Violence in Prisons*. United Nations.

56 OSCE (2020). *Non-custodial Rehabilitation and Reintegration in Preventing and Countering Violent Extremism and Radicalisation That Lead to Terrorism: A Guidebook for Policymakers and Practitioners in South-Eastern Europe*, p. 63.

Recommendation: For addressing the drivers of violent extremism, specific attention must be paid to the mechanisms of personal and social development, social inclusion, social cohesion and the improvement of well-being.

Additional Resources

Aly, A., Taylor, E., and Karnovsky, S. (2014). "Moral disengagement and building resilience to violent extremism: an education intervention", *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism*, vol. 37(4), pp. 369–385.

WANA Institute and Terre des hommes (2018). "Reconceptualizing the drivers of violent extremism: An agenda for child & youth resilience".

Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Violence against Children (2020). "A Child-Resilience Approach to Preventing Violent Extremism".

1.5. International legal and policy references

The prevention of violent extremism intersects and works in parallel with a variety of policies aiming at security, rule of law and development. These can be integrated and interconnected to leverage existing initiatives and to develop a multi-stakeholder and multi-sectoral approach to sport for PVE. This supports a more cohesive and robust response to national and global PVE agendas.

Recommendation: Leverage existing initiatives from cross-cutting agendas to develop a more cohesive and robust multi-stakeholder approach to sport for PVE

The following examples outline international frameworks that recognize the role of sport in meeting global agendas for peace, development, crime prevention, security, youth, and gender equality. While not all are directly related to PVE, they nevertheless contribute to the PVE agenda and provide policymakers with strong rationale for leveraging the value of sport-specific policy across a variety of sectors.

Peacebuilding and sustainable development

In several resolutions, the United Nations acknowledges and emphasizes the positive role of sport in the area of peacebuilding and sustainable development (see below). Beyond the fact that sport can stimulate positive mental health and cognitive development, it also contributes to the promotion of tolerance, respect, perseverance, resilience, equity and solidarity, as proven by various initiatives following the concept of Sport for Development and Peace. The rise of sport-based development and peacebuilding projects in conflict-affected regions also exemplifies how sport has proven capable of easing conflicts that might otherwise have escalated.⁵⁷

Sport can build bridges between communities, regardless of their cultural differences or political divisions, as it disregards geographical borders, ethnic differences, and social classes. It also plays a

⁵⁷ For example, in South Sudan, with the support of UNDP and the United Nations Mission, 500 youth engaged in competition in their chosen sports, whether it was football, volleyball, basketball or wrestling, in the spirit of promoting peace and social cohesion as part of National Unity Day.



Participants at the student observance of the International Day of Peace (21 September) UN Photo/Laura Jarriel.

significant role as a promoter of social integration and economic empowerment. Sport has the capacity to support youth at risk (including unemployed and migrant youth) because it is structured around norms, behaviours and rules that are also desirable in the larger community and can be a most effective means for empowering women and supporting gender equality.

- The United Nations' [2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development](#) recalls that "sport is an important enabler of sustainable development" and values "the growing contribution of sport to the realization of development and peace in its promotion of tolerance and respect and the contributions it makes to the empowerment of women and of young people, individuals and communities as well as to health, education and social inclusion objectives".

- Sport contributes positively to the five pillars identified under [Security Council Resolution 2250 \(2015\)](#) on youth, peace and security:
 - a) Participation: Sports, in all disciplines, create opportunities for young people to collaborate and co-create with peers, elders, authorities and other adults in communities, thus providing communities with the opportunity to experience intergenerational dialogue, collaboration and social cohesion.
 - b) Protection: Sports events can be used to communicate key messages and raise awareness about young people's rights and aspirations, including messages on gender equality and women's empowerment, during armed conflict and in post-conflict times.
 - c) Prevention: Sports contribute to the promotion of a culture of peace, tolerance, and social cohesion, therefore setting the stage and creating an enabling environment for young women and men to play a critical role in conflict prevention.

- d) Disengagement and reintegration: Sports are a meaningful way to engage with young people and create a sense of belonging, thus supporting the meaningful inclusive and community-based reintegration of young women and men directly involved in armed conflict.
 - e) Partnerships: Security Council Resolution 2250 (2015) highlights the importance of partnering with youth, local communities and non-governmental actors in countering violence extremism. Sports can create a connection between and with traditional and non-traditional actors, and offer the opportunity to co-create with young women and men.
- [Security Council Resolution 2419 \(2018\) on youth, peace and security](#) (second resolution) recognizes the growing contribution of sport and culture to the realization of development and peace through the promotion of tolerance and respect. It also recognizes the contributions that sport makes to the empowerment of youth and women, individuals and communities as well as to health, education and social inclusion objectives. It recognizes the positive role young people can play in negotiating and implementing peace agreements and in conflict prevention. Finally, it urges stakeholders to take young people's views into account, and facilitate their equal and full participation in peace and decision-making processes at all levels.
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- [Elimination of discrimination against women and girls in sport](#) (United Nations Human Rights Council Resolution 40/5 of 2019) recognizes the imperative need to engage women and girls in the practice of sport and to enhance, to this end, their participation in sporting events at the national and international levels. It calls upon States to ensure that sporting associations and bodies implement policies and practices in accordance with international human rights norms and standards and refrain from developing and enforcing policies and practices that force, coerce or otherwise pressure women and girl athletes into undergoing unnecessary, humiliating, and harmful medical procedures in order to participate in women's events in competitive sports. It also calls on them to repeal rules, policies and practices that negate their rights to bodily integrity and autonomy.

With regards to sport specifically, the United Nations has established an extensive framework to promote synergy, coherence, and harmonization of sport-based activities related to peace and development:

- The General Assembly, in its resolutions on [Sport as a means to promote education, health, development and peace](#) (Resolution 59/10 of 2004), and on [Sport as a means to promote education, health, development and peace](#) (Resolution 71/160 of 2016), recognizes the contribution of sport to economic and social development. The Assembly encourages Governments, the United Nations system and sport-related institutions to seek new and innovative ways to use sport for communication and social mobilization, particularly at the national, regional, and local levels, and to engage civil society through active participation. It also invites these actors to include sport and physical education as a tool to help achieve internationally agreed development goals such as social and gender equality and the broader aims of development and peace.
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- UNESCO: the [International Charter of Physical Education and Sport](#) (1978, revised 2015) introduces universal principles such as gender equality, non-discrimination and social inclusion in and through sport. It also highlights the use of sport as a tool against gender-

based violence in addressing its root causes, especially gender inequality, harmful social norms and gender stereotypes. The Charter also sets ethical and quality standards for all actors designing, implementing, and evaluating sports programmes and policies.

- The [United Nations Action Plan on Sport](#) (2018) outlines objectives and actions in four key themes:
 - a) Strengthened global framework on sport for development and peace.
 - b) Policy development for mainstreaming and integrating sport for development and peace in development programmes and policies.
 - c) Resource mobilization, programming and implementation.
 - d) Research, monitoring and evaluation.
- The report of the Secretary-General to the General Assembly, [Sport: a global accelerator of peace and sustainable development for all](#), A/75/155 of 2020, reviews progress on implementation of the United Nations Action Plan on Sport for Development and Peace, highlights the important role of physical activity and sport in mitigating the health and well-being impact of the global COVID-19 pandemic, explores the role of digital technology in helping sport to fulfil that role. It also examines means of building global resilience to counter future shocks through investment and innovation in sport and sport-related policies.
- General Assembly, [Sport as an enabler of sustainable development](#), Resolution 73/24 (2018) and [Sport as an enabler of sustainable development](#), Resolution 75/18 (2020) encourage the international community to explore and leverage the sport and physical activity to achieve development objectives under the 2030 Agenda, contributes to the advancement gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls, and promotes further consolidation of sport in cross-cutting development and peace strategies, policies, and programmes.
- UNESCO: Kazan Action Plan (2017) sets out actions in the areas of inclusion, maximizing the contribution of sport to sustainable development and peace, including advancing gender equality and empowering all women and girls, and protecting the integrity of sport. It serves as a tool for aligning international and national policy in the fields of physical education, physical activity, and sport with the 2030 Agenda and addresses the needs and objectives identified in the [United Nations Action Plan on Sport for Development and Peace](#).

Additional Resources

Koehler, D. (2015). "[Sport and the Sustainable Development Goals](#)" (UNOSDP).

Sport for Development and Peace International Working Group (2008). "Harnessing the Power of Sport for Development and Peace: Recommendations to Governments."

Search for Common Ground (2017). "Transforming Violent Extremism: A Peacebuilder's Guide".

Crime prevention and PVE

When paired with life-skills training, sports become a unique tool to affect social change and development. Sports have been used in many countries as a programming strategy for targeting youth on peace and security issues, such as crime prevention. While there is still a critical need for further research and theory to identify the context and processes through which sports participation may contribute to crime

prevention, there is evidence that sport – in conjunction with public investments in education, access to employment, social services, access to justice, and rehabilitation programmes – can help divert young people away from crime (both physically and in terms of shifting perceptions). Furthermore, sport helps to engage difficult-to-reach groups, and realize certain social objectives (justice, inclusion, equality) and positive personal developmental outcomes (life skills, attitudes, employability).⁵⁸

Although sport programmes that focus on crime prevention or PVE vary widely in implementation and structure, they generally rely on providing a safe recreational setting to promote sport-centric values and skills, such as cooperation and communication. They may also incorporate other interventions (e.g., counselling, mentoring, and life skills training), while providing youth with a pro-social way to spend their time. Available evidence suggests these types of programmes develop improved attitudes, behaviours, and opportunities, and contribute to reductions in risk factors and offending⁵⁹ and thus, can support aspects of a national PVE agenda.

There are a variety of international instruments that support the use of sport in these areas:

- **Global Counterterrorism Forum: Good Practice No. 26 of The Abu Dhabi Memorandum on Good Practices for Education and Countering Violent Extremism** (2014) addresses the incorporation of sports, arts, and/or cultural programmes in order to build secondary effects of programmes for countering violent extremism, especially in a youth population. It highlights how these activities can provide students opportunities to work within local groups and teams, to develop constructive goals and skills, and to build resilience.
- The **UNODC Doha Declaration** (2015) contains a number of commitments relating to the prevention of crime, including violent extremism, and emphasizes the fundamental role of youth participation in prevention efforts.
- The 2016 **Council of Europe Convention on an Integrated Safety, Security and Service Approach at Football Matches and Other Sports Events** (the Saint-Denis Convention) is the only internationally binding instrument to establish an integrated approach for sports events based on three interdependent pillars: safety, security, and service. Building on the **European Convention on Spectator Violence** in 1985, it promotes cooperation between all public and private actors, including supporters, to provide a safe and welcoming environment at soccer matches and other sporting events.
- Protecting the integrity of sport is also recognized as an important factor in creating an environment that supports PVE activities. The **Convention against Corruption** – a legally binding universal anti-corruption instrument that addresses many different forms of corruption, including in sport – establishes an international legal framework for tackling corruption in sport.⁶⁰
- **Economic and Social Council: Integrating sport into youth crime prevention and criminal justice strategies** (2019) encourages Member States to use sports-based activities more widely to promote primary, secondary and tertiary prevention of youth crime and the social

58 Dandurand, Y. (2020). Sports-based Crime Prevention. International Centre for Criminal Law Reform and Criminal Justice Policy.

59 Public Safety Canada. (2018). Crime Prevention – Research Highlights 2017-H03-CP – Sports-Based Crime Prevention Programs.

60 The values of Olympism, as defined by the International Olympic Committee are thriving for excellence and encouraging people to be the best they can be, celebrating friendship and building bridges and demonstrating respect in many different manners, which is respect towards yourself, the rules, your opponents, the environment and the public.

reintegration of young offenders. It also encourages Member States to emphasize and advance the use of sport as a vehicle to realize gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls, while it calls for the promotion and facilitation of research and the monitoring and evaluation of relevant programs and initiatives, including gang-prevention initiatives, in order to assess their impact.

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- **Conference of the States Parties to the United Nations Convention against Corruption:** (2017) and Resolution 8/4 on [Safeguarding sport from corruption](#) (2019) recognize that corruption and organized and economic crime can undermine the contributions of sport to achieving SDGs, advancing gender equality and the empowerment of women, and the fundamental principles of Olympism. Also, it calls for the strengthening efforts to safeguard sport from corruption. It also encourages the greater participation and representation of women in sports-related activities, programmes and initiatives and in sports governing bodies, including by developing robust awareness programmes that address gender-related barriers in sport caused by corruption.

II. DEVELOPING SPORT-FOR-PVE POLICIES



Member States representatives participating in a working group session during the National Focal Points Regional Forum for Asia and the Pacific (Thailand, May 2022). Photo: UNOCT.

This chapter examines the key principles that should inform sport-for-PVE policies and practices (2.1). It also identifies areas for policy development and details how some countries have integrated sport into national action plans, policies, and strategies for PVE or that contribute to PVE (2.2). Furthermore, it also emphasizes the need for minimizing risks of violent extremist behaviour in the context of sports (2.3.)

2.1. Key principles

Based on lessons learned and good practices established in PVE and sport-based PVE activities (UNESCO, 2020), there are number of key principles that should be integrated into sport-for-PVE policy, whether part of a national action plan or a community-based model.

Whole-of-society approach

Successful sport for PVE depends on the capacity of different sectors to align mandates, share knowledge and resources, and work together to achieve a common goal. A whole-of-society approach brings together government, civil society, and other non-governmental actors to work collaboratively and cohesively in the prevention of violent extremism.⁶¹

In developing national sport-for-PVE policies, governments have the responsibility to ensure security and respect for human rights, as well as to uphold the rule of law and implement policies that counter

61 OSCE (2020). A whole-of-society approach to preventing and countering violent extremism and radicalisation that lead to terrorism a guidebook for Central Asia.



Global Sports Programme's members during in the first European National Focal Point Regional Forum, co-hosted by the city of Málaga (Spain) and UNITAR CIFAL. (Spain, December 2021). Photo: UNOCT.

discrimination, marginalization and exclusion. In that process, local communities, NGOs, sport organizations, and the private sector are both stakeholders and partners. Civil-society actors are well placed, knowledgeable and experienced in working with specific groups at local levels. They can help identify and address the grievances that make individuals more vulnerable to violent extremism. Private-sector actors, too, have unique capacities that can make them ideal partners.

By actively engaging a diverse range of stakeholders, policymakers can integrate sector-based priorities and perspectives, leverage existing knowledge and expertise, incorporate meaningful benefits and incentives, and establish the buy-in needed to sustain effective sport-for-PVE policies and programmes. By expanding ownership of sport-for-PVE policies, this approach fosters greater trust and understanding between all stakeholders and ultimately contributes to good governance more broadly.

Recommendation: Adopt a whole-of-society approach to establish priorities, get buy-in, expand ownership, and build trust between stakeholders.

Whole-of-government approach

The drivers that fuel violent extremism cross many societal boundaries. In a government context, effective prevention requires cooperation, coordination, and coherence with broader societal actors,

between different levels of government (national, regional, local), and between government ministries and agencies.

There are numerous opportunities to employ sport across various ministries that will support national PVE objectives. In education, sport can be incorporated into curriculums to teach youth the values of teamwork, respect, diversity and tolerance. In corrections and justice, it can provide an outlet for prisoners that reduces aggression, improves relationships with staff and other prisoners and contributes to their abilities to resolve conflict, all of which contribute to offenders' rehabilitation and their successful transitions back into their community. Sport-based activities are an effective way to enhance social inclusion agendas for immigrants, refugees, and displaced populations. In tourism and cultural affairs, sport can generate employment and build greater social cohesion, agreement, and consensus through sporting events.

By developing a coordinated and cohesive whole-of-government approach to sport-based PVE that aligns national and international priorities, Governments can tap into diverse knowledge, perspectives, and ideas from across the public sector, deepen policy development and deliver services in a more synergistic way. A whole-of-government model also supports greater resource leveraging where funding to pursue sport-based PVE initiatives may be sourced from multiple departmental budgets. This reduces the impact on any one agency.⁶²

Recommendation: Adopt a whole-of-government approach guaranteeing cooperation, coordination and coherence between different levels of government (national, regional and local), and between government ministries and agencies.

Human rights and the rule of law

The protection and respect of human rights and the rule of law are, in themselves, powerful defences against violent extremism and terrorism and a non-negotiable element to pursue effective policies for the overall purpose of security and societal development. Policymakers have the direct responsibility to ensure all PVE and sport-for-PVE policies are grounded in these areas.

However, in broader practice a [2020 report](#) of the Special Rapporteur on the promotion and protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms⁶³ indicated that current policy approaches lack consistent adherence to rule of law or human rights. Factors such as the lack of precise legal definitions of extremism and violent extremism and a lack of meaningful consultation with, and participation of, communities targeted by PVE measures lead to widespread abuses of human rights at the national level. The report emphasized that only rights-affirming and rights-focused policies will have long-term success in preventing violence and cautioned against the simplistic deployment of policy aimed at PVE in complex conflict and other fragile settings, where a broader spectrum of interconnected interventions is needed to stem violent extremism.

62 Singapore, Civil Service College. "Reviewing whole-of-government collaboration in the Singapore Public Service", 2011. Available at www.csc.gov.sg/articles/reviewing-whole-of-government-collaboration-in-the-singapore-public-service.

63 United Nations, Human Rights Council (2020). Report of the Special Rapporteur on the promotion and protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms, "Human rights impact of policies and practices aimed at preventing and countering violent extremism" (A/HRC/43/46).

The practice of sport is not only engrained as a human right within the [Olympic Charter](#)⁶⁴; it is also a tool to uphold human rights. Through its principles of respect and fair play, it bridges social, cultural, and economic divides; it teaches valuable lessons about non-discrimination, inclusivity, and equality; it challenges stereotypes and breaks down barriers in society; and it drives progress on issues that are fundamental to the enjoyment of human rights.⁶⁵ But sport, too is linked to human rights abuses such as sexism, racism, police brutality and suppression of free speech during peaceful protests at MSEs. Policymakers must be scrupulous in ensuring that all PVE policies, including sport-for-PVE policies, both espouse and promote human rights and the rule of law at national and international levels.

Sports can also be used as a tool for supporting gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls, if local contexts and gender relations are considered and addressed. They can give women and girls access to public spaces where they can gather and enjoy freedom of expression and movement,⁶⁶ and present them with opportunities for leadership, development of specialized skills, peer education, networking, and the development of community ties. Sports may also strengthen gender equality through the fostering of values such as fair play, non-discrimination, and teamwork, and may have the transformative potential of altering gender norms by challenging traditional hierarchies between women and men, as well as potential ties between masculinity and violence. Evidence from the [Mathare Youth Sports Association](#) revealed that boys participating in mixed sports programmes were observed to adopt a more positive and supportive attitude towards girls,⁶⁷ attesting to the potential of sports in constructing a more gender-equal society.

Recommendation: Embed a rights-based approach in sport-for-PVE policy that is informed by consultation and input from broader civil and non-governmental stakeholders, including women's and women's rights organizations.

Do no harm⁶⁸

While much of the significance of the do-no-harm principle relates to humanitarian assistance from organizations, many of the principles can guide government efforts to prevent violent extremism. Analysing sources of tension, group linkages as well as programme objectives, consequences, and options – the main components of “do no harm” – are particularly relevant for mapping the drivers of violent extremism and the complex paths to radicalization leading to violence, which are often influenced simultaneously by State and non-State actors, foreign organizations, as well as family and friends. As an authoritative source on local social, political, and economic dynamics, governments can apply principles of do no harm to deconstruct the many layers of radicalization leading to violence and to map common drivers that are intertwined with specific geographic locations, cultural and social pressures, as well as

64 International Olympic Committee. Olympic Charter. Available at <https://stillmed.olympic.org/media/Document%20Library/OlympicOrg/General/EN-Olympic-Charter.pdf>.

65 Commonwealth Forum of Human Rights Institutions. Sport and human rights. Available at <https://cfnhri.org/human-rights-topics/sport-and-human-rights/>.

66 European Institute for Gender Equality, “Sport – relevance of gender in the policy area”, European Institute for Gender Equality. Available at <https://eige.europa.eu/gender-mainstreaming/policy-areas/sport>.

67 Sportanddev.org. “The role of sport in addressing gender issues” Available at www.sportanddev.org/en/learn-more/gender/role-sport-addressing-gender-issues-0.

68 UNOCT. *Reference Guide Developing National and Regional Action Plans to Prevent Violent Extremism* (1st edition).

personal and historical grievance. By using do no harm to unravel and connect the actors and events along the path to radicalization leading to violence, governments will be better suited to craft prevention strategies and policies that effectively serve at-risk communities, ensure vulnerable individuals receive appropriate support to avoid radicalization leading to violence, and support marginalized groups as allies for the reintegration and early detection of violent extremists.

Safeguarding children in sport

Engaging children (persons under the age of 18) in sport, play, and other recreational activities is key to developing the qualities and behaviours that can help enhance their resilience to negative influences, including violent extremist rhetoric, as they grow.

Under the [Convention on the Rights of the Child](#), States Parties recognize the right of the child to engage in play and recreational activities and also commit to ensuring the effective protection and safeguarding against anything harmful to the child's health or physical, mental, spiritual, moral, or social development. Ending violence in children's lives and investing in early childhood are first and foremost a question of children's rights (OSRSG).

Where relevant, a locally informed and tailored PVE dimension can be added to child safeguarding policies and practices (e.g., risk assessments) to protect children from the potential influence, grooming or recruitment activities of violent extremist groups.

Additional Resource:

[INSPIRE: Seven strategies for Ending Violence Against Children](#) (World Health Organization, 2016)

FIFA defines safeguarding as "taking **proactive action** to protect people from harm or abuse through appropriate prevention and response measures and promoting their wellbeing".⁶⁹ Additionally, it represents the effective responses to concerns raised about a child, youth or adult facing a risk of harm. Measures for safeguarding in sports seek to protect the health, well-being and human rights of individuals, while promoting their right to participation in a safe and enjoyable environment.

Also, it is imperative to focus on the safeguarding of children (see box). According to UNICEF, their sports participation can come with severe and justifiable child protection concerns.⁷⁰ It is then necessary to establish safeguards where the activities take place. Some safeguarding examples are:

- Avoid labelling the initiatives and activities as "prevention of violent extremism" to avoid stigmatization of the participants. For this, activities should focus on the positive objectives that the programme will accomplish.
- Promote the implementation of a code of conduct for those organizations involved.

69 Fédération Internationale de Football Association (FIFA). Safeguarding and Child Protection. Available at www.fifa.com/social-impact/fifa-guardians.

70 UNESCO (2019). *Getting into the Game Understanding the evidence for child-focused sport for development*.

- Avoid sharing information that could identify and expose individuals participating in programmes (to avoid stigmatization of participants, enhance the security of technical staff, etc.).
- Ensure that investments and measures do not inadvertently exacerbate conditions underpinning violent extremism (e.g., deepening divides between rival communities through competition) or cause harm to partners or staff.⁷¹
- Provide coaches and technical staff involved with training that will allow them to create environments free from all forms of abuse, harassment, and exploitation, allowing freedom of speech and the involvement of all participants, and aiming for the best interest of those involved. In this sense, it is essential that first-line practitioners consider that extremist groups can also use sports programmes/activities/tournaments to recruit victims. In addition, allow for mentoring of coaches and technical staff to ensure staff support beyond the training environment.
- Guarantee trainings which implement inclusive practices focusing on human rights, welfare and safeguarding, in order to understand the specific violent extremism factors in their own communities.⁷²
- Promote improvements within the national, subnational or local safeguarding regulations through the discussion with agencies and organizations in charge of protecting the requirements of those involved in the programmes.
- Ensure that all participants are able to take part in activities in an environment free from harm, irrespective of their race, gender, sex, marital status, ethnic or social origin, colour, sexual orientation, age, disability, religion, conscience, belief, culture, language, and birth or athletic ability.

Recommendation: Assess all policies with a “do no harm” and human rights lens to ensure they neither exacerbate conditions for violent extremism, nor put individuals (recipients, partners or staff) at risk. Youth and women-led civil society organizations, as well as practitioners can provide a crucial advice in the design of safeguarding policies.

Meeting local context needs

While sport-for-PVE policies will be largely guided by the overarching priorities set by the international community, they must be contextualized to address the local drivers of violent extremism and harmonized with other counter-terrorism strategies. Sport-for-PVE policies and programmes must align with those issues that represent the most significant areas of concern. In order to achieve the PVE objectives, the local context must be appropriately defined, considering also its gender dimensions, to adequately understand the specific push and pull risk factors for women, men, boys and girls. For example, in those areas affected by high or chronic unemployment, the policies/initiatives might emphasize the development

71 Australia, Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade. (2017). Development Approaches to Countering Violent Extremism.

72 UNODC (2021). Preventing Violent Extremism Through Sport – Technical Guide, p. 10.

of sport programmes that promote skills and competency development, as these can positively influence future employment opportunities.⁷³ In areas with tension or conflict between different groups, sporting activities and events may be used to establish a dialogue and build tolerance.

The nature of violent extremist threats (and the sport-based strategies deployed to address them) require constant appraisal, and policymakers must continually review and revise their approaches accordingly. Information-sharing between local and national stakeholders about the nature of extremism, as well as how a policy is being received (e.g., whether it is seen as stigmatizing certain groups) is critical.⁷⁴

Recommendations: Develop sport-based PVE policies that are responsive and flexible to the localized drivers and threats of violent extremism, and that are harmonized with other PVE policy and strategies.

Base and adapt the development of sport-for-PVE programmes according to gender analysis of the local context and relations.

2.2. Sport-for-PVE policy in national action plans

International experts and sport-for-PVE practitioners have identified a wide range of challenges in the implementation of sport-based PVE programmes. Some of them are, for example, the lack of stable and long-term funding; the necessity of navigating between social or security policies due to the lack of sport-for-PVE policies and frameworks; and effectively evaluating and measuring the impact of sport-for-PVE activities. It is important to understand that populations from different cultures, nationalities, and religions may prefer different sport activities, or may have certain restrictions around gender-appropriate sports. Consequently, if the organizers do not offer them a variety of sports activities, they may be accidentally excluded or choose not to participate in the activities.

Based on that input, there are a variety of ways that policymakers can support and strengthen the use of sport within national PVE action plans, including:

- Promoting a human rights perspective in all public policies, giving special attention to the protection of children, the social integration and inclusion of marginalized population, the engagement of communities, the development of personal skills and the improvement of the well-being of people. Policymakers must create opportunities for peacebuilding and social cohesion.
- Raising awareness about the positive impact of sport in crime prevention, social inclusion, social development, and peacebuilding.

73 European Sports NGO Youth, Skills for You(th) through Sport Handbook, available at www.eusa.eu/documents/eusa/media_library/Skills-for-You-th-through-Sport-Handbook.pdf.

74 Davies, L., and Limbada, S. (2019). "Education and radicalisation prevention: Different ways governments can support schools and teachers in preventing/countering violent extremism".

- Promoting awareness about the complementary and cross-cutting effect of sport on youth participation, the empowerment of women and girls and, therefore, supporting sport-for-PVE activities, especially in at-risk communities and for vulnerable or marginalized populations. Also, labelling of sport-for-PVE activities must be included within a broader purpose to avoid stigmatization (e.g.: “Sport for peace” instead of “Sport for preventing violent extremism”).
 - Implementing public policies that call for a holistic sport-for-PVE approach and engage all sectors – including government departments (sport, health, education, economy, labour), sport federations, academia, private sector, youth, women, and any relevant area of civil society.
 - Designing policies that advocate for the integration of sport-based approaches to PVE in education curricula, especially at the primary and secondary levels, that enhance young people’s sense of community belonging, provide safe spaces, and empower and build confidence through equality and inclusion.
 - Securing funding for sport-for-PVE initiatives and new financing instruments to foster the creation of social enterprises around sports for development.
 - Implementing policies that enhance the security of women and girls involved in sporting activities.
 - Developing national evaluation systems for sport-for-PVE initiatives.
 - Working with relevant sectors to enhance security of MSEs.
 - Introducing legislation that facilitates the coordination of law enforcement, social reconciliation, and sports authorities to use sport as a major tool for PVE.
- For current information on “Sport in National PVE Action Plans, Strategies, and Policy”, the UNOCT live-mapping is available at:
www.google.com/maps/d/viewer?mid=1meHtsq62zc18XdK6qaHLzAHpQDHdu-el&hl=en&ll=29.224776734956386%2C-8.095640627398879&z=2

Recommendations for establishing sport-based policy in national action plans

- Develop robust working relationships across government and with sport and civil-society organizations to identify and coordinate best approaches for incorporating sport into national action plans.
- Develop flexible policies that are responsive to the needs of local communities and the changing dynamics of violent extremist threats (e.g., embed an inclusive monitoring and evaluation component that informs on the effectiveness of such policies).
- Clearly delineate the roles and responsibilities of all relevant actors, allowing each of them to take ownership for the implementation of relevant activities.
- Develop effective strategic communications to promote sport as a critical tool for building resilience and peace across society (Atamuradova and Zeiger, 2020).

By incorporating sport as a pillar within national action plans and developing policies that support the ability of stakeholder groups to develop, implement, and sustain effective sport-based activities, governments, and other authorities both enhance and reinforce their ability to meet PVE objectives.

2.3. Minimizing risk

While sport can contribute to PVE, it does have its risks. In some cases, there is aggression and violent rivalry among opposing teams and their supporters. The promotion of a win-at-any-cost mentality that encourages unethical and unhealthy behaviours like aggression, doping and other forms of cheating is not uncommon.⁷⁵

Extremists also use sport to spread propaganda, recruit young people to their causes and promote conflict. For example, Kampf der Nibelungen is an annual martial-arts event in Germany that promotes right-wing extremist and neo-Nazi ideology. Combat sports, like martial arts, have been sometimes described as “schools of militancy” that use values of belonging and sacrifice to develop devotion to a leader and a cause, in essence to produce political soldiers.⁷⁶

Sport stadiums have also been used as venues to express anti-establishment sentiments, promote extremist nationalism and, through hooliganism, conduct acts of racism and violence against members of minority ethno-cultural and other excluded groups. Across Europe, fanatical or extremist fan groups have used stadiums to promote anti-LGBT, racist, Islamophobic and anti-Semitic narratives; in North Africa, stadiums are often a place where the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (Da'esh) and other jihadist groups reach out to disillusioned youth who are subject to poverty, unemployment, and illegal immigration.⁷⁷ These are all unfortunate realities that undermine sport's positive values and establish negative role models for young people.

However, despite the potential duality of sport and sporting events, from a policy and practice perspective these risks can be minimized by ensuring that initiatives are driven by clearly identified objectives, and are delivered with transparency, accountability and sustainability.

Recommendation: To minimize risk associated with sport for PVE, ensure initiatives based on clearly identified objectives and that are delivered with transparency, accountability, and sustainability.

75 UNODC (2021). “Global Report on Corruption in Sport”, 21.

76 Lenos, S., and Janes, A. (2019), “The role of sports and leisure activities in preventing and countering violent extremism”, RAN Centre of Excellence, 3.

77 Amara, M., and Testa, A. (n.d.). Sport, Radicalisation and Violent Extremism, in Frontiers Research Topics.

III. STAKEHOLDERS IN SPORT-FOR-PVE POLICY DEVELOPMENT



The Global Sports Programme contributed to the Model United Nations Impact Bilbao 2022 to raise awareness of the importance of advancing the Sustainable Development Goals and demonstrating the impact of sport for community resilience (Spain, June 2022). Photo/UNOCT.

PVE is the responsibility of all of society. The development of sound public sport-for-PVE policies relies on collaboration across a range of partners to ensure that plans, programming, and processes are designed in a localized context that address the needs and best interests of the communities they serve.

In that collaborative environment, sport-for-PVE stakeholders will play several roles, based on their capacities and positional strengths. Governments will develop overarching frameworks and mechanisms that give direction, cohesion, and support to sport-based initiatives. Sporting organizations will offer a platform to endorse and apply the values that contribute to broader PVE mechanisms and to communicate those values to audiences at local, national and international levels. Civil society – which encompasses a diverse body of actors including NGOs, community-based organizations, academia, and media – will help provide the credibility and experience to identify the localized grievances that fuel violent extremism, and the practical understanding of how to design and implement sport-for-PVE programmes.

This chapter outlines the roles of key stakeholder groups, Government (3.1), sport organizations (3.2), civil society (3.3), public-private partnerships (3.4), and youth and women (3.5), and how they can support the development of effective sport-for-PVE policies.

3.1. Government

Principles for effective partnerships between stakeholders

The following principles to guide effective partnerships between government and non-government actors in a sport-for-PVE context are extrapolated from the four key principles (Beutel and Weinberger, 2016) for government actors to facilitate public-private partnerships:

1. Reduce barriers to participation. Develop mechanisms that create opportunities for stakeholders to participate. Online forums, community-based consultations, and sector-identified representatives on PVE committees support dialogue and enable individuals at all levels to share knowledge, experiences, and ideas.
2. Identify the division of labour. Determine what activities should be performed by government agencies and which can be assigned to civil society and private sector actors; this can often vary depending on the geo-political context, as well as the specific function(s) intended to be performed.
3. Foster a culture that makes partnering a top priority. Adopting a win-win approach that focuses on shared, broad outcomes (rather than narrow organizational ones), and is championed by a lead organization.
4. Act as an “innovation catalyst”. Encourage partnership-based problem-solving by modifying or complementing an existing product, process, or programme. This approach leverages existing knowledge and resources, expands ownership and strengthens partnerships.

In many PVE models, governments lead the development of PVE frameworks, set the overarching strategies to achieve PVE objectives and create the structures that support a whole-of society approach to PVE. By incorporating sport-based policies into national action plans, governments can leverage a universally relevant and accepted approach to enhance resilience across a variety of sectors and public life.

Key areas of contribution

In addition to adopting policies and practices that recognize and employ sport as a tool for PVE, governments – alone or as part of international coalitions – must provide the framework and mechanisms to ensure that sport for PVE is used to its full potential across all stakeholder sectors.

Funding and capacity building

Sustainable results in youth development cannot be achieved with quick “hit-and-run” projects⁷⁸ and in order to fully harness sport's potential, governments must provide appropriate mechanisms to support programmes and, where appropriate, to scale-up these programmes on a nationwide basis.⁷⁹

Dedicated funding streams are needed to promote, develop, implement and maintain sport-for-PVE programming that addresses local, national, and international PVE priorities and supports broader ethical principles. This may include sustained budgets for sport-based projects that promote human rights, gender equality, build greater cohesion between communities in conflict, or provide ongoing training of volunteers, coaches, and other practitioners to address new methodologies and emerging issues as they appear.⁸⁰ For example, the European Commission's Erasmus+ Sport Programme funds partnerships between sports organizations, non-profits and research for grassroots projects that promote skills development and address intolerance and discrimination, social inclusion and equal access to sport for all.⁸¹ It also provides funding for collaborative partnerships that develop and reinforce networks, increase capacity to operate at transnational levels, exchange good practices, and consider ideas and methods in different areas relating to sport and physical activity. Ensuring that the organizations that are carrying out the work have access to appropriate tools, resources and funding over the longer term is a critical factor for success.

Government-regulated funding can also add rigour to the monitoring and evaluation of sport-based PVE programmes. To date, limited and disparate sources of funding have led to poor reporting for many sport-related PVE programmes. By attaching monitoring and evaluation requirements to funding, governments can not only increase the transparency and accountability of PVE spending, but also contribute to the broader inventory of evidence-based practice.

Recommendations: Create dedicated sport-for-PVE funding streams that support national PVE objectives and broader societal values (e.g., human rights, social inclusion, gender equality, etc.).

Integrated support and coherent approaches

Many countries may have a variety of small-scale sport programmes that contribute to PVE, but developing more comprehensive, cohesive approaches can help achieve broader national objectives more efficiently. A more integrated approach also reduces duplication of effort in programme development, research and in defining best practices, and makes more effective use of available funds.

78 Radicalisation Awareness Network (2019). The role of sports and leisure activities in preventing and countering violent extremism. Available at https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/sites/homeaffairs/files/what-we-do/networks/radicalisation_awareness_network/about-ran/ran-yf-and-c/docs/ran_yfc_sports_and_leisure_06-07_03_2019_en.pdf.

79 Sport for Development and Peace International Working Group (2008). Harnessing the Power of Sport for Development and Peace: Recommendations to Governments.

80 Davies, L., and Limbada, S. (2019). Education and radicalisation prevention: Different ways governments can support schools and teachers in preventing/countering violent extremism. Radicalisation Awareness Network.

81 European Commission (2019), “Erasmus+ funding to promote social inclusion through sports”. Available at https://ec.europa.eu/migrant-integration/news/erasmus-funding-promote-social-inclusion-through-sports_en.

In addition to adopting a whole-of-society approach into the development, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation of sport-for-PVE policies, governments can help encourage more synergy around sport-for-PVE initiatives (and other aspects of PVE) in several ways, including:

- Supporting holistic approaches where issues related to resilience, respect, mutual understanding, and inclusion are mainstreamed across sport practice and culture.
- Creating more opportunities and mechanisms for sustained dialogue and information-sharing among stakeholders by adding a sport component to existing PVE committees/working groups or establishing a community of practice.
- Developing funding streams to support key PVE priorities.
- Creating research units to track and publicize sport-for-PVE initiatives.
- Developing standardized methodologies and metrics to measure programme impact and enable longer-term assessment and exchange of best practices and lessons learned.⁸²

Recommendation: Establish more cohesive frameworks and mechanisms to support integrated dialogue and more coordinated approaches of sport-for-PVE initiatives.

Improve legal frameworks for sport-related PVE

If PVE policies and programmes are to enjoy the support of civil society, they must be in full compliance with legal frameworks, including international humanitarian law, international human rights law, and domestic criminal and civil law. Introducing legislation that recognizes sport as a powerful tool for PVE simplifies the ability of government and non-government actors to work together; protects fundamental freedoms; entrenches and strengthens human-rights protections, minority rights, and gender equality; and champions consensus-building around common values in and beyond a sporting context. This is foundational to evolving PVE models.⁸³ For example, the European Commission Against Racism and Intolerance has outlined [a number of recommendations](#) for member States of the European Union to combat racism and racial discrimination in sport,⁸⁴ including enacting and implementing anti-discrimination legislation ensuring access to sport for all, and penalizing racist acts. In such cases, governments and international organizations can use sport regulation to set a message against intolerant behaviour at MSEs and to defend ethical values.

Recommendation: Introduce legislative and regulatory frameworks that recognize sport as a powerful tool for PVE, simplifies the ability of government and non-government actors to work together, and protects fundamental rights and freedoms.

82 Davies, L., and Limbada, S. (2019). Education and radicalisation prevention: Different ways governments can support schools and teachers in preventing/countering violent extremism. Radicalisation Awareness Network.

83 UNDP (2016). Preventing Violent Extremism Through Promoting Inclusive Development, Tolerance and Respect For Diversity: A development response to addressing radicalisation and violent extremism.

84 See ECRI recommendations at <https://rm.coe.int/ecri-general-policy-recommendation-no-12-key-topics-combating-racism-a/16808d28f3>.



3.2. Sport organizations

In modern society, sport organizations hold a unique position of influence. Sport organizations reach across all cultures, nationalities, and politics and have a direct line of communication to committed fans. Add in the high level of media attention that is typically given to sports and sport organizations – whether a city-based team or an international governing body – are positioned to inspire, motivate and influence mass audiences. In a whole-of-society approach, sport organizations are a key stakeholder in promoting and communicating the values and standards that contribute PVE objectives at local, national and international levels.

Sport organizations represent communities to themselves and, through administrators, athletes, coaches and fans, can contribute to national PVE agendas in a variety of ways.

Addressing sport-based violence

While sport is primarily recognized as a unifying force among people, there are certain elements of society that use sport to promote divisive and negative agendas, which contribute to violence and impair social cohesion. Sport-based violence may occur at the team level, where aggression or prejudiced attitudes can undermine fundamental values of fair play and inclusion, or at the fan level, where fanaticism can lead to insular points of view and destructive behaviours. Football hooliganism, in particular, is a global problem that not only promotes violence between supporters of opposing teams but is also used by groups with beliefs based on xenophobia, racism and other forms of intolerance, or in the name of religion or belief to promote antisocial agendas that target specific groups or populations. Different models have commonly been used to research group violence and football hooliganism.⁸⁵ According

85 Van Hiel, A. and others (2007). "Football hooliganism: Comparing self-awareness and social identity theory explanations". *Journal of Community and Applied Social Psychology*.

to Mills and others (2004), attitudes related to violence and entitlement could be used to predict violent behaviours.⁸⁶ A more recent study carried out by Lindstrom stated that “soccer supporters scoring low in honesty-humility and high in team identification may be especially susceptible to engaging in violence for their team”.⁸⁷ The study suggested that violence-prevention programmes could reduce sport-related violence through the encouragement of humility among the football supporters.

Sport organizations can help address sport-based violence in a variety of ways:

- Develop training and awareness-building campaigns that promote positive values and behaviours among fans.
- Introduce zero-tolerance policies for athletes, coaches and clubs to discourage behaviours that endorse discrimination or undermine the values of fair play.
- Work with other stakeholders, including law enforcement, local authorities and social agencies, to identify sources of extremist behaviour and to develop local solutions to deter and counter their messages of hate and intolerance. They can also address the individual, contextual, social and environmental factors that facilitate the development of extremist mentalities within sport contexts.
- Raise awareness and provide training courses for clubs, police officers, local authorities and other local actors.
- Mobilize and invest in non-extremist fans with higher levels of service, more privileges, and other benefits that reward good behaviour.
- Engage fan groups to identify ways to channel their passion into positive social action.⁸⁸

Recommendation: Engage sport organizations to identify sources of sport-related violence and ways to mitigate that violence through team- and fan-based policies and practices.

Additional Resources

RAND Corporation (2018). “[Violent and Antisocial Behaviour at Football Events: Review of interventions](#)”. Social responsibility agendas.

Many sport organizations, particularly international federations and team franchises have adopted social-responsibility agendas to promote positive action and support local communities. Social responsibility can involve a variety of mechanisms, including charitable giving, community-based outreach programmes, or global campaigns, to generate positive social outcomes. When aligned with priorities and community needs, these types of activities can have a significant contribution to broader PVE objectives. Policymakers can encourage sport organizations to adopt internal policies and programmes to support national priorities for PVE, including:

86 Mills, J.F., Kroner, D.G., and Hemmati, T. (2004). “The measures of criminal attitudes and associates (MCAA): The prediction of general and violent recidivism”, in *Criminal Justice and Behavior*, vol. 31(6), pp. 717–733.

87 Lindstrom, J. (2021). “*Personality and team identification predict violent intentions among soccer supporters*”, *Frontiers in Sports and Active Living*, p. 6. Available at www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC8573121/.

88 Radicalisation Awareness Network (2019). *The role of sports and leisure activities in preventing and countering violent extremism*.

- Introducing policies that endorse diversity and gender equality and reject all forms of discrimination; these can be further enhanced through operational measures and activities such as regulations, training and education, and networking and cooperation with other sectors.
- Partnering with other stakeholders to develop campaigns to increase awareness and promote positive action on key social issues such as inclusion, health and wellness, development, or sport integrity.
- Creating programmes that increase access to sport in low-income or vulnerable communities that address local needs and context, including the use of different kinds of sport.

Recommendation: Encourage sport organizations to adopt policies and strategies to address key social issues such as antidiscrimination, diversity, and gender equality and increase access to sport in vulnerable communities.

Additional Resources

European Commission Against Racism and Intolerance. "[Combating Racism and Racial Discrimination in the Field of Sport](#)".

FIFA (2017). "[Good practice guide on diversity and anti-discrimination](#)"

Role models

Within sport organizations, professional athletes and coaches are role models who hold particular influence, especially among young people. Even small gestures from professional athletes, such as raising black-gloved fists at the 1968 Olympics in Mexico or taking a knee during the American national anthem at National Football League games, brings global awareness to social issues. In this capacity, they are well positioned to disseminate positive and alternative narratives to extremist dogma. In addition to helping young athletes develop technical skills, coaches and trainers are positioned to instil the more intangible tenets of respect, teamwork, and sportsmanship.

Racial equity

In relation to the Black Lives Matter movement, a recent "Promoting racial equity in sport" study found that 72 per cent of sports fans believe athletes provide a unique view and are an important influence and that brands are more powerful when they partner with sports organizations to help influence social change.⁸⁹ In a PVE context, engaging athletes in an informed and responsible manner to promote positive dialogue and action on issues such as health and well-being, child protection and development, gender equality, refugee inclusion, peacebuilding and conflict resolution can be highly effective.

When properly informed, trained and equipped with appropriate tools and language, athletes and coaches can promote the values, teach the skill, and generate the awareness needed to build resilience in young people and bring about broader positive social change.

⁸⁹ Aziz, A. (2020). A Moment of Awakening: Has Sport Finally Found a Higher Purpose Beyond Entertainment? Forbes. Available at www.forbes.com/sites/afdelaziz/2020/08/31/a-moment-of-awakening-has-sport-finally-found-a-higher-purpose-beyond-entertainment.

“Sport is a fantastic tool which can be used to communicate, educate and learn, especially for the benefit of vulnerable individuals and groups in society.”

Nadia Nadim, former Paris Saint-Germain Féminine, Danish National Team



Role models, particularly coaches, should not openly identify individuals who display worrying behaviours or attitudes, including suspected radicalization. This can lead to an erosion of trust with young athletes. Instead, sport organizations, in collaboration with other agencies, should establish safeguards and protocols to help coaches deal with individuals at potential risk. These should include a tiered discussion mechanism before referrals to outside agencies are made.⁹⁰

Recommendation: Encourage sport organizations to engage, inform and train professional athletes and coaches to communicate positive messages that support PVE values and objectives and develop life skills that build confidence and resilience in young people.

Additional Resources

International Olympic Committee (2016). “The Fundamentals of Olympic Values Education: A Sports-based Programme”.

UNODC (2017). “Line Up Live Up Trainer Manual, Life Skills Training through Sport to Prevent Crime, Violence and Drug Use”.

Leverage sponsor resources

Sport organizations are well connected partners to private-sector sponsor networks. These networks can not only be engaged to find new sources of funding for PVE-related campaigns and projects, but can also be used to reach a wider audience and demographic outside the core fan base. From a sport-for-PVE perspective, the relationship between sport organizations and sponsors offers mutually beneficial opportunities; sport organizations can use sponsorship dollars to enhance important campaigns and projects, while sponsors can bolster their own corporate social responsibility presence by using the influence and power of teams, athletes, and events to enhance their brand.

Recommendation: Work with sport organizations to engage and leverage private sector sponsors for sport-for-PVE activities.

⁹⁰ Davies, L., and Limbada, S. (2019). Education and radicalisation prevention: Different ways governments can support schools and teachers in preventing/countering violent extremism. Radicalisation Awareness Network. Available at https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/sites/default/files/what-we-do/networks/radicalisation_awareness_network/about-ran/ran-edu/docs/ran_edu_different_ways_governments_can_support_schools_teachers_052019_en.pdf.



Representatives from the Global Sport Programme pictured at the "High-Level Round-Table on the Protection of Major Sporting Events and the Use of Sports' Values for the Prevention of Violent Extremism", co-hosted by Qatar, with football legend Tim Cahill, renowned marathon runner Tegla Loroupe, FIFA Foundation CEO Youri Djorkaeff and Nasser Al Khori, Programmes Director at Generation Amazing Foundation. (Qatar, March 2022) Photo: UNOCT.

3.3. Civil society organizations

Effective approaches to prevent radicalization that leads to violent extremism envisage working with local community channels to develop early-intervention programmes. Civil society is both a crucial space and a key actor to develop sport-for-PVE policies. Civil society, encompassing a wide range of organizations – including national and international development agencies, charities, art and culture community-based organizations, women's and youth-led groups, faith-based organizations, academia, the media and private sector entities – is at the frontline for fostering resilience against violent extremism and building the local frameworks to promote peace, prosperity, and equality.

However, while the role of civil society in a comprehensive and multidimensional response to violent extremism has been widely acknowledged and encouraged by many international organizations, real on-the-ground measures to reinforce civil society contributions are limited. Civil society organizations encounter numerous obstacles – ensuring their participation in government-level policy and strategy development; securing adequate and sustainable funding; building internal capacity; and establishing effective partnerships with government actors – to productive interchange with government and other stakeholders.⁹¹ In some cases, governments have imposed measures that restrict the ability of civil-society actors to advocate for social change, promote human rights and build tolerance, all of which are essential elements for PVE.⁹² These kinds of barriers severely limit civil society's role in effective prevention.

91 OSCE (2018). The role of civil society in preventing and countering violent extremism and radicalisation that lead to terrorism a guidebook for South-Eastern Europe.

92 Observatory to Prevent Extremist Violence. (2017). Barcelona Declaration: Plan of Action of the Euro-Mediterranean civil society to prevent all form of violent extremism. Available at <https://europa.eu/capacity4dev/file/46900/download?token=bb-g8qHR>.

Key areas of contribution

As the primary delivery agents for sport-for-PVE programmes, civil society organizations play a critical role in sport-for-PVE. They are largely trusted and respected by the communities they serve and can serve as intermediaries between those communities and government agencies. As such, these groups are central to policy and programme development, implementation, and advocacy.

Civil society has proven experience with broad-based mobilization and for creating bottom-up action that can produce an effective response against violent extremism. Civil society organizations are positioned to understand local drivers and grievances and the best ways to engage at-risk populations through sport. As part of an inclusive approach to policy development, sport-for-PVE policymakers can engage civil society in a variety of important areas.

Local knowledge and experience

Policymakers can greatly benefit of cooperating closely with civil society organizations. If working jointly, the local community and its actors can:

- Assess the drivers and impact of violent extremism at the local level (e.g., hate speech, public policies that may impinge on human rights or limit socioeconomic opportunities, etc.) and identify opportunities for sport-based mitigation.
- Provide expertise on specialized issues (e.g., gender equality) and how sport can be used to advance those areas in a localized context.
- Identify local representatives (youth, women, community leaders) who can effectively contribute to sport-for-PVE dialogue and policy development.
- Conduct critical research (through academia and think tanks) for the effective design and evaluation of sport-based activity to address local drivers and grievances.
- Provide information, data, and lessons learned from local programmes and projects.

Reinforce sport-based education and resilience at the local level

- In close cooperation with civil society organizations, develop participatory, age-appropriate sport strategies to support resilience-building at the local level that aligns to national priority areas, including cross-cutting programmes that build skills to enhance employability and social engagement.
- Identify communities and neighbourhoods that can benefit most from increased access to sport activities.
- Strengthen local capacity for trust-building through sport-based initiatives.
- Engage local leaders and different cultural and religious communities to use sport to mainstream shared values and find common ground for social cohesion.
- Incorporate sport-based activities into educational curricula to teach tolerance, diversity, team-building and other skills that build cohesion.

- Design and implement training with coaches and other community volunteers to promote sport-based values to young people.
- Work with local community leaders to establish safe, dedicated areas for sport activities.
- Engage with civil society organizations to empower victims of violent extremism or other marginalised individuals through sport programmes and activities.
- Engage local media and “influencers” to promote stories that illustrate positive social action, normalize perspectives, or inspire (e.g., women athletes, diversity on sport teams, athletes overcoming adversity, etc.).

Establish trust with marginalized populations

- Use non-partisan civil society organizations and community groups to implement sport-for-PVE initiatives among prisoners, youth offenders or other marginalized groups or communities that may mistrust government authorities.

Recommendation: Engage civil society actors to integrate local knowledge and experience into sport-for-PVE policy, reinforce resilience-building activities, and establish trust with local communities and populations.

Strengthening civil society frameworks

Though there are numerous ways that civil society can support national PVE objectives through sport-based activities, there are also key areas where policymakers can help strengthen civil-society frameworks for policy development and programme delivery:

Consultation: Civil society organizations will have the most experience and credibility with local communities. They can advise on where gaps exist in the system, what resources are needed to fill those gaps and how policies and programmes are best implemented to build trust and participation at the community level. As such, civil society must be engaged at the outset to ensure that policymakers understand the specific local issues and weaknesses that make individuals and communities more vulnerable to the influence of violent extremist groups.⁹³ Ongoing dialogue and cooperation between government and civil society actors, in formal and informal structures, is also essential for monitoring and adapting to dynamic environments.

Recommendation: Engage civil-society actors in all aspects of policy development, implementation, and monitoring to ensure it aligns to the needs and realities of individuals and communities at risk.

93 OSCE (2020). *A Whole-of-Society Approach to Preventing and Countering Violent Extremism and Radicalisation That Lead to Terrorism: A Guidebook for Central Asia*. Available at www.osce.org/files/f/documents/a/7/444340_0.pdf.

Coordination: Frameworks that establish multi-agency coordination mechanisms, based on participatory and shared responsibilities, delineate roles and responsibilities between stakeholders, support sharing good practices, link researchers with practitioners to support evidence-based work and establish regional networks and platforms for collaboration can ensure civil society is fully leveraged to support the broader PVE objectives, and establishes a security paradigm that more fully respects rights and protects civilians.⁹⁴

Recommendation: Establish frameworks that support multi-agency coordination and collaboration, delineate stakeholder roles and responsibilities and share good practices and evidence-based work.

Core funding: In many cases, existing funding frameworks compel civil society actors to pursue short-term objectives or incongruent goals. Rather than only offering project-based funding, more core funding for groups to develop and sustain their work is needed. In some cases where a rapid response is required, funding mechanisms should also incorporate a more accommodating approach that does not require lengthy proposals or approval processes to unlock funding for local civil society organizations. This will usually require case-by-case review to ensure funds are likely to yield results and can be effectively tracked.⁹⁵

Recommendation: Provide more core funding to develop and sustain the work of civil society organizations that contribute to PVE objectives; where needed, establish flexible approaches (i.e., that do not require lengthy proposals or approval processes) for rapid response.

Adaptability: Local civil society actors should be given greater license to design and adapt programmes, rather than simply implementing projects designed at national or international levels that do not adequately respond to local needs and do not have an ability to adjust course when the context shifts.⁹⁶

Recommendation: Establish frameworks that provide localized, adaptable programme design that can be adapted as situations require.

3.4. Public-private partnerships

Governments and other civil society actors increasingly recognize the value of public-private partnerships to improve performance and lower costs – for both the government and to the public

94 Steadman, L. E., and Moix, B. (2019). How Civil Society Can Help Prevent Violence and Extremism. United States Institute of Peace. Available at www.usip.org/publications/2019/06/how-civil-society-can-help-prevent-violence-and-extremism.

95 Ibid.

96 Ibid.

being served – across a variety of service areas, including youth development, crime prevention, mental health and public health.

Key areas of contribution

When properly implemented, in a sport-for-PVE context, public-private partnerships enhance skills and experience with respect to PVE-related areas and provide valuable resources and capacities for sustainably supporting the cause.

Engagement of the private sector

Policymakers and implementing authorities can engage the private sector to build support and capacity and to increase the sustainability of local and national sport-for-PVE initiatives, such as:

- Encouraging companies to add a sport-for-PVE component to MSE sponsorship and marketing arrangements, commitments in at-risk communities.
- Funding community-based sport activities (e.g., helping to finance start-up of community-based sport organizations, training sports coaches, providing sporting goods, etc.).
- Linking government sport-for-PVE initiatives and companies' core business objectives (e.g., health development for pharmaceutical companies; community safety and security for tourism industries; and an educated work force for information and communications technology companies)⁹⁷.

Recommendation: Develop policies that support public-private collaborations to enhance expertise, resources, and ownership of sport-for-PVE objectives.

3.5. Youth and women

Youth and women are globally acknowledged as key stakeholders in peacebuilding, conflict resolution, and PVE. The international community also recognizes the growing contribution of sport in helping youth and women become more engaged and empowered in those roles.⁹⁸ The following sections will introduce key areas of contribution of youth and women in sport for PVE, emphasize the meaningful engagement of youth and women in policymaking, and the role of youth and women in PVE, exemplify

97 Sport for Development and Peace International Working Group (2008). *Harnessing the Power of Sport for Development and Peace: Recommendations to Governments*. Toronto: Right to Play, 2008. Available at www.sportanddev.org/sites/default/files/downloads/rtp_sdp_iwg_harnessing_the_power_of_sport_for_development_and_peace.pdf.

98 For example, see General Assembly Resolution 70/1 of 25 September 2015, Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development; Security Council Resolution 2419 (2018), on Youth, peace and security; UNESCO and the Mahatma Gandhi Institute of Education for Peace and Sustainable Development, *Youth-led guide on prevention of violent extremism through education* (2017); UNDP, *Frontlines – Young people at the forefront of preventing and responding to violent extremism* (2019); General Assembly Resolution 74/170 of 18 December 2019 on Integrating sport into youth crime prevention and criminal justice strategies; and General Assembly Resolution 75/18 of 1 December 2020 on Sport as an enabler of sustainable development.

how to empower youth and women through sport, and illustrate how to strengthen youth and women's participation and impact in sport.

Key areas of contribution

Engaging and empowering youth and women, as well as fostering gender equality, are prevalent themes in the PVE dialogue. While youth and women can be vulnerable to recruitment into violent extremism, and are often the victims of it, they are also recognized as powerful agents of social change. Women are central to shaping positive values and often hold enough influence to steer individuals away from the dangers of radicalization to violence. Youth must be given a voice in building a future free of violence.

In sport-for-PVE models that increase access to sport, youth and women are also the primary beneficiaries of policies and programming. They must be included as partners in design, development, and implementation processes to ensure their unique skills and perspectives are used to create responsive plans that reflect their experiences and needs. Enhancing the ownership of those plans among youth and women is essential for buy-in and long-term sustainability.

Meaningful engagement of youth and women

This involvement must promote gender equality and break down the stereotypes that limit the rights and freedoms of women and girls. This is a core principle for achieving PVE. Policymakers are strongly encouraged to incorporate measures that promote gender equality, leverage the specific views, competencies, and experiences of women in developing sport-based policies, and strengthen their capacity to promote PVE in their families and communities.⁹⁹

Recommendations: Shape sport-for-PVE policy around establishing gender equality to empower and strengthen the capacity of women and girls in PVE. Engage youth and women in sport-for-PVE policymaking, both as recipients of sport-based activities and as key influencers for social change and peace.

Youth and PVE

Among violent extremist organizations, young men and women are a primary target of recruitment and mobilization efforts. Irrespective of country, religion, social background or level of education, youth represent the social group most vulnerable to the rhetoric of violent extremist groups. Psychologists attribute this vulnerability to a number of factors, including but not limited to, young people's search for identity, a sense of meaning, fellowship, purpose, recognition and belonging. Their natural impulsivity and willingness to take greater risks may also be contributing factors to their propensity to join groups or movements that may espouse violence.¹⁰⁰ In a search for justice against inequality and discrimination

99 UNDP (2016). *Preventing Violent Extremism Through Promoting Inclusive Development, Tolerance and Respect for Diversity: A development response to addressing radicalisation and violent extremism*.

100 OSCE (2020). *A Whole-of-Society Approach to Preventing and Countering Violent Extremism and Radicalisation That Lead to Terrorism: A Guidebook for Central Asia*. Available at www.osce.org/files/f/7/444340_0.pdf.

against themselves, or in support of a cause larger than themselves, youth can be induced to believe that violence is a reasonable path – or perhaps the only path – to achieve their ends.

However, even though the young age of many recruits and perpetrators has placed them at the centre of PVE policy discussions, only a fraction of the world's young people will ever engage in violence. The overwhelming majority of young people are not involved in violence.¹⁰¹ More often they are the victims, both of the violence perpetrated by extremist groups, and of the collateral damages – such as displacement and loss of livelihoods; psychological strain and trauma; and the spread of intolerance and intimidation in spaces of interaction and recreation. Despite that fact, many countries have focused their response to violent extremism and terrorism on maximizing hard-edged, short-term security efforts that often stigmatize young people as risks and expose them to harms, including surveillance, arrest, injury, or death.¹⁰²

But new perspectives on youth and PVE are emerging and there is a global movement underway to rethink how young people are included in, rather than being the objects of, PVE measures. Increasingly, young women and men are recognized as credible leaders in the pursuit of sustainable peace, both through their ability to identify the triggers of violent extremism in their local communities, and through the diverse and innovative actions they employ to address those issues.

An example of an initiative which has successfully engaged youth is that of the United Nations Counter-Terrorism Centre's Youth Engagement and Empowerment Programme. This innovative programme takes a participatory approach to youth engagement and has two phases. Throughout the first phase, participants focus on developing a data-driven, evidence-based, human rights-compliant and youth-informed programme. It establishes formal mechanisms and an engagement platform for meaningful participation. The second phase emphasizes implementation of the Programme to prevent violent extremism in partnership with youth, including youth-led civil society organizations and private sector stakeholders.¹⁰³

Empowering youth through sport

The benefit of sport and its capacity to empower young people is well documented. Participating in sport improves physical and mental well-being and helps to develop teamwork, leadership, relationship building, problem-solving, planning, and social interaction skills. It influences cognitive functioning and improves focus in children and youth, which helps to improve their grades, increase their chances of achieving post-secondary education and success in labour market. Sport is also a means for decreasing isolation, breaking down gender stereotypes and building youth identity.

Evidence shows that long-term, community-based development initiatives, including sport-based activities, that address the complex push and pull factors that drive a small minority of youth to engage in violence can increase youth voices and contribute to PVE. Such initiatives strengthen youth

101 Office of the Secretary-General's Envoy on Youth: "If I disappear Global Report on Protecting Young People in Civic Spaces" (2021) (p. 22) www.un.org/youthenvoy/wp-content/uploads/2021/06/Global-Report-on-Protecting-Young-People-in-Civic-Space.pdf.

102 UNDP (2018). Assessing Progress Made, and the Future of Development Approaches to Preventing Violent Extremism: Report of the United Nations Development Programme Second Global Meeting on Preventing Violent Extremism, 'Oslo II'. Available at www.undp.org/publications/assessing-progress-made-and-future-development-approaches-preventing-violent-extremism.

103 UNCCT. "UNCCT Global PCVE Programme issues call for applications to its Youth Engagement and Empowerment Programme for South Asia and Southeast Asia". Available at www.un.org/counterterrorism/events/call-for-applications-YEEP-south-asia-southeast-asia.

participation in peacebuilding.¹⁰⁴ Sports not only enhance resilience at the individual level, but also help to ensure that youth are able to contribute to their communities and broader society in meaningful and positive ways.¹⁰⁵

However, young people encounter a variety of barriers in their ability to participate in sport. A shortage of trained volunteers and coaches to provide programming, a lack of sports facilities and safe spaces, socioeconomic factors (children and youth from low-income families are less likely to participate in sports), insufficient encouragement from parents or caregivers, and growing prevalence of digital games and the internet are impediments to youth participation in sports. Furthermore, children and youth who have experienced past traumas or who do not trust adults because of past experiences may be uninterested or reluctant to engage in sports.¹⁰⁶

By including young men and women in policy development, policymakers can ensure they better understand local environments and experiences of young people and how to employ sport to effectively address issues that may contribute to young people's vulnerability to radicalization.

Strengthening youth participation in policy- and decision-making processes

The Plan of Action on PVE and earlier initiatives, including Security Council Resolution 2250 (2015) on youth, peace and security and the Amman Youth Declaration, call on Member States to involve young people in peace and decision-making processes for PVE.¹⁰⁷ More recently, Security Council Resolution 2535 (2020), called upon Member States to improve the capacity-building and inclusion of youth in key peace processes.

At a forum held in January 2021¹⁰⁸ that consulted youth leaders from 40 countries across five continents on PVE through sport, participants provided a wide range of recommendations for strengthening youth participation in PVE policy- and decision-making processes:

Ensure a transparent process in the design and implementation of PVE strategies, and provide opportunities for young people to contribute in meaningful ways; acknowledge tokenism as a hindrance to youth inclusion.

- Encourage and facilitate youth participation in all policy and decision-making processes:
 - Create legislative processes that mandate multi-stakeholder cooperation, including young women and men.
 - Develop stronger youth agency through the integration of young people's ideas and ensuring they have a common voice.

104 USAID. (n.d.). Promising practices in engaging youth in peace and security and PVE/CVE: Summary of key interventions and examples. YouthPower Learning. Available at www.youthpower.org/sites/default/files/YouthPower/resources/Peace%20and%20Security%20Brief%209-21-17%20PRINT%20FINAL-OK.pdf.

105 Saqlain, N. (2019). "Child and youth empowerment through sports". CYC-Online, pp. 42–46. Available at www.researchgate.net/publication/330158256_Child_and_Youth_Empowerment_Through_Sports/.

106 Ibid.

107 UNDP (2016). *Preventing Violent Extremism Through Promoting Inclusive Development, Tolerance and Respect for Diversity: A development response to addressing radicalisation and violent extremism*.

108 United Nations Alliance of Civilizations, UNOCT, United Nations Interregional Crime and Justice Research Institute, and International Centre for Sport Security (2021). Report: Online Youth Consultation on Preventing Violent Extremism Through Sport, held 20–21 January 2021. Available at www.unaoc.org/resource/online-youth-consultation-on-preventing-violent-extremism-through-sport/.

- Adopt a bottom-up approach that encourages more interaction between youth-led organizations, leaders, and policymakers.
 - Build stronger in-country PVE collaborations by developing local networks of national Government representatives and young activists from various regions; this should include youth leaders who may not have access to resources (e.g., internet, technological devices, etc.) and other isolated or marginalized young people who, for various reasons, are excluded from the system.
 - Enhance networking and idea exchange by adopting a user-friendly interface that is more relatable to young people (e.g., a digital networking community that allows them to comment, message, "like", participate in Q&A, etc.).
-
- Adopt a holistic and multi-agency approach, addressing all aspects of youth development.
 - Create spaces and platforms to engage youth councils and youth representatives from various sport clubs so they can share their insights, local experiences, and recommendations in the design of new policies at the regional or national level.
 - Prioritize funding for youth-led organizations that focus on PVE and youth development to strengthen their impact and potential.
 - Invest in leadership development programmes that advance and build the youth's leadership capacities.
 - Include youth as key players in COVID-19 recovery plans, rather than just as beneficiaries.

Women and PVE

"Sustainable peace is only possible if there is inclusive peace-making where women are strong participants, both in their numbers and in their authority".¹⁰⁹

A growing body of research on the role of women in terrorism also attests to their complex and nuanced roles as preventers, perpetrators and victims.¹¹⁰ This research also identifies a myriad of reasons and trends about why women join and about terrorist groups that integrate women. These include the desire or need for increased media attention; group outbidding or a requirement to differentiate themselves from other groups; tactical requirements to penetrate hardened targets; lack of "manpower" available for the terrorist organization (recruitment pressures); as well as pressure from women to be incorporated into the struggle.¹¹¹ Evidence also suggests that women willingly join violent extremist groups in active and powerful roles, in spite of the misogynist character of these groups.¹¹² Many times, women will also

109 Gakiya, M., Tiu Wu, A., and Al-Rousan, T. (2016). *Women's Leadership and Empowerment for Peacebuilding*. Saskawa Peace Foundation. Available at www.spf.org/publication/upload/Women%27s%20Leadership%20and%20Empowerment%20for%20Peace-buildingII.pdf.

110 UN-Women, Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific (2019). "Who's behind the keyboard? – A gender analysis of terrorism and violent extremism in the online space in Bangladesh, Indonesia, Malaysia and the Philippines". Available at <https://asiapacific.unwomen.org/en/digital-library/publications/2019/03/whos-behind-the-keyboard>.

111 Davis, J. (2017). *Women in Modern Terrorism – From liberation wars to global jihad and the Islamic State*.

112 UN-Women and Monash University (2018). "Misogyny and Violent Extremism: Implications for Preventing Violent Extremism". Available at <https://asiapacific.unwomen.org/en/digital-library/publications/2019/10/misogyny-violent-extremism>.

join these groups not because of a strong ideological belief, but because they are “squeezed” between repressive and dangerous local contexts, including repressive Government-led security initiatives.

These complex circumstances and motivations also demonstrate that the boundaries between women’s and girls’ experiences as accomplices, accessories, victims and survivors is mostly unclear, leading to uncertainty regarding women’s degree of agency and culpability regarding their roles in violent extremism and terrorism. It is therefore critical to ensure that a nuanced and context-specific understanding and analysis of women’s and girls’ experiences is integrated into effective PVE programmes and policies.

PVE initiatives should also not disregard the especial vulnerability of women and girls in contexts affected by violent extremism and terrorism. As victims, women are not only directly affected by violent terrorist actions, but also in the way terrorists and violent extremist groups more broadly curtail the rights of women and propagate misogynist ideologies. The Global Study on the Implementation of United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 (2000) found that the actions of violent extremist groups comprised significant attacks on the rights of women and girls, including on education, public life and decision-making over their bodies, as well as rape and gender based violence.¹¹³ Jointly with the strategic manipulation of gender norms and stereotypes for recruitment tactics, this forms part of some of the most devastating impact of terrorism and violent extremism. The latter is not only impacting women’s rights but also the resilience of communities in the face of violent extremism.¹¹⁴ Further evidence demonstrates that hostile sexist attitudes toward women and support for violence against women are the factors most strongly associated with support for violent extremism.¹¹⁵

Empowering women and girls through sport

Sport has demonstrated tremendous capacity to empower women and girls – it teaches the values of teamwork, self-reliance and resilience; has an amplifying effect on health, education and leadership development; contributes to self-esteem; builds social connections; and challenges harmful gender norms. Sport is also a conduit to mobilize the global community and raise awareness about gender equality in sport and beyond, including around issues of governance, gender-based violence and economic opportunities.¹¹⁶

For example, in South Sudan, The World Bank has estimated that only seven girls for every ten boys attend primary education, while five girls for every ten boys are enrolled in secondary education. In 2013 only 500 girls were in the last grade of secondary school in the whole country. Complicating matters the fact that only 12 per cent of teachers are female.¹¹⁷ The creation of a new women’s soccer league is being used to combat some of the gender inequality that women persistently face in this East African nation. The new league helps to enhance the leadership role of women in their communities through skills building and coach training. This initiative is supported by the South Sudan Football Association, which has launched a four-year plan to promote the women’s team and pledges to build a “transparent,

113 UN-Women (2015). “Preventing Conflict, Transforming Justice, Securing the Peace – A Global Study on the Implementation of United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325.”, chap. 9.

114 United Nations, Secretary-General’s 2019 Report on Women, Peace and Security. S/219/800.

115 Monash University and UN-Women (2019). *Misogyny and Violent Extremism: Implications for Preventing Violent Extremism*.

116 UN-Women (2020). “Sport for Generation Equality Framework: Driving implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action through the Power of the Sport Ecosystem”.

117 GPE Secretariat (2015). “Expanding Education Opportunities for Girls in South Sudan”. Available at www.globalpartnership.org/blog/expanding-education-opportunities-girls-south-sudan#footnotes/.



Two participants of the workshop “Intergenerational Dialogue on the Role of Youth in Preventing Violent Extremism through Sport” to foster sustainable peace and development in the MENA Region (Morocco, June 2022)
Photo: UNOCT

inclusive and sustainable future for women's soccer in South Sudan” and to increase the number of women involved in the sport, including as players, coaches, and referees.¹¹⁸

In Argentina, the Ministry of Security conducts training with technical bodies and sport organizations on the prevention of gender-based violence at sporting events. Sessions address key gender concepts, legislative responsibilities, and gender-related issues, particularly around violence against women and LGBTQIA+ people, and encourage a commitment to adopt an inclusive gender perspective in sporting events. These types of initiatives that engage women in sport and create safe environments for them are powerful counter-narratives to extremist ideology. However, numerous studies show lower participation rates of women and girls in both amateur and professional sport. This is the result of both external factors – such as discriminatory social norms or obstacles to reconciling the burdens of care, work and sport – and internal factors, including the lack of programmes to create gender-sensitive and safe sporting environments. This means opposing harassment and other forms of gender-based violence in sport.

The discrimination that women and girls encounter in competitive and non-competitive sport cannot be separated from the discrimination they face in society more broadly; sociocultural norms and more direct discriminatory actions, such as prohibitions on certain attire worn by women, have hindered women and girls from participating in sport. Women and girls who do participate in sport, particularly

118 Ramirez, I. (2021). “A surprising leg up for women in war-torn South Sudan: On the soccer field”. *PassBlue*, 12 July 2021. Available at www.passblue.com/2021/07/12/a-surprising-leg-up-for-women-in-war-torn-south-sudan-on-the-soccer-field/.

those who do not conform to community-based gender norms may be subjected to harassment and exclusion by their families or communities.¹¹⁹

In response to persistent and pervasive inequalities in women's and girls' access to sporting resources and activities at the local, national, and transnational levels, the United Nations Human Rights Council resolved in 2020 to eliminate discrimination against women and girls in sport. In order to effectively empower women through sport, to increase gender equality both within and outside of sport and leverage the capacity of women for PVE, policymakers must be sure to apply a context-specific gender analysis to all sport-for-PVE policy to ensure it is not distorted by gender stereotypes, inequities, or discrimination.

Recommendation: Apply a context-specific gender analysis to all sport-for-PVE policy to ensure it is not distorted by gender stereotypes, inequities, or discrimination.

Strengthening women's participation and impact in sport for PVE

The Plan of Action on PVE encourages policymakers to provide more opportunities for women to share their specific views, competencies, and experiences in shaping PVE approaches and strategies.¹²⁰ In sport for PVE, involving women and girls in policy development creates more relevant and effective policies, increases the participation of women and girls in sport and physical activity, and advances the agenda for gender equity. It contributes to the overall PVE agenda, and it develops more respectful partnerships between women's groups and decision-making bodies, as well as informing and engaging more men, who must be active advocates in the gender-equality dialogue.

While noting that gender equity must be embedded across all government policy and programme areas, and be consistent with the protection and enforcement of fundamental human rights, the Sport for Development and Peace International Working Group's [Harnessing the Power of Sport for Development and Peace](#) (2008) offers a number of recommendations for policymakers to engage and empower women and girls through sport. While developed in a sport for development context, these recommendations align and have been adapted to PVE context:

- Engage and collaborate with women's groups, female athletes, and other female community influencers as key stakeholders in sport-for-PVE policy discussion and design.
- Recognize the benefits of sport for girls and women by formally designing national sport policies to advance gender equity, empowerment, and improved quality of life for girls and women.
- Reinforce policies with appropriate legislation, regulations and funding to promote gender equity.
- Examine gender-equity policies and initiatives with a focus on sport opportunities, and to find additional ways to use sport to empower women and girls.

119 United Nations, Human Rights Council (2020). Intersection of race and gender discrimination in sport: Report of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights. A/HRC/44/26.

120 UNDP (2016). *Preventing Violent Extremism Through Promoting Inclusive Development, Tolerance and Respect for Diversity: A development response to addressing radicalisation and violent extremism*.

- Invest in building the capacity of women and sport organizations to ensure women have an adequate voice and meaningful ways to contribute to policy development processes at national and sub-national levels.

- Develop policies and programmes that acknowledge the tremendous diversity of girls and women in terms of age, health, education, social and economic circumstances and needs, and that provide relevant tools, programmes approaches and indicators of success.

- Establish explicit timetables and targets to ensure more equitable allocation of resources for girls' and women's sport and to narrow the gap in relation to sport for boys and men.

- Require publicly funded sport organizations and sport programmes to establish, enforce, and report on policies that eradicate discrimination, harassment and sexual abuse against women and girls, and provide training and procedures to protect girls and women in sporting situations.

- Ensure that government sport-funding policies aim to create an equitable balance of men and women in leadership roles in sport organizations to ensure the interests and aspirations of men and women equitably represented.

- Encourage sport organizations, municipalities, and community-based organizations that offer sport programmes to build gender equity into their programmes, including hiring and recruitment practices, leadership development, establishing equality goals, support services to enhance female participation, providing safe and inclusive environments and increasing the number and variety of programmes available and relevant to women and girls.

- Guarantee the necessary research, monitoring, and evaluation frameworks are in place to attain gender equity policy goals in sport.

IV. MAXIMIZING THE IMPACT OF MAJOR SPORTING EVENTS



In 1994, Nelson Mandela assumed the Presidency of a deeply divided South Africa. With the injustices of apartheid still fresh and the threat of violence looming, there was little to bridge the gap between Blacks and Whites. Even though many Black citizens associated rugby with the apartheid regime, Mandela used the 1995 Rugby World Cup as a vehicle to unite the country. He openly supported the team and sent a clear message that the Springboks, South Africa's national team, should have the support of all South Africans. This strategy not only propelled the Springboks to become a focal point of social cohesion but was also the impetus for creating a more inclusive team, opening the door for more Black players.¹²¹

This chapter highlights the opportunities and risks of PVE in the context of MSEs (4.1) and describes how to support PVE objectives in relation to MSEs through policymaking (4.2).

121 Madhavan, N. (2019). "Invictus: How Nelson Mandela used rugby to unite South Africa". Delhi: *The Hindu*, Business Line, 3 November 2019.

4.1. Opportunities and risks

The 1995 Rugby World Cup is one of many events that show how countries around the world have channelled the power of MSEs to promote progressive and transformational ideas that support PVE dialogue and enhance economic, political, and social development, which in turn strengthen the social fabric of a city or nation.

Pakistan's National Games, the country's largest domestic sporting event, is a more recent example: after a nine-year hiatus, mainly due to the threat of militancy in the region, the 2019 Games in Peshawar took place under a "Play for Peace" theme and brought together 8,000 athletes in 32 different disciplines. Recognized as a key tool for rebuilding solidarity in the country, the event was also used as a platform to raise the profile of women athletes, providing 27 sport segments exclusively for women and encouraging more participation.¹²² There are also examples of sport fans putting aside long-held social and political divisions between nations for the love of sport and competition – Pakistani cricket fans flooded social media channels cheering on India in matches against England and Australia in 2019 and 2021, respectively, thereby bridging the historic rivalry and tensions between those countries.¹²³ By making use of their universal appeal and the local, national and international media attention they attract, MSEs offer incredible opportunities to endorse, promote and demonstrate fundamental values that contribute to PVE. Such examples demonstrate the wide range of impact that MSEs can have.

One win leads to another

GRLS partnered with UN-Women, the International Olympic Committee and Empodera to create One Win Leads to Another, a legacy programme stemming from the 2016 Rio Summer Olympics, held in Brazil. One Win leverages sport as a tool to help reduce gender inequalities and build and maintain self-confidence among adolescent girls. Twice a week, participants attend sports training and gender workshops in one of the 16 participating Olympic Villas in Rio de Janeiro.

In addition to raising the profile of important issues like anti-discrimination, diversity, gender equality, tolerance, inclusion and other values that enhance unity and social ties, MSEs can provide more practical benefits that contribute to resilience-building within communities and across nations. MSEs can accelerate infrastructure development (e.g., roads, rail, telecommunications, facilities) and other large-scale improvement activities that generate jobs and improve economic development opportunities.

Successful MSEs can lead to increased foreign investment, attract new business, and enhance tourism; they can also break down barriers and foster collaboration among the public and private sectors, community, and various levels of government. MSEs can also closely involve local communities, schools, youth organizations and sport clubs, and sustainably lead to more and inclusive sporting activities in the region, thus directly contribute to PVE. By ensuring that MSEs are organized to maximize long-term

122 Arab News PK (2019). "Peshawar is game for sports after nine-year lull". *Arab News Pakistan*, Nov. 10, 2019). Available at www.arabnews.pk/node/1581921/pakistan.

123 News18.com (2021). "Pakistani fans forgot about rivalry and cheered for India's win against Australia on Twitter". Available at www.news18.com/news/buzz/pakistani-cricket-fans-forgot-about-rivalry-and-rooted-for-indias-win-against-australia-3312032.html.

positive impact (rather than just their short-term success), policymakers and other MSE stakeholders can use them as a functional vehicle for actioning real change.

However, planning and delivering MSEs safely requires a major investment of public dollars and resources. In order to secure and maintain public confidence and buy-in, the benefits generated from an MSE must outweigh the risk. If mismanaged or formulated around unrealistic outcomes, MSEs can negatively impact local communities, widen social divides, and create frustrations that can further fuel discontent among local populations. Promises of urban regeneration can lead to the displacement of poor and vulnerable communities; pledges to adapt sport facilities for post-event public use to improve community life may eventually end up with them being sold off to private sector investors; assurances that public funds invested to host an MSE will generate long-term return on investment can turn into debts; instances of corruption could weaken trust and undermine the integrity of the MSEs.^{124,125}

Ensuring that MSEs can effectively contribute to PVE encompasses far more than tying in the right messages, campaigns, and programmes; the greatest impacts will come from careful study, planning, and long-term vision for MSE legacy.¹²⁶ Taking Preuss's definition, a sport legacy "is all planned and unplanned, positive and negative, tangible and intangible structures created for and by a sport event that remain longer than the event itself."¹²⁷

Barcelona Model

The success of the 1992 Barcelona Olympic Games in terms of organization and impact has since become a model from the sporting, economic, social and urban planning viewpoints. The Games not only had a dramatic positive impact on unemployment rates, resulting in some 20,230 permanent jobs, its capital investment increased economic activity to such a large extent that it improved wealth, well-being and social cohesion. In parallel, Barcelona's housing market has since undergone an enormous development, along with its construction industry, experiencing expansive new levels of growth (Brunet, 1995b).

Recommendation: Plan MSEs around realistic opportunities for short-, medium- and long-term outcomes and legacies that support PVE objectives.

124 UNODC (2021). "Global Report on Corruption in Sport", 277. The report offers insights on tackling corruption in relation to major sporting events.

125 Grix, J., and Brannagan, P.M., and Wood, H. (2017). "State strategies for leveraging sports mega-events: Unpacking the concept of "legacy". *International Journal of Sport Policy*, vol. 9(2), pp. 1–16. Available at www.researchgate.net/publication/316844933_State_strategies_for_leveraging_sports_mega-events_unpacking_the_concept_of_%27legacy%27.

126 MSEs can offer an opportunity to empower underprivileged sectors of society and counteract threats such as the violent radicalization of vulnerable youth (see UNOCT, *Guide on the Security of Major Sporting Events*).

127 Preuss, H. (2007). "The conceptualisation and measurement of mega sport tourism", in *Journal of Sport and Tourism*, vol. 12 (3–4), pp. 207–227.

4.2. Major sporting events and policymaking¹²⁸



Given the continuing growth of violent extremism and terrorist activities around the globe, governments and other stakeholders must exploit every opportunity, including the delivery of MSEs, to counteract extremist dogma, enhance social cohesion and create legacies for more productive communities. Policies can be incorporated into several provisions to support PVE objectives in relation to MSEs:

- Incorporate PVE into all stages of MSEs – from bidding to post-event evaluation –, both in terms of security measures to enhance safety, as well as broader social activities (sport/educational/cultural programming, advocacy campaigns, volunteer programmes, etc.) and legacies that support national PVE priorities and objectives.
- Entrench a rights-based model (human, labour, non-discriminatory, environmental) in all aspects of MSE planning and preparations to ensure they do not further contribute to injustices that fuel violent extremism.
- Conduct bilateral or multilateral discussions with international and regional organizations as important partners to design measures that can contribute to transnational or regional PVE objectives.
- Consult communities to identify local needs, concerns, and opportunities to enhance PVE-related outcomes; MSEs are also an opportunity to engage stakeholders at policy and

128 UNOCT (2021), *Guide on the Security of Major Sporting Events: Promoting Sustainable Security and Legacies*.

grassroot levels in discussions to promote sport as an enabler of sustainable development and resilience-building within local communities.

- Seek to provide sustainable jobs and training programmes for people, specifically youth from local communities and involve local businesses for providing services and goods before and during the MSE.
- Support an event culture free from harm and accordingly support zero-tolerance policies with regards to discriminatory and violent behaviour, and the installation of observer schemes and complaints mechanisms.
- Engage government departments and civil society organizations (including youth, women, human rights groups, media, etc.) to develop coordinated action plans (i.e., awareness-building campaigns, youth-oriented programmes) before, during and after the MSE.
- Develop training programmes for police, protocol officers, spokespeople (e.g., athletes, celebrities, etc.), programme coordinators, coaches, volunteers, and other groups who will be involved in PVE-related activities before, during or after the MSE.
- Focus on achievable, realistic objectives for post-event legacies that can contribute to longer-term outcomes for social and economic development and peacebuilding.
- Include post-event measures to adapt infrastructure (i.e., sport facilities) for the day-to-day needs of local communities.
- Develop indicators and benchmarks to measure the impact of MSEs and their legacies in terms of PVE.

Recommendation: Apply a multisector, rights-based PVE lens to all stages of Major Sporting Event planning, delivery and evaluation.

V. INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION AND INSTRUMENTS ON SPORT FOR PVE

While every Member State must make provisions to address radicalization and violent extremism within its own borders, PVE also requires cooperation and coordination between nations. Broader terrorism and counter-terrorism issues can become mired in the international politics agenda, but the PVE dialogue is an opportunity for the international community to put greater focus on that which unites the global community, rather than on what divides it. Collective agreement on issues like human rights, gender equality, the role of youth and the capacity of sport to support PVE objectives not only paves the way for more localized action, but also supports the development of more pragmatic and practical frameworks by mobilizing international cooperation.

International cooperation on sport for PVE can take many forms. Frameworks to support international dialogue and action, such as the Global Sport Programme, are critical in building awareness and best practice. Foreign investment in developing sport in countries that are at-risk or under siege by violent extremism provide opportunity where it is needed most. Even cooperation among nations to control the spread of COVID-19 supports PVE by working towards the restoration of “normal” life where sport-based group activities, including MSEs, can resume. These types of partnerships between governments, international and regional organizations, sport bodies and civil society leverage the expertise and resources of all entities and provide unique perspectives for sport-for-PVE policy.

For policymakers, while sport is recognized as an effective tool for international cooperation across many areas, from development to diplomacy, research indicates that the use of sport-based policy can be successful only if it is embedded in and supported by a wider strategy that pursues the same political goals.¹²⁹ Systematic integration and mainstreaming of sport for PVE into international, national and sub-national development plans and policies – in security, foreign affairs, international development, social and cultural sectors – is critical for maximum impact.¹³⁰ Policymakers may also consider creating policies that make it easier for organizations to access foreign funding to pursue development-oriented projects or safeguards that ensure transparency and minimize any perception of political agendas in the allocation of public funds to international initiatives.

This chapter explores various examples and instruments of international cooperation that may be considered by policy- and decision-makers as part of national and international agendas for peace and PVE. It starts with MSEs (5.1), continues with international development and peacebuilding (5.2.) and resumes with sport as a diplomatic tool (5.3).

129 Pellegrino, G., and Hancock, H. (2010). A lasting legacy: How major sporting events can drive positive change for host communities and economies (Pellegrino and Hancock). Deloitte.

130 General Assembly (2016). United Nations Action Plan on Sport for Development and Peace: report of the Secretary-General. A/71/179.

5.1. Major sporting events



Members of the United Nations Global Sports Programme visited sports grounds during a capacity-building activity for emergency services, civil protection organizations, public officials from different ministries and private sector representatives in security for MSEs (Costa Rica, February 2022) Photo: UNOCT.

MSEs can be utilized as a powerful tool as well as a vector to unite and congregate people while promoting the underlying positive values of sport and the peaceful factors it generates. For recommendations regarding MSE and PVE revisit chapter 4 on opportunities and challenges of MSEs.

5.2. International development and peacebuilding

International development is a common route for nations and international agencies to support agendas, specifically the Sustainable Development Goals, which contribute to economic growth, improving health, alleviating poverty and improving living conditions in developing countries. In helping create the capacity to implement long-term solutions to these problems, international development can address many of the underlying issues that contribute to violent extremism.

As part of the follow-up to the Action Plan on Sport for Development and Peace and the Kazan Action Plan, the Secretary-General's 2016 report to the General Assembly on [Strengthening the global framework for leveraging sport for development and peace](#) outlined numerous examples of international cooperation in this area.

International agencies

For example, UNESCO and a broad range of partners – including the European Commission, the International Bureau of Education, the International Council of Sport Science and Physical Education, Nike, the International Olympic Committee and the World Health Organization – worked together to deliver the [Quality Physical Education](#) initiative.¹³¹ The programme, which uses a cross-cutting approach to improve access to sport and to use sport to achieve soft skills and social inclusion objectives, has been introduced to help revise national physical education policies in numerous countries, including Fiji, Mexico, South Africa and Zambia.

Governments

The Secretary-General's report also outlined examples of where individual countries are undertaking international sport for development initiatives. Germany, for example, has carried out development cooperation initiatives in numerous countries including Brazil, Colombia, Ethiopia, Iraq, Jordan, Rwanda and Senegal. In partnership with local and international partners – including government ministries, non-governmental organizations, and sport federations – it has introduced initiatives to leverage sport for promoting social inclusion, fostering social cohesion and improving psychosocial well-being, gender equality, and conflict resolution. These initiatives most often involved training coaches, teachers, and community leaders in context-specific methods to impart the desired life skills and social and emotional competencies.

Ping-pong diplomacy

In 1971, the famous “ping-pong diplomacy” between the People's Republic of China and the United States was launched when an American national table tennis player missed his bus after a practice and was invited onto the Chinese team's bus. One of the Chinese players offered a silkscreen portrait to his American counterpart as a greeting and the American later presented the Chinese player with a T-shirt containing the peace symbol and the words “Let it be”. The media attention that followed this incident led to an invitation for an United States Government delegation to visit China. This example represents the tremendous power of the media to bring about positive action, especially when it highlights the better side of human nature.

Sport organizations

In the areas of sport governance and administration, the Secretary-General's report noted how sport organizations, including the International Olympic Committee and FIFA, are working towards sustainable development objectives, particularly in the areas of human rights and development in relation to MSEs. The International Olympic Committee plays a key role in driving priorities around credibility, sustainability, and youth across the breadth of Olympic sport. This positions it as an important ally in shaping the use of sport in national and international development efforts and maximizing its positive impact in social, economic, and environmental spheres.

131 UNESCO. Promoting Quality Physical Education Policy. Available at <https://en.unesco.org/themes/sport-and-anti-doping/sports-education/qpe>.



A ceremony was held when South Sudan became the newest country to join the International Olympic Committee (IOC), during which the Olympic flag was raised in the country for the first time ever. UN Photo/Nektarios Markogiannis.

Similarly, FIFA 2.0: The Vision for the Future strategy is built around the growing global demand that sport governance structures adhere to the key principles of international development, including sustainability, respect for human rights, inclusion, and economic capacity. FIFA has committed itself to building the capacity of its member associations and civil society partners to align with this strategy¹³².

Civil society organizations

Numerous civil society organizations working in the international development arena are using sport and educational development programmes to tackle social issues and to support long-term sustainable change for the most vulnerable youth around the world. Civil society organizations may empower youth through workshops, conducting awareness campaigns, teaching social skills and non-violent conflict resolution, and promoting social cohesion through sport.

For instance, Local Youth Corner, a youth-led organization in Cameroon, has sought to prevent radicalization through sport, education and recreational activities, including its Creative Skills for Peace project. This prison-based project drew on the power of sport by launching sport-for-peace tournaments that aim to build team spirit and promote social cohesion and friendship among the inmates. This project is one of many led by civil society organizations that utilize sport and place a particular focus on youth from marginalized groups.¹³³

¹³² FIFA (2016). FIFA 2.0: The Vision for the Future.

¹³³ UNOCT (2021). Compendium of existing policies, projects and initiatives aimed at making use of sport and its values as a tool to prevent violent extremism.

Recommendation: With international development addressing many of the underlying issues that contribute to violent extremism, consider integrating sport for development initiatives into national policies, emphasizing close cooperation between international agencies, governments, and sport and civil society organizations.

5.3. Sport as a diplomatic tool

Whether through planned strategic endeavours, such as the joint bid of the two Koreas to host the 2032 Olympic Games, or through more spontaneous incidents, like the “ping-pong diplomacy” opportunity that arose for the United States and China from the 1971 World Table Tennis Championships, sport has proven to be an effective foreign policy tool and a gateway for improving international relations and cooperation.

Sport’s ability to bring about unity and peace has been often employed to reduce tensions between countries. Despite decades of conflict, “cricket diplomacy” has been used by the Governments of India and Pakistan to reduce tensions and explore the possibility of normalizing relations, opening borders, and resuming direct security negotiations. MSEs are a means by which host nations demonstrate international “good citizenship” and enhance their profile and standing within the international community. Internationally renowned athletes have also been useful in augmenting a foreign policy message.

In situations where there is a chance that international sport may serve to exacerbate tensions due to extreme rivalries between nations or as a venue to act on external conflicts, additional care and diplomatic cooperation between teams, governing bodies of sport and governments can help ensure competitions are secure for competitors, spectators and service providers. However, in practice, international sport increases international comity and reduces conflict more frequently than it exacerbates tension (Murray and Pigman, 2014).

Recommendation: Historically proven, sport can be an effective tool for supporting peace and unity, and for reducing tensions between countries and regions.

VI. PLANNING, MONITORING AND EVALUATION



Participants in the workshop "Intergenerational Dialogue on the Role of Youth in Preventing Violent Extremism through Sport" during a group activity addressing the creation of policies for preventing and countering violent extremism by promoting social inclusion and cohesion (Morocco, June 2022) Photo: UNOCT.

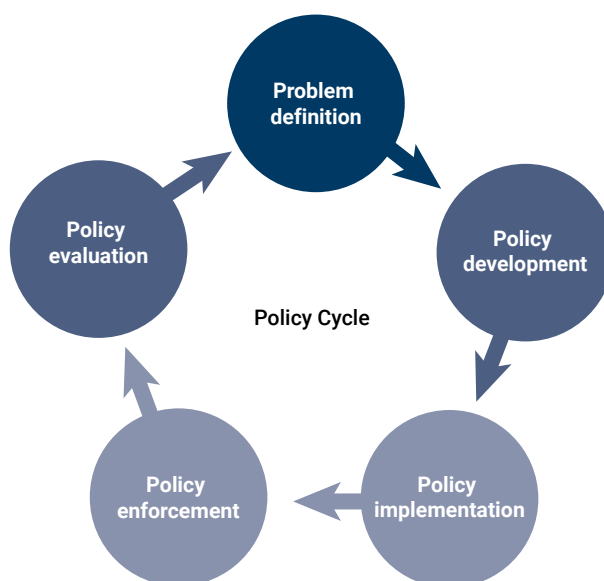
Planning, monitoring, and evaluation are all crucial steps in the successful and effective implementation of sport-for-PVE initiatives. This chapter illustrates both the importance of these three components as well as how to best approach them in the context of sport for PVE. The planning and design stage of PVE initiatives (6.1) is explained through public policy analysis, using Harold Lasswell's seminal "policy circle" framework. This helps to frame the section on monitoring and evaluation (6.2) and the associated good practices and recommendations for monitoring and evaluation in the field of sport for PVE. The chapter concludes with emphasizing the need for evidence-based sport-for-PVE practice (6.3).

6.1. Planning and design

A shared characteristic of public policy with PVE is that "policy problems are seen to occur in a specific context [...] that must be carefully considered in terms of the analysis, methodology, and subsequent recommendations".¹³⁴ Therefore, PVE and sport-for-PVE policymakers must understand that there is no

¹³⁴ DeLeon, P., and Vogenbeck, D.M. (2007). The policy sciences at the crossroads. In *Handbook of public policy analysis: Theory, politics, and methods*, pp. 3–14.

Figure 2
Policymaking and policy cycle



Source: Janssen and Helbig, 2018.

single equation to create public policy. Creating policies for PVE is a complex task, which practitioners often describe the challenging nature of evaluating their work. Related challenges include trust-building with communities and individuals involved in PVE interventions; the lack of valid time scales to measure support level for violent extremism; and the low-sample size of PVE programmes available. These challenges can be mitigated through making use of expert knowledge and judgment and understanding contexts by using proxies such as behaviours.¹³⁵ Often local governments are best equipped for PVE since they usually understand the local context better. The role of deciding the final objective of PVE policies within a country often lies with the national authority.

The policy-making process: the policy circle

This system was first developed by Harold Lasswell (1957, 1971) and became the starting point of different typologies of public policy processes. Lasswell divided the process into five steps:

1. Agenda setting: a problem is detected by either the political authorities (institutional agenda) or any of the actors in society (systemic agenda).
2. Policy formulation: unlike in the agenda-setting stage, different actors participate; however, only those with knowledge about the matter can join the conversation. Different authors highlight that the number of actors involved is not as relevant as the number of idea sets they could provide, since the number of ideas taken into consideration could affect the communities and create/extend/face new conflicts. Also, having more perspectives from diverse groups creates intelligence for the Government, and this

135 Dawson L., Edwards C., and Jeffray C. (2014). *Learning and Adapting: The Use of Monitoring and Evaluation in Countering Violent Extremism, A Handbook for Practitioners.*

can be translated in the improvement of their capacity to foster early-alarm systems (Bazaga and Sáez, 2021).

3. Decision making: This step addresses the way decisions are taken. Authors such as Pawson (2006) defend the use of evidence-based policy to apply systemic rationality to the process (Howlett and Giest, 2013).
4. Policy implementation: Three theories of implementation can be identified: 1) top-bottom: the implementation takes place in a hierarchical execution and the goals are defined by a central Government; 2) bottom-up: a more participatory concept where the creation of the policies resides originally in a critique to the previous models and to solve everyday conflicts experiences by "street-level bureaucrats" (Lipsky 1980); and 3) hybrid theories: a mixture of both models.
5. Policy evaluation: Monitoring and assessing the efficiency of the policy and measuring the impact of the policies.

Lasswell's model is an excellent example of professionals from different disciplines introducing the public policy process. However, it also contains limitations as "under real-world conditions, [...] policy processes rarely feature clear-cut beginnings and endings. [...] Policies are perpetually reformulated, implemented, evaluated, and adapted".¹³⁶

Recommendations: When developing sport-for-PVE policies, make use of the policy cycle consisting of the following five steps: problem definition, policy development, policy implementation, policy enforcement and policy evaluation.

Sport-for-PVE programmes have to be labelled carefully to avoid causing any harm to any of the participants or the staff. It is therefore recommended to not directly use the terms "radicalization" or "violent extremism" and, instead focus the efforts of the programme in broader objectives such as peacebuilding or social inclusion.

Ensure that staff members and policymakers clearly discuss and define PVE objectives in a human-rights compliant manner, considering the specific challenges of radicalization, raising awareness and promoting staff training on the detection of radicalisation.

6.2. Monitoring and evaluation

The need for more robust monitoring and evaluation is a prevalent theme across sport-for-PVE literature and policymakers are strongly encouraged to incorporate mechanisms to support the development of evidence-based practice. Determining the effectiveness of PVE measures is part of the policy's implementation process. Monitoring and evaluation must be an integral component of PVE policy plans. Further, monitoring and evaluation of policy performance, which applies a behavioural science lens, is

¹³⁶ Jann, W., and Wegrich, K. (2007) "Theories of the Policy Cycle" in Fischer F., Miller G.J., Sidney M.S. (eds.), *Handbook of Public Policy Analysis: Theory, Politics, and Methods*, 44.

essential to ensure the proper implementation of a public policy, the activities and projects stemming from this, and its final impact. It helps policymakers to track progress and adjust, to ensure a policy is on track to achieve its objectives. It provides accountability to stakeholders on issues such as resource use, internal processes, and outcomes, and is a way to ensure the consistent integration of gender considerations throughout the activities and to better measure their gendered impacts.

Monitoring and evaluation can also inform the policy and its decision makers on other policy interventions. Greater focus is put not only on validating the relationship between spending and impact, but also on improving coordination across PVE policy areas. This can optimize the impact of sport-for-PVE interventions.

Monitoring

Monitoring – or the systematic and routine collection of information throughout the life of a policy or programme – offers precise and in-depth information on activity suitability, resource allocation, and inputs from stakeholders. Monitoring also allows for progress to be checked against plans. This allows results, processes, and experiences to be documented and used as a basis to guide decision-making and learning procedures.

An effective monitoring system does more than just track the deliverables of a programme or policy; it offers accurate and in-depth information on the suitability of activities, the input from stakeholders and the allocation of resources.¹³⁷ The data collected is then used for evaluation. In order to obtain better-quality data, the gathering procedure should be culturally attuned (e.g., interviews led by individuals of the same sex in highly patriarchal societies); protected from data searches by law enforcement, security services and unauthorized others; and duly reported to prevent possible violent attacks.¹³⁸

Policymakers are responsible for ensuring that direction and vision of sport for PVE are informed by sound evidence and that they are aimed at sustainable PVE objectives such as:

- Improving the links between sport-for-PVE interventions and their outcomes and impacts.
- Improving decision-making.
- Increasing transparency and accountability, including the promotion and respect of human rights.
- Providing legitimacy for the use of public funds and resources.
- Securing co-ownership of key stakeholders and awareness from any beneficiary entity and contributing to the broader pool of sport-for-PVE evidence-based practice.

A growing community of practice is dedicated to developing better informed sport-for-PVE policy and programming. That is, to incentivize continued public financial support, data gathering should become an ongoing process to document the programme's progress.¹³⁹

137 Dawson L., Edwards C., and Jeffray, C. (2014). *Learning and Adapting: The Use of Monitoring and Evaluation in Countering Violent Extremism, A Handbook for Practitioners*.

138 Williams, M. (2021). Preventing and Countering Violent Extremism Designing and Evaluating Evidence-Based Programs.

139 Ibid.

Evaluation

The evaluation phase is a systematic and objective assessment of a completed stage or project in terms of its relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, impact, and sustainability. Evaluations inform strategic decisions, thus improving the overall policy and programmes or projects in the future.¹⁴⁰ Evaluations help policymakers understand the effectiveness of policies, programmes and projects. They can also optimize policies' value for money and the accountability and transparency of the policymaking process. Stakeholders can then hold public servants, the recipients of public funds, accountable for ensuring that resources are used appropriately and effectively.

The most effective approach within a PVE and sport-for-PVE context uses a whole-of-government approach for policy evaluation systems that:

- a) Builds a framework which provides macro-level guidance, identifies a cross-section of stakeholders (from government and non-government sectors), and stipulates the resources allocated to oversee or carry out evaluations.
- b) Promotes a coordinated approach across all sport-for-PVE interventions that builds human-resources capacity, ensures appropriate stakeholder engagement, and fosters a culture of evidence-based practice. This promotes innovative performance assessment and evaluation of policies.
- c) Advocates to produce more rigorous evidence and research and offers support through funding.
- d) Adheres to international and national safeguarding standards.

Staff members should be trained in the data-gathering and analysis process. This will allow for a longer analysis of the outputs and an improvement of service delivery and efficiency while maintaining quality control.¹⁴¹ If funding and environment allow, it is also advisable to have external evaluation conducted by independent researchers. Besides their level of expertise regarding gathering and analysing data, their external position allows examination of sensitive issues especially relating to the staff performance and their relations and position as role models to the participants.

Additional Resources

UNDP (2019). "Improving the impact of preventing violent extremism programming: A toolkit for design, monitoring, and evaluation".

United Nations (2021). "Behavioural Science Report". Available at www.uninnovation.network/assets/BeSci/UN_Behavioural_Science_Report_2021.pdf.

Recommendation: Have monitoring and evaluation as integral part of any PVE policy development, plan, and implementation.

Follow the six steps outlined below: monitoring to support transparency, accountability, and trust; establish a process for learning and feedback; measure focusing on PVE progress; straightforward data collection requirements; resource monitoring interventions for implementing agencies and partners; and complementary interactions and overlaps with other national strategies and plans.

¹⁴⁰ Sportanddev.org. (n.d.). Toolkit: Monitoring and evaluation (M&E).

¹⁴¹ Williams, M. (2021). Preventing and Countering Violent Extremism Designing and Evaluating Evidence-Based Programs.

The following recommendations are adapted from the UNDP/International Alert briefing paper which is based on emerging good practices for monitoring national action plans for PVE.¹⁴²

1. Use the monitoring process to support transparency, accountability and trust between stakeholders

- As far as possible, the monitoring process should be participatory, engaging a wide range of implementing agencies, stakeholders and beneficiaries at local and national levels (government, civil society, media, academia, the private sector, etc.).
- Use the mechanism and network established for the monitoring process, data collection and the dissemination of learning to bring stakeholders together.
- Clarify roles and responsibilities for monitoring and define clear channels for communication regarding the monitoring process.
- Ensure that the process considers security of data and the safety of monitoring and evaluation participants and that it balances sensitivities about sharing confidential data with the need for accountability.

2. Establish a process for learning and feedback.

- Piloting the monitoring and evaluation process and sharing the learning can serve as gateways for demonstrating value and building buy-in. Building a culture of exchange and feedback among Governments, sport organizations and civil-society stakeholders (including youth networks, women networks, media, academia, the private sector and other actors) encourages openness and a more meaningful assessment of progress and impact.

3. Measurement should focus on PVE progress and impact rather than being reduced to a series of project-level results.

- An integrated view of measurement includes assessing policy design and implementation in terms of performance, process, gender mainstreaming and context, as well as comprehensive indicators at impact and outcome levels.

4. Data collection for monitoring requirements should be simple and aligned with existing methods, capacities, and resources.

- Partners involved in newly established sport-for-PVE policies and programming may have limited monitoring capacities and resources, or different methods for monitoring and data management. Monitoring frameworks, tools, data collection, and analysis and reporting should be as streamlined as much as possible and designed to fit existing capacities.
- Sex-disaggregated data collection should be encouraged, in order to better measure the differential gendered impacts of the initiatives.

142 Simpson, R. (2020). Briefing Paper: Monitoring National Action Plans on Preventing Violent Extremism. International Alert and UNDP. Available at www.international-alert.org/sites/default/files/PVE-Monitoring-National-Action-Plans-EN-2020.pdf.

5. Resource monitoring interventions for implementing agencies and partners.

- Budgets for monitoring policy and interventions should be addressed at the policy planning phase for implementing agencies and partners. This will help secure the continuity of monitoring and ensure that the evidence and lessons learned are fed back into the policy-review process as-per the aforementioned policy cycle. Wherever possible, additional resources should be allocated for more in-depth monitoring, particularly for pilot or innovative prevention approaches. Given limited budgets and varying national and local monitoring and evaluation capacities, monitoring plans should be realistic and focus on developing capacities. This may include the development of guidelines, control mechanisms, and other measures to support effective evidence gathering.¹⁴³

6. Consider complementarity, interactions and overlaps with other national strategies and plans.

- Sport-for-PVE engages different areas of Government. As a result, actors across different sectors (education, social development, gender equality, youth, culture, interior, etc.) and interventions are likely to intersect with other national strategies and plans. Objectives, actions, and outputs within sport-for-PVE policy should align with these and share common indicators, where relevant. In addition, monitoring frameworks should consider points of interaction and consider where more hard-security and counter-terrorism-focused measures may have unintended negative impacts for the prevention agenda.

6.3. Need for evidence-based practice

Evidence-based practice can be described as “a discourse or set of methods which informs the policy process, rather than aiming to affect the eventual goals of the policy directly”.¹⁴⁴ It advocates a more rational, rigorous, and systematic approach. The pursuit of evidence-based practice is based on the premise that policy decisions should be better informed by available evidence and should include rational analysis. This is because a policy that is based on systematic evidence is seen to produce better outcomes.¹⁴⁵ However, different studies contend that “political processes of bargaining and negotiation often outweigh 'rational' deliberations and calculations of costs and benefits which are subject to substantive and procedural limitations”.¹⁴⁶

Unfortunately, there is little evidence-based research that quantifies and measures the effectiveness and impact of PVE programmes. However, it remains imperative to develop locally informed indicators. Understanding the nature as well as the various types of relationships which may impede the influence of violent extremism can enhance the levels of effectiveness of PVE interventions, as well as of efforts in evaluating the impact of the PVE policy.¹⁴⁷

143 Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, OECD (n.d.). Policy Framework on Sound Public Governance. Available at www.oecd.org/governance/pcsd/OECD_Policy_Framework_on_Sound_Public_Governance_Highlights%20Brochure_EN.pdf.

144 Sutcliffe S., Court J., (2005). “Evidence-Based Policymaking: What is it? How does it work? What relevance for developing countries?”, Overseas Development Institute, p.iii.

145 Ibid.

146 Jann, W., and Wegrich, K. (2007). Theories of the Policy Cycle. In: Fischer, F., Miller, G. J. and Sidney, M. S. (Eds), Handbook of Public Policy Analysis: Theory, Politics and Methods, p. 44.

147 Holmer, G., Bauman, P., and Aryaeinejad, K. (2018), “Measuring Up: Evaluating the Impact of PVE Programs”, United States Institute of Peace.

Even though social work is usually mentioned in PVE and sport-for-PVE literature, there are not many papers written by academics on this field. In most cases, authors did it to confront the increasing securitization that their sector was suffering.¹⁴⁸ What has been published has primarily been critical of social work in PVE. This is on account of legitimate fears of securitization of the profession, lack of resources/training and the potential to stigmatize and discriminate against particular racial/ethnic and/or religious groups.¹⁴⁹

A behavioural-insights approach

Behavioural science is the evidence-based study of how people behave, make decisions and respond to programmes, policy and incentives. It is part of a United Nations system-wide methodological and practical transformation process that enables the United Nations to leverage its best tools and methods to address contemporary and future challenges. It can help promote behavioural change by focussing on how people interact with their environment and apply rigorous scientific methods to derive insights about the common patterns and drivers of human behaviour. It is increasingly applied by Governments on a wide range of issues as a relatively cost-effective means to enhance the impact of public policies and programmes (United Nations, 2021).

The application of behavioural science to sport for C/PVE strategies and programming, including in monitoring and evaluation methodologies, is recommended to provide insights that improve their overall effectiveness and success in influencing people's lives.

The available evidence-based research is mostly derived from the government- or intergovernmental-funded programmes that typically require well-developed methodology, monitoring, evaluation, and reporting procedures. This research concludes that sport-based interventions contribute to building resilience and that they support PVE objectives.

Sports activities that facilitate other educational, vocational, mentoring, and volunteering activities and opportunities (e.g., "sport-plus" programmes) produce the most effective results and longer-term impacts. Programmes that focus on developing life skills (e.g., confidence, self-esteem, teamwork, self-discipline) generate skills that can be transferred to other areas such as conflict avoidance.

Although most of the PVE-related sport programming – mostly grassroots initiatives with limited resources, capacity, and documented assessments – do not provide evidence-based outcomes, it does not negate their impact. Rather, it can be suggested that the true extent of their impact simply cannot be known.¹⁵⁰ Where feasible, efforts should be made to assess the outcomes of these initiatives. It is important to note that the quality of monitoring and evaluation for PVE interventions depends on the

148 McKendrick, D., and Finch, J. "Under Heavy Manners?": Social Work, Radicalisation, Troubled Families and Non-Linear War, *The British Journal of Social Work*, Volume 47, Issue 2, March 2017, Pages 308–324; Stanley T, Guru S, Gupta A. Working with PREVENT: Social work options for cases of 'radicalisation of risk' *Practice*. 2018;30(2):131–146; Finch J, Jönsson, J.H., Kamali, M., and McKendrick, D. Social work and countering violent extremism in Sweden and the UK. *European Journal of Social Work*. 2019.

149 Ibid.

150 UNODC (2018). Line up to live up; how sports can help prevent violent extremism in youth. Available at www.unodc.org/doha-declaration/en/news/2018/12/line-up-to-live-up-how-sports-can-help-prevent-violent-extremism-in-youth.html and UNODC (2018). *Desk Review on Sport as a Tool For the Prevention of Violent Extremism*. Available at www.unodc.org/documents/doha-declaration/Sports/PVE/PVE_DeskReview_Final.pdf.

capacity and expertise of those implementing and evaluating programmes. Including academics along with practitioners in the field which can have a vital impact on the approaches to the evaluation, as well as increase the overall quality of the data collection leading to more rigorous evaluations.¹⁵¹

Recommendation: Establish a robust system of monitoring and evaluation, including the sharing of lessons learned. The sharing and communication of lessons learned will address and meet the need for more evidence-based practice on sport for PVE.

Additional Resources

Radicalisation Awareness Network (2021). [“The role of sports in violent right-wing extremist radicalisation and PVE”](#).

UNODC (2018). [“Desk Review on Sport as a Tool for the Prevention of Violent Extremism”](#).

UNOCT (2021). [“Compendium of existing policies, projects and initiatives aimed at making use of sport and its values as a tool to prevent violent extremism”](#).

151 Holmer, G., Bauman, P., and Aryaeinejad, K. (2018), “Measuring Up: Evaluating the Impact of PVE Programs”, United States Institute of Peace.

VII. KEY RECOMMENDATIONS



The Global Sports Programme welcoming participants during the opening session of the National Focal Points Regional Forum for Asia and the Pacific (Thailand, May 2022) Photo: UNOCT.

Following the structure of the *Guide*, this section consolidates the recommendations featured throughout the document. It provides a concluding overview of key steps for policymakers to consider when planning, developing, and implementing sport-for-PVE-policies.

Sport and its values for PVE (chapter 1)

- **Understanding violent extremism**

Before starting to plan and develop sport-for-PVE policy, explore the forms of violent extremism and the drivers of violent extremism prevalent in the local and national context.

- **Preventing violent extremism**

Violent extremism and its associated concepts should be discussed and defined at the national level as a precondition to developing sport-for-PVE policy. This must comply with human-rights obligations.

- **Contribution of sport to PVE priority areas**

Understand the contribution that sport provides for supporting PVE, and when integrating sport into national strategies and policies make use of behavioral insights and sport's leverage through the entertainment industry.

Simultaneously seek to improve the evidence-base and effectiveness of sport for PVE.

- **Sport-for-PVE mechanisms**

For addressing the drivers of violent extremism, specific attention has to be paid to the mechanisms of personal and social development, social inclusion, social cohesion and the improvement of well-being.

- **International legal and policy references**

Leverage existing initiatives from cross-cutting agendas to develop a more cohesive and robust multi-stakeholder approach to sport-for PVE.

Developing sport-for-PVE policies (chapter 2)

Key principles

Adopt a whole-of-society approach to establish priorities, get buy-in, expand ownership, and build trust between stakeholders.

Adopt a whole-of-government approach guaranteeing cooperation, coordination and coherence between different levels of government (national, regional and local), and between government ministries and agencies.

Embed a rights-based approach in sport-for-PVE policy that is informed by consultation and input from broader and non-governmental stakeholders, including women's and women's rights organizations.

Develop sport-based PVE policy that is responsive and flexible to the localized drivers and threats of violent extremism and is harmonized with other PVE policy strategies.

Base and adapt the development of sport-for-PVE programmes according to gender analysis of the local context and relations.

Assess all policies with a "do no harm" and human rights lens to ensure they neither exacerbate conditions for violent extremism nor put individuals (recipients, partners, or staff) at risk. Youth and women-led civil society organizations, as well as practitioners can provide a crucial advice in the design of safeguarding policies.

Sport-for-PVE policy in national action plans

Develop robust working relationships across government and with sport and civil-society organizations to identify and coordinate best approaches for incorporating sport into nation action plans.

Develop flexible policies that are responsive to the needs of local communities and the changing dynamics of violent extremist threats (e.g., embed an inclusive monitoring and evaluation component that informs on what works and what doesn't).

Clearly delineate the roles and responsibilities of all relevant actors, allowing each of them to take ownership for the implementation of relevant activities.

Develop effective strategic communication to promote sport as a critical tool for building resilience and peace across society.

Minimizing risk

To minimize risk associated with sport for PVE, ensure initiatives based on clearly identified objectives and that are delivered with transparency, accountability, and sustainability.

Stakeholders in sport-for-PVE policy development (chapter 3)

Government

Create dedicated sport-for-PVE funding streams that support national PVE objectives and broader societal values (e.g., human rights, social inclusion, gender equality, etc.).

Establish more cohesive frameworks and mechanisms to support integrated dialogue and more coordinated approaches of sport-for-PVE initiatives.

Introduce legislative and regulatory frameworks that recognize sport as a powerful tool for PVE, simplify the ability of government and non-government actors to work together, and protect fundamental rights and freedoms.

Sport organizations

Engage sport organizations to identify sources of sport-related violence and ways to mitigate that violence through team- and fan-based policies and practices.

Encourage sport organizations to adopt policies and strategies to address key social issues such as anti-discrimination, diversity and gender equality and increase access to sport in vulnerable communities.

Encourage sport organizations to engage, inform and train professional athletes and coaches to communicate positive messages that support PVE values and objectives and develop life skills that build confidence and resilience in young people.

Work with sport organizations to engage and leverage private sector sponsors for sport-for-PVE activities.

Civil society organizations

Engage civil society actors to integrate local knowledge and experience into sport-for-PVE policy, reinforce resilience-building activities, and establish trust with local communities and populations.

Engage civil-society actors in all aspects of policy development, implementation, and monitoring to ensure it aligns to the needs and realities of individuals and communities at risk.

Establish frameworks that support multi-agency coordination and collaboration, delineate stakeholder roles and responsibilities, and share good practices and evidence-based work.

Provide more core funding to develop and sustain the work of civil society organizations that contribute to PVE objectives; where needed, establish flexible approaches (i.e., that do not require lengthy proposals or approval processes) for rapid response.

Establish frameworks that provide localized, adaptable programme design that can be adapted as situations require.

Public-private partnerships

Develop policies that support public-private collaborations to enhance expertise, resources and ownership of sport-for-PVE objectives.

Youth and women

Shape sport-for-PVE policy around establishing gender equality to empower and strengthen the capacity of women and girls in PVE.

Engage youth and women in sport-for-PVE policymaking, both as recipients of sport-based activities and as key influencers for social change and peace.

Maximizing the impact of major sporting events (chapter 4)

Opportunities and risks

Plan MSE's around realistic opportunities for short, medium, and long-term outcomes and legacies that support PVE objectives.

MSEs and policymaking

Apply a multisector, rights-based PVE lens to all stages of MSE planning, delivery and evaluation.

International cooperation and instruments on sport for PVE (chapter 5)

MSEs

Understand MSEs as a powerful tool to unite people and use the enormous reach of MSEs for promoting peace, tolerance and mutual respect. In this respect, consider co-hosting MSEs with other cities and States for strengthening relationships beyond historic geopolitical contexts.

International development and peacebuilding

With international development addressing many of the underlying issues that contribute to violent extremism, consider integrating sport for development initiatives into national policies, emphasizing close cooperation between international agencies, governments, sport and civil society organizations.

Sport as a diplomatic tool

Historically proven, sport can be an effective tool for supporting peace and unity, and reducing tensions between countries and regions.

Planning, monitoring and evaluation (chapter 6)

Planning and design

When developing sport-for-PVE policies, make use of the policy cycle consisting of the following five steps: problem definition, policy development, policy implementation, policy enforcement and policy evaluation.

Sport-for-PVE programmes must be labelled carefully to avoid causing any harm to any of the participants or the staff. It is therefore recommended to not directly use the terms "radicalization" or "violent extremism" and, instead focus the effort of the programme in broader objectives such as peacebuilding or social inclusion.

Ensure that staff members and policymakers clearly discuss and define PVE objectives in a human-rights compliant manner, considering the specific challenges of radicalization, raising awareness, and promoting staff training on the detection of radicalization.

Monitoring and evaluation

Have monitoring and evaluation as integral part of any PVE policy development, planning and implementation.

Use the monitoring process to support transparency, accountability, and trust; establish a process for learning and feedback; focus on progress and impact rather than on a series of project-level results; keep data collection simple and aligned with existing methods and capacities; allocate adequate resources for monitoring and evaluation; and consider complementarity, interactions and overlaps with other national strategies and plans.

Need for evidence-based practice

Establish a robust system of monitoring and evaluation, including the sharing of lessons learned. The sharing and communication of lessons learned will address and meet the need for more evidence-based practice on sport for PVE.

ANNEX I: EXAMPLES OF SPORT-FOR-PVE PROGRAMMES AND PRACTICES

The following represent a sample of sport-based PVE activities. A more comprehensive list is available in the *Compendium of existing policies, projects and initiatives aimed at making use of sport and its values as a tool to prevent violent extremism* (UNOCT, 2021).

Country/region	Organization	PVE mechanism	Sector	Target audience	Program title/description
Africa	Basketball Africa League	Personal/social development	Sport – Basketball/sustainable development	Youth	Basketball Africa League has focused on the development of the sport across Africa. Participation in sport allows for increased productivity and most importantly gives people hope. Basketball Without Borders role models have helped improve access to education and microeconomic activities and invest in young talents to give them more impact as advocates within their communities. Basketball Africa League will contribute to the building of infrastructure and create an entire ecosystem to inspire youth to keep away from terrorism and crime.
Australia	Australian Football League	Social inclusion/cohesion	Community	Youth	The More than a Game programme is a prevalent example of a community-based resilience model that used team-based sports to address issues of identity, belonging, and cultural isolation amongst young Muslim men. The programme, which incorporated a range of activities, including a "Peace Dialogue" and a multi-faith "Football for Harmony" clinic, culminated in the Unity Cup. This has been conducted annually since 2008, and is a joint initiative between Australian Federal Police, the AFL and participating AFL clubs, to promote greater social cohesion and harmony by using team sports to break down cultural, racial and religious stereotypes and barriers (Johns and others, 2014). The qualitative evidence from this programme suggested that the intensity of team sports, and its shared goals, facilitated cross-cultural engagement, breaking down the barriers of culture, ethnicity and religion in the process (Richardson and others, 2017). Analysis also indicated that sport-based programmes like "More than a Game" can make a significant contribution to young people's feelings of confidence and self-esteem in relation to negotiating cultural difference and cultural stereotypes, particularly in terms of recognizing and developing skills related to physical ability, intercultural communication, teamwork, and leadership (Johns and others, 2014).

Country/ region	Organization	PVE mechanism	Sector	Target audience	Program title/description
Australia	Australian Football League	Social inclusion/cohesion	Policing	Youth	The More than a Game initiative, which used team-based sport to deliver a range of activities to develop personal well-being and pro-social skills and facilitate a greater sense of social inclusion and community belonging for Muslim youth, included several police-led workshops around conflict resolution, the role of police in the community, cyber-bullying and counter-terrorism, as well as a three-day youth leadership camp in a bush setting (Johns and others, 2014).
Austria and Germany	Not in God's Name	Personal/social development		Youth	is a non-profit association that is dedicated to the prevention of radicalization and extremism, as well as the promotion of tolerance, equal treatment and understanding between religions and cultures. Together with famous and well-recognized athletes (role models), Not in God's Name works against conflicts, develops a better understanding within the society and helps young people to develop life goals. The programme offers free activities like "Exercise with Role Models", where martial arts stars train with young people and between exercises, they talk about respect, violence in everyday life and extremism. (Manhartsberger, 2018)
Belgium	Royal Belgian Football Association	Social inclusion	Sport – football	Youth/athletes/coaches/fans	<p>Come Together</p> <p>The Royal Belgian Football Association supports a number of social projects that focus on four main themes – inclusion, health and well-being, ethics, and the environment – that positively impact the UN's global Sustainable Development Goals. Under its inclusion theme, the Association promotes "football for everyone" in ways that appreciate age, gender, religion, sexual orientation, culture, origin, income and opportunities. Its Come Together action plan works on the premise that we can only tackle racism and discrimination together. It encompasses a number of initiatives, including:</p> <p><i>Belgian Red Courts</i></p> <p>This four-year community-based initiative was launched in 2020 and will renovate 40 football courts, train coaches, and organize the first Belgian Red Courts Cup, a national football tournament to unite people.</p> <p><i>Nobody Offside</i></p> <p>This G-football club welcomes people with physical, mental, and/or intellectual disabilities. G-football takes players' abilities into account when organizing appropriate training sessions, at a competitive or recreational level, and is promoted through G-foot festivals where schools and institutions for children and adults with disabilities are welcome.</p>

Country/ region	Organization	PVE mechanism	Sector	Target audience	Program title/description
Belgium (continued)	Royal Belgian Football Association (continued)	Social inclusion (continued)	Sport – football (continued)	Youth/athletes/coaches/fans (continued)	<p><i>Football for All</i></p> <p>This initiative features annual campaigns with different anti-discrimination themes. The 2020 campaign called on all Belgian football teams to not only embrace diversity but also to report any form of discrimination.</p> <p><i>Younited Belgium</i></p> <p>RBFA partners with Younited Belgium to fight against vulnerability in different areas such as housing, mental health, well-being, finances, and addiction using football.</p>
Brazil	Women Win	Personal/social development (gender equality)	Community	Young women	<p>One Win Leads to Another</p> <p>GRLS partnered with UN-Women, the International Olympic Committee, and Empodera to create One Win Leads to Another, a legacy programme stemming from the 2016 Rio Summer Olympics, held in Brazil. One Win leverages sport as a tool to help reduce gender inequalities and to build and maintain self-confidence among adolescent girls. Twice a week, participants attend both a sports training and a gender workshop in one of the 16 participating Olympic Villas in Rio de Janeiro.</p>
Cabo Verde		Social inclusion	Community	Citizens	<p>National Programme of Physical Activity and Health, MexiMexê, of Cabo Verde was developed to consolidate sports culture there. It is aimed at all people of all ages and in all locations in the country, especially in rural areas. The programme aims to encourage the practice of physical activity in schools, workplaces, at home, and in the community, regardless of background or social class. It aims training a healthy lifestyle and improving the quality of life of the population of Cabo Verde throughout life. The programme also seeks to reduce physical inactivity in children, adolescents, young adults, and the elderly by 10 per cent by 2025.</p>
Cameroon	Local Youth Corner	Improving well-being	Rehabilitation in prisons	Prisoners	<p>Local Youth Corner Cameroon is a youth-led organization with a focus on empowering youth in prisons in the domain of peacebuilding, preventing and countering violent extremism. In 2015, the organization launched Creative Skills for Peace, a prison-based project that aimed at facilitating the rehabilitation of violent offenders and preventing radicalization through sports, education and recreational activities. This project was an outcome of a continuous rise in the number of young people in conflict with the law, radicalized and recruited by violent extremist groups. As part of this project, Local Youth Corner Cameroon launched the sport for peace tournaments that aimed to build team spirit and promote social cohesion and friendship among the inmates.</p>

Country/ region	Organization	PVE mechanism	Sector	Target audience	Program title/description
Europe	European Union, United Nations and others	Social inclusion	Volunteerism	Youth	<p>Empowering Youth Volunteers through Sport</p> <p>Empowering Youth Volunteers through Sport is a transnational and multi-sectoral cooperation initiative co-funded by the European Union within the Erasmus+ programme, involving partners from the Olympic Movement, the United Nations, academia and civil society, working together to develop and implement innovative educational methods to train youth volunteers on how to utilize sport to promote intercultural dialogue, peace and socioeconomic development. The Empowering Youth Volunteers through Sport project addresses the topic “Promote voluntary activity in sport”, as the main purpose of this project is to provide young “multipliers” (youth leaders and civil society activists) and young sports volunteers with concrete training tools to be used in youth empowering activities based on social inclusion through sport.</p>
France	Fédération Française Sports pour Tous	Social inclusion	Community	Citizens	<p>Fédération Française Sports pour Tous</p> <p>Based on values of accessibility, friendliness, diversity, prevention and expertise, the French Sports for All Federation aims to provide everyone with a range of adapted and varied physical activities. Though not associated with a PVE agenda, the Federation includes more than 3,000 Sports for All clubs that offer all individuals the opportunity for social inclusion through 150 different sport-based activities, including team sports.</p>

Country/ region	Organization	PVE mechanism	Sector	Target audience	Program title/description
Global	Save the Dream	Social inclusion		Refugees, youth and children	<p>Save the Dream is a global non-profit movement of organizations, people and athletes who believe in the power of sport to build more fair and inclusive societies. They are committed to promote and protect its core values for the good of youth and future generations. Save the Dream works with humanitarian organizations to develop local sport for development and peace programmes, for the benefit of young internally displaced persons, refugees and other most vulnerable or underprivileged groups.</p> <p>The Darfur Dreams project, implemented by Save the Dream and partners Qatar Fund for Development and Qatar Charity, aims to promote peace, prevent violent extremism, integrate society, peacebuilding and reconciliation, and development through sport. It targets internally in Darfur, Sudan within the framework of the Doha Document for Peace in Darfur. Field activities are primarily implemented in Al Fashir City, North Darfur, and target youth who are more vulnerable to radicalization and recruitment to violent extremism. Associated activities and networks are comprised of multiple sport and cultural activities, advocacy campaigns, and training workshops on "Sport for Peace and Development". The initiative has provided intensive training to 50 youth leaders from different communities of internally displaced persons to develop their "skills to act as agents of change" and to strengthen their abilities in the areas of capacity building, community engagement and social inclusion.</p> <p>Radical (Ex)Change is a two-year project funded by the European Commission's Directorate-General for Education and Culture. It was jointly designed with the International Olympic Truce Centre, involving other international partners to make full use of the power of sport and physical activity as a tool to empower youth with the specific goal of PVE and radicalization. This initiative will develop a collaborative network between organizations working in the area of sport for development and peace and those engaged in the prevention of marginalization and radicalization.</p>

Country/ region	Organization	PVE mechanism	Sector	Target audience	Program title/description
Global	Peace and Sport with: Terres-en-Méliees, COP-Colombia, Fundación ADA, TIBU-Maroc, National Olympic Committee of Burundi, All Black Hong-Kong, Naandi Foundation, APJS, AKWOS and RFI Clubs	Personal/social development	Peace-building	Children (7–12 years)	<p>The Peacemaker's project focuses on peace-building through a bottom-up approach to address various social issues. Its implementation relies on the mobile application developed by Peace and Sport in partnership with MyCoach and on the expertise of 10 selected organizations throughout the world.</p> <p>With two sports (football and rugby) and three languages (English, Spanish, and French), peace educators are trained to deliver peace through sport sessions in Peace and Sport's three-cycle programme: Work on yourself, accept each other, live together. The mobile application also provides them annual scalable content and planning, monitoring, and evaluation tools. Two hundred peace educators supervising nearly 2,000 children are currently involved in this initiative for a two-year duration. Supported by the Danone Nations Cup, the Peacemakers Project teaches children a set of soft skills to control feelings, channel violence, and use dialogue rather than aggressive attitudes and behaviours.</p>
Global	World Taekwondo	Social inclusion	Sport – taekwondo	Sport clubs, athletes, fans	<p>World Taekwondo's Anti-Discrimination Policy came into effect in 2019 and endorses diversity, supports equal rights, and does not advocate, support or practice discrimination based on ethnicity, race, culture, political opinion, marital status, sexual orientation, religion, gender, sexual orientation, language, country, colour, nationality, or other invalid grounds, whether covered by applicable legislation or not, except where affirmative action may be required to redress individual or social handicaps of people from disadvantaged groups. It seeks to protect against both individual discrimination (committed by individuals) and from structural discrimination (arising from policies or procedures that disadvantage certain groups).</p>

Country/ region	Organization	PVE mechanism	Sector	Target audience	Program title/description
Global	Fédération Internationale de Football Association (FIFA)	Social inclusion	Sport – football	Sport clubs, athletes, fans	<p>FIFA recognizes its responsibility to lead the way in abolishing all forms of racism and discrimination in the game and to make the most of the influence football has beyond the pitch. Its Diversity and anti-discrimination at FIFA (2018) policy outlines the use of regulations, controls and sanctions, communications, education and networking and cooperation as key elements to embrace diversity and anti-discrimination in the world of football.</p> <p>During the 2018 FIFA World Cup in Russia, the policy was implemented in a number of ways:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A three-step procedure (stop, suspend and abandon) for referees in case of discriminatory behaviour • Specially trained match observers who scrutinized spectators, taking into account their respective languages, regional characteristics, and fan culture • All security staff and stewards were tasked to support dialogue with conspicuous fans and to intervene when necessary • Informing fans that they were entering a discrimination-free zone and the applicable rules • Special training and briefings for FIFA and local organizing committee staff, referees, volunteers, stewards, and food and beverage staff • Special briefing with participating member organizations to ensure their fans were encouraged to respect diversity and were aware of all measures. FIFA provided advice and additional guidelines such as FIFA's Good practice guide on diversity and anti-discrimination. (Radicalisation Awareness Network, 2019)
Global	International Cricket Council (ICC)	Social inclusion	Sport – cricket	Sport clubs, athletes, fans	<p>In its Anti-Discrimination Policy for International Cricket, the International Cricket Council confirms its commitment and its members to promote and encourage participation at all levels regardless of race, colour, religion, descent, culture, ethnic origin, nationality, sex, gender, sexual orientation, disability, marital status and/or maternity status and to ensure that there is no discrimination in the sport. It includes requirements for conduct, education and training, and communications with spectators and others.</p>

Country/ region	Organization	PVE mechanism	Sector	Target audience	Program title/description
Global	UEFA	Social inclusion	Sport – football	Sport clubs, athletes, fans	Launched at the beginning of the 2017/2018 season, the #EqualGame multi-platform campaign demonstrates and champions the incredible diversity of football in Europe through the stories of football lovers. The initiative provides a new dimension to UEFA's promotion of diversity, inclusion and accessibility by demonstrating the benefits that football brings to the community, how the game will be enriched by greater diversity and explaining the European football family's role in making the sport open and accessible to all.
Global	National Basketball Association (NBA)/International Basketball Federation (FIBA)	Personal/social development	Sport – basketball	Youth	Basketball Without Borders, the global basketball development and community outreach programme of NBA and FIBA has been conducted annually since 2001. The NBA and FIBA have staged 52 Basketball Without Borders camps in 32 cities in 27 countries on six continents. Basketball Without Borders has reached more than 3,000 participants from 133 countries and territories. More than 250 current and former NBA and WNBA (Women's National Basketball Association) players have joined more than 200 NBA team personnel from all 30 NBA teams, with 47 campers drafted into the NBA. Additionally, four campers signed as free agents. In 2017, Basketball Without Borders included first-time camps in New Orleans, United States, the Bahamas and Israel, as well as a return to South Africa for the fifteenth edition of Basketball Without Borders Africa.
Global	Women Win	Personal/social development (gender equality)	Community	Girls	Women Win is a non-profit organization registered in the Netherlands, the United States and the United Kingdom, to raise funds and awareness to promote worldwide gender equity. Its GRLS initiative uses sport and play to advance girls' rights globally in the areas of gender-based violence, access to sexual and reproductive health and rights, and economic empowerment.

Country/ region	Organization	PVE mechanism	Sector	Target audience	Program title/description
Global	Generation Amazing, Supreme Committee for Delivery and Legacy	Social inclusion		Youth	<p>The Generation Amazing Foundation is the flagship human and social legacy initiative launched in 2010 during Qatar's successful bid for the 2022 FIFA World Cup. It uses the power of sport, specifically football, to positively impact lives, create sustainable social development in vulnerable communities, inspire and empower the next generation of youth, and to help youth improve their lives and their communities. GA's strategic direction is driven by the Qatar National Vision 2030 and the Sustainable Development Goals.</p> <p>Through its unique football-for-development methodology, the Generation Amazing Foundation helps girls and boys develop skills to grow and create positive changes within their communities which, amongst other objectives, helps to prevent violent extremism.</p> <p>To date, the programme has been implemented in 10 countries, including Haiti, India, Jordan, Nepal, Pakistan, Philippines, Rwanda and Uganda – across three continents and has already reached 725,000 beneficiaries. Key partnership engagement enables the Foundation to scale the programme's impact credibly and qualitatively to more countries in the coming years.</p>
Global		Personal/social development		Youth	<p>Extremely Together is a global, youth-led initiative that aims to empower young people to prevent violent extremism. Launched in 2016 by the Kofi Annan Foundation, the initiative's global network of young leaders and country chapters responds to the increasing threat of recruitment and the narratives of violent extremist groups. By using a peer-to-peer approach, the youth-led initiative acts upon the gap in international and national efforts aimed at PVE, where young people are understood as a threat to security rather than enablers of peace. Its youth-led projects and networks utilize various approaches such as theatres, arts, sports, dialogue, communication campaigns and training to reject narratives of violent extremism and promote togetherness within communities. Extremely Together aims to provide a sense of identity and purpose to young people worldwide, helping them work for positive change and peace in their communities. By equipping young people with tools and knowledge as well as reinforcing alternative narratives and positive values of "togetherness", Extremely Together seeks to enable youth to engage and play a leading role in peace and PVE at local, regional, and international fora.</p>

Country/ region	Organization	PVE mechanism	Sector	Target audience	Program title/description
Global	UNODC	Personal/social development		Coaches	As part of its efforts to support the implementation of the Doha Declaration, this UNODC global initiative promotes sports and related activities to prevent crime and to effectively build resilience of at-risk youth. The initiative employs Line Up Live Up , an evidence-informed and sports-based life-skills training curriculum, to teach life-skills training, such as resisting social pressures to engage in delinquency, coping with anxiety and communicating effectively with peers, for crime and drug use prevention in sport settings. The curriculum includes a 10-session manual and additional materials available in several languages to assist coaches, trainers, and others working with young people to deliver life skills training to youth aged 13–18 years. Working in close partnership with multiple actors at the national and local levels, UNODC implements Line Up Live Up in a variety of settings, including schools, community centres, sport clubs and juvenile facilities. The programme has been implemented in 12 countries across the world, ranging from Africa, Central Asia and the Middle East to Latin America and the Caribbean.

Country/ region	Organization	PVE mechanism	Sector	Target audience	Program title/description
Global	Cross cultures	Social cohesion	Peacebuilding	Youth and adults	<p>Cross Cultures (NGO based in Denmark):</p> <p>Key areas of focus: Youth, inter-ethnic dialogue, integration, sport for peace, gender equality</p> <p>Mission: Peace and stability is not solely an issue between nation States and Governments alone. Cross Cultures believes that civil society plays a key role in the dialogue and interaction. Their Open Fun Football Schools programme built the framework to act as a catalyst to bring children, youths and adults to interact together across ethnic and social divides in order to create new stories, new ideas and common actions. This is done through the promotion of local participation, volunteering and heterogeneous social networks to become an inspiration to find a new, peaceful, sustainable way of solving common problems.</p> <p>Relations with the United Nations: It contributes and has been contributing to the United Nations 2030 Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals specifically goals 3 (Good health and well-being), 4 (Quality education), 5 (Gender equality), 10 (Reduced inequalities) and 17 (Partnerships for the goals). In addition, the organization and its original programme has existed since 1998 and stretches across all regions of the world. This makes it a best practice and a key partner because the organization provides a structure and a support that a Government does not necessarily have the legitimacy or the ability to pursue.</p> <p>Why it contributes to the prevention of violent extremism: given the sensitive nature of the areas where they have been operating and the role of peace-building, which can also be defined as prevention of violent extremism by allowing channels of inter-cultural dialogue, it provides support and the opportunity for Governments to act without being directly involved in reducing the risks of inter-ethnic and other types of violence which lead to violent extremism. In addition, the ability to remain legitimate in all of these countries both with the youth, civil society and government law-enforcement agencies gives us a best practice which aligns with the Sustainable Development Goals. In other words, working with civil society is key to dealing with violent extremism, and sport is the perfect first step to peace building. This can be used in pre- and post-conflict zones.</p>

Country/ region	Organization	PVE mechanism	Sector	Target audience	Program title/description
India		Personal/social development	Sport	Coaches	<p>Parivartan Programme</p> <p>The Parivartan training-for-trainers programme (NESTA level 3) provides sport coaches with the skills to discuss gender-based violence with male athletes. The workshop encourages coaches to practice delivering messages to athletes, so that immediate feedback can be given to facilitators. Based on surveys of athletes who took part in the training and comparison groups, the workshop led to statistically significant increases in gender-equitable attitudes and decreased propensity to exhibit negative intentional behaviour, while comparison groups showed a deterioration in behaviour over time (UNESCO, 2018).</p>
Iran, Jordan	Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ)	Normalizing life	Education/refugees	Refugees, youth, coaches, teachers	<p>Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ). Using a "sport for development" approach, GIZ demonstrates the value of sport for youth in some of the world's most marginalized communities. In cooperation with the Jordan Ministry of Education and Iraq's Ministry of Planning of the Kurdish Regional Government, this exchange, education and conflict management through sport for development project engages internally displaced persons, refugees and local people aged between 8 and 24 from Iraqi and Jordanian refugee camps and host communities. They engage in sporting activities in safe environments. The project has provided gender-sensitive sport activities at over 150 schools and 100 community centres in Jordan and at 6 refugee camps and 10 youth centres in northern Iraq. It is training 500 teachers and coaches in sports activities and coaching methods in order to ensure a sustainable approach to promote psychosocial support, violence prevention and conflict transformation. Half of the participants are female. (GIZ(a), n.d.)</p>
Jordan		Social inclusion	Sport	Coaches	<p>Disability Inclusion Training</p> <p>Training coaches and adapting sports and games are key to successfully including young people with disabilities. For example, Cedra, a female coach in Azraq Camp, Jordan, at a "girls only" Makani Centre employed her disability inclusion training to engage a 13-year-old girl with a visible disfigurement. "At first, she would only sit inside and never participate. I engaged her myself, sitting and talking with her every day, and this encouraged the other children to participate with her – she loved drawing and dancing. She was feeling isolated, and these activities helped her feel included, having people around her. The other children came to know she is one of them. This helped her overcome her challenge of isolation." (United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees and others, 2018)</p>

Country/ region	Organization	PVE mechanism	Sector	Target audience	Program title/description
Jordan, Rwanda, Turkey	Taekwondo Humanitarian Foundation	Improving well-being	Sustainable development	Refugees, youth	<p>Taekwondo Humanitarian Foundation (NGO based in Switzerland)</p> <p>Key areas of focus: Youth, intercultural dialogue, integration, sport for development, gender equality</p> <p>Mission: Empowering refugees and displaced persons by training them in Taekwondo by providing them support with equipment, infrastructure and related educational programmes by teaching the values of Olympism and global citizenship. Improving their quality of life and future prospects as global citizens. It is inextricably tied with the World Taekwondo (Federation).</p> <p>Since its inception, it contributes to the United Nations 2030 Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals, specifically Goals 3 (Good health and well-being), 5 (Gender equality), 10 (Reduced inequalities) and 17 (Partnerships for the Goals).</p> <p>Why it contributes to the prevention of violent extremism: first by providing a better quality of life to the refugees and giving them an activity, which requires discipline and most importantly hope, it allows them to have a somewhat normal life. In addition, the possibility of accessing the highest level of competition also contributes to their development as global citizens. All of these factors allow these young people to grow up and develop themselves without resorting to hatred and violence (in an uncontrolled manner) and perpetuating the cycle of violence from within their local environments.</p>
Nigeria		Social cohesion	Education/sport	Students	<p>National Youth Games and National Principals and Headmasters Cup</p> <p>Nigeria's Ministry of Youth and Sports Development supports several initiatives, including the National Youth Games and the National Principals and Headmasters Cup competitions. These competitions involve schools throughout the country and create ideal conditions for social participation and positive engagement. They build bridges between communities in conflicts, develop sportsmanship and respectful competition. They also serve as a platform to discover and select athletes that will represent the country in international sports competitions. (Daily Sports, 2020) (Jide, 2020)</p>

Country/ region	Organization	PVE mechanism	Sector	Target audience	Program title/description
Nigeria	National Security Advisor, Nigerian Prisons Service	Personal/social development	Corrections	Prisoners	In Nigeria, the National Security Adviser and the Nigerian Prisons Service implemented an 18-month programme that applied a wide range of approaches, including sports and games, to address extremism issues among prisoners. The programme received a positive response from both prisoners and staff. Sports activities were credited with facilitating new channels of communication and allowed staff to manage and engage with extremist prisoners in a different, more positive way. Notably, organized sport and team games provided the foundation for these new relationships and subsequent group discussions highlighted the inconsistencies in extremist beliefs. Furthermore, the prisoners developed essential physical and social skills, which improved their ability to reintegrate into mainstream society and pursue vocations (Richardson and others, 2017).
Pakistan	Pakistan Super League	Social cohesion			<p>Pakistan Super League</p> <p>Some of the major cities of the country were darkened by violence and terrorism after 9/11. But the country has now diminished terrorism by conducting all matches of Pakistan Super League in jam-packed stadium. The League was not just an idea to bring international cricket back to Pakistan but also a way forward to defeat terrorism and extremism. The league includes players from all communities and religions.</p>

Country/ region	Organization	PVE mechanism	Sector	Target audience	Program title/description
Pakistan	Farmers Development Organization	Personal/social development	Peacebuilding	Youth	<p>The Parvaz e Aman Program (PeA) (Flight of Peace) programme was organized by the Farmers Development Organization, a community development organization in Southern Punjab. Carried out in Multan city, an area known for a high level of intolerance and internal conflicts and a reportedly high radicalization rate, the project was designed to build young people's capacity for conflict resolution and peacebuilding through a variety of activities organized in 19 villages. In addition to seminars, peace walks and arts activities, the project employed cricket, football, kabaddi and volleyball to engage 1,000 young people across the region in positive activities to counter violent extremism and promote peace values. Sport was reported to be particularly helpful in engaging youth in uneducated and neglected communities. The Youth Adolescent Development programme was also based in Multan city (but in different villages) and used cricket to promote social cohesion and confidence building of youth. Evaluation of these programmes indicated that they were effective in challenging societal stereotypes that existed between young people, enhancing social cohesion, promoting peace values, and helping to reduce violent extremism in the region. Programme participants reported that they built confidence, discipline, and self-control, which contributed to their ability to resolve conflicts; this was not limited to their participation in sports but extended to their participation in broader society. These programmes were also found give purpose and direction to young people, helping to integrate marginalized and disadvantaged people back into society by removing differences and gaps and promoting the values of peace and inclusion. Overall, sports were found to be a powerful tool for mobilization that could be used as a broad-based sensitization tool (Asif, 2018).</p>
Pakistan		Social cohesion			<p>Khyber Peace Games</p> <p>The Khyber Peace Games use different sports, including cricket, hockey, football, volleyball and kabaddi, to bring together young people in the Federally Administered Tribal Area (FATA) region of Pakistan. The event has been used to send a message that the tribal belt is no longer a safe haven for terrorists aiming to spread insurgency in Pakistan, to discourage antisocial elements, and to hunt for talented players. The fact that sports activities have been restored in the merged areas has been described as evidence that peace has been restored in the tribal districts (Yousafzai, 2017).</p>

Country/ region	Organization	PVE mechanism	Sector	Target audience	Program title/description
Pakistan	Welfare Association for New Generation Pakistan	Social inclusion	Peacebuilding, sport for development	Youth, students	<p>The Welfare Association for New Generation Pakistan is a youth-led non-profit organization that works to build peace, engage youth, empower women, and educate society. It works to harness the potential of youth, protect rights, and ensure every child has access to basic education. Focusing on mass sport that is accessible to all, the Association employs a variety of sport for development programmes to engage those most in need, including refugees, child soldiers, victims of conflict and natural catastrophes, the impoverished, persons with disabilities, victims of racism, stigmatization and discrimination, and persons living with HIV/AIDS, malaria, and other diseases. The Association has partnered with 16 schools where trained coaches conduct weekly sessions with students. These sessions focus on health and hygiene, communication and team-building, inclusiveness, conflict resolution, and the environment.</p>
Palestine	Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ)	Personal/social development	Labour	Youth	<p>Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ)</p> <p>Using a "Sport for Development" approach, GIZ demonstrates the value of sport for youth in some of the world's most marginalized communities. In collaboration with the Palestinian Ministry of Labour, the Sport for Development programme is using sport to promote vocational training and employment. By building personal and social skills and fostering positive personality development, the programme seeks to improve the employability of young people, which indirectly contributes to economic development in the region. Working with civil society organizations and the private sector, the project organizes camps oriented toward sports and vocational training, helping young people with their career choices, and conducting workshops to train coaches and sports science graduates in the educational methodologies of Sport for Development. The project places a particular focus on youth from marginalized groups, with a view to creating vocational training opportunities for them and providing information about their prospects on the labour market and to teaching social skills and approaches to non-violent conflict resolution. (GIZ(b), n.d.)</p>
Poland	Ministry of the Interior and Administration, Hope for Mundial (Nadzieja na Mundial) Association	Personal/social development	Social services	Children in care homes	<p>World Cup of Children from Care Homes</p> <p>The Hope for Mundial (Nadzieja na Mundial) Association, in cooperation with Poland's Ministry of the Interior and Administration, hosts the World Cup of Children from Care Homes. Since 2012, this annual event has brought children from many countries together, transcending language, colour, and culture through football. In addition to providing children with the opportunity to represent their country in an international setting, the programmes build self-esteem, dignity, and relationships with peers from around the world through competition and goodwill.</p>

Country/ region	Organization	PVE mechanism	Sector	Target audience	Program title/description
Poland		Personal/social development	Policing	Youth	In Poland, the Provincial Police Headquarters in Rzeszów delivered the Hooligan initiative from 2007 to 2010 to offset the impact of football hooligans in incidents of hate speech, racism, and violence. This programme incorporated sports activities; meetings with youth, parents, representatives of sport clubs and fan clubs and feature athletes and sport activists; and the distribution of information and advice. It focused on increasing young people's awareness about criminal offences, including those involving "hate speech" and extremist acts committed in connection with mass gatherings, especially football matches, and promoting positive attitudes during sporting events. A similar programme for teenagers at the Warsaw Metropolitan Police focused on preparing young people for cultural participation in sports events and promoting proper behaviour of fans in connection with organized mass sports events.
Portugal	Amnesty International	Social cohesion	Sport – football	Sport clubs, athletes, fans	Amnesty International's Jogo Pelos Direitos Humanos (I Play for Human Rights) In response to a growing climate of violence, disrespect, racism, and intimidation, Amnesty International, in cooperation with the Portuguese Football Federation, league and clubs, launched this national campaign to raise awareness and defend human rights in sport and specifically in football. It emphasizes that everyone – from fans to regulatory agencies – have a role to play in ensuring human rights are respected and upheld.
Rwanda	Taekwondo Humanitarian Foundation, Rwanda Taekwondo Federation	Improving well-being	Refugees	Refugees	Kiziba refugee camp is one of the biggest refugee camps in Rwanda and hosts more than 17,000 refugees, primarily from the eastern part of the Democratic Republic of Congo. Participants in the programme have credited it with improving their outlook on life, building friendships, and teaching discipline that contributes to better grades in school.
Somalia		Personal/social development		Former child soldiers	Youth at Risk This programme, which ran from 2011 to 2015, was funded by UNDP, the Government of Japan, UNICEF and the International Labour Organization. It mixed low- and medium-risk criminal youth, based on factors including their role in Al-Shabaab, with former Al-Shabaab members in order to reduce stigmatization of former fighters. Tailored to the Somali context and customs, it used a curriculum including anger and stress management, conflict resolution, and religious teaching, as well as music and sport. While the study did not undertake a baseline assessment, a subsequent questionnaire to participants found that these feelings of aggression had fallen after the programme (Kelly, 2019).

Country/ region	Organization	PVE mechanism	Sector	Target audience	Program title/description
Tajikistan	National Taekwondo and Kickboxing Federation	Personal/social development (gender equality)	Sport – taekwondo/ kickboxing	Athletes/fans	The National Taekwondo and Kickboxing Federation of Tajikistan partnered with the United Nations Population Fund and the United Nations country team to promote gender equality and prevent gender-based violence. The initiative included summer camps to train martial artists in gender equality, violence prevention, community organizing and public speaking. Equipped with these tools, the fighters – mostly men – spoke out against gender inequality and violence at martial arts lessons, matches and public gatherings. They also appeal to the public in videos and major media campaigns. The Foundation has spotlighted the issue of gender equality and violence prevention at a variety of high-profile events, including the IX World Juniors Kickboxing Championship, held in 2012 in Bratislava, Slovakia, and at the ITF Taekwondo World Championships, held in Dushanbe in August 2014. (United Nations Population Fund,, 2015)
United Kingdom		Personal/social development	Juvenile justice/crime prevention	Young offenders	The 2nd Chance Project of the United Kingdom uses sport, specifically football and rugby, to provide young offenders with an effective outlet to divert them away from violence and criminality. This cross-cutting program creates pathways for personal and social development, raises aspiration, and offers realistic routes into mainstream education, training and employment on release from custody. In 2012, an independent evaluation of the two-year programme at Portland Young Offenders Institution reported significant improvements across in conflict resolution, aggression, impulsivity, behaviour in the prison, relationships with staff and other prisoners, and offenders' transitions back into the community. Of 50 participants who were released over an 18-month period, there was a reconviction rate of 18 per cent, considerably lower than the prison average of 48 per cent after one year. The project demonstrated a high financial and social return on investment and provided further evidence for policymakers regarding investment in future programmes to tackle crime prevention among youth (Meek, 2012).
United Kingdom /Europe	Show Racism the Red Card	Social inclusion	Sport	Youth, adults, sport clubs, athletes, fans	Show Racism the Red Card Established in 1996, Show Racism the Red Card is the largest anti-racism educational charity in the United Kingdom. The programme uses the high-profile status of football and football players to help tackle racism in society and has also expanded into other sports. Most of the campaign's work involves the delivery of educational workshops to young people and adults in schools, workplaces and at events held in football stadiums. Across the United Kingdom, the charity provides educational sessions to more than 50,000 individuals per year.

Country/ region	Organization	PVE mechanism	Sector	Target audience	Program title/description
	University of Denver	Social cohesion	Academia		<p>Sport for Peacebuilding and Preventing Violent Extremism</p> <p>Sport, Peacebuilding, and PVE is a research project at the Siè Cheou Kang Center for International Security and Diplomacy at the Josef Korbel School (University of Denver) that is exploring the role of sport in peacebuilding and PVE through a series of targeted interviews with leading specialists and practitioners who use sport-related programming for peacebuilding and PVE.</p>
	Vrije Universiteit Brussel	Personal/social development	Academia		<p>CATCH (Community sport for at-risk youth: Innovative strategies for promoting personal development, health and social Cohesion)</p> <p>This four-year study (2016–2020) by the Sport & Society Research Group at the Vrije Universiteit Brussel investigated the active factors of neighbourhood-based sports that contribute to the social inclusion of young people (14–25 years) in socially vulnerable situations, and how these can be applied within existing neighbourhood sports practices. Study outcomes outlined three key policy recommendations:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. <i>Build cathedrals</i> with community sport as a context to work with youth in socially vulnerable conditions (Understanding processes; monitoring and evaluation) 2. <i>Scale up</i> existing community sport initiatives from “front runners” (mechanisms and facilitating conditions; partnership between practice, policy and science) 3. <i>Provide support</i> for community sport through integral collaboration of various policy areas (e.g., support programmes and financing mechanisms).

ANNEX II: CASE STUDIES

Lebanon: Sport as a component of a national action plan for PVE

Lebanon's **National Strategy for Preventing Violent Extremism** was adopted in 2018. Developed through an all-ministry national committee in accordance with international standards to prevent violent extremism, the plan set out a general framework of national objectives, policies, and plans to prevent violent extremism in the short, medium, and long term, including defined monitoring and evaluation systems. In order to address structural factors contributing to the growth of violent extremism at the community, cultural and economic levels, it considers issues such as poverty, unemployment, and the feeling of inequality and absence of justice, as well as the overlap and intertwinement of those issues and the multiple actors who play diverse roles in those contexts.

The strategy considers the threat of violent extremism at individual, family, and community levels, and draws upon the work of international organizations the strategies of other states, and relevant experiences and practices to provide a holistic perspective for PVE that reflect the cultural, developmental, demographic, social, administrative and economic realities of Lebanese society.

Lebanon's strategy is structured around nine pillars:

1. Dialogue and conflict prevention.
2. Promotion of good governance.
3. Justice, human rights, and the rule of law.
4. Urban/rural development and engaging local communities.
5. Gender equality and empowering women.
6. Education, training, and skills development.
7. Economic development and job creation.
8. Strategic communications, informatics, and social media.
9. Empowering youth.

Sport-based activities are integrated across several ministries in several pillars:

- **The promotion of good governance:** The role of the Department of Tourism Development is expanded through the dedication of units concerned with the most important types of tourism (sports, health, environmental, religious, etc).
- **Justice, human rights, and the rule of law:** The Ministry of Youth and Sports organizes sports activities in prisons and develops sporting values among them to facilitate their reintegration into society.
- **Strategic communications, informatics and social media:** The Ministry of Youth and Sports is tasked with spreading a culture of cooperation and diversity, rejection of violence, and

respect for others, and strengthening sports culture through sports centres and clubs; it also will develop strategic communication programmes to disseminate messages of social integration and renounce violent extremism, in cooperation with the Ministries of Information and Telecommunications.

- **Empowering youth:** The Ministry of Youth and Sports will:
 - emphasize and anchor values of teamwork and cooperation among youth through the organization of sports events and athletic competitions for young people;
 - promote messages of respect for national diversity and rejection of violent extremism through major sports events, especially in basketball and football; and
 - support and promote sports initiatives aimed at renouncing violence and preventing extremism, in cooperation with the private sports sector.

The Ministry of Social Affairs will also increase opportunities for youth to engage in sports and sports activities and have a sense of sportsmanship through the establishment of sports facilities in all regions.

An example of sport-based programming at work in Lebanon includes a 2020 collaboration between the Ministry of Public Health, UNESCO, and **Line Up Live Up**, which is part of the Youth Crime Prevention through Sport initiative under the Doha Declaration Global Programme. A four-day Training of Trainers programme was organized in Beirut, bringing together 15 women and men working in the sport, youth, and social sectors. Participants learned how to use sport to promote valuable life skills among youth and encourage them to make assertive and positive life choices. Promoting fair play, equality, and respect; increasing awareness about violence and drug use; and building key life skills, such as resisting negative peer pressure, coping with anxiety and critical thinking, are all key components of the curriculum shared with and practiced by the participants.

To help address the traumatic effects of the Beirut Blast of August 2020, the training also incorporated a special session on mental health in times of crises. This was also relevant to the COVID-19 pandemic, which has led to increased levels of anxiety and mental health problems. With support from UNESCO, participants held in-depth discussions on the push and pull factors leading to doping in sports, and on ways to protect young people and athletes from such risky practices, which aligns with the International Convention on Anti-Doping and national efforts in preserving fair play¹⁵².

Ireland: Prisoner rehabilitation

The Irish Football Association (IFA) Foundation is the charitable arm of the Association. Established in 2016, the Foundation's mandate is to enable the Association to foster and grow the sport through four main goals:

1. Develop amateur football, youth football, schools' football and *futsal*;
2. Advance education by providing work experience and support to educational establishments and extracurricular groups;
3. Provide funds and football facilities in areas of economic need with the object of improving circumstances;

152 UNODC (2020). *Using sport to reach young people in vulnerable settings, UNODC rolls out new life skills training in Lebanon*. Available at www.unodc.org/dohadeclaration/en/news/2020/10/using-sport-to-reach-young-people-in-vulnerable-settings--unodc-rolls-out-new-life-skills-training-in-lebanon.html

4. Improve the health and wellbeing of people in Northern Ireland through football.

The Foundation has also created programming with a focus on crime prevention, including the rehabilitation of prisoners. Since the Good Friday Agreement was signed in 1998, Northern Ireland has experienced a shift in its approach for dealing with prisoners, moving from a security-focused model to rehabilitation. In keeping with that approach, The Association's **Stay Onside** programme aims to engage, rehabilitate, and develop people with criminal convictions or at the risk of offending, offering them pathways away from criminality through football. Launched in 2017 in partnership with the Department of Justice, the Police Service of Northern Ireland, the Northern Ireland Prison Service, and Ulster University, the programme is considered highly successful in diverting young offenders (18+) from re-engaging in violent extremism-motivated activities.

The voluntary programme, which is delivered in both custodial and community settings, is offered to offenders near the end of their release from prison. Over a six-week period, participants attend a series of workshops in basic coaching skills, laws of the game, introduction to futsal, and mental health. The programme also includes a tournament and a graduation event. After this basic programme, participants are encouraged to pursue Association's community programmes, where they can complete the Level 1 Coaching Award, Referee and Respect Workshop and develop their interview and presentation skills.

This programme has been well received by participants who provide feedback through semi-structured interviews and a series of four questionnaires on mental health and resilience to extremism. In 2019, 90 per cent of participants completed the programme; 88 per cent have not returned to custody. Furthermore, 115 participants completed qualifications, 8 found employment, and 32 continued in further education or training.

In addition to the Stay Onside programme, the Irish Football Association is involved in a range of other projects directed at communities and youth at risk, particularly as the global pandemic and local disputes associated with Brexit increase the potential for violent extremism. These projects focus on providing gender inclusivity, increasing access for people with disabilities, combatting mental health problems, and countering high unemployment rates in Northern Ireland. The **Fresh Start Through Sport** was implemented in 2021 and aims to engage youth at risk from extremist paramilitary groups through sports-based training. This pilot programme is led by the Department for Communities and supported by the Department of Justice; the Foundation is the leader provider agency. The programme offers activity-based modules delivered through the Irish Football Association, Ulster Rugby, Ulster GAA and the Belfast Giants to guide and support participants in identifying and making positive life choices. In addition to focusing on improving mental health and wellbeing, the programme will provide sporting and accredited qualifications to help improve participants' employability, as well as long-term support in terms of signposting to other agencies¹⁵³. It is expected that a second edition of the programme will be offered in 2022 to provide young people between the ages of 16 and 24 with sport-related opportunities centred around anti-racism, mental health, employment, and resilience.

Mali: Strengthening social cohesion

Mali has suffered a major political, economic and social crisis since armed groups tried to seize control of the country in 2012. Ongoing violence and human rights abuses by armed Islamist groups, ethnic militias, and government security forces has had far-reaching repercussions on the development and stability of the country. The crisis has perpetuated armed attacks on civilians, killing hundreds,

153 Irish FA Foundation (2019). Irish FA Foundation Social Impact 2019 Available at www.irishfa.com/media/28968/irish-fa-foundation-social-impact-report-2019.pdf

widespread displacement, and hunger. Attacks by armed groups on humanitarian agencies undermine their ability to deliver aid, and rampant crime continues to threaten livelihoods. The conflict has had a particularly devastating effect on children – the United Nations reported that at least 185 children have been killed due to communal violence, crossfire, or improvised explosive devices, and armed groups were responsible for at least 55 attacks on schools in 2019. Children are also targeted for recruitment as soldiers by armed groups and forces.¹⁵⁴

Though still a desperate situation, there are efforts to rebuild cohesion in the country, including through engaging young people in sport. Several sport-based programmes have been delivered in recent years by various external and internal agencies, including:

- In 2014/2015, Peace and Sport, in partnership with the National Olympic and Sports Committee of Mali, delivered a project to support development using the integration and socialization of sport. The project centred around the provision of three tons of sports equipment (for rugby, volleyball, climbing, karate, taekwondo, judo, football tennis, boules, etc.) that was distributed to 2,000 young people via sports centres. Technical guidance and expertise, financial and material support was also provided to local stakeholders to support implementation and long-term management of their projects and events. In addition to providing wider access to sports activities in schools and youth centres, this project played an important role in developing and sustaining education through sport projects led by Malian sport authorities and using sport as a tool to strengthen dialogue and social cohesion among Malian youth.¹⁵⁵
- During 2016–2018, the United States Agency for International Development's (USAID) **Advanced Reconciliation and Promoting Peace** programme worked to help secure a peaceful future for Malians by advancing the peace process, promoting reconciliation, and reducing youth violence and involvement in armed extremist groups. In addition to delivering conflict resolution to traditional, religious, and elected leaders across ethnic communities in 200 villages and working with over 20 inter-ethnic women's peace committees to promote the peace process, the programme also helped to create 100 inter-ethnic sport clubs to engage at-risk youth (ages 15–24) as sport team members and youth (ages 25–29) as coaches.¹⁵⁶
- In 2021, Peace and Sport engaged in a [two-year programme](#) with the Association for the Promotion of Youth and Sports (APJS). APJS was created in 2017 by the Malian athlete Aminata Makou Traore Sy, with the ambition to build a framework for the development and fulfilment of Malian young people and future generations. This program provides peace educators with content to teach Malian youngsters structuring peace values through the [Peace and Sport by MyCoach](#) mobile application. This unique tool trains peace educators and helps them to implement and monitor a set of pedagogical sessions in Peace and Sport's three-cycle programme: work on yourself, accept each other and live together.

154 Human Rights Watch (2020, December 18). World Report 2021: Rights Trends in Mali. Available at www.hrw.org/world-report/2021/country-chapters/mali

155 Peace and Sport (n.d.). Sport, a key tool for strengthening national unity in Mali. Available at www.peace-sport.org/on-the-field/sport-a-key-tool-for-strengthening-national-unity-in-mali/

156 USAID (2018). USAID Mali Countering Violent Extremism Activity.

- In March 2021, Mali's Ministry of Youth and Sports organised a sports tournament under a theme of "**Consolidating trust and strengthening national unity among Mali's youth through sport**". The tournament, which featured football for boys and basketball for women, was designed to strengthen of the social fabric, consolidate peace, and restore hope among the youth of Mali. It involved actors from civil society, local communities, local elected officials in an effort to relaunch sports and youth activities throughout the territory. The promotion of national unity, citizenship, tolerance, the prevention of violent extremism was advanced through conferences and workshops associated with the tournament.¹⁵⁷

Pakistan: Sport for development and peace

Since its independence from British colonial rule in 1947, Pakistan has been divided along ethnic, religious, and sectarian lines, a situation which has been exploited by internal and external organizations to foster extremism and terrorism. Ongoing territorial conflicts with India have also contributed to the rise of violent extremist groups in the country, including Tehrik-e Taliban Pakistan, a subset of the Taliban in Pakistan. Children have been a specific target of terrorist activity and, according to Human Rights Watch, Tehrik-e Taliban Pakistan and other militant groups in Pakistan target schools and universities in order to foster intolerance, attack symbols of the Government, and enforce gender discrimination by preventing the education of girls in particular. The attempted assassination of then 15-year-old Malala Yousafzai in retaliation for her activism for female education garnered worldwide attention. There were reportedly 867 attacks on education institutions in Pakistan between 2007 and 2015, and as of 2017, an estimated 25 million Pakistani children were not enrolled in school. Human Rights Watch predicts that such a devastating impact on education will have negative long-term effects on Pakistani society.

To help combat extremism and terrorism in the country, sport-based activities have been employed to support youth development and peacebuilding:

- The **Welfare Association for New Generation Pakistan** is a youth-led non-profit organization that works to build peace, engage youth, empower women, and educate society. It works to harness the potential of the youth, protect rights, and ensure every child has access to basic education. Focusing on mass sport that is accessible to all, the Association employs a variety of sport-for-development programmes to engage those most in need, including refugees, child soldiers, victims of conflict and natural catastrophes, the impoverished, persons with disabilities, victims of racism, stigmatization and discrimination, and persons living with HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases. WANG has partnered with 16 schools where trained coaches conduct weekly sessions with students. These sessions focus on health and hygiene, communication and team-building, inclusiveness, conflict resolution, and the environment.
- A 2018 evaluation of two youth-based Sports for Development and Peace programmes found them to be an effective approach to prevent violent extremism in Pakistan. The study examined outcomes from the Parvaz e Aman (Flight of Peace) and Youth Adolescent Development programmes, which engaged youth through cricket, football, kabaddi and volleyball.

¹⁵⁷ Maliweb.net. (30 January 2021). Tournoi sportif du Mali pour la paix et la cohésion sociale: L'événement est prévu du 05 au 12 mars prochain à Gao. Available at www.maliweb.net/sports/tournoi-sportif-du-mali-pour-la-paix-et-la-cohesion-sociale-levenement-est-prevu-du-05-au-12-mars-prochain-a-gao-2914306.html

The Parvaz e Aman programme was organised by the Farmers Development Organization, a community development organization in Southern Punjab. Carried out in Multan city, an area known for a high level of intolerance and internal conflicts and a reportedly high radicalization rate, the project was designed to build young people's capacity for conflict resolution and peacebuilding through a variety of Sports for Development activities that were organised in 19 villages. In addition to seminars, peace walks and arts activities, the project employed cricket, football, kabaddi, and volleyball to engage 1,000 young people across the region in positive activities to counter violent extremism and promote peace values. Sport was reported to be particularly helpful in engaging youth in uneducated and neglected communities. The Youth Adolescent Development programme was also based in Multan city (but in different villages) and used cricket to promote social cohesion and confidence building of youth.

Evaluation of these programmes indicated that they were effective in challenging societal stereotypes that existed between young people, enhancing social cohesion, promoting peace values, and helping to reduce violent extremism in the region. Programme participants reported that they built confidence, discipline, and self-control, which contributed to their ability to resolve conflicts; this was not limited to their participation in sports but extended to their participation in broader society. These programmes were also found give purpose and direction to young people, helping to integrate marginalized and disadvantaged people back into society by removing differences and gaps and promoting the values of peace and inclusion. Overall, sports were found to be a powerful tool for mobilisation that could be used as a broad-based sensitization tool¹⁵⁸.

- A 2018 memorandum of understanding between Pakistan's National counter-terrorism Authority and Higher Education Commission was established to foster a sustained partnership and collaboration through joint research and student awareness-building activities including seminars, workshops, essay competitions, debates, sports events, cultural activities, and social media.

Leicester, United Kingdom: Building resistance to radicalization

Leicester Prevent, which coordinates Prevent activities as part of the United Kingdom's counterterrorism strategy, seeks to empower local communities to develop resilience to extremism and to challenge all forms of extremism when it does arise. The organization offers a wide range of programs to support its mandate, including Channel, which is a voluntary referral-based process that offers "wrap-around" care and intervention (mentoring, training, employment assistance, and education and life skills support, etc.) for at-risk individuals, particularly young people; most referrals include the 12-to-16-year-old demographic.

Leicester Prevent also works with local community organizations to train and build capacity to prevent radicalization among young people, including through sport-based activity. One of these organizations is Leicester City in the Community (LCC), the charitable arm of the Leicester City football club. With access to the stadium, players, training grounds, equipment, coaches, and other resources, LCC is a credible and popular organization among young people. Leicester Prevent trained LCC staff about the warning signs of radicalization in young people and identified locations throughout the city (where young people are more likely to come into contact with extremist groups that promote Islamist- or far-right-inspired ideologies) where they could conduct sport-based engagement and training activities. LCC also works with faith-based organizations and schools to promote integration and tolerance. One of their most

158 Asif, U. (2018). 'Sports for Development and Peace' and Violent Extremism: The role of Sports for Development & Peace programs to prevent violent extremism among youth in Pakistan [Seoul National University].

important activities is creating opportunities for the programme participants to take part in leadership training sessions and to become volunteers with LCC. That ultimately leads to employment with the organization; by 2022, LCC expects 20 per cent of its staff to have been involved in the participant-to-employment program.

The city of Leicester is also actively responding to the challenges presented by the COVID-19 pandemic. As one of Britain's hardest-hit cities that has been under lockdown longer than most, the city is highly cognizant of the heightened vulnerability of young people. A recent survey indicated that 78 per cent of young people were spending more time online during the pandemic, which increases their risk of being exposed or drawn into extremist messaging. In response, the city has enhanced its online and social media presence, offering online fitness classes, football skills training (e.g., close control skills) to help individuals keep active and to get the benefits of physical activity. They're also engaging young people online through an e-sports mentoring project where coaches and mentors play FIFA Online with vulnerable young people and discuss other issues such as life in lockdown, mental health and extremism. This programme has not only helped to keep young people engaged (both in sport and with other people), but it also counters some of the threat presented by online gaming activities, which represent a consistently used conduit through which violent extremist groups attempt to indoctrinate young people to extremist ideologies.

Europe: Cross-border spectator violence

Spectator violence and hooliganism at football matches, which includes far-right groups' use of sport events to promote violence and/or antisocial agendas that target specific groups or populations, is a pervasive issue across Europe. During 2018–2019, Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, France, Poland, Portugal and Sweden and partnered in the LIAISE project. Designed to tackle the cross-border threat posed by spectator violence in football, the project encouraged stakeholders to recognize the value of enhanced dialogue and communication between supporter liaison officers and football and public authorities through better understanding, awareness and implementation of established good practices for support liaison officers. The project involved a series of training events and practice-based learning exchanges between national football bodies and national and international supporter organizations that focused on supporter liaison, the integrated safety, security and service approach at football matches, and supporter engagement. It produced a collaborative partnership of national football bodies and supporter organizations in six European countries, a group that will continue to work together beyond the lifetime of this project.

The project was carried out under the guidance of SD Europe,¹⁵⁹ a not-for-profit supporter organization with national members from 16 countries and recognized supporter liaison experts, which was co-funded by UEFA and included institutions such as the Pan-European Think Tank of Football Safety and Security Experts, as well as selected external facilitators and mentors.

The LIAISE project ran for two years, and it built a legacy that will last much longer. Project outcomes included action plans for each of the six participating countries, based on training events and exchange visits. These future steps are crucial, as SD Europe wants to strengthen the improve cooperation between club support liaison officers and the football and public authorities.

The project produced a number of concrete outputs, including:

- **Raised awareness:** The project helped to address the problem of spectator violence in sport through improved cooperation between club support liaison officers and the football

159 SD Europe (2019). LIAISE: A unique two-year collaborative partnership. Available at www.sdeurope.eu/.

and public authorities. It fostered a better appreciation among participants of the need for all stakeholders to work together in an integrated approach. It also generated extensive dissemination of information and feedback through partner social media posts and SD Europe's website, which is available to SD Europe's growing network of clubs and supporter organizations, national football bodies, member state Governments, and other interested stakeholders in 40-plus countries.

- **Cultural exchange:** While each country faces its own challenges, the project has enhanced the ability of partners to learn from each other's situation and the solutions they are developing to plug the gaps in the work. It has facilitated unprecedented connections across Europe and produced tangible developments that can be implemented in and around stadiums to improve the fan experience.
- **Consolidation of the role of the support liaison officer:** A key outcome of the project was the consolidation of the role of the support liaison officer across Europe; it contributed to the creation of a solid network of support liaison officers and partners will continue to develop the project lessons as part of their overall supporter engagement strategies in the future.
- **Action plans:** The project produced dedicated action plans to formulate country-specific strategies for developing the work support liaison officers.
- **EU Football Handbook:** An amendment to the *EU Handbook on Police Liaison with Supporters* (12792/16) that is specific to support liaison officers will expand upon the existing content relating to the role support liaison officers can play in the dialogue between supporters and the football and public authorities and in contributing to a reduction in spectator-related disorder.¹⁶⁰

Additionally, the Global Sport Programme has produced other resources to assist Member States: The following five resources represent the and highlight the underlying work and objectives of the Programme, and the fundamental goal of promoting sport and its values in helping strengthen resilience against radicalisation and violent extremism conducive to terrorism.

- [Guide on Security of Major Sporting Events \(2021\).](#)
- [Compendium of existing policies, projects and initiatives aimed at making use of sport and its values as a tool to prevent violent extremism \(2021\).](#)
- [Online Youth Consultation on Preventing Violent Extremism Through Sport \(2021\).](#)
- [Handbook to Leverage on Major Sporting Events to Prevent Violent Extremism \(forthcoming\).](#)
- [Global Sport Programme's Visualization Mapping Tool to Illustrate Major Sporting Events and Promote Sport-for-PVE \(2022\)](#)

¹⁶⁰ SD Europe (2019). LIAISE: A unique two-year collaborative partnership.

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