## **Girl-Centred Design**



The International Guidelines are aimed at equipping anyone, in any country, who wants to empower girls through sport, with the tools and processes to be able to effectively design, deliver, and measure a sports programme for girls and young women.

Developing a sport programme that focuses on the transfer of life skills through sport, as well as one that addresses common barriers and challenges that girls face within their communities, will not only empower participants, but empower communities as well.

## Where are you?

This section of the International Guidelines focuses on what it means to be girl-centred in your sports programme and how you can imbue this approach in all aspects of your session planning, design, execution and delivery.

In this section, you will explore the following topics:

- 01 Empowering Girls Through Sport
- 102 Life Skills Through Sport
- 03 Dealing with Barriers and Challenges





Image source: Tiempo de Juego, Colombia

## **Empowering Girls Through Sport**

#### **Sport Empowers**

Over the last several decades, sport has increasingly been used as a tool for empowering youth in developing countries. However, opportunities to participate in sport are often designed for, and dominated by, boys and men. Gender inequity and discrimination remain deeply entrenched and widely tolerated throughout the world, resulting in a devastating and cascading list of global, social, economic and development costs. Limitations placed upon adolescent girls and young women restrict them from fulfilling their potential and play a significant role in perpetuating global health and economic disparities.

We know that sport is empowering, particularly for girls, and challenges gender norms. Sport participation offers girls an opportunity to build their self-esteem, courage and self-efficacy. It is a place where they can take up leadership positions and bolster confidence in their own abilities. This translates into everyday life – it encourages them to take initiative, raise their voices and attempt things they never assumed were possible. When community members see girls achieve in sport, they often recognise their potential to achieve in other domains. Lastly, sport is a powerful tool and platform to strengthen social ties, networks, engage the community and promote positive messages. In short, wins on the field translate into wins off the field.



#### Through sport and play, girls:



Become physically stronger, healthier, and develop a greater ownership and understanding of their bodies. If a girl considers her body her own, she protects it, cherishes it, and demands that it be respected.



Develop critical life skills transferable to other spheres of life such as teamwork, goal setting, resilience and communication, all through the constant practice that sport requires.



Gain access to a safe space to grow and explore, especially through physical, social and emotional development.



Connect with peers and build support networks – a vital resource for dealing with the challenges associated with adolescence.



Learn from a positive female role model in the form of a woman coach or team leader. This provides girls with a caring, supportive mentor to help navigate adolescence and inspire a vision of what is possible.



Explore human differences and get connected to others from different classes, races, castes, or religions, which in turn can promote mutual respect and deeper understanding.



Capture the attention of the community. When girls play in public, they have an instant awareness-raising opportunity to advocate for their rights within the community. Victories, kits, and leadership positions can shift a girl's status within her community – from being perceived as a liability to a source of pride.



Have fun. It is so simple, but the sheer distraction from the pressures of growing up is an essential experience that we are all entitled to.



## Sport and Leadership 🔷

A body of research suggests that asset-building programmes can result in long-term gains for girls and women. Our theory of change is built on the **belief that adolescent girls**, as well as their **families** and **societies**, **benefit from and are empowered by sport and sport programmes** that build assets, provide access to resources and develop agency.

Women Win and our work are both guided by the belief that all adolescent girls are born leaders. This belief serves as a foundation for all our programmes and activities. We believe that leadership is a set of skills, behaviours, and attitudes that can be learned, practised, and refined through experience, mentorship, and education. We believe that all girls have leadership capacities that will become evident once recognised and nurtured.

Women Win thinks about leadership in the following way:



## Leadership reflects the ability of a girl or young woman to exercise her rights and drive change.

Our tools and resources help strengthen girls' and young women's leadership through the process of building five key competencies (Voice, Self Confidence, Vision, Action and Global Thinking).



<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Brady, Martha (2007). Levelling the playing field: Building girls' sports programs in the developing world. Promoting Healthy, Safe, and Productive Transitions to Adulthood Brief no. 1. New York: Population Council. http://www.popcouncil.org/uploads/pdfs/TABriefs/01\_GirlsSports.pdf

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Lehman, S. J, & Koerner, S. S. (2004). Adolescent women's sports involvement and sexual behavior/health: A process-level investigation. Journal of Youth and Adolescence 33 (5), 443-455.

Women's Sport Foundation Report (2009): Her Life Depends on It: Sport, Physical Activity, and the Health and Well-being of America Girls and Women

Sport offers a safe space for girls to discover, develop and practise their leadership abilities and ultimately apply their skills in the community. Through sport activities and girls' rights programming, girls acquire leadership skills, attitudes and knowledge, and develop an array of competencies. Together with our programme partners, we have identified several core competencies that reflect an adolescent girls' journey to becoming a leader for social change in her community. These are:

#### I TAKE ACTION

- Make decisions
- Solve problems
- Create and seize opportunities

#### I USE VOICE

- · Develop and express own opinions and thoughts
- · Speak in public
- Communicate to move others (storytelling, using social media, pitching an idea)

#### I AM SELF-CONFIDENT

- Identify strengths and celebrate successes
- Take risks and step up to challenges
- Fail forward



#### I HAVE VISION

- See the possibility for change
- Set goals
- Inspire and motivate others to action

#### **I THINK GLOBALLY**

- · Have a Global Outlook
- Value Diversity
- Benefit from Unknown
- Environments
- · Grow and Invest in
- Support Networks

## Why Invest in Girls?



According to UNICEF, there are currently 1.1 billion girls under the age of 18 globally. These girls are poised to be the world's next generation of leaders, entrepreneurs, and community change makers. Yet, girls continue to face enormous hurdles in a world that still largely favours boys and men including still being excluded from decision-making that impacts their lives. The most marginalised girls - those from ethnic minorities, indigenous groups and poor households; LGBTQIA+ youth; those living in rural or conflict settings; and those living with disabilities - face additional layers of discrimination.

International authorities, from the World Bank to the United Nations, agree that the most effective way to fight poverty in the world is to empower girls and women. Research has shown that if you invest in girls, you invest in society because the education, increased earnings, and human development of girls have a direct impact upon their families. Because women often serve as primary caretakers, every dollar invested in a girl also benefits her family and her community. When an individual girl understands her rights and believes in herself, she will improve her life and the lives of others.

<sup>4</sup> https://www.unicef.org/media/65586/file/A-new-era-for-girls-2020.pdf

<sup>5</sup> https://www.worldbank.org/en/news/feature/2011/09/22/getting-to-equal-how-educating-every-girl-can-help-break-the-cycle-of-poverty

# How Does Sport Advance ♦ Women's Rights?

Women Win uses sport as a strategy to advance women's rights with a focus on three core rights-based issues: Addressing Gender-Based Violence (GBV), Accessing Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights (SRHR), and Gaining Economic Empowerment (EE). These approaches serve as the foundation for our guides, curricula and other tools as well as the basis for our girl-centric outcomes that show how change can happen.



**Gender-based violence (GBV)** is violence that is directed at an individual based on his or her biological sex OR gender identity. It includes physical, sexual, verbal, emotional, and psychological abuse, threats, coercion, and economic or educational deprivation, whether occurring in public or private life.

#### **Addressing Gender-Based Violence**

When girls participate in sport, they challenge the core tenets of GBV – inequity, patriarchy, and rigid gender roles. Beyond the social challenge, the application of sport in combating gender-based violence is practical. When girls play sports, they become physically stronger and healthier. They develop a greater ownership and understanding of their bodies. Psychologically, sport can enhance a girl's self-esteem and self-efficacy. The success a girl experiences on the sport field translates into her belief in herself off the sport field, and being a member of a team provides an additional support system for her. These life skills and networks contribute to a girl's ability to address gender-based violence in her community.

#### Accessing Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights

Every girl and woman should have control over their own bodies and have access to health services, as well as having their needs related to sexuality and reproduction met. Supporting SRHR goals contributes significantly to a range of broader development goals, such as improving the status of women, contributing to economic growth and reducing poverty and inequality. Sport can facilitate the building of important competencies that support girls in not only gaining knowledge around SRHR but also in changing their attitudes and behaviours, which is essential for positive health outcomes. Essential life skills such as teamwork, cooperation, problem solving through communication, and relationship building are inherent to sport and also crucial for girls to realise their sexual and reproductive health and rights. Furthermore, quality sport programmes that include comprehensive life skills curricula are essential for girls to gain access to fact-based information about their sexual and reproductive health.

#### **Gaining Economic Empowerment**

A majority of the worlds' 628 million unemployed young people are girls and young women. Barriers caused by gender inequity often prevent girls from finishing their education and, consequently, building the skills they need to access decent work and break the cycle of poverty. A delayed marriage or living free from violence enables a girl, their family, and their community to experience better economic, health, and social outcomes. A sport programme can progressively build and strengthen a girl's skills and help them further develop personal and professional competencies that are required for economic empowerment.



"Life skills" is often used as a very broad term. UNICEF defines life skills as knowledge, attitudes and abilities that equip individuals to deal effectively with the challenges of everyday life and become positive agents of change in their communities. At Women Win, we believe that it is important to take this definition a step further and include a **gender lens**. When situated in a sport for girls' empowerment programme, **life skills are skills that serve a girl in their life both in and outside of sport**, such as critical thinking, cooperation, empathy, and leadership.



Applying a gender lens to life skills development is crucial to being able to design a sport programme to empower girls. Although general life skills are important for everyone to develop, in order to combat gender inequality it is important that girls learn specific skills to empower them to recognise and claim their rights. For example, while decision-making skills are important for everyone to learn, it is particularly important for girls to understand their right to make their own decisions. This is because in many cultures, girls and women often do not have the autonomy or power to make decisions about their interests, their bodies, or their futures.

A sport programme can be the perfect place to learn, develop, and practise these skills. While there are innate benefits of the physical activity of a sport programme, these programmes also provide the unique opportunity to further develop specific life skills. Coaches and facilitators can intentionally incorporate activities, exercises or discussions that address specific life skills, significantly increasing the impact of the sport programme on girls' lives. In this section you will find descriptions of specific life skills that can be addressed through sport, and why they are important for adolescent girls. These life skills have been identified by Women Win's partner organisations and informed by our work with girls and young women around the world. This is not intended to be an exhaustive or definitive list of life skills, but can be used as a starting point for organisations looking to integrate life skills into their sport programmes for girls.

Go to the next page to find out more about these life skills.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>6</sup> Plan International. Young, Woman and Unemployed: The Triple Challenge. October 2015

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>7</sup> https://www.unicef.org/media/64751/file/Global-framework-on-transferable-skills-2019.pdf

## Life Skills 🔩

#### Life Skills Explored in this Section:

- Self-esteem and Confidence
- Self Awareness
- Leadership
- Negotiation
- Conflict Management
- Empathy
- Emotional Literacy
- Stress Management

- Resilience
- Team Work and Cooperation
- Problem Solving
- Critical Thinking
- Decision Making
- Taking Care of Your Body
   Goal Setting and Time
- Management
- Financial Literacy



#### **Self-esteem and Confidence**



#### What are self-esteem and confidence?

Self-esteem is one's subjective evaluation of their own worth or abilities.

#### Why are they important for adolescent girls?

In many communities, girls often lack spaces to build their confidence and self-esteem in constructive and healthy ways, particularly when it comes to communicating their needs and wants, exercising their rights, and expressing their emotions.

#### How can sport strengthen self-esteem and confidence?

Sport programmes help girls learn to use their voices in confident and strong ways, such as organising and coordinating with teammates during a match, demanding foul calls from the referee, voicing opinions and feelings to the coach during the match or at practice. Stepping out onto a playing field takes courage and confidence, and the more that girls play, the more they build their self-esteem. Learning new sport skills also builds confidence and self-esteem, helping girls realise that physical activity is not just for boys in the community, but that they too can learn and master the same skills.

#### **Examples**

Goal Programme Sessions:

- Our Positive Qualities
- Girls Against Aggression:
- Outer confidence
- Inner confidence



#### What is self-awareness?

Being self-aware means knowing one's weaknesses and strengths, understanding what is possible to improve about oneself and what one must accept in a constructive and critical manner.<sup>5</sup>

#### Why is it important for adolescent girls?

A girl's perception of her own body is at the very heart of her identity. If they dislike their body, or are not able to own and attach to their physical self because of trauma, impairment or negative conditioning relative to their size or shape, they will be inhibited from developing strength in any other aspect of their life. A girl who values their body is more likely to walk proudly, exercise bodily self-determination and feel truly empowered in daily life. Girls around the world are discouraged from loving the natural state of their bodies. The media is constantly presenting unattainable images of beauty, which lowers a girl's self-esteem if they feel they do not look like the ideal. Girls are often sexualised and objectified, leading them to believe that their bodies exist for the pleasure and judgement of others, especially men. If a girl has been sexually abused, they might detach completely from their body, the site of a major emotional trauma.

#### How can sport strengthen self-awareness?

Playing sport requires that girls be attached to their physical selves. They can feel their heartbeats, work on motor skills and coordination, and experience injuries and soreness. The physical becomes conscious when a girl runs, jumps, shoots and stretches. As a girl grows physically stronger and sees their body accomplishing athletically, they often become more confident and aware about their body. The goal of body image development through sport should be to teach girls how to value the body they have, take care of and control it, and use it to their benefit.

For a girl with disabilities, addressing body image in sport programmes is especially important. A girl with disabilities carries the double burden of being a woman and physically different from their peers.

#### **Examples**

Goal Programme Sessions:

- Who Am I?
- Skills and Qualities
- Body Image
- Real Beauty Commercial



#### What is leadership?

Leadership encompasses the ability to lead, influence, or guide a group of people.

#### Why is it important for adolescent girls?

In many places, girls rarely or never get the opportunity to lead. When they are never provided with this opportunity, it is difficult for them to understand that their opinion and perspective matters and is important and valid.

#### How can sport strengthen leadership skills?

One of the most powerful ways for girls to develop leadership skills is for them to experience leadership roles. When they are expected to lead others, they often find power and abilities within themselves they might not know existed. Sport provides multiple opportunities for girls to become leaders. Something as simple as leading a warm-up session can help girls develop their confidence, voice, and self-awareness.

Additionally, sport provides a unique opportunity for girls to see women in leadership roles such as trainer, coach, referee or organisation leader. The more girls are exposed to other women in leadership positions, the more they will be able to envision themselves in these positions.

#### **Examples**

Goal Programme Sessions:

• Who is a Leader?



#### What is negotiation?

Negotiation is the ability to take part in a negotiation process by respecting others while being assertive, being cooperative, using communication skills, showing leadership skills and saying no when one's well-being is threatened.<sup>9</sup>

#### Why is it important for adolescent girls?

The better girls are able to communicate, negotiate and understand how to refuse advances, the more likely they are to avoid dangerous peer pressure that may result in lying, stealing, crossing emotional and physical boundaries, abuse, and unsafe sexual experiences.

#### How can sport strengthen negotiation skills?

Practising using their voice to communicate and negotiate in loud and forceful ways during a sport practice can help girls gain the confidence to use that voice off the field.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>9</sup> Life Skills and Citizenship Education Initiative Middle East and North Africa, LSCE

For example, a girl who builds confidence on the field might be more likely to speak up in her best interest, or say no when approached for sex or pressured to do drugs. Learning to negotiate playing time on the field, position choice or rules of the game can help girls learn to negotiate and communicate their rights off the field such as at school, home or in a relationship. Communication, negotiation and refusal skills are also critical in protecting girls from various forms of gender-based violence (see International Guide to Addressing Gender-Based Violence Through Sport) and in asserting their sexual and reproductive rights (see addressing SRHR Guide).

#### **Examples**

Goal Programme Sessions:

- Learning to Say No (and meaning it!)
- Say it with Silence
- Peer Pressure

# Conflict Management #

#### What is conflict management?

Conflict management is the practice of being able to identify and handle conflicts sensibly, fairly, and efficiently.

#### Why is it important for adolescent girls?

Every relationship experiences conflict. The better adolescent girls are equipped with the right communication tools and support networks, the more likely they are to experience healthier relationships with caregivers, family members, friends or partners. Healthy conflict management skills can also prevent adolescent girls from experiencing any form of violence, whether physical, emotional, sexual or economic.

#### How can sport strengthen conflict management skills?

In every sports situation, conflict is bound to occur. This can include disagreements on ways of organising during a match or on foul calls from the referee. Although conflict often gets perceived as only having negative outcomes, it can actually lead to stronger, more enduring relationships. The more girls practise healthy conflict management skills on the field, the easier it will be to apply these skills to other areas of their life.

#### **Examples**

Goal Programme Sessions:

- Conflict Ladder
- Managing Conflict

## **Empathy**

#### What is empathy?

Empathy is the ability to understand and share the feelings of someone else. To develop this skill, one must be willing to consider and acknowledge the context and experience of others.

#### Why is it important for adolescent girls?

The ability to demonstrate empathy is important for girls, particularly when they are navigating the challenging years of adolescence. Being able to empathise with those from different contexts or experiences can lead to the acceptance of differences. This, in turn, can lead to a sense of belonging and the development of positive relationships, which are particularly important for adolescent girls.

#### How can sport strengthen empathy?

Sport programmes are excellent places to develop empathy, particularly team sports. Teams are often composed of people from many different backgrounds, contexts and experiences. By providing a safe environment to explore, understand and celebrate these differences, sport offers a unique opportunity to develop empathy.

## Emotional Literacy

#### What is emotional literacy?

Emotional literacy is the ability to understand and express one's behaviours, emotions and feelings. This skill is important for understanding oneself and interacting constructively with others.

#### Why is it important for adolescent girls?

Adolescence can be a very confusing and emotional time for girls, particularly because they are going through significant changes. It is important for girls to be able to understand what is happening to them not only physically, but emotionally as well, and learn how to express those feelings, emotions, fears and confusions in healthy and positive ways. Too often, girls feel like they are going through these changes alone and do not reach out and ask for help, explanations or support.

#### How can sport strengthen emotional literacy?

Girls can find safe spaces (both physically and emotionally) in a sport programme where they can discuss and talk about what they are feeling as they experience adolescence with others who are going through similar experiences. Additionally, role models such as coaches and facilitators are in a great position to become confidants and guide girls through this confusing period in their lives. Through sport, girls learn how to share their feelings, trust others and feel part of a group, all factors that will make it easier for them to discuss and express what is going on inside their heads.

### **Stress Management**

#### What is stress management?

Stress management is the ability to address feelings of tension, anxiety, or pressure and deal with them in positive ways.

#### Why is it important for adolescent girls?

Many situations can cause stress for adolescent girls, who face the normal stressors of adolescence in addition to stress related to gendered expectations of their role in society. These include schoolwork and exams, family conflict, relationships with friends, decisions about whether to have sexual intercourse, or future plans for careers.

Recurrent stress can result in lower levels of self-confidence and self-esteem, and lead to vicious cycles of self-doubt and self-blame. By developing stress management skills, adolescent girls can deal with stress in healthy, positive ways that make them more resilient to future stressors.

#### How can sport strengthen stress management skills?

Sport and other forms of physical activity can help lower overall stress levels and improve physical and mental health. Building relationships between team members and coaches also helps girls create support networks they can turn to when they are stressed or anxious.

Playing sports can also create stressful moments and provide girls with opportunities to deal with this stress by practising stress management skills (like breathing exercises, positive self-talk, or visualising success). Practising these techniques in high-stress situations on the playing field can help reinforce these skills for when girls face stressful everyday events.

#### **Examples**

Goal Programme Sessions:

Being Mindful



#### What is resilience?

Resilience is maintaining effort and interest despite failure and adversity.

#### Why is it important for adolescent girls?

A skill like resilience is likely to help a girl succeed on her sport team, at school or in her job despite the many societal obstacles that prevent adolescent girls from reaching their full potential. This skill is especially important when girls must cope with traumatic events that happen early on in their lives, causing harmful emotional damage, a decrease in self-esteem and even depression. Traumatic events could include being pulled out of school by family, barred from participation in sport or other leisure activities, forced labour at a young age, or any form of gender-based violence.

#### How can sport strengthen resilience?

Through sport, girls learn to manage stress when playing matches and games or trying out for and learning new positions. Importantly, sport can teach girls not only how to win and celebrate, but also how to lose and try again, emphasising resilience in the face of obstacles and failure.

#### **Examples**

Girls Against Aggression:

- I am Resilient
- Resilience

# Teamwork and Cooperation

#### What are teamwork and cooperation?

Teamwork and cooperation are important skills to develop that are transferable to multiple life scenarios. Being a good team player means that you not only celebrate individual strengths and differences but collaborate as a group of unique individuals to achieve a common goal. Teamwork and cooperation can also teach other important skills such as effective communication and listening.

#### Why are they important for adolescent girls?

Often, girls are not celebrated for their unique strengths and skills, which can make it harder to see their personal value. When they learn to collaborate with others, they experience an environment where their skills and qualities are valued. This can lead to increased self-esteem and willingness to work with those around them in school, at home, on the field, or in a job.

#### How can sport strengthen teamwork and cooperation?

Playing on a sports team with a supportive coach and teammates who help develop a personal sense of value illustrates the positive aspects of teamwork and shows how when players cooperate and pool their skills and talents, they can win games or reach objectives they could not have individually. Being a team player and cooperating on the field can help girls work in groups at school, contribute to different areas of family life, or be group leaders in their jobs.

#### **Examples**

Goal Programme Sessions:

- Ground Rules
- Power With

## Problem-Solving

#### What is problem-solving?

Problem solving is the ability to think through steps that lead to a desired goal by identifying and understanding a problem and devising a solution to address it. Problem-solving begins with recognising that a problematic situation exists and establishing an understanding of the nature of the situation. It requires the solver to identify the specific problem(s) to be solved, plan and carry out a solution(s), and monitor and evaluate progress throughout the activity.

#### Why is it important for adolescent girls?

With threats such as gender-based violence, abusive relationships and cultural stereotypes that strip girls of their sexual and reproductive health, education, work and leisure rights, it is important for girls to learn how to solve problems and take ownership of their lives. An important aspect of problem-solving is understanding that sometimes a problem cannot be solved alone. Therefore, it is essential for girls to be aware of and able to access external resources that can provide support if they are experiencing abuse, or if they have specific questions or concerns related to menstruating or sexual and reproductive health. When girls know how to access these services and aren't afraid to do so, they greatly reduce emotional and physical health risks and gain valuable care, information, and support.

#### How can sport strengthen problem-solving skills?

Sports can provide a place to practise problem-solving skills. By introducing challenges in play, for instance introducing several balls to the game or adapting the rules to make it harder to win, girls get to practise thinking about solutions. Trusted coaches or woman facilitators are ideal for introducing girls to community resources and services. They can take the girls on visits to various service providers and introduce them, in non-threatening and comfortable ways, to contacts at the institutions who can help the girls get the treatment or help they need. This initial introduction through a sport programme field trip can make girls more comfortable and less afraid to access these services outside of the programme later in life.

#### **Examples**

Goal Programme Sessions:

• Help in My Community

# Critical Thinking #



Critical thinking is the ability to question and interpret information, connect ideas, and make decisions based on that information.

#### Why is it important for adolescent girls?

With critical thinking skills, adolescent girls can analyse the information they receive, reason with their own experience and other knowledge, and identify solutions to problems in their own lives and in their communities. These skills are especially important for understanding their surrounding environment, the role that they are expected to play within society, and the role they actually want to pursue.

#### How can sport strengthen critical thinking skills?

Sport programmes can be excellent environments to gain access to information and build understanding that supports critical thinking. Through the guidance of knowledgeable coaches and the support of their teammates, girls can explore through their own perspective what is important to them, be met with alternative viewpoints, and understand what strategies to use to solve problems.

Sport programmes can reach girls who are not in school, in rural areas and in communities where girls are not always able to access accurate information or given opportunities to practice critical thinking skills, particularly related to their rights and roles in society.

#### **Examples**

Goal Programme Sessions:

- Wants and Needs
- Gender in our Community

#### **Critical Thinking and Gender-Based Violence**

Critical thinking and decision-making are crucial for adolescent girls faced with the risk of gender-based violence, before, during and after the violence and abuse takes place. Knowing how to navigate the risks of gender-based violence and making decisions during or after experiencing abuse in order to lessen the impact of harmful consequences are critical skills that adolescent girls need.

As an organisation offering sport programming for girls, you can:

- Connect with local service providers, such as social welfare organisations, to help educate participants and counsel those who have been victims of gender-based violence. Be prepared to transport a girl to a service provider instead of simply making a referral.
- Report instances of gender-based violence to the police and family, if this does not further jeopardise the girl's safety. If a family member is involved in the violence, or authorities cannot be trusted to handle the situation at hand, use alternative service providers.
- Invite someone who has experienced and overcome gender-based violence to come and share their story with the group.
- Train peer educators about responding to gender-based violence. A girl is often more willing to talk to a peer about being abused.
- Use alternative communication forms, such as poetry, music or theatre to open up sensitive discussions about gender-based violence.
- Conduct outreach events to raise awareness about gender-based violence in your region.

Goal Programme Sessions:

- History of Violence
- What is Gender-based Violence?
- Speaking up against Violence



#### What is decision making?

Decision-making is the process of choosing between two or more courses of action, and includes looking ahead to what the consequences of these actions will be.

#### Why is it important for adolescent girls?

Adolescent girls have to make important decisions related to school and studies, relationships, sex, and contraceptive use. Some of these decisions are easier to make and the right choice is clear. Others are more difficult and require girls to consider different perspectives and consequences of these decisions. Being able to consider the benefits and risks of different decisions before making a final choice is a vital skill for girls to make informed decisions that impact their lives.

#### How can sport strengthen decision making?

Playing sports can help girls practise making decisions, and oftentimes under pressure and with short time frames. For example, a leader might have to make difficult decisions about who they choose to play in a match. The more girls practise making decisions in a training environment, the more comfortable they can become with making decisions in their personal lives as well.

#### **Examples**

Goal Programme Sessions:

- Making Decisions
- Share with Care (Digital Safety)
- Contraception
- Risky Behavior

# Taking Care of Your Body



Taking care of your body means making choices with your physical, mental, and emotional well-being in mind. This could include maintaining personal hygiene, having a regular sleep routine, hydrating, and tending to injuries.

#### Why is it important for adolescent girls?

Adolescence can be a tricky time, as girls are learning to deal with everything from puberty and periods to health and hygiene. Learning how to listen to your body and giving it the care it needs is an important life skill for girls to stay healthy and safe in their communities, fuel their bodies with healthy food, and maintain menstrual hygiene.

## How can sport strengthen your ability to take care of your body?

Using sports can be a powerful way to teach adolescent girls about the importance of taking care of their bodies through personal hygiene and nutrition. Girls can learn that when they get enough rest and eat a healthy, balanced diet, their body stays fuelled with energy during sports practices. Sports sessions can also be a place to discuss the impact of alcohol and substance use, and the negative lasting impacts abuse of these substances can have on their bodies and minds. These lessons can have positive benefits for their lives outside of sports. Maintaining proper personal and menstrual hygiene in the context of sport - such as showering/bathing after sweating, washing your hands, wearing deodorant, and/or using menstrual sanitation products - will help girls keep clean and reduce the risk of infection and disease.

#### **Examples**

Goal Programme Sessions:

- Hygiene Tag
- Alcohol and Substance Abuse
- Puberty and Our Bodies
- 28 Days

# Goal Setting and Time Management

#### What are goal setting and time management?

Goal Setting is the process of identifying something that you want to accomplish and establishing measurable goals and timeframes to get there. Setting goals means that a person has committed thought, emotion, and behaviours towards attaining the goal.

#### Why are they important for adolescent girls?

In many communities, girls are often not taught to take pride in their skills and qualities or encouraged to set and reach goals. Educating girls on setting life goals for themselves and creating a plan to reach those goals helps them realise their own value. Whether they are educational, career or family goals, objectives help girls focus and gain control of their behaviour and actions, make healthy decisions and improve their confidence and self-esteem. Girls are frequently conditioned to believe that they have a limited role to play in life: to be married off, to be someone's wife and become a tool for reproduction. By opening up the discussion about what they want for themselves, and how they could start planning to get there, they can become more intentional about their lives and their personal goals.

## How can sport strengthen goal setting and time management skills?

By learning to set small goals and reach them, like juggling a football 10 times or running a kilometre without stopping, girls learn through sport that the possibilities of developing skills and reaching goals are endless. Girls start to believe that they can accomplish and achieve objectives by working hard and putting their energy into the goals they have set. Good coaches and facilitators can help girls transfer this skill off the field, by showing them that the possibilities that exist for them are numerous and not limited to what society tells them their roles should be. A girl can learn that there are similarities between working hard to run a certain distance and studying hard to pass a certain exam and continue their education.

#### **Examples**

Goal Programme Sessions:

- My Goals
- Planning for a Future Career
- My Plan

## **Financial Literacy**

#### What is financial literacy?

Financial literacy is the ability to understand and effectively use various financial skills, including personal financial management, budgeting, and saving. Financial literacy is the foundation of a person's relationship with money.

#### Why is it important for adolescent girls?

Unfortunately, girls have few opportunities to gain financial literacy or are not encouraged to do so. Basic financial literacy is an important building block towards girls achieving economic empowerment. Before starting a business, becoming employed or just navigating personal finance, girls must know how to make a budget, develop a savings plan, and apply for a local loan.

#### How can sport strengthen financial literacy?

Girls sport programmes can introduce ways to practise financial literacy skills, for instance by giving them (joint) budgetary responsibility for community events or team finances.

#### **Examples**

Goal Programme Sessions:

- Understanding Money
- Saving Money
- Savings Plans
- Borrowing



## **Dealing with Barriers and Challenges**

Around the world, girls and women face unique challenges to participating in sport. **These challenges are personal, practical, economic, political and cultural.** In order to create a sustainable and impactful sport programme for girls, you must **first work out what is keeping girls from participating in sport** in the first place.

Below are common barriers and obstacles to girls' participation in sport faced by Women Win partner organisations around the world, as well as suggestions for how you can design a programme that overcomes them. These barriers and obstacles often show up in different ways depending on the culture and context of your community. The most important step to understanding the obstacles girls in your region face is to go into the community and ask girls, caregivers, and community leaders their thoughts on the barriers girls face to participating in sport.



### **Appropriate Sport Clothing**

Many communities impose constraints on what is considered appropriate attire for girls. In some conservative and religious societies, expectations include modest dress, often covering legs, arms and/or hair. According to programme partners, these requirements can make participation in many sports challenging for girls from both a practical and a psychological standpoint.

If a girl feels like they are shaming their family for wearing a swimsuit in public, they are not likely to want to swim. It can be very dangerous for a girl to shame their family by behaving in a manner that is perceived as inappropriate: they risk being punished (physically or psychologically), threatened, or having their freedom of movement restricted.

#### **Recommendations**

- Whenever possible, don't make girls choose between sport participation and adhering to cultural dress codes.
- Be flexible about what a girl can wear within the bounds of their physical safety. For example, allow girls to wear headscarves or tights if that makes them comfortable.
- Choose sport activities that girls can play in modest clothing. This can be critical for both the girls' interest in participating and the community's perception of your respect for tradition.
- When girls' attire restricts their ability to perform athletically, make accommodations. In some cultures, girls can dress as they like, as long as men are not watching. Perhaps consider conducting your sport programme in a private location that cannot be viewed by males.
- Provide girls and female coaches with proper sport attire if they can't provide it for themselves. Talk to girls and their families about their hesitations regarding athletic clothing. Major sport clothing companies have begun to produce conservative sportswear for girls and women with this issue in mind.
- When money is of concern, encourage girls and their caregivers to design and sew appropriate sports clothing, which can be worn by the girls themselves as well as sold to others. In some cases, it might be sufficient to allow girls to wear pants beneath skirts during play.



## Case Study: Les Hijabeuses -The Sports Hijab

Muslim girls in certain communities around the world are fighting for their right to play sports. Some local, national, and international sporting federations and bodies prohibit the wearing of a hijab, a headscarf worn by many Muslims girls and women, while playing. Muslim athletes are put in a position of having to choose between their love for a game and their religion.

Founé Diawara was 15 years old when she was first told she could not wear her hijab in a football match. It was an important game: she had recently got into the team of a club in Meaux, the town north-east of Paris where she grew up, and they were playing a local rival. Diawara had been wearing her hijab during training, but as she was about to walk on to the pitch, the referee said she must remove it if she wanted to play. Diawara refused to take her hijab off and channelled her anger from that day into action. She became co-president of <a href="Les Hijabeuses">Les Hijabeuses</a>, a collective of young hijabwearing female footballers <a href="campaigning">campaigning</a> against the FFF's ban as part of a wider battle to promote a more inclusive society in France, which has seen a rise in far-right groups and Islamophobia.

Formed in May 2020 by community organisers from the <u>Citizen's Alliance</u>, which campaigns against social injustices in France, the Paris-based Les Hijabeuses now has more than 100 members. They play football together, connect with other teams across France and put on training sessions to encourage other young hijab-wearing women to get into football<sup>10</sup>

<sup>10</sup> https://www.theguardian.com/global-development/2021/jun/21/les-hijabeuses-the-female-footballers-tackling-frances-on-pitch-hijab-banjun/21/les-hijabeuses-the-female-footballers-tackling-frances-on-pitch-hijab-ban

# Fields and Facilities

In economically disadvantaged communities, especially in urban areas, there are not enough spaces to practise sport. Adding to the issue of limited resources is the fact that the pitches and courts that do exist are often overused in high-density areas. There is typically a hierarchy for access to sports spaces, and girls' teams are often at the bottom. Programme partners report girls' football events being canceled without notice to accommodate boys and men who show up to play casual games on the pitches. In some cultures or conflict regions, it may be inappropriate or too dangerous for girls to play outside, therefore confining them to an even smaller pool of indoor spaces.

#### Recommendations

- Work with the local government to seek alternative pitches or courts, or find times when these spaces are not being used.
- Build partnerships with whoever makes the decisions regarding pitch/court use in a community, especially in urban areas.
- Include pitch/court space in the programme budget to ensure that the girls have the space they need to play comfortably.
- Create or build mobile equipment that you can take with you when finished playing.
- Partner with local schools and ask to use pitches on days when school is not in session (e.g. weekends or during school holidays).



## **Case Study: love.fútbol**

<u>love.fútbol</u> partners with and mobilises vulnerable communities worldwide to create, reclaim, and redefine sports spaces as inclusive centres of community and lasting platforms for social growth.

love fútbol specialises in partnering with underserved communities to plan, build, activate, and sustain their own recreational spaces, and as a result, strengthen their communities. Rather than an end product, their projects are a process where in-depth community engagement and a critical focus on sustainability are interdependent and integral to the entire project.<sup>11</sup>



#### **Economic Constraint**

Girls from economically disadvantaged backgrounds can find the costs associated with equipment, transportation and competition unrealistic for their families. Additionally, playing sports can mean time away from paid jobs and work that generates income for a family. Parents can be resistant to letting their daughter stop an activity that brings the family money in favour of something that many cultures see as a waste of time or unproductive.

#### **Recommendations**

- Consider the financial burden on both the individual and group when designing a programme for girls. If you want girls from economically disadvantaged backgrounds to be included, you must make it affordable for them to participate.
- When possible, provide income-earning opportunities for girls. Train them to provide services
  within the organisation that you would otherwise have to pay for externally, such as coaching
  and officiating.
- Be creative about improvising and finding low-cost solutions for running your programme. For example, instead of buying new uniforms, see if you can get donations of used equipment.
- Choose a sport that matches the economic capacity of your participants or cut costs by having girls share equipment. Consider creating a "shoe library" where girls check out shoes before practice and then check them back in after practice.
- Think about partnerships that can be built within the community to reduce costs. Ask for support from local businesses in exchange for marketing at events with banners or fliers displaying the business's name.
- Create income-generating activities at your organisation that can help offset costs for participating in a tournament or attending sport camps.



#### Case Study: Vijana Amani Pamoja -Employability and Entrepreneurship Program

<u>Vijana Amani Pamoja</u> uses the power of football for the social and economic empowerment of young people in Nairobi. In addition to their sport and life skills programmes, they provide opportunities for participants to access training opportunities, which can serve as an incentive for families to encourage and allow their daughters to play in the first place.

VAP's employability and entrepreneurship program is an exit initiative that integrates graduates of VAP's programmes into vocational training opportunities courses and apprenticeships are linked into job opportunities, internships and entrepreneurship support.

The vocational training courses are aimed at engaging and motivating VAP's programme graduations, providing them with valuable professional skills including: catering, hair and beauty, baking, financial and computer literacy. Courses prepare them for the job-market as well as helping them create their own sustainable income generating opportunities. VAP works closely with well-established salons and restaurants for the purposes of providing internships and job placements for the graduates.



Girls, especially those living in poverty, are often responsible for assisting with domestic responsibilities, including looking after children, doing chores, cooking, and cleaning. In addition, many adolescent girls fill the rest of their day in school or working paid jobs. Participation in a sport programme might not fit easily into a girl's already full schedule. Girls are often afforded only a little, if any, leisure time after their daily chores and caretaking responsibilities are over.

#### **Recommendations**

- When possible, schedule training sessions and events around the majority of a girl's home responsibilities. Consider this both on a weekly and seasonal basis. For example, in agricultural communities, harvest and planting seasons might require you to negotiate scheduling differently than growing or dormant seasons. In religious communities, it will be important to make accommodations for holidays and regular worship.
- If it is not possible to work around a girl's external commitments, be flexible in your understanding of the importance of this part of a girl's life. Consider allowing her to bring a younger sibling to a session or making up for a lesson or workout in her own time.
- In some cases, it might be helpful to organise sport programmes close to water fountains or firewood supply. This allows girls to participate in sport activities and return home with a filled water jug or a load of firewood, which is considered a productive contribution to the household.
- Ask teachers to leave you an hour before school ends to run your sport programme, thereby not taking up the girls' time dedicated to other responsibilities.



## **Personal Safety**

There are few girls who have never feared for their own safety. Across the globe, in urban and rural environments, girls walk home from school with the risk of being robbed, harassed, or assaulted. To participate in a sport programme, girls and their caregivers have to feel safe when travelling to and from trainings and events, and throughout the entire practice and competition. In conflict zones, it is sometimes dangerous for women to simply be outside. It is important for sport programmes to first identify what threats exist to a girl's safety and then devise strategies for protecting girls from those threats.



- Engage female coaches and trainers who can create safe spaces. This can help the girls feel emotionally and physically secure and comfortable within their sport environment. (For more information on creating safe spaces, see the Creating Safe Spaces section of the guide).
- Include girls in the creation and implementation of safeguarding policies within the
  organisation. Girls who know what their rights to safety are can better demand those
  rights when they are lacking. (For more information on child protection policies, see Child
  Protection in the Safe Spaces section of the guide).
- Schedule programme activities at appropriate times of the day (determined by the community, but certainly before dusk).
- Teach girls to recognise potentially dangerous situations or areas in their community.
- Arrange suitable transportation for getting girls to and from programme sites.
- Organise groups to walk home together in order to reduce vulnerability.
- Invite a qualified instructor, preferably a woman, to teach girls basic self-defence skills.
- To avoid fear and suspicion from caregivers, inform them about the time the girls will be home and plan a safe way of getting them there.
- Develop a strategy for communicating with caregivers in case an external emergency arises during a practice or game (i.e., natural disaster or political unrest).
- Consider the choice of the sport facility. It may be necessary for your programme to hold training sessions and events indoors because it may be culturally inappropriate or dangerous for girls to play outside.
- Consider how to grow with girls' safety in mind. For example, as programmes evolve, it is likely that more girls will travel beyond the confines of their community or village to participate in sport or related activities. Their safety must be ensured throughout these changes.



## **Case Study: Free to Run**

<u>Free to Run</u>, a non-profit organisation that supports girls and women in areas of conflict through adventure sports to build their physical, emotional, and social well-being, ensures physical and emotional safety in their programmes by:

- Changing training locations/days in the week to never establish a traceable pattern.
- Focusing on community outreach events and volunteer activities to maintain a
  positive perception of the programmes in the communities where participants
  run and train.
- Following a comprehensive Participant Confidentiality Policy.
- Registering with security organisations to receive the latest updates/advice on movements and locations of conflict.



#### **Female Role Models**

If a girl has never seen women participating in sport, it will be virtually impossible for her to imagine playing herself. When a girl sees a woman who grew up in her region, and who has faced the same challenges she faces, speaking out for herself and walking and playing proudly, that girl's sense of what she can do expands exponentially. When a girl sees a woman who is married or has children still playing sports, she realises that becoming a wife or mother doesn't mean giving up her passions. Strong woman coaches who show just as much understanding and command of a sport as male coaches challenge a common stereotype, often held by girls themselves, that male coaches have more expertise than women.

Girls need role models not only to show them their limitless potential in sport and life, but also to show them how one can achieve success in different ways. Too often, girls only see certain types of role models, limiting their visions for their own potential.



#### Recommendations

- Regularly expose the girls in your programme to positive, strong women role models. Invite successful women, athletes, and community members to be guest speakers or do training sessions with your group.
- Encourage girls to be positive role models for one another by sharing their successes outside
  of sport during group discussions.
- Try making it a policy in your programme to promote woman coaches and leaders, even if it
  means you won't be the team that always wins. By doing this, you are creating an atmosphere of leadership development that sets an example and provides role models from within
  your organisation.
- Use powerful images of strong female role models (in and outside of sport) that can help girls
  visualise who a role model might be. Examples could be to put up posters around your office
  or in changing rooms where girls frequently go. Coaches or facilitators could also start
  sessions showing pictures of powerful females and hold a quick discussion about who they
  are and what they might represent to the group.



## **Government Support**

Sport is a government-sponsored and regulated institution at local, provincial and national levels in many countries. In some places, sport exists almost solely within the context of the government. These governments, often run by a male majority, prioritise sporting opportunities for boys rather than girls. This bias occurs at all levels of government: national, regional and local. In countries where governments do not support sport opportunities for girls, independently run sport programmes fill an important void.

#### **Recommendations**

- Solicit the help of individuals and organisations that can influence policy decisions in order to
  get government support for your programme. Building an alliance or coalition of like-minded
  organisations that speak with one voice shows strength and could have more influence than
  individual organisations with their own messages.
- Find community members, including teachers and caregivers, who support your programme.
- Build a network of citizens, politicians, and business people who will lobby on your behalf.
   Consider including influential women in positions of power in this network, as well as popular athletes who are both men and women.
- Identify and apply for government funding that is relevant to your programme objectives.

For more information on how to engage the government in your sport programme, go to the <u>Community Engagement</u> section of this guide.



## **Case Study: Magic Bus**

Magic Bus, a sport for development organisation in India, has been extremely successful in expanding its programmes by applying for and receiving funding from the government to work in various states across India. By becoming the Knowledge and Implementing partner of the Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports and the Government of India, Magic Bus received the support it needed to go after its goal of reaching 1 million youth in 10 Indian states.



## **Media Coverage**

The media plays a pivotal role in showing, or hiding, the images of strong, healthy female athletes who can serve as role models for younger girls. Girls derive their sense of self, in part, by what they see on the television and in newspapers and magazines. Most mainstream media show women's sport only occasionally or not at all, while providing a daily dose of men's sport. It's no wonder girls are often brought up feeling like strangers to sport. For more information on how to engage media bodies, go to the <a href="Community Engagement">Community Engagement</a> section of this quide.

- Search video collections, newspapers, books and the internet to find news about girls' and women's sport and share it with the girls in your programme.
- Encourage local media outlets to cover women's sport. Write letters, send emails and make phone calls to radio stations and newspaper editors.
- If possible, invite local media to cover your programme, events and participants.
- Take your team to watch local women's sport events if they exist, even if they are not part of a formal league.





## **Case Study: She Is**

<u>She Is</u> is a collective of individuals, sport sector leaders and national sport leagues working together to grow women's sport globally. Through partnerships and advocacy efforts, they aim to achieve the following goals:

- Drive attendance and viewership of women's sports events
- Inspire fans to take action through storytelling
- Centralise resources to contribute to the sustainable growth of women's sports

Two of their initiatives focus on representation of female athletes in the media. <a href="Momento-Worth Watching">Women Worth Watching</a> is a digital space (#womenworthwatching) that highlights female athletes around the world and across a multitude of sports. Through panel discussions, videos, documentaries and social media campaigns, She Is invites everyone to share and promote stories of female athletes on their social media channels. The other initiative, <a href="STEM">STEM in the Stadium</a>, highlights female athletes in STEM careers, or who are using STEM to be successful in their sport.



### Religion

Sometimes religion is used by conservative societies and institutions to prevent females from participating in sport. Religious groups within society selectively appropriate religious texts to demonstrate sport as inappropriate for girls. This often shames families whose daughters play or scares families into barring their daughters from playing out of fear of religious authorities. The reality is that although many religious traditions do dictate appropriate clothing for sport or appropriate spaces, very few, if any, bar girls from playing and participating in sport. In fact, many religions promote sport as a tool for well-being. For more information on how to engage religious leaders, go to the <a href="Engaging the Community">Engaging the Community</a> section of this guide.

- Approach the religious community in your area and present to them the benefits of sport on the mind and body, while showing them that your organisation abides by all rules regarding acceptable clothing or any other culturally or religiously relevant rules, such as separation of women and men. Making sure religious leaders are fully aware of what you are doing helps reduce fears, anxieties and misunderstanding that might exist.
- Ask religious leaders on board with your programme to help educate parents that religion does not forbid sport. Hold a community meeting in which you invite caregivers as well as these religious leaders.



## **Case Study: HODI**

HODI (Horn of Africa Development Initiative) is a community organisation in Northern Kenya that works toward justice and development in the Horn of Africa through advocacy, education, peace building and sustainable livelihoods. One of their programmes, Sport on the Cutting Edge, uses football as a vehicle for life skill building and awareness raising around SRHR and GBV, with a focus on female genital mutilation and cutting. Girls meet up weekly to play football and participate in life skill sessions. A very important part of the programme engages local community leaders, and most importantly, local imams, around the importance of sport and uses them as champions against FGM/C within the community because of their influence.



## **Prejudices and Misconceptions**

Many cultures consider sport to be a male domain. Societies assume that the physical and psychological qualities associated with athleticism, such as strength and competitiveness, are "masculine." When femininity in a culture is associated with being petite or soft, girls are often reluctant to build muscle mass. When girls are condemned for being promiscuous for merely showing their skin in athletic clothing or raising their leg to kick a ball, they are hesitant to participate. These gendered prejudices and misconceptions extend to the role a girl should or should not play in society - and are imposed upon adolescent girls and, over time, adopted by them as well.

- Teach girls, caregivers and community members about the health, economic and social benefits of physical activity for an adolescent girl, to help change perceptions.
- Show images of female athletes or host events where programme participants are able to interact with a champion female athlete who is a positive role model.
- Invite caregivers, teachers and community members to visit the programme in action and to talk about their concerns.
- Create and implement a child protection policy and code of conduct that ensures there are guidelines detailing procedures and processes needed to keep girls emotionally and physically safe in the programme.

- Train coaches and facilitators on the protection policy and code of conduct so that those who
  have the most contact with the girls can work to ensure their safety at all times during the
  programme.
- Talk openly with girls about perceptions of women athletes and encourage them to care more
  about themselves and what makes them happy and less about what others think of them.
  Enlist the support of male athletes, professionals or tribal elders who are respected in the
  community. Their support can help to defuse myths and solicit support from other community
  members.
- Use local pride as a motivator. Point to national or regional women's teams and athletes as examples of women's sporting abilities.

There are also misunderstandings when it comes to sport and its impact on girls' sexual and reproductive health. Some fear that playing sports will cause loss of virginity. A common myth in some cultures is that the physical exertion of sport, such as running, kicking or jumping, will cause the hymen to tear. An intact hymen is erroneously seen as a physical indicator of virginity. In societies where a girl's virginity before marriage is sacred, the threat of sport causing a tear can be a very serious concern.

#### **Recommendations: Fear of Loss of Virginity**

- Inform caregivers about your intention to discuss reproduction with their daughters as part of the sport programme. Once you have the support to have an honest conversation, you can educate girls that the only way to lose your virginity is through sexual intercourse. A girl's hymen tearing is a physiological occurrence that can happen in a variety of ways, only one of them being sexual intercourse. Any pelvic trauma, such as that experienced when climbing a tree, riding a bike or participating in sport, can also cause tearing.
- Encouraging girls to own their bodies and make decisions based <sup>1</sup>on their own well-being as opposed to cultural stigmas and myths is the next step in this conversation. Include caregivers and community members in the conversation, as their fears around their daughters losing their virginity can limit participation.

Girls and society often have misunderstandings about the safety of participating in sport while menstruating. In addition, the cost of sanitary pads and tampons can be prohibitive and not a financial priority for many families, especially in traditional cultures or among economically disadvantaged families. When girls begin to menstruate, they are often confined to their homes and temporarily for totally stop practising sport.



<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>112</sup> Abder-Rahman, H. A. (2009). Hymen care for unmarried Muslim females: role of the forensic consultant in gynecology interventions. Eastern Mediterranean Health Journal, 15. Page 864

Association for Women's Rights in Development (2005). AWID interviews Shiphrah Gichaga of the Forum for African Women Educationalists Kenya Chapter (FAWEK) about the organisation's work in addressing menstruation management to ensure that girls' education is not interrupted by their menstrual periods. By Kathambi Kinoti. Resource Net Friday File Issue 231, June 2005

## Recommendations: Menstruation Prohibiting Participation

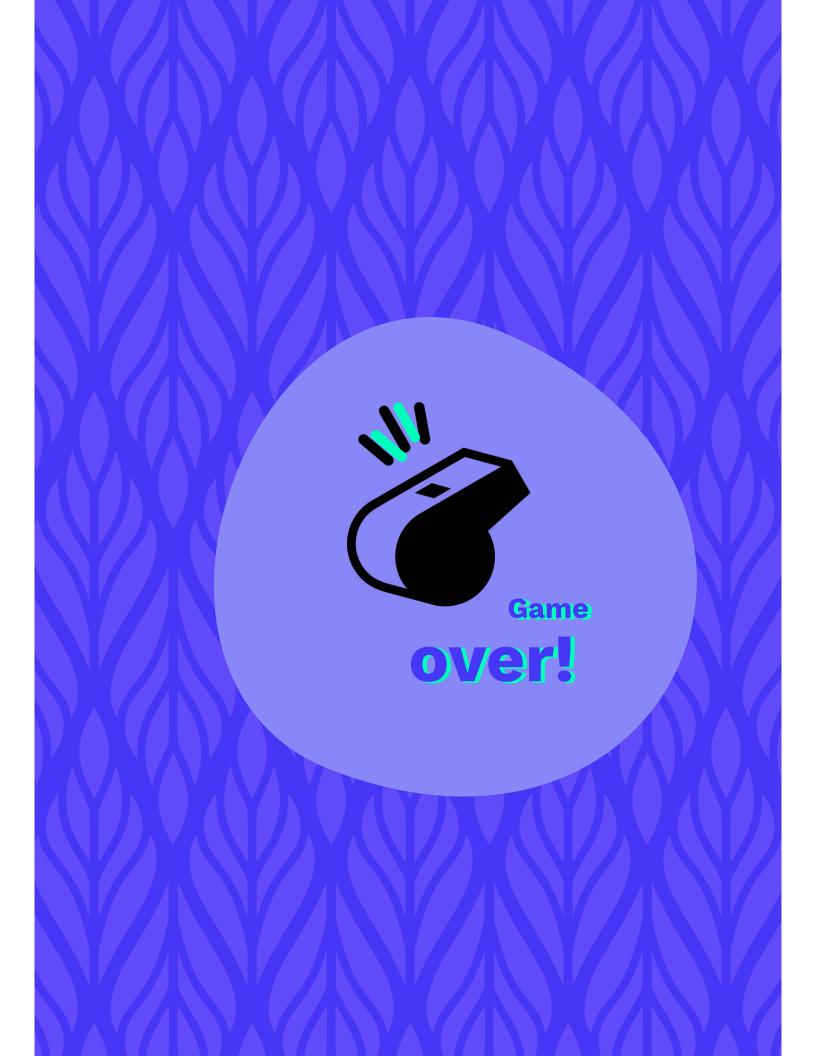
- Teach girls how to manage menstruation while participating in sport. This could include training
  girls about how to use feminine hygiene products, such as sanitary pads, sponges and
  tampons. Encourage girls to use all products safely, including avoiding using tampons for
  prolonged periods of time and being exposed to risk of toxic shock syndrome.
- Consider providing feminine hygiene products for the girls if cost is an issue, or do fundraisers
  as a team to help offset the costs. If a girl cannot find the resources to purchase feminine
  hygiene products, educate them about safe alternatives, such as cloths or sponges.
- Let each girl know it is alright to play sports while menstruating, as long as they do not feel sick.
   Sometimes participation in sport might actually help them feel better. It is equally important for girls to know they can talk to trusted peers and coaches about cramps or other symptoms associated with menstruation without fear of judgement.
- Ask an accomplished female athlete to come and discuss this subject of playing while menstruating with participants.



## **Body Image**

A girl's perception of their own body and their relationship with their body image can influence if they feel confident or comfortable enough to play sport. Many girls are apprehensive to join sport programmes out of fear that they will not look attractive and their bodies will become less "feminine" because of the development of muscles, and therefore they will struggle to find a boyfriend or significant other or ever get married. Also, girls are sometimes not confident enough with their own bodies to participate without feeling ashamed or embarrassed.

- Discuss with participants alternative ideas of beauty. Ask them what the "ideal" woman looks like in their opinion and then ask them to look around and see who in that room has all those characteristics. Point out that this "ideal woman" does not exist and that beauty is not one thing but different things to different people.
- Expose girls to strong female athletes who have gotten married and have families of their own. If these women are accessible in your community, have them talk to girls through visits to schools and youth centres.
- Be patient. Sometimes it takes girls time to develop confidence in their bodies or develop positive self-image. What they need is a positive and encouraging environment free from judgemental comments, teasing, or harassing.



# Sport and Curriculum Design

#### **Purpose**

Designing a successful, girl-centred sport programme can be complex. While interacting with girls and developing bonds between them, you may have to have a few challenging life skills conversations with them; you may need to carefully consider whether your proposed sport of choice is the right fit; and you may be required to evaluate the risks, benefits and values of combining boys and girls.

## Where are you?

This section of the International Guidelines will explore how to approach the development of a successful sport programme for girls.

In this section, you will explore the following topics:

on Using a Life Skills Curriculum

O2 Choosing the Right Sport

Quality of Sport

64 Benefits of Using Competitions, Tournaments, and Events

05 Mixing Genders



## Using a Life Skills Curriculum

A **curriculum**, or a set of sessions that guide facilitators and coaches on teaching a certain skill, idea, or lesson, can be indispensable for organisations working with girls, particularly those who want to put **girls' rights and life skills at the centre of their sport programmes.** A well-designed curriculum can help achieve your sport programme's objectives in a number of ways.



### **Support on Sensitive Topics**

A curriculum gives your coaches and facilitators flexible and adaptable instructions on how to link games and exercises with life skill lessons, as well as how to lead discussions around sensitive topics such as gender-based violence, sexuality, or reproductive health. This is never an easy task, and having written instructions that guide a coach in asking the right questions and providing factual information is extremely useful.



Women Win, with input from programme partners, defines community as all of the stakeholders and community members who influence the lives of the adolescent girls participating in sport programmes. The geographical area that makes up this community differs for every programme; in some cases it may be a village, in some it may be more than one village. This definition not only includes parents, teachers, community leaders, both international and local organisations, peers, and coaches, but also, most importantly, the girls themselves.

Note: This influence or impact may not necessarily be positive.



### **Replicable Training Processes**

Having a standardised curriculum allows you to **expand your programme** and **train coaches and facilitators quickly** since you have a written lesson-by-lesson guide on how to deliver sessions.



## **Standardised Programming**

By using the same curriculum across multiple programme sites, you can **standardise the impact measurement** across all participants. Since they are all following similar sessions that are based on a single curriculum, you can use standard surveys and other tools to measure what they have learned, use it to inform your programming approach, and then share this progress with community groups and stakeholders.

### **Considerations When Using a Curriculum**

The key to successfully using a curriculum is **finding the right curriculum** for your programme, participants, and community. The following considerations are suggestions to think about when deciding which curriculum to use.

#### **Evidence-based**

When searching for a curriculum for your programme, check to see that it builds on global evidence about what works when addressing topics such as gender identity, gender-based violence, and sexual health, and that the information comes from reputable sources, preferably academic or evidence-based.

### **Adaptation**

When choosing a curriculum, the best option is to use something that you can easily adapt to your local context, culture, and age of participants. It is also important to let coaches know that even the best curriculum is not meant to be read word-for-word in front of a group of girls, but rather, it is more of a guide that can be and should be adapted to the programme and its context.



## **Duration of Engagement**

When identifying curricula that fit with your objectives, consider the length of time that your programme will engage each individual girl. The longer that girls are engaged in the sport programme, the more impact a life skills curriculum will have. However, trying to fit too long of a curriculum into too few sessions can result in rushed sessions and limited depth of discussions. Choose what works best for your group and the amount of time they will spend in programming.

### Sensitive Subject Matter

In some cultures and contexts, speaking about sensitive topics such as sexuality, rape, abortion, and reproductive rights can be controversial and put your programme or staff at risk. Ultimately, the goal of using these curricula should be to empower adolescent girls to advocate for and enjoy their rights to dignity, equity, and healthy sexual lives. Progressing towards this goal may mean adapting or emphasising certain sections of the curriculum for political or cultural reasons.



Goal equips girls with the confidence, knowledge and skills they need to be economic leaders in their families and communities. The curriculum is designed for girls aged 12-18 who are living in underserved communities and is typically offered on a weekly basis, over the course of ten months.

Since its launch in 2006, Goal has grown into an internationally-recognised global movement operating in more than 20 countries. Implemented by organisations around the world, the programme teaches girls critical facts about health, communication, rights and managing their personal finances in order to help them transform not just their own lives, but those of their families and friends.<sup>1</sup>



Image source: Goal Programme ToT, Malaysia

## Choosing the Right Sport

The success and sustainability of your programme will depend, in part, on what sport or physical activity you select. While some programmess offer girls a variety of sports to choose from, there are benefits to focusing your programme on a single sport:

Often through school or other community initiatives, girls are given basic introductions to many sports but rarely afforded the opportunity to invest their time and energy in strengthening sport-specific skills.

Consistent participation in a single sport over time and developing their skills can contribute to a girl's sense of accomplishment and growth on and off the playing field.

Go to the Quality of Sport section of this guide for more information on why quality of sport is important for developing the leadership of adolescent girls. Turn to the next page to view some considerations to take into account when choosing what sport your programme will focus on.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> https://www.sc.com/en/sustainability/investing-in-communities/goal/

# Accessing Resources

Conduct a thorough assessment of the resources you need to begin a sport programme. Resources include space (indoors/outdoors), equipment, girls' practice and game attire (uniforms), transportation to and from playing spaces, and availability of coaches. When choosing your sport, be realistic about what tools you have at your disposal or are able to acquire.



# **Case Study: Moving the Goalposts, Kenya**

The selection of football as Moving the Goalposts' programmatic sport was related to the popularity of the sport in the country and the existing infrastructure in the community. Football is a popular sport in Kenya and is also a male-dominated sport. Getting girls to learn and play football is a powerful message for the entire community. The existing infrastructure in the community also made it possible to use the fields in schools and local communities avoided incurring construction costs.

# Choosing Between an Individual or =**Team Sport**



While both individual and team sports can be empowering tools for girls to exercise their right to play and challenge gender norms, there are different benefits to choosing each type of sport for your programme. Regardless of whether you choose an individual sport, such as running, or a team sport, such as netball, it is ideal to combine the positive aspects of both experiences.



Team sport participation encourages cooperation and communication and gives girls a social context or group in which to place themselves. If you are running a team programme, meet with each participant one-on-one, giving each girl time for individual reflection, and hold eachgirl accountable in front of the team.



Individual sport participation encourages girls to learn personal responsibility for outcomes, feel unique, and be able to fully control personal progress. When teaching individual sport, create group cohesion through gatherings and collective results so girls feel like they are part of something greater than themselves.

# Identify What Girls Are Interested In

Ask girls what sport they want to play! This is the single most important aspect of which sport to choose and it will make your programme more successful if you choose a sport the girls in your community are excited about. If you choose a sport that girls are not motivated to play, you will face a daily challenge to get them to participate. Share options that are financially and culturally accessible to guide participants, then allow the girls to make the choice.



Girl Move has adapted its sports programming depending on the availability of female coaches and interest of girls in specific sports. The programme originally began offering rugby and basketball as two participants in their programme were coaches in these sports. Later they incorporated a martial art, Tang Soo Do, because there was a new participant who practised it and could share their knowledge and skills. In 2020, they chose to incorporate dance because of the context of the COVID-19 pandemic and the restrictions on physical contact. This was a critical adaptation, as the opportunity to dance gave young women new forms of expression in a time of greater vulnerability and social distancing.

# Challenging Stereotypes //

Stereotypes around class, gender, and race can exist around many sports. Choosing a sport that challenges a stereotype can be a very positive experience for girls and their community. When girls play a traditionally male-dominated sport, girls and the boys around them experience a transformation in their personal and societal expectations. When community members see girls competing in a sport typically dominated by males, they begin to expand their understanding of girls' capabilities, opening up opportunities for girls to engage in traditional male domains, such as school and work.



However, you must be aware of the potential backlash to choosing a sport that challenges stereotypes. Negative responses could include boys challenging girls outside of the programme and caregivers prohibiting girls from participating. You need to be aware of the impact the challenge could have on the girls' lives, assessing if the sport benefits or harms individuals and the collective group. Once you have identified these factors, assess what is ultimately best for the safety and growth of participants.



# Case Study: Naz Foundation, India

In India, the <u>Naz Foundation</u> chose netball specifically because it was considered a girls' sport and was not a traditional male sport. Rather than trying to force their way into a traditionally male world like cricket or football, the organisation felt the best option for the girls in their programme would be to focus on a sport that wasn't culturally masculine. Eventually, boys started asking the girls if they could teach them to play netball.



Image source: Naz Foundation, India



# Case Study: ChildFund Rugby and Laos Rugby Federation - Pass It Back

The pilot programme of Pass it Back started by offering several sports, but only one of them attracted girls and women: rugby. The lack of knowledge about rugby in Laos, combined with a strong focus on female leadership from the start, brought new opportunities for the programme's growth. Being a new sport strongly promoted by female trainers and coaches for female players, rugby began to be



# Can Your Sport Programme Also Teach Self-defence and Build Physical Strength in Girls?

Strength differences between men and women put girls at risk for being physically abused, beaten, sexually assaulted, or raped. Although most sports build muscle, sports that build speed, confidence and strength can be effective tools for the empowerment of women. Programme leaders of organisations that teach girls boxing and martial arts, such as karate and weightlifting, attest to the benefits of teaching girls about personal strength and self-defence. They note that if a girl has experienced abuse or bodily trauma, self-defence training can be a powerful way to regain control over her body.



Image source: UNICEF

# **Quality of Sport**

There are multiple ways that organisations can design sport programmes for girls, each with different outcomes or experiences for participants. Some organisations choose to offer unstructured or non-competitive programmes to girls in the community, whereas others choose to formalise their sport programmes and offer girls an opportunity to gain skills and play in a competitive environment. Both types of programmes have benefits, and it is up to organisations to understand the needs of the girls in their community as well as the resources available to them. Some organisations choose to include both types of approaches in their programme design, offering all participants a non-competitive environment that introduces them to sport as well as a competitive environment that allows those girls who are interested the opportunity to excel.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> GBV Prevention Network. (2008). Our Strength is the Solution: Communities Can Prevent Sexual Violence. Quick Chats for 16 Days of Activism. Page 3.



Sport is inherently a competitive space, but ethically and in practice, programmes that serve girls most effectively are those that **emphasise wellness over winning**. Girls can benefit greatly from learning how to compete, how to win, and how to lose with grace. However, if your programme's aim is to help strengthen girls off the field, growth and development of the girl must always be considered to be more important than winning or losing.

# **Unstructured or Non-Competitive Programme**

### **Characteristics**

- Sports "buffet" with lots of choices for girls to try different sports and activities.
- Flexible scheduling, irregular or infrequent training.
- Events-based activities, such as sport days or celebrations.
- Play-based programme with low-level instruction of games.
- Unsupervised or led by untrained coaches/teachers without deep sports knowledge.

#### **Benefits**

- Familiarises girls with physical activity and play.
- Non-threatening environment to try new things.
- Generates interest in a lot of sports and activities.
- Few resources needed (equipment, coaches, fields).
- Low/no pushback from parents or community - does not challenge gender stereotypes



### **Formalised Sport Programme**

#### **Characteristics**

- Single sport focus in single site or programme.
- Consistent and frequent sport training over a longer period of time.
- Structured teams that participate in leagues, tournaments, and other sports events.
- Skill-based development emphasised and competition encouraged.
- Practices planned and delivered by trained, qualified coaches.

#### **Benefits**

- Progressive skill development and mastery build girls' confidence.
- Enhanced pride and commitment of being part of a formal sport programme or team.
- Structured environment and sustained skill development optimal for teaching the transferable life skills including discipline, teamwork, learning from mistakes, time management, goal setting, stress management. See more life skills that can be addressed through sport in Adolescent Girls Life Skills.
- Extensive opportunities for leadership practice that give different girls a chance to shine.
- Can create pathways to sport employment, such as professional contracts, coaching, refereeing.



Formalising your sport programme can provide a host of additional benefits that a non-competitive or unstructured programme can't. If you would like to formalise your sport programme, here are some tips to consider:



Choose a single sport in a single site or programme (see Choosing the Right Sport for more tips).



Design your programme with a sport specialist.



Create training pathways for girls with interest/talent in sport (coaching, refereeing) and provide regular opportunities for development.



Support girls' opportunities for sport employment outside of the programme.



Build a gender-friendly sport culture at all levels of your organisation.



Hire qualified, trained coaches.



Provide coaches with national/international certification opportunities.



Encourage coaches/trainers to challenge girls and celebrate accomplishments.



Invite elite/successful female athletes and coaches to visit as guests to encourage girls to invest more time and energy into sport.



Consider proper nutrition options for girls at practices and games.



Invest in equipment, facilities, and clothing to lower barriers to access for girls in your programme.



Partner with existing sport structures: federations, physical education colleges, other sport for development NGOs.



# Case Study: ChildFund Rugby and Laos Rugby Federation - Pass It Back

Pass It Back is a sport for development programme that offers an integrated rugby and life skills curriculum for boys and girls in rural and urban communities in Laos. Their focus on technical rugby skills creates employment and leadership opportunities for participants and alumni. In the Pass It Back programme, participants who go through the curriculum often go onto: be trained as Pass It Back Coaches or LRF staff, start their own clubs or hold club board or leadership positions, be trained as World Rugby qualified Coaches, match officials or medical personnel, or play for the Laos National Team in international competitions.

This broad range of personal and professional development pathways entices young people to continue their involvement and supports them to practise the leadership competencies developed during the Pass It Back curriculum.

# Benefits of Using Competitions, Tournaments, and Events

While much of the technical and life skill building happens in regular training sessions, it can be empowering for girls to test those skills at competitions, tournaments, and events. These competitions can also be excellent opportunities to motivate girls' growth, generate a sense of pride in their team identity, and build enthusiasm around your sports programme. Participants and community members will get the chance to see other girls compete, reinforcing the image of girls as athletes and competitors.

You may choose to organise competitions within your sports programmes (between teams from your programme), or include other local girls' teams as well. They may be held at the community, regional, or even national level, giving opportunities for girls to meet other athletes from different teams and communities.

If done in public, competitions and events allow girls to showcase their skills in front of community members, which can have impacts on both the individual and the community. It is one thing for a girl to practise shooting baskets on her own, but quite another for her family or neighbours to come and watch her score baskets, play defence, celebrate with her team, and share her growth with an audience. Public acknowledgement and celebration of development can accelerate progress inside and outside of the sporting arena.



Image source: Fundación Golees, Costa Rica Community engagement through competitions and tournaments can also encourage the shift of perceptions about girls' participation in sport, as well as facilitate conversation among community members about the value of sport in girls' lives. Gender stereotypes are automatically challenged when community members witness girls participating in activities that are assumed to be reserved for boys.

For more information on using events and other activities to engage the community, go to the Community Engagement section of this guide.

For assessing if your organisation's events are safe for and inclusive for adolescent girls, complete the <u>Safety and Gender Inclusion self-assessments</u>.



# **05** Mixing Genders

By necessity or by choice, there are times when boys and girls are integrated into a sport programme. Common scenarios from our partners include organisations that share resources (such as play space, sport equipment, or coaches), or when a programme originally designed for boys decides to add a component for girls. This section will explore the benefits and risks of the combination of boys and girls in sport programmes and provide recommendations on how to effectively integrate these groups.

It is important to **be intentional when mixing genders** and recognise that simply adding girls into an existing boys' programme without **considering their unique needs** could be harmful for the girls as well as the boys. Research shows that when girls' and boys' bodies change during adolescence, the playing field becomes unequal in many sports. In life skills sessions, girls and boys should have their own spaces to discuss sensitive issues if they come up or are part of the curriculum.



You should carefully consider before mixing genders, making sure that the girls and their needs aren't marginalised in the process.

# Understanding Gender Roles



what do we mean by 'gender'?

The term 'gender' refers to the set of social attributes and opportunities associated with being male and female, and the socially constructed norms and ideologies which determine the behaviour and actions of men and women.

When considering mixing boys and girls in a sport programme, it is critical to first recognise the power dynamics and imbalances that exist between genders in most societies. Gender relations involve a system of power relationships between women and men in the context of socio-cultural definitions of masculinity and femininity and economic relations. In many societies, the system of gender relations gives power and privilege to men and discriminates against women.

A child's sex usually determines his or her gender role, expectations, tasks and responsibilities, and personal belief in his or her potential. Characteristics of gender roles vary greatly across cultures, as does the distribution of resources, decision making power, and economic privilege between men and women. However, across cultures, girls are often given fewer opportunities, less access to public spaces, and less power than male peers.

To effectively integrate girls and boys in programmes, you need to have a complete understanding of the social distribution of power and social expectations of both genders for the culture in which you are working.

### Recommendations

Recommendations and experiences for mixing boys and girls in a sport programme are often defined by conditions and intentions. How you should handle introducing boys to an existing girls' programme is different than how you would handle adding girls to an existing boys' space, although many of the same principles of equity, respect and communication remain the same.

The following information is most relevant for:

- Those who have been operating a sport programme for boys and want to add, improve or expand a component for girls.
- Those who have been operating a sport programme for girls and choose to integrate boys, either on account of limited resources or to help promote growth for all children.
- Newly established programmes designed with the intention of mixing boys and girls.



Consider integrating slowly, inviting the new group to attend sessions occasionally at first and then with more regularity when both groups are comfortable with the presence of the other. Girls must feel comfortable in their teams, playing their sport, and communicating with one another and coaches before introducing boys into the programme. Similarly, if you are adding girls to a programme that was formerly only for boys, it is important to talk to boys about why girls are being added. If integrated too early or hastily, girls or boys can feel threatened and intimidated, thereby stunting opportunities for growth.



### Consider the Age of the Groups you Intend to Integrate in your Programme

In various countries around the world, children's sport is often mixed-gender, with girls and boys playing alongside each other on the same teams. However, as girls and boys hit adolescence, their bodies change in different ways, making it difficult for them to play together. This transition to adolescence is a scary, confusing and emotional time for both boys and girls. Research shows that when girls turn 14, they drop out of sport at two times the rate of boys, particularly when the teams are mixed-gender. Although mixed-gender teams may be great ideas for girls and boys at a young age, as they both enter their teens, it is important for an organisation to recognise girls may need their own space and/or their own teams so as not to stop playing completely.



### Position Girls in Leadership Roles

It is important to **demonstrate that girls are capable of being strong leaders**, and to ensure they have opportunities to gain this experience, particularly in the presence of boys who may try to assume leadership positions in the programme. According to Women Win programme partners, it is not uncommon for girls to be shy and reluctant to be vocal or volunteer in front of boys due to social or cultural norms. Position girls in places of power whenever possible by giving them the opportunity to be team captains, teach skills to younger boys and lead discussions.





At <u>Boxgirls</u>, in Nairobi, Kenya, boys are invited to train with the girls from time to time, in part due to limited gym space. Coaches will have a more experienced female boxer instruct a less experienced, younger male boxer. This encourages the boy's respect for the girl's mental and physical skill, while building the girl's confidence in herself and her abilities.



### Case Study: Sadili Oval

At <u>Sadili Oval</u>, in Nairobi, Kenya, young tennis players train to be the best they can be. Girls and boys alike come every day to improve skills, get stronger and become well-rounded athletes. Director Dr. Liz Odera, a former professional tennis player, believes that girl-boy integration is the ideal set up for a sport programme, primarily because this is how we all live in society. Once a girl has established a feeling of comfor and confidence at Sadili Oval, she is encouraged to play matches against athletes of similar skill level, boys or girls.



# **Case Study: Naz Foundation**

In the <u>Naz Foundation</u>'s Goal Programme in India, female Goal Champions lead select life skills sessions as well as teaching netball skills to boys who would hand around during the girls' practices. Coaches realised that the boys wanted to know how to play netball because it was something new to them, netball being traditionally a girls' game. One coach used girls in her programmes who were leaders to teach those boys how to play netball and lead them through selected life skills sessions as well.



### **Maintain a Safe Space**

A primary focus of every sport programme for girls should be maintaining a safe space. **This means that all children must feel emotionally and physically safe and comfortable at all times.** In some communities, this might mean allowing girls to wear long pants while playing in the presence of boys if wearing shorts around boys is socially prohibited. You should monitor this carefully and proactively address any indications that girls are uncomfortable or becoming hesitant or reserved. It might also be necessary to create a participants' code of conduct, which ensures both boys and girls understand the need for respect. For more information, see the <u>Safe Spaces</u> section.



# **Facilitate Sensitive Discussions Separately**

While there are some discussion topics for which it can be beneficial and important to share with mixed-gender groups (such as health, gender roles, communication, leadership, and economic empowerment), there are others (such as sexuality, abuse, and menstruation) which are more sensitive and should be carefully facilitated. The type of subjects that are "sensitive" depends on culture, context, and level of trust between boys and girls.

These important conversations might not be happening in school or at home, and both girls and boys can benefit from factual education and a safe space to explore sensitive issues. You should consider the environments in which to have sensitive discussions, and that single-sex environments may lead to more productive discussions, where girls can feel free to talk openly, ask questions and insert personal experiences into conversations. The presence of members of the opposite sex can inhibit this freedom and even make girls more shy about opening up, for fear of being judged.



## Be Mindful About Mixed-Gender Physical Activity

Depending on the age of participants, there can be significant differences in boys' and girls' physical strength and aggression, particularly during and after puberty. **Having girls and boys play against each other can actually reinforce gender power dynamics and disempower girls.** In programmes where girls are being integrated into existing boys' teams, you need to carefully consider if girls are physically and emotionally safe competing against boys, or if they need their own groups.

When considering integration, there is **no hard rule** for when it is or is not appropriate for girls and boys to compete alongside and against one another. What matters is that you and your coaches pay close attention to the physical safety of girls and ensure that girls are not playing with greater reservation when competing with boys. It can be helpful to ask girls if they want to play with and against boys; coaches should honour their decision.



Partners have shared with us that unsuccessful integration of boys and girls in a sport programme can lead to a reinforcement of unequal power dynamics and girls' feelings of sporting inadequacy. For example, if a coach rewards boys for passing to girls during a football game, he unintentionally reinforces the notion that girls are inferior to boys and would not receive passes unless others are forced to pass them the ball.



### **Conduct Follow-up Discussions**

Give girls the opportunity to debrief about their interactions with boys, both on the field and in programme discussions. Ask them how they felt, what was different, and what they thought about sharing their space with boys. Reflection will give coaches important information about what to do differently and give girls the opportunity to express themselves and experience a level of control over their programme.

It is also important to **conduct follow-up talks with boys.** This enables coaches to gain an understanding of the ways in which boys learn from the process and help answer their questions, address their concerns and guide their experiences. **Give feedback to both boys and girls on their different perceptions of the experience.** This helps them understand each other better. Both coaches and participants need to understand gender dynamics. A successfully integrated program can be a positive breakthrough moment for boys with regards to the physical abilities of the girls, as well as a self-realisation of strength and ability for girls.

### The Potential Value of Integration



Mixed-gender sport participation can have a positive impact on girls' development, and should be considered when designing sports programmes for girls. While there are likely other benefits, the following is a list of reported positive outcomes when partners organisations mixed boys and girls in sport sessions and life skills discussions.

### Empowering Girls in the Presence of Boys

Although they may be shy at first when participating or speaking up in front of boys, girls find increased confidence in themselves when they are able to demonstrate their skills and strength in front of male peers.

### Changing the Perspective Girls and Boys have of Each Other

Communities and individuals are at risk when girls and boys are not educated about life skills and gender dynamics. For example, if children do not understand how and why to prevent the spread of HIV/AIDS, they are more likely to spread infection. If a boy sees girls being treated poorly, and no one speaks up against it, he will do the same. However, if girls and boys are encouraged to treat each other with respect and question societal gender norms, it can spur peer-led empowerment and the challenging of unequal and destructive power dynamics.

### Facilitating Positive Cross-Gender Communication

Social cues teach boys and girls over time how they should communicate with one another. When a boy hears their father say disparaging things to their mother, they learn something about what is an acceptable way to talk to women. Conversely, if they are taught to be respectful, honest and open with women, their communication and treatment of girls outside of that environment is likely to improve. Sport programmes can give girls and boys the tools to talk about sensitive issues, handle conflict respectfully, and use appropriate language in a protected and equitable environment. This can have wide-reaching, positive ramifications outside of the playing field.

### Diffusing Potential Gender-based Challenges

When boys see girls participating in sport, receiving uniforms, instruction, and attention, they are likely to become curious. If they are not included, boys can become jealous and challenge girls physically and emotionally when girls leave training. In this way, sport programmes can actually escalate instances of gender-based violence and abuse. If boys are invited occasionally to see what is happening in the sport programme sessions and educated about why girls are playing sport, they may become allies with the programme and be less likely to make jealousy-inspired challenges. In fact, inviting a boys' team to come and support girls at a game or event can be a powerful statement and affirm a girl's participation in the programme.



## **Case Study: MIFUMI**

Programme partner MIFUMI (Uganda), uses karate and taekwondo to educate girls about domestic violence and empower them physically and emotionally against it. When the programme began, project coordinators reported that boys were physically attacking girls on their way home from training. They were uneducated in martial arts and wanted to show the girls that they, too, could fight. Programme coordinators made the decision to include boys occasionally to educate them about the non-violent principles of martial arts to help keep girls safe



# **Engaging Girls in Sport**

### **Purpose**

When designing a sport programme, it's **critical to identify the girls who will be targeted** by the programme, how they will be supported throughout the programme, and how they will continue to stay engaged.

# Where are you?

This section of the International Guidelines will present questions and strategies to guide you through recruiting girls, creating intentional girl-centred leadership development opportunities, and retaining participants in your programme.

In this PDF, you will explore the following topics:

1 Recruiting Girls

Developing Girls' Leadership

03 Encouraging Participation and Retention



# Recruiting Girls

### **Step 1: Identify the Potential Participant**

Identifying the target participant group is critical to designing a sport programme that serves their needs. Clear identification of the **characteristics of the "type"** of girl you are looking for builds a solid foundation for serving them.

Key questions to ask can include:



Who do you want to participate?



Are they HIV-affected?



Why do you want them to participate?



Do they have a disability?



Are the girls from a rural or urban environment?



Do they have caretaking duties within their family that might restrict their participation?



How far away from the programme headquarters or playing fields do they live?



Are they in school or does their family have enough money to send them?



How old are they?



### **Step 2: Assess Capacity**

Once you have identified who will benefit most from your programme, **evaluate how many girls you want to be able to work with, and how often.** Think about how many girls the infrastructure can accommodate, and consider availability of coaches, time, space, uniforms, food, permits and all other necessary resources.



**Be realistic.** Overestimating how many girls you can serve can result in participants not experiencing the full benefits of participation. You can always recruit more girls or rely on girls to bring their friends if your numbers are low. However, it's very difficult to turn girls that you've recruited away if you find that you have overestimated your capacity.

### **Step 3: Create and Execute a Strategy**

Recruiting girls for your programme can be extremely challenging. It's unlikely that you will just walk up to an informal game of football and find large numbers of girls waiting to join your sport programme. For reasons of safety and family responsibilities, girls are more likely to be closer to home than boys, who are often more free to travel further away from home. It helps to have a clear, **intentional plan** for how you are going to identify and recruit girls.

Effective strategies are based on knowing exactly who you want to reach, where they are, what will motivate them to participate, and who makes decisions for them if they are not permitted to make them for themselves. Every programme's recruiting strategy will be unique. For some, creating an after-school partnership with a local primary school could be effective. For others, finding a team of participants might require months of going door-to-door, building relationships with community leaders, caregivers and girls.

WHO you want to reach + WHERE they are + WHAT they want = Effective Strategy for Engaging Girls

### **Ideas for Recruiting Girls**

Designing a strategy for recruiting girls will depend on the particular cultural context of where the sport programme takes place. However, there are some general tips that feedback from partners has shown to be relevant for sport programmes across the globe.

### **Recommendations**

- Understand and address all barriers to participation.
- Word-of-mouth is a powerful recruitment tool. Encourage girls to bring their friends.
- Create partnerships with schools, religious institutions or other groups that serve girls.
- Host tournaments and pass out information or have current members share.
- Meet with community leaders. Ask for their influence in spreading positive word about the programme.
- Go door-to-door. Explain programme benefits and details to girls and their families. Solicit the help of trusted community women, as they might be more openly received in their neighbours' homes.

- Give financial incentives, when possible. If a girl can earn extra money by providing a service for the programme, such as cleaning uniforms or officiating, their caregivers might be more likely to support their participation.
- Advertise constantly. Post a sign outside your training facility. Wear programme t-shirts and encourage girls to do the same. Speak about the benefits of sport in the lives of girls to anyone who is willing to listen.
- When recruiting girls, rather than doing a general meeting to see who comes and signs up, advertise a try-out or selection day. This creates a sense of competition that could motivate the girls to come and feel as if they have "earned" a spot in the programme. However, this must be carefully considered since creating a competitive atmosphere could also alienate girls who have never played sports and/or have low self-esteem, even if they are already guaranteed a spot.

# Consider 💠

Ask caregivers to fill out applications or simple entry forms for girls who want to join your sport programme. This provides written consent and ensures that the organisation has contact information in case of an emergency. If photos will be taken of girls during training, make sure to include this in the consent form, as in some cases photos compromise the personal safety of participants.

# Developing Girls' Leadership

Girls' leadership development can and should be an important part of programme design. Creative programme leaders and coaches find subtle ways to facilitate this process and support all forms of leadership. It's important to recognise that there are many leadership models and styles, and not all girls will demonstrate leadership in the same way. While traditional patriarchal forms of leadership rely on command and control, participants may value a more inclusive and empowering approach of shared leadership or servant leadership.

One of the most powerful ways to build leadership skills in girls is to put them in leadership roles and give them the power to make decisions collectively. When girls are expected to lead, they find power within themselves they might not know existed. This can come in the form of formal positions or informal relationships between girls. This, in turn, increases the potential for these girls to grow as leaders in their communities.

# **♦** Consider

Beyond the individual and collective benefits of dedicating time to leadership development for girls, building leadership skills creates a pool of potential coaches, facilitators and female leaders for your sport programmes. To learn more about ways to entrench leadership pathways and skill building in your programme design, go to the Leadership and Economic Empowerment Guideline.



# Case Study:

Watch this video to find out about how a group of young women from Women Win partner organizations in Asia and Africa came to build their leadership muscles.



### **Tips for Developing Leadership**

- Be patient. Leadership is a skill that is developed over time. Ask girls what they are good at and how they want to build their skills and confidence. Encourage them to lead their own development.
- Allow girls to elect their own leaders or leadership structures.
- Highlight examples of good leadership on and off the playing field.
- Let girls train others in sport-specific. practical and life skills.
- Show girls you value their opinions.
- Explicitly talk about and encourage discussions about leadership values to girls regularly.
- Support positive role modelling.
- Allow girls to choose if they want to fill leadership roles.

- Give all girls opportunities to lead during practice, not just older, talented. non-disabled or more natural leaders.
- Constantly encourage goal setting and evaluation.
- Recognise barriers to leadership, such as lack of confidence, peer pressure or poor mentoring, and address them.
- Seek to help every girl develop to their highest personal potential, as opposed to criticising or comparing girls to one another.
- Recognise quiet leadership in girls: those who are not outspoken or loud, but rather, those who will always run the extra lap with the slowest girl on the team.

# Girl-Led Design



Leadership, personal empowerment, and decision-making power are closely linked. Programme partners report that when a girl feels like they have control over decisions concerning their body, their future and their environment, they begin to feel strong and powerful. It is important to give your participants some degree of control over the design of the programme, especially when the objective is to increase girls' self-esteem and leadership skills. Girls are more likely to fully engage in activities that they help design.

> Leadership **Personal Empowerment Decision-Making Power**

# Tips for How to Engage Girls in Programme Design

- Allow girls to exercise ownership over their shared spaces. They can choose paint colours and create posters for the space where their sessions are held.
- Ask girls to vote on how they would like to be grouped for competitions, for example, by age, by region or by skill level.
- Give girls the choice of uniform colours and team names.

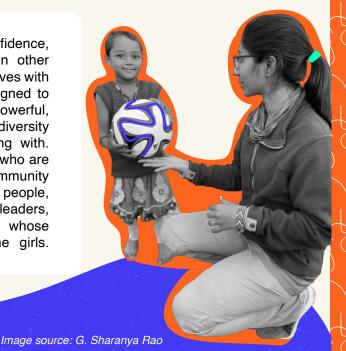
- Consult with girls and their families about time and duration of practices and training sessions.
- Ask girls to create rules of conduct for sessions and penalties for breach of conduct.
- Pick a group of girls to interview and evaluate potential coaches.
- Ask girls which sport they would like to play.
- Ask girls which life skills topics they would like to discuss.

### The Power of Role Models

Girls are exposed to both positive and negative role models every day. All of these people affect how a girl views their own potential. These are the people who girls use as references for who they will become and whose behaviour they will emulate.



It helps for a girl to see confidence, leadership and accomplishment in other women in order to envision themselves with those qualities. A programme designed to empower girls must provide powerful, positive role models that reflect the diversity of the community you are working with. Strong role models can be women who are older, skilled athletes, coaches, community leaders, successful business people, celebrities, politicians, religious leaders, confident peers, or any woman whose experience will resonate with the girls.



When you ask a girl who their role models are, often they will mention an international celebrity or fictional character. Although there is power in exposing girls to women who are international heroines, there is also power in exposing them to local people. A key component to presenting girls with role models is to make sure the success experienced by the role models is attainable and replicable in their minds. Research has shown that when individuals feel that a role model they look up to has attained a status unreachable to them (a celebrity winning an international prize for example), this can be demoralising. If possible, find role models who exemplify an area in which girls have an interest and where they need help in personal development. Find a person who can share their personal experience with personal growth in that area. Men can certainly serve as positive role models; however, there is an inherent value in same-gender role modelling.

# Tips for Creating Opportunities for Girls to Learn from Role Models

- Organise events where role models speak to girls about their experiences
- Try to pair up individual girls with older mentors with the intention of creating long-lasting relationships.
- Take girls to see athletic events with older participants. Arrange a meet -and-greet afterwards to allow girls to interact with players.
- Set up guest coaching sessions with successful coaches from your region.
- Ensure that all those in positions of power within the organisation are serving as positive role models for participants.

- Seek role models outside of the sporting arena. Invite a successful businesswoman or female politician to come to the programme and speak to the girls.
- Consider inviting men or women with a disability to come and speak, as they often have a powerful impact on girls with and without disabilities.
- Discuss the concept of "negative role modelling" with girls, i.e., simply because a person is successful does not mean that they are worthy of being a role model. Challenge girls to evaluate virtues, values and expectations related to these role models.

Image source: OWLA Program, Empodera, Brazil



# Case Study: ♦ Fondo Centroamericano de **Mujeres (FCAM)**

FCAM, an organisation based in Nicaragua, uses peer-to-peer education groups in their women's camps, which provide adolescent girls the opportunity to explore issues that affect their lives through gender, inter-generational and feminist perspectives. The objective is to open spaces for reflection so that girls can build new kinds of relationships together (peer-to-peer), based on their experiences in their organisations and as individuals, with a deep analysis of how power relationships can arise.

# Encouraging Participation and Retention

Fundamentally, for girls to participate and stay in a sport programme, the **programme** must meet girls' emotional, personal and physical needs, encouraging their growth and addressing barriers that impede involvement and retention.

# Motivation 4



There are countless strategies for motivating a girl to participate in a sport programme. These vary based on age, sport, geographic region, and the individual. Programme directors and coaches often want to give girls every possible incentive to play. However, with limited resources, sometimes our partners have had to make difficult choices about which incentives will yield the greatest results relative to cost. For example, you might have enough money in the project's budget to provide uniforms for 25 girls, but not enough money to provide transportation to competitions.



### **Tips for Motivating Participation**



#### Recognise and Reward

Publicly reward girls based on leadership, performance and initiative. Recognition can be a physical award, such as a certificate or trophy, a privilege, or simply verbal recognition in front of the group by a coach or leader. Recognition can happen informally throughout practices and sessions, or formally during a regularly scheduled event, such as an annual awards banquet. Be open and explicit about how other girls can win rewards, so they have clear and tangible goals.

### Give Girls Leadership Roles

Giving girls leadership roles in daily sessions, at events or within the organisation encourages girls to set goals and work hard to reach them. There is no better way to teach girls how to lead than to actually let them do it and learn by experience.

# Offer non-economic incentives

Offer non-economic incentives for participation such as small prizes, clothing or equipment. Some programmes provide a "membership card" that is stamped each time a participant attends a practice or a programme activity. A chart posted on the wall tracks attendance, and then the programme can award prizes for different levels of participation. Prizes such as hair elastics or pencils would require fewer participation stamps, and boots or tennis racquets could be earned for more.

#### Keep it Fresh

A primary motivator for playing sport is simply having fun. Girls around the world are weighed down with daily responsibilities that require them to behave beyond their years. The practice of simply playing with peers can be incredibly healing and liberating. When you and your coaches put the emphasis on fun, girls respond.

### Provide Economic Incentives

Provide economic incentives. Giving girls a chance to earn and manage money are skills that will serve them beyond the playing field and might convince caregivers to allow them to participate. Some programmes have had success in retaining girls by offering them a chance to earn money within the programme. For example, girls can get paid small sums for cleaning, officiating, or coaching. Others have used small sums of money as part of leadership schemes. You can also introduce them to vocational training and non-formal education opportunities, and schedule practices during times when girls do not have to work.

### Make it Meaningful

Make it meaningful. Girls need to consciously see the value of a sport programme prior to making a commitment. For some, this can be simply about having fun and feeling carefree while at practice. For others, it is in making new friends, learning new skills, building physical strength or feeling a heightened sense of possibility.

### Consider

Although there are many positive ways to provide economic incentives for girls to participate in sport programmes, there are also negative and harmful practices that could create a culture or atmosphere where girls only come if there is a financial incentive. Try not to hand out money just for simple participation. Girls should be there because they love sport and want to exercise. Making it easier for them and their family financially so they can participate is important, but simply providing money for showing up sends the wrong messages. Also, staff must be careful when finding employment for the girls in the sport programme, taking care not to reinforce or promote child labour or exploitation of participants.

### **Basic Needs**

The following is a list of basic needs for a successful sport programme. Each need is discussed in terms of "the minimum" and "the ideal". If your programme cannot ensure that each girl is receiving the minimum recommended, you need to reconsider its design so it is not a threat to your participant's well-being.

#### 1. Clean Water and Food

Sport participation demands that participants are properly nourished and hydrated. A girl without enough calories in their system is less likely to be able to physically perform and focus than a girl who has their nutritional needs met. In economically disadvantaged communities, girls might not be getting their dietary needs met at home; in this case provision of food and water at your sport programme is absolutely necessary.

#### **The Minimum**

Provide clean drinking water and make sure that girls have enough calories in their systems for physical exertion. If girls are malnourished or dehydrated, they should not be playing sport without being given food or water, as it can further jeopardise their health. Educate girls on the importance of drinking water and eating healthy foods when participating in sport.

#### The Ideal

Provide all girls with nutritious snacks, juices and clean drinking water at training sessions and events.





One of the participants at Sadili Oval, in Nairobi, Kenya, fainted one Monday morning when they arrived to train. Until that incident, no one knew that they were living on their own. They were not able to eat on weekends, as their only source of food was at school and what was provided at Sadili Oval. Girls cannot participate safely without being given nutritious food.

### 2. Athletic Clothing

If a girl does not have comfortable and sport-appropriate clothing, they will not be able to fully participate in a sport programme. If they are expected to run, they need running shoes; if they are playing field hockey, they need shin guards. Beyond function and performance, uniforms often give girls a sense of pride and belonging. Often it is possible to secure donations for sportswear, but when resources are scarce, you must improvise, for example getting girls to share uniforms if they aren't playing at the same time. If there is not enough money for full uniforms, girls can wear practice jerseys over their blouses.

#### The Minimum

Ensure girls have functional and culturally appropriate clothing and are not in danger of injury or social ostracism for participating in the clothing they have available.

#### The Ideal

Provide sport-specific uniforms, footwear, bras and underwear for all participants.



# Consider \*



Once girls reach puberty, undergarments become extremely important for sport participation. For example, a supportive sports bra is critical for girls participating in running sports. Without one, girls may experience pain from bouncing breasts and are less likely to want to run. Underwear is equally important, as it enables girls to use sanitary pads or other materials to manage their menstruation. Any sport programme aimed at serving adolescent girls effectively must address the issue of ensuring all girls have both a bra and underwear.

### 3. Safe Space to Change Clothes

Girls typically need to change out of street clothes and into sportswear prior to playing sport. Providing safe, private spaces in which to change is vital for participation. In the absence of such spaces, girls will either opt not to change their clothes (and play in inappropriate attire) or wear their sport clothes outside of the programme, which can put them at risk of assault or social ostracisation for breaking social codes related to gender-appropriate dress.

#### **The Minimum**

Access to a toilet and a place to change that is lockable and off-limits to males during the time the girls are using it. Ensure it is accessible to girls with disabilities.

#### The Ideal

A separate girls-only facility for changing and cleaning up near training/competition space.



Some girls, despite having a safe space to change and access to proper training kits, might not feel comfortable changing clothing to play sports. If the goal is to get girls to participate, it's best not to force those girls to change. Let them play. However, it can be helpful to talk with them about the benefits of wearing comfortable shoes and clothing, and explore their reasons for not wanting to change.

### 4. Transportation

Getting to and from training sessions can be a costly and dangerous predicament for girls. If participants do not have a safe, affordable and reliable method of transportation, the longevity and consistency of a girl's participation will be affected. Some of our partner programmes organise girls in groups so they can walk home together safely through neighbourhoods they don't feel safe in. Other organisations give girls fare for minibuses or hire buses for the girls' transportation to and from events. When considering transportation, be sure to create safe, low-cost provisions for regular training sessions as well as for games, tournaments and events.

#### **The Minimum**

Ensure that girls can travel, by foot or transport, to and from training safely and affordably.

# The Ideal 💠



Alleviate cost and safety concerns by running a programme near girls' homes or at a school that girls already attend and do not need to travel to. When this is not possible, provide necessary transportation.

#### 5. Menstruation

There is a lot of social stigma about menstruation, and girls are unlikely to attend a sport programme if they fear the possibility of bleeding in front of others. This can be a major barrier to initial and ongoing participation for girls who don't have the means or knowledge to manage menstruation. Your sport programme can educate girls about their menstrual cycle and you should also consider providing menstruation supplies. It can be very helpful to have a health provider come and talk to participants about menstruation as well.

#### The Minimum

Provide education about hygienic menstrual management and bathroom facilities for girls near sport spaces.

#### The Ideal

Provide girls with education, bathroom facilities and sanitary pads.



# 6. Reputation and Effectiveness of Programme

Strong sport programmes that provide girls with role models, safe spaces and growth opportunities will continue to grow without endless recruiting efforts. If a girl is meeting their own goals, is having fun and feeling inspired by their time within the programme, they will do everything in her power to continue participating. They are also more likely to recruit other friends to join a programme that is meeting their needs.

#### **The Minimum**

Try to keep girls in the sport programme for at least an entire year.

### The Ideal 💠



Run programmes so that girls are exposed to sport and life skills for more than four years, allowing them to grow and learn in a safe environment at a critical time in their adolescence.

# Consider \*

The duration of participation is a key factor in determining how beneficial a sport programme will be for a girl. Every girl is different, but, generally speaking, the longer a girl participates, the more opportunity they have for growth. Several programme partners agree that girls need to be involved for no less than one year to enjoy the benefits of participation.

#### 7. Home Duties

One of the most common reasons girls leave sport programmes is because it conflicts with family responsibilities or values. Girls are often expected to care for siblings and elders, cook, clean and contribute to the family's income. When conflicts between your sport programmes and those duties arise, it's very difficult for a girl to choose themselves over their commitment to her family. Additionally, family disagreement over priorities can curtail a girl's participation in your programme.

It is critical that you think about operating programmes to fit within the context of a girl's family life. This can mean scheduling practices and events around chores and farming schedules, allowing girls to bring siblings to practice, or making sure girls have the energy to help around the house once they leave a practice. It's equally important to communicate regularly and transparently with caregivers about a girl's activities and progress, to help caregivers see the positive benefits of sport participation.

#### The Minimum

Be conscious of a girl's responsibilities at home and to their family, letting them leave training early or skip certain days when they conflict with their family work.

### The Ideal 🔷



Schedule trainings and games around a girl's family responsibilities and chores they do at home, allowing girls to be able to attend all activities related to the programme.

# **Group Cohesion**

An important part of keeping girls in a programme and making sure the atmosphere is comfortable and open to all is good group cohesion, or positive group dynamics. A group atmosphere in which girls feel comfortable to be themselves, say what they think, and respect all voices is ideal for any sport programme — however, this is not always as easy as it sounds.

Often, bullying and feelings of superiority can be big problems, especially if you have groups that mix social class, nationality, ethnic backgrounds, or even just different neighbourhoods and schools. If there is no group cohesion, or some girls feel threatened by others in the programme, they will not speak up or fully engage in sessions and could eventually decide not to come back, preferring to avoid the group and forget sport.



### **Recommendations**

- Monitor girls who are more dominant in discussions and during sessions. If you see
  the dominance being displayed in abusive or negative ways rather than through
  positive and healthy ways, pull that girl aside and talk to them about their behaviour.
- Break up cliques when you see them forming, so that all girls partner or form groups with girls they do not know or are not necessarily close to during training. Play games in which those girls must rely on each other to win, forming a bond through competition.
- Help girls talk through conflict resolution.
- Stop gossip and rumours from circulating. Have a discussion with the girls about the damage that gossip or rumours cause.
- Refrain from playing favourites. It is great to reward girls and encourage girls who
  are natural leaders and show good behaviour; however, constantly favouring some
  girls over others can cause jealousy and conflict in the group.



Informal time before or after a training session can often be a critical period of time in which a coach can form strong bonds with their players and gain their trust. This unstructured time could be valuable for coaches to discuss life issues with players while juggling a ball, shooting hoops, or just sitting on the grass and waiting for everyone to arrive. Interviews with our partner coaches have shown that girls feel more free to open up, ask for advice and discuss things bothering them in life the more time they spend with the coach before and after practice, outside of the structured curriculum or training session. This gives the coach more opportunities to act as a mentor and give valuable advice and information to that participant.

However, unstructured and informal time is not always positive. If no one is monitoring them, coaches can take this time and use it in ways that could harm the girls, either through fostering inappropriate relationships or favouring some girls over others. As an organisation, it is important to think through creating this informal or unstructured time for your coaches and players to interact and ensure that the time is a positive thing for the players.

### **Recommendations**

- Ensure that if there is unstructured time before or after practices, that male coaches
  are always accompanied by woman coaches or another female adult. Do not let
  male coaches meet with female players before or after practice alone.
- As an organisation, pay coaches a little bit extra to come 30 minutes before practice and stay 30 minutes after, giving them the opportunity to interact with players who come early and those who leave late.





# **Coach Development**

All over the world, more and more girls are getting engaged in sport and play. But research shows **that girls start sports later and drop out earlier than boys**, which can be a **result of gendered expectations** of girls and women, family or **community responsibilities**, or negative experiences with sport. This has **negative effects** on girls' ability to reap the benefits of playing sports and leads to them **missing opportunities to develop important life skills**. Coaches play a huge role in addressing the barriers that girls face to getting involved and staying engaged with sport.

# Where are you?

This section of the International Guidelines will explain the importance of coach development in the success of sport programmes for girls.

In this PDF, you will explore the following topics:

- 01 Importance of a Good Coach
- O2 Coaching Approach
- 03 Importance of Woman Coaches
- 1 The Impact of having Woman Coaches
- 05 Recruiting Women Coaches
- 06 Tools and Resources for Coach Development
- 07 Allyship



<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Zarrett, N., Veliz, P.T., & Sabo, D. (2020). Keeping Girls in the Game: Factors that Influence Sport Participation. New York, NY: Women's Sports Foundation.

# 01 Importance of a Good Coach

The success of a girls' sports programme lies in the hands of coaches and their approach to coaching. **Coaches are the main source of interaction with girls**, and can make all of the difference in how the girls experience the programme. Inspiring coaches will not only help girls develop sport skills but also be able to show participants how they can **transfer their experience in sport into empowering life skills**.

A strong life skills and sport coach should be:



Inspiring and supportive



Reflective of participants' community



Able to make sport fun and accessible for all participants



Able to connect sport to important life skills



A strong facilitator who is able to navigate sensitive and complex issues that affect the daily lives of participants



Knowledgeable of where to find resources on sensitive topics



However, many coaches in sport for development programmes are not adequately trained or prepared for their objectives. Often elite sport coaches, who may have expertise in technical training and sporting excellence, have little training on how to teach the valuable life skills that develop girls' leadership and empower youth. Facilitators who teach and develop life skills at various development organisations may have a deep understanding of what it takes to empower youth but have little training or knowledge of how to teach the basics of a certain sport. It is crucial to provide an environment where a coach feels like they can learn and improve, whether that means improving their technical knowledge of the game or learning how to link sport with life skills and lessons.

# 02 Coaching Approach

Q what is a coaching approach?

A **coaching approach** refers to the way that a coach engages with their team, the values and attitudes that they hold, the environments they create, the nature of their interactions with the players, and the goals and priorities they promote. Coaches play a huge role in the nature and quality of a sport programme for girls, and their approach to coaching has a large impact on girls' self-perception, motivation, and confidence.

With this responsibility, coaches who work with girls should pay special attention to coaching with a **gender lens** in mind. Coaching with a gender lens means creating girl-centred sport environments, and using strategies and approaches that support girls' interest and engagement in sport. While each coach may have their own unique approach to coaching, there are certain practices and strategies that will foster girls' interest and continued involvement in sport.



Image source: ICEF Rugby, USA

### Strategies to Engage and Retain Girls 🔇





Creating a positive environment that encourages learning from mistakes



Encouraging girls to set personal and team goals



Emphasising skill-building through fun and healthy competition



Rewarding effort or trying a new skill over winning or scoring



Communicating using positive and encouraging feedback



Focusing time and energy on building supportive relationships within sport (with players, between players, and between players and others who are influential in their lives)



Ensuring that girls have access to safe and appropriate equipment and facilities

Coaches in your programme may already be highly skilled at creating these types of environments and sensitive to team dynamics, but, more often than not, these skills and strategies can be cultivated and developed over time. You should take a look at what your coaches' capacities and skills are and where they might need extra training in order to foster a holistic approach to using sport as a tool for girls' empowerment.

For more information on engaging and retaining girls, see:

Coaching Girls Guide: How to Get (and Keep) Girls Playing (WeCoach and Nike)

Coaching through a Gender Lens (Women's Sports Foundation)



# 13 Importance of Woman Coaches

Woman coaches, trainers, and discussion group facilitators are crucial to ensuring the success of sport programmes aimed at empowering girls. Prioritising women for these roles **creates leadership opportunities**, where such opportunities may otherwise be scarce or non-existent. In all levels of organisational leadership, women have a chance to strengthen decision-making, confidence and management skills over time. Having women in leadership positions both serves as an external representation of the programme's values, and demonstrates potential opportunities for other girls to strive towards.



Beyond just hiring woman coaches, it is important that coaches in your programme reflect the communities and populations that the girls are coming from with respect to race, ethnicity, caste, and socioeconomic class. This representational leadership is important so that girls and their communities can connect to your organisation and know that they are familiar with their context and lived realities. It also means providing access to opportunities that most marginalised groups have been traditionally excluded from.

In addition to coaching staff, gender equality should also be considered across your organisation, by encouraging and seeking female members of the board of directors, advisors and organisation administration. Female representatives on these decision-making bodies will help your organisation shape programmes based on what is best for your participants, keeping their interests in mind and serving as role models themselves.

# 04

### **The Impact of Having Woman Coaches**

#### **Individual Impacts**

- Female role models positively influence girls' self-perceptions, self-efficacy, and sense of belonging.
- Having women as coaches challenges outdated stereotypes about gender and leadership.
- Girls can relate to the lived experience of female coaches and see themselves in their coach.
- Girls may feel more comfortable conveying their needs to woman coaches, trainers, and referees rather than male ones.

#### **Systemic Impacts**

- Woman coaches advocate for and help grow the number of women in the coach ing profession.
- Woman coaches can provide advice and mentorship to other women about how to navigate traditionally male dominated workplaces.
- Girls and women who see other women coaching can see coaching as a legitimate and viable career.
- Men who respect women as athletes, players and sporting leaders within their own sporting sphere are more likely to respect women in other areas of their lives.



Liberian football star and mentor, Dehkontee Sayon shares about her experiences of empowerment through sport. As the women's Football to Develop Destitute (FODEDE) coordinator in Liberia, she uses her experiences to mentor young girls in her community, empowering them to address the challenges they face.

Watch this video to learn more about her experiences:





# 05

### **Recruiting Woman Coaches**

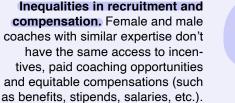
Coaches play a crucial role in creating gender-equitable and inclusive sports spaces, and woman coaches can actively dismantle stereotypes and gender norms about women in sport and demonstrate to girls that they should be included. However, across the world we hear from partners that recruiting woman coaches is a challenge. This is due to the disproportionate barriers to accessing and holding coaching positions that women face compared to their male counterparts.

#### **Barriers**

Identifying the barriers that prevent women from progressing in sports coaching positions is one of the first steps towards understanding not only how to recruit women coaches, but also how to retain them and invest in their professional development. Below are some of the barriers shared by our partners.



Lack of an inclusive sport culture. Women and non-binary people are not attracted to coaching positions due to the male-dominated environment (sometimes referred to as a "boys club").



Biased hiring and recruiting processes often lead to men being favoured for coaching jobs.





Structural gender-based discrimination. Woman coaches are more likely to face harassment, intimidation, and abuse (both on the sidelines and within sport organisations) due to their gender. This happens at informal, amateur, and professional levels of sport organisations.

Lack of appropriate equipment or spaces. Cisgender and transgender women who coach may not have access to quality facilities (e.g. toilets, changing rooms)





Lack of family support. Cultural and gender norms are often ingrained in the minds of family members, leading to a lack of permission or support for women pursuing coaching. This reinforces gender stereotypes that suggest that being a coach "is a man's job". Often, sport environments and coaching schedules are not sensitive to expectations for women's unpaid caretaking responsibilities.

Challenges with menstruation management. Suitable and accessible toilet facilities are not always available, complicating the coaching experience for those who menstruate.





**Double Standards.** Women need to work harder to prove that they are eligible for coaching positions, particularly if they would like to coach men's teams.







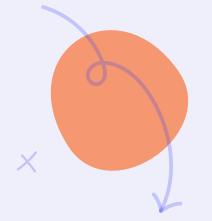
Unequal resources. For many organisations/clubs, sport programmes for boys and men have existed for much longer, leading to more developed programmes, better playing facilities, equipment, etc. in comparison to women's programmes.

Lack of role models. There are limited role models and mentors to support woman coaches to progress in sport, or even inspire them.



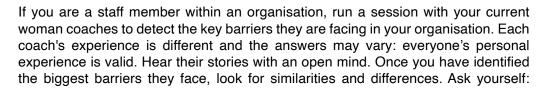


Fewer opportunities. Marginalised genders have less access to coaching opportunities. Not all organisations or clubs have female teams where they could coach. Women are almost never considered to coach male teams.





### **Consider**



- Is there a common barrier coaches face in your organisation? This means it might be a systemic barrier. Find ways to remove these barriers internally.
- Are there unique barriers named by your coaches? These might be barriers affect
  -ing and impacting your coaches in different ways. After all, we are all different. Try
  to provide dedicated support and learn from each coach's personal experience to
  tear this barrier down together.

### **Tips for Recruiting Woman Coaches**



Below are general tips and strategies to be able to overcome challenges to recruiting woman coaches, and should be adapted to your local context if necessary.

#### **Internal Strategies**

- Build leadership pathways. The most effective way of recruiting coaches is likely right before your eyes. Develop intentional leadership development opportunities for participants and volunteers within your programmes so they can acquire the skills to become a coach. Click here for a framework on how to build leadership pathways within your organisation.
- Be flexible in your programme design. If you have a sport in mind but can't find a woman coach for this sport in your community, reflect on why this may be and consider other design approaches that may be more suitable. This could be expanded recruitment drives, or choosing another sport. Is there another sport that is suitable for your participants and easier to find a female coach?
- Consider hiring crossover athletes. Sport-specific skills can be learned quickly with focus and a qualified instructor. Often, regardless of the sport, the athlete will already be aware of basic needs for participants, such as training or being a member of a team.
- Give female coaches access to formal accreditation programmes. Sometimes, woman coaches are asked to volunteer their time because they don't have the same formal coaching certificates or recognition from the government or other sporting bodies as men. By influencing sporting bodies and advocating for women, woman coaches can gain access to these training and accreditation processes. Through this, your organisation gains accredited coaches, and these coaches can negotiate salaries and earn a living through coaching in the future.

 Share resources. Partner and work with other organisations that need or have strong woman coaches and role models, and work with these women so they split their time between different programmes.

#### **External Strategies**

- Advertise in the community. Let the community know you are seeking woman coaches. Post flyers in community spaces and your social media channels.
- Visit venues where sport is being played. Visit local sport venues and meet women who are there, to recruit and get recommendations.
- Contact the national sport governing body. Many popular sports have national organisations that govern regulations, coaches, officials, etc. As a central headquarters for a sport, the people in this organisation often know of qualified coaches and can help you get in contact with them.



Image source: OWLA Program, India



Programme leaders at MIFUMI (Uganda) originally wanted to use karate as the sport focus for girls. However, they were unable to find more than one qualified karate coach who was a woman. Believing deeply in the value of women coaches, they decided to be flexible in their programme design and begin taekwondo sessions as they were able to recruit an experienced taekwondo coach who was a woman from a nearby city. There was an unexpected benefit to recruiting this coach as girls' participation increased. Some caregivers that were initially reluctant to let their girls participate in martial arts understood that they were not harmful activities after seeing other women doing it.



Coaches are one of the most valuable resources that any sport organisation has. Investing in this resource, through training and continual development, is essential to implementing a high quality and effective sport programme for girls' rights and equity in your community. Coaches will be interacting with participants on a daily basis and therefore need the training and support to be able to make a positive impact through their coaching and mentoring. Coach development should not be just a one-off training or handing them a manual, but rather, a continual process that accompanies the coach throughout their time with your organisation.

**Continuous training** 





It is important to note that woman coaches (or aspiring coaches) historically have less opportunities to access formal or informal coach training in many communities. It is therefore even more important to ensure that sport and girls' rights programmes are providing these opportunities. In many cases, our partner organisations have ended up recruiting female athletes or life skill educators and providing them with technical sport skills training, due to the lack of woman coaches in their community.

### **Tools for Training Coaches**

There are several approaches, tools and resources that your organisation can use to support the continual development of coaches and facilitators. Some examples include:

- 01 Workshops and training
- Manuals
- Curricula
- 04 Mentoring
- Observing and supporting the growth of coaches
- O6 Coach Certification Programmes

# Workshops and Training



In person (or virtual) coach trainings and workshops are great ways to train many coaches at once in your programme's approach, curricula and in the technical aspects of the sport or sports you are using.

Coaching workshops and training can be focused on any aspect of the job, such as creating safe spaces for girls, teaching a specific skill, or how to recognise and address instances of gender-based violence in a girl's life. Internal training can help ensure that all your coaches are working within the same philosophy and are promoting the same values. These face-to-face meetings can foster powerful idea exchanges between individual coaches and provide opportunities for mock sessions and peer feedback.



### **Topic** Details

Technical Sport Skills Training Historically, technical training in sport skills, rules of the game, officiating sport and coaching sport have been limited for women in many communities. Providing woman coaches or aspiring coaches a strong background in the technical aspects of a particular sport is important. Partnering with local or national sporting bodies (your country's sport federations) could be a great solution to provide high quality training to your coaches. Check in with local or international nonprofits that also might be able to support the technical portion of a coach training.

Safeguarding

Successful sport programmes for girls have very clear expectations for all the coaches and staff within the organisation. Coaches are in a position of power and therefore every coach should sign a contract stating that they understand and will abide by your organisation's mandates. This provides for complete accountability in case of abuse or misuse of that power. The contract is also a valuable communication tool, demonstrating that both the administration and coaches understand clearly what is expected to create a safe space for girls. You should also be very clear about penalties for breaching the code of conduct. There should be a clear organisational commitment to "zero tolerance" for sexual harassment, violence or abuse.

Facilitation and Group Management Skills

Coaches in a life skills and sport programme should have strong facilitation and group management skills. This is particularly important if your coaches are addressing sensitive topics related to certain girls and women's rights such as gender-based violence, sexual and reprorductive health and rights and engaging in local advocacy.

Curriculum Methodology and Approach Every quality sport and girls' rights programme has a curriculum that coaches can use to deliver sessions to the participants. Coaches need to be trained in this curriculum, so they themselves understand not only all of the session content but also the methodology and approach.

Leadership Development Coaches themselves could greatly benefit from reflecting on and further developing their own leadership. This is particularly important to woman coaches as they often have not had as many opportunities to build their leadership. Reflecting and working on their own leadership will also help them better support the development of the leadership of participants in their program.

## **Manuals**

Providing coaches with a written guidebook of technical information about how they are expected to lead girls is a great way to accompany an in-person or virtual training. Manuals often include programme rules and philosophies, ideas for drills and tips on practice planning. Most manuals are produced internally by programme directors and other coaches and include very specific information about sport-specific skills, facilities and local cultural considerations. There are also coaching handbooks that are produced by third-party providers, such as national or international sport federations and/or coaching bodies. Below are a variety of manuals available free online, focusing on different aspects of coaching in a sport and life skill programme.

- Youth Development Football
- Goal Coaching Manual
- LA84 Foundation Coaching Education Resources
- Discover Football Coaching Manual
- Nike Made to Play Girls Coaching Guide
- Women's Sports Foundation Coaching Resources



Girl Determined runs weekly Volleyball Circles led by community-based coaches in many parts of rural and peri-urban Myanmar, who themselves may not have volleyball or coaching experience. To support coaches with sport knowledge, Girl Determined created a Coaching Manual in Burmese. This resource provided coaches with game rules and explanations of different skills, illustrations of skills and stretches, technical skill advice to give to players, practice planning tools, and ideas for drills and games to run. This manual can be used to train coaches who may be new to the organisation, the sport of volleyball, or to structured sport programmes more generally.

## 03 Curricula

Besides technical training manuals, curricula that help coaches address life issues like gender-based violence, sexual and reproductive health and rights, teamwork, or peer pressure are essential for coaches attempting to approach sensitive topics. Curricula usually define the sessions, key messages, activities, and discussion questions. This can sometimes look like a script but should be adapted and contextualised to each group of participants. Be mindful of language barriers: it's important to provide your coaches with manuals or curricula that are written in a language they fully understand. (For more information on finding and choosing a quality curriculum, see the <a href="Curricula">Curricula</a> section of this guide).

## Mentoring

One of the most effective ways for coaches to engage in long term learning is through mentors. You should look for opportunities to pair up younger coaches with more experienced coaches. Learning "on the job" from mentors is an extremely effective way to improve coaching skills. Additionally, you should provide ongoing opportunities for peer learning and check-ins to troubleshoot and problem solve coaching and implementation obstacles as they come up. This could be regular meetings between coaches once a week, or once a month, depending on availability or your programme model. During these meetings, coaches can share best practices, obstacles, successes and support each other to find solutions and approaches in real time and be able to apply them at the next practice or session.

# Observing and Supporting the Growth of Coaches

Regular observations and open dialogues are a vital tool in supporting a coach's growth and ensuring that they are positively serving girls. The process can be a learning experience for all involved. Rather than doing more formal top-down evaluations, try having a guided conversation with coaches around what they think their strengths and weaknesses are and what they think they need to improve and grow. Use the <a href="360 Feedback Tool">360 Feedback Tool</a> to help you in these conversations.

## **Coach Certification Programmes**

Offering coaches access to a certification programme (whether it is internally run by your organisation or through a partnership with an external organisation) allows you to further develop your staff. Certification can also allow your coaches to advance on their own career pathways in the future. There are lots of examples of certification programmes and many sport federations have their own technical sport coaching certification. Below are some examples of how other organisations have used certification processes to strengthen their coaches.



One Win Leads to Another (OWLA) is a programme that leverages the power of sport to empower girls in Brazil. The programme combines quality sport programming and life skills sessions to build the leadership skills of adolescent girls living in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, improving their ability to influence the decisions that impact their lives. Its overall objective is to use sport to change harmful gender stereotypes and norms so that adolescent girls can fully achieve their rights. As part of the programme, implementing partner Empodera and technical support partner Women Win developed a certification and assurance framework to access and certify individual trainers and coaches. The framework contained:

- Organisational Certification Organisations assessed on three certification levels: (1) Official OWLA implementing organisation, (2) Advanced OWLA implementing organisation and (3) Master OWLA implementing organisa tion
- Individual Certification Individuals assessed on three certification levels:
   (1) Official OWLA coach, (2) Advanced OWLA coach and (3) Master Trainer

The framework will allow for the programme and curriculum to scale to new implementing partners and a variety of programme sites while attempting to maintain quality and effectiveness. The framework also allows for Empodera to support other organisations and partners with development plans and activities.



Q what does allyship mean?

**Allyship** is when a person of privilege works in solidarity and partnership with a marginalized group of people to help take down the systems that challenge that group's basic rights, equal access, and ability to thrive in our society

Careful selection of male coaches and facilitators that truly believe in girls' equality and empowerment, is paramount to making gender inclusion in your sport and rights programme successful. Although Women Win believes that recruiting and training women in coaching positions should be a top organisational priority, male coaches can be important allies and assets in the empowerment of adolescent girls. Including men in efforts to empower girls and women can be beneficial on many levels and help support greater change in your community.

Historically, men have had greater access to sport; therefore, they often have valuable technical knowledge to offer to girls. When teaching girls sport-specific skills, our partner programmes often call upon that expertise. Men who are truly dedicated to empowerment can work directly with girls and show them positive examples of cross-gender communication, behaviour and respect. They can bring a diversity of experience and perspective to your programme. Furthermore, having a male celebrate the strength and athleticism of an adolescent girl can leave a big impression on them and the community.

From a programme point of view, having caring, qualified professionals that embody the principles of your organisation and are dedicated to empowering girls, regardless of gender, is paramount. However, the presence of males, regardless of the individual, has the potential to compromise a girl's feeling of security within your space and reinforce their belief that men are in charge. If they have experienced gender-based oppression at the hands of a man, they will likely be reluctant to trust and share as freely as they would with a leader who is a woman.

In designing sport programmes for girls, it's important to be aware of both the risks and benefits of this dynamic to make sure the programme is a success.





It is typically more comfortable for women and older girls to talk to participants about issues surrounding reproduction and menstruation than it is for males. However, most male coaches of adolescent girls will encounter occasions when a girl's full participation in a sport programme requires understanding, advice and education about personal and sensitive issues particular to females. For example, if a girl is menstruating and experiencing cramps, they must be able to communicate to their coach without experiencing shame. Or, if a coach notices that a girl is not performing to their potential because they do not have a sports bra, he must be able to offer them resources, if they are available.

### **Tips on Integrating Men into a Programme**

- Screen the men you plan to hire as coaches or administrators. Interview them about their perception of girls' empowerment. Ask them about their experience in helping shape strong girls, as opposed to focusing simply on their technical coaching skills.
- If a male coach has zero or little experience with girls' empowerment, limit his role to occasional training sessions with another woman coach present.
- Never allow men to train or travel with girls without an adult woman present. For many groups, this can be financially and logistically difficult to achieve. If you have a male coach, consider asking a woman teacher, mother or community member to join in sessions on either a voluntary or paid basis. Create meaningful roles for these women, such as helping with equipment, organising transportation, communicating with parents or preparing food.
- e Educate girls about reporting gender-based violence or abuse when/if it occurs at the hands of men within the organisation. Make sure girls have a trusted woman they can talk to who will help them contact police and/or third-party service providers (see the Safeguarding section for more information.)
- Encourage girls to view men as partners in their development, as opposed to controllers of it.
- Establish open lines of communication around sensitive issues. In initial group meetings, acknowledge that all coaches, men and women, understand that menstruation and sexual development is a healthy and normal part of girls' coming of age. Ensure that coaches respect and believe girls when they say they cannot participate because of cramps or other discomfort related to reproductive health.
- If girls are not comfortable using formal language around sensitive issues, welcome them to come up with a code word to communicate with all coaches, men or women, when they are menstruating.

- Adopt a zero-tolerance policy for inappropriate interaction of male leaders with girls.
- Train all coaches, women and men, on how to talk with girls about sensitive issues, such as sexuality, health and reproduction. Include gender sensitivity sessions in these trainings for all coaches so there exists an honest and open dialogue between male and woman coaches as well.
- Maintain clear boundaries around discussions with girls. Do not get into discussions about girls' sexual behaviour. If a girl needs to discuss sexuality and other personal topics, refer her to an adult woman within the programme.
- For more information on engaging boys and men in girls' sport programming, go to the <u>Community Engagement</u> section of this guide.





### **Engaging the Community**

Organisations around the world that use sport as a tool to build leadership in adolescent girls have made it clear that part of the **essential strategy for designing and implementing a girls' sport programme is effectively engaging the local community.** 

Not all of the challenges faced by organisations are the same, nor are the organisations' strategies to engage their communities the same. Many have learned that what works in engaging the community has **evolved over time**, and have **adapted** and **improved** their strategies, and because of this, have created more enabling environments for the girls in their programmes.

### Where are you?

This section will explore key strategies in engaging the community, while also turning to practical case studies from various regions around the world.

In this PDF, you will explore the following topics:

- 01 What is Community Engagement?
- 02 Girl-led Engagement
- 03 Community Groups and Stakeholders
- 04 Strategies for Engaging the Community

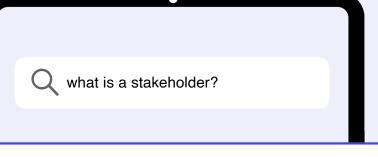


## What is Community Engagement?

Community engagement is about building, developing, and maintaining effective relationships with people through all of the **critical** aspects of human interaction – dialogue, patience, persistence, care, consideration, and clarity of purpose. It means taking time to listen to people and having the flexibility to deal with potential conflicts or problems, and being creative in finding ways to address those problems with the community, not in spite of them. Community engagement is the foundation of any organisational strategy and, as experienced by many of our partner organisations, an accelerating factor for sustainable programmes.

This process of learning from a community is not a single event; it is a constant interaction that will continue throughout the life of a programme. Degrees of support vary across **stakeholder** groups over time, and community engagement is not fixed, but is fluid and changes. Many organisations agree that community engagement has changed throughout the life of their programmes.





A **stakeholder** is any individual, group, or organisation with an interest or stake in the outcome of a decision or programme.

Although community engagement should be a strategy throughout the life of your girls' sport programme, it is important to keep in mind that in many places, by carrying out a girls' sport programme you may be challenging perceptions about what girls' roles are in that community. Although this guide illustrates that a promising practice is to include the community in decisions and the process of implementing a girls' sport programme, it also cautions that participation in the development process can be difficult to balance when trying to challenge existing social norms (check out this Naz Foundation India case study to learn more).



### **Defining Community**

How does your organisation define community? It's not the same for all organisations. Communities can take many forms: for some, their community is a village, for others, a religious group, and for others still, the community is a refugee camp. Gaining the support of any community that your participants are part of is invaluable. Organisations' definitions of community are varied:





Women Win, with input from programme partners, defines community as all of the stakeholders and community members who influence the lives of the adolescent girls participating in sport programmes. The geographical area that makes up this community differs for every programme; in some cases it may be a village, in some it may be more than one village. This definition not only includes parents, teachers, community leaders, both international and local organisations, peers, and coaches, but also, most importantly, the girls themselves.

Note: This influence or impact may not necessarily be positive.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup>These quotes are from interviews and surveys from sport for development practitioners around the world.



# Case Studies: Naz Foundation and Magic Bus

The <u>Naz Foundation</u> (India) reports that when they initiate a sport for development programme in a new community, there is very little community engagement in the beginning. Naz really begins engaging the community once the programme is running, through events and festivals as well as the monitoring and evaluation of the programme. On the other hand, <u>Magic Bus</u> (India) takes a different approach and involves the community heavily at the planning stage of their programmes. They ask the community to nominate young volunteer coaches, which builds support and community ownership from the very beginning.



## **O** 2 Girl-led Engagement

Community engagement for girls' sport programmes can be a difficult endeavour. On the one hand, it is essential that on **some level your community is involved in the planning and implementation of your programme,** if that programme is to be sustainable. On the other hand, in many contexts, the simple fact of girls participating in sport is challenging gender norms and, therefore, draws negative reactions from certain community members. It is important to remember that although you want to engage the community as much as possible in order to change perceptions and create sustainability, the first duty is to the safety and rights of the girls. It is imperative that the girls' voices are not drowned out in the process of engaging the rest of the community.

Many of the organisations consulted in writing this section cited that the most important community group for the success of their programmes is the girls themselves. The girls not only support each other and bring more girl participants into the programme, but also spread information and knowledge to their peers, classmates, and families.



<u>Digital Storytelling (DST)</u> is a workshop-based methodology that focuses on any person's ability to share aspects of their life story. It is grounded in the storytellers' control over the medium – **words, images and audio** – so that the process of learning and production is as powerful for the storyteller as the end product is for the audience. Using formal storytelling tools can be a powerful way to engage the community and for girls to have their voices heard. Digital and audio storytelling are powerful methods in which girls learn to tell their own stories, edit them, and add media. If girls are proud of these stories and want to share them, it can be a great tool for a programme's community engagement strategy with the media, community leaders, parents and caregivers, and other stake-holders.



As part of their strategy to empower girls and young women to be leaders in their communities, Women Win began implementing Digital Storytelling workshops in 2013.

Through an intense 5-day DST workshop, Women Win equips girls and young women with technical skills, knowledge, and opportunities to share their personal stories of transformation through sport. These may include the challenges they faced, how they overcame them, and the impact sport has had in their lives. In telling/sharing their stories, participants create a sense of ownership of their experiences, discover how much experience and learning they have in common with others, advance solidarity and understanding, and ultimately become visible change-agents in their communities. It is for this reason that DST is an important aspect to Women Win's community engagement strategy. Visit Women Win's DST Platform to hear the stories of young women around the world.

For more information about DST workshops, please contact Learn@womenwin.org.

### **Digital Story Spotlights**



#### Football Saved My Life

For Linda, football was her only chance to avoid an early marriage with a much older man. Succeeding in a football competition was the critical point in her life that allowed her to shape a future very different from that of most girls in her community.

By Linda Choeun Salt Academy, Cambodia

#### • I Believe...I Can

In the beginning Laxmi didn't have either her family's or her community's support to follow her dream to become an athlete. Inspired by famous female athletes, however, she practised hard and eventually managed to change their opinion about what a girl can or cannot do.

By Laxmi Shakya The Naz Foundation Trust, India

#### How Football Saved My Life

Football came into Furaha's life when she was in despair, craving to go to school but not being able to. Thanks to football Furaha managed to go to school, become a coach and earn an allowance, becoming in this way a role model for her younger siblings and the girls in the community.

By Furaha Pascal Moving the Goalposts, Kenya



<u>Polycom Development</u> (Kenya) pointed out that girls go home and talk about what they learn at sport and life skills sessions, which results in getting parents' support for the programmes and also often results in younger siblings wanting to attend. The strongest voice in engaging with the community, and the most important voice, is that of the girl participants themselves.

# O 3 Community Groups and Stakeholders

Your community engagement strategy is dependent on the community groups and stake-holders who potentially impact on the lives of the girls in your programme. These groups and stakeholders will vary by country, programme, and location within a country. For example, in religiously devout communities, religious leaders are very important stakeholders who often have a vested interest in monitoring the role of girls in their community, and have the ability to bring a girls' sport programme to a halt. Another important stakeholder group is parents and caregivers, whose permission and support is essential to girls' participation in sport. Oftentimes, fathers and mothers (or male caregivers and female caregivers) have different motivations for keeping their daughters out of sport programmes or different reasons why they might support their daughters.

It is essential you understand these motivations and reasons before creating a strategy, avoiding a 'one size fits all' approach.

## Create a Stakeholder Map

There are many different ways to involve the various stakeholders in a community in order to gain their support for a programme. When planning a community engagement strategy for any girls' sport programme, the essential first step is for you to create a list or map of all potential stakeholders and groups in the community in which you will work. Once you agree on the players involved, you can create approaches for each group individually. Involving the girls in this process of mapping the stakeholders in the community will also allow you to understand who they view as the most important supporters, or opponents, to their participation in sport.

For exercises on community mapping, take a look at the <u>Girls in Motion Toolkit Annexes</u>, which offer a variety of community mapping and engagement activities, particularly in the context of designing a girls' sport programme in humanitarian contexts.



Moving The Goalposts (Kenya) visits caregivers and helps them to create daily schedules with their daughters so that the girls can both attend sport sessions and complete chores at home. Other organisations have taken steps to provide childcare at sport sessions so that girls can bring their young siblings with them.



Experience from our partner organisations dealing with sensitive and possible culturally contentious issues has shown that it is important to involve the community in programme planning. For example, in implementing a programme to reduce female genital mutilation (cutting) in Ethiopia, Kembatta Mentti Gezzima found that rather than replicating an approach from another context, it was more effective to seek local community input on possible solutions to the problem of female genital mutilation. They invited stakeholders to community discussion groups in which they created a space for open discussion, with agreement that there would be no judgement or intimidation on whatever was brought up by participants. The result of these open discussions has been a reduction in cases of female genital mutilation in the community as well as new initiatives started by community members to further address this issue.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup>Womenkind Worldwide Report: http://www.womankind.org.uk/



<u>Youth Empowerment Foundation</u> (Nigeria) has regular meetings with local government officials to inform them about the success of their programme and to build their relationship with these leaders for continued future support.

## Parents and Caregivers

Caregivers are the single greatest barrier or accelerator to a girls' participation in a sport programme: in most programmes around the world, they are the key. This is especially important in contexts where it is not normal for women or girls to play sport or be seen in athletic clothing or out on a field. Caregivers also influence other caregivers, and if they understand the benefits of your programme and feel that they are a part of it, they will be more likely to encourage other caregivers to send their daughters to the programme. It is critical to earn the trust and support of caregivers and it is in each girl's best interest for your programme directors and coaches to be on the same 'team' as caregivers in order to avoid having a participant feel like they must choose between participating in sport and obeying the wishes of their caregivers.



# Common Reasons Preventing Caregivers from Supporting Sport Programmes...

Daily chores and work at home that girls are expected to do; unpaid care work. Fear that neighbours will look down on the family if their daughter is participating in sport, or that girls will be undesirable for marriage.

Fear of girls' safety when they have to travel long distances to trainings.

Fear of physical injuries.

Belief that girls will become sexually active and as a result become pregnant because of playing sport in public. Dislike of sport clothing because it is too revealing (e.g., football shorts).

Caregivers wanting to participate in sport themselves and therefore unhappy with space being given to daughters.

Perception that participation reduces time for girls' studies.

Belief that organisations are benefiting financially because girls attend the programme.

Worry that the place where the girls play is not safe.

Lack of exposure to/experience with sport (especially for women).

### **Incentives or Motivations for Engagement**

It is important to identify what would motivate caregivers to support a girls' sport programme in their community. Having this knowledge will make it easier to engage them. Incentives or motivations might include:



Improved access to education for their daughters.



Community recognition for their involvement with the organisation.



Their own interest in participating in sport.



Potential of more spaces for sport in the community.



Food at community events.



Household items, food, or clothing for families in need of basic necessities.

### Strategies for Engagement 💊



- Educate caregivers about all aspects of your programme and listen to their concerns.
- Be absolutely transparent and honest at all times.
- If caregivers have a lack of knowledge on life skills issues, give them information or organise a session for them on the life skills information that you provide to their daughters through sport.
- Ask caregivers for permission for their daughters to participate through consent forms or verbal consent. This demonstrates that you respect their role in their daughters' lives.

- Assure caregivers of the physical and emotional safety of the girls while participating in the programme.
- Invite caregivers to occasionally participate in or observe sessions, and attend programme events.
- Visit the home of participants regularly, especially if a girl has been absent or if you become aware of a conflict with her caregivers.
- Create a committee for caregivers in which they can meet and make recommendations for the programme, as well as have their own defined position within the programme.
- Ask caregivers for feedback on the success of the programme throughout the year.
- Ask about the skills or knowledge they would like their girls to attain through the programme.
- Work with caregivers to develop a daily schedule for their daughters so that they can do all of their household chores and also attend the sport programme.
   Teach girls time management skills to balance home responsibilities and sport participation.
- Organise friendly competitions between girls and caregivers, such as mother/daughter or father/daughter sport days.
- Give caregivers small income-earning opportunities by training them to serve as officials, organise events, or maintain facilities.
- Utilise and engage caregivers who are enthusiastic from the onset. One great strategy is to use caregivers who are on board with your programme as advocates who can talk to skeptical caregivers.
- Identify and utilise different strategies for male and female caregivers. Male caregivers often have an idea of the power of sport and its impacts since they themselves may have played or still play. Leverage this by highlighting their own experiences and what sport could do for their daughters. On the other hand, many female caregivers may have never kicked or caught a ball themselves. Organise sport days for them so that they too experience the joy of sport.





Moving the Goalposts recognised that caregivers would often not give consent to send girls to their football and life skills programme. Instead of telling the caregivers they were wrong, MTG staff visited the homes of the girls and asked the caregivers why they were not allowing the girls to attend. One of the reasons they discovered was that caregivers did not think that their daughters had enough time to complete all of their household chores and to attend football sessions. To address this, MTG staff now sit down with caregivers and girls to make a plan or schedule for their days so that their time is planned and they can both do their home duties and attend the programme. As a result, the caregivers feel more involved, and more girls in Kilifi are able to attend the programme.

In addition, participants at Moving the Goalposts selected 48 fathers who respect girls' rights and support them in their empowerment process through football. The supportive fathers were invited for a Father's Day celebration at MTG's headquarters, where they interacted with the field leaders in discussions, film screenings, and a football match. Topics that were highlighted were girls' rights, responsibilities of girls and fathers, and how to involve fathers more in the upbringing of their daughters and participation in MTG.

One supportive father is Mwanasha's: "My daughter has a baby, and she is not married, but In MTG she can give herself a chance. I am willing to stay at home with my grandson and give my daughter all the support she needs".



<u>Tiempo de Jeugo</u>, a grassroots organisation using sport with adolescent girls, created a social business project that gives participants and their mothers an opportunity to get training and work in a bakery. This provides families with incentives for letting their girls participate in sport activities. The organisation also involves mothers in sport activities: some of the mothers train every week, have their own Tiempo de Juego uniforms, and coach themselves as a 'mums' team. Most of the women have little/no experience with football, however, the opportunity to relax, see the conditions their girls are playing in, and enjoy camaraderie with other women in a safe space outside the home is a powerful strategy for gaining support.



One Family People gives a manual on reproductive health to all of the mothers of girls who participate in their programme so that they have the resources and confidence to help inform their daughters about the issues that are being addressed at sport sessions.



### Case Study: Asian Football Development Programme

The <u>Asian Football Development Programme</u>, which works with Syrian refugees in camps in Jordan, asks local families in the camp what they need so their basic needs are met before asking if their daughters can play in the football programme. The organisation also builds covered, indoor fields, which is a must for most families and their daughters.



When considering building solid partnerships, first consider your relationship with the girls who will be your participants as well as with the rest of the girls in the community. **Gaining buy-in from girls can be the most difficult part of building a programme,** as many girls have never considered sport as something available to them or something that they necessarily wanted to do because of social pressure to be 'feminine' and do things that are 'appropriate' for girls.

Additionally, remember that girls influence each other. If sport participation is new, girls can be a negative influence on each other and stand in the way of other girls participating. This can take the form of teasing those who wear sports clothes and making them feel bullied. It is essential that girls are informed about your sport programme and that you make an effort to dispel misconceptions about playing sport. It is also important that if your programme has limits to the number of participants you can have, that you take steps to avoid potential conflict with girls who do not participate and who may be jealous of the resources that their peers are receiving.

### **Common Obstacles to Engaging Peers**

Lack of access to/contact with peers of the girls in your programme.

Jealousy of girls who participate in the programme and get equipment and other resources.

### **Incentives or Motivations for Engagement**



If girls have a stronger network of peers outside of their sport group that encourages them to play and be a leader on and off the field.



Engaging peers of the girls in your programme could turn those peers into potential new participants in the future.



Girls in the programme have an easier time passing along information learned from the sport and life skill trainings to their peers and, therefore, more girls are reached indirectly in the community.



The community does not only see sport as an activity for a select group of girls but rather, something that all girls in the community can do and have the right to do.

## Strategies for Engagement $\diamond_{\bullet}$



- Hold community events that are open to all girls in the community, regardless of whether they are part of the programme or not. During these events, do demonstrations of general sports and play-based activities. These events are great opportunities to celebrate different international holidays, like International Day of the Girl Child.
- Encourage participants in the programme to reach out to a certain number of their friends at school who are not part of the programme each month or every couple of months. This could be in the form of informal discussion about things they learned during training or life skill courses, or more formal peer education lessons supported by the organisation.

 Hold a 'bring a friend to training' day, when each participant in the programme can bring a friend to one training session so they can see and understand what their friend is experiencing.



Maitrayana is a non-profit based in Delhi, India that works towards their dream of a "gender-equal society in which girls and women can exercise their rights." Their programme, the Young People's Initiative, uses sport, particularly netball, to deliver life skills on Communication, Peer Pressure, Body Image, Menstruation, Financial Literacy, and Gender-Based Violence to adolescent girls and young women at community sites in Delhi and Mumbai. Girls not only attend sessions for sport and life skills, but also have the opportunity to become coaches for the organisation. Taking on these leadership roles, the young women coaches of Maitrayana are able to reach many more girls in their communities and teach them sport and important life skills, breaking down prejudices and misinformation.



In addition to their classroom and football training sessions, <u>Youth Empowerment Foundation</u> uses a peer-to-peer model where girls who participate in their programme go out and educate other girls about what they learn from YEF coaches and educators. This model has allowed them to exponentially increase their influence, and it creates community support from other girls who become interested inthe programme through peer-to-peer interactions.





The <u>SALT Academy</u> uses football festivals to attract and expose adolescent girls across rural communities to football. Mighty Girls, SALT football players, run the festivals and give inspirational talks about what football and sport have done for their own lives. One example is from the Buor District, a small community near the Thai border, which used to be littered with landmines. 90 girls participated in a football tournament and then, together with numerous boys who had been spectating, took part in life skill sessions on gender equality and children's rights. At the end three Mighty Girls from the community shared how football has positively impacted their lives and the obstacles they faced as younger female football players.

### **Boys and Men**

Engaging boys and men is a necessary part of the process to improve the status of girls and women. The vulnerabilities and disadvantages that adolescent girls face are often due to social constructions that determine identities, roles, behaviours, and social structures. By addressing these social stereotypes, with girls as well as boys, sport programmes can take a holistic approach to creating social structures that empower girls and do not alienate or exclude the boys. Boys and men can play a positive role in ensuring that girls have access to sport programmes and leadership positions and are able to make their own decisions about their bodies and future.

Seeking the support and help of older males, such as fathers, brothers, relatives, or other community members when implementing your sport programme can help your organisation reach its objectives through a holistic and sustainable approach. By engaging the wider male community, you gain valuable advocates and important allies who can work with you to change the existing social stereotypes, gender roles, and societal constructions that contribute to women's disempower ment and vulnerability to gender-based violence.

The goal is to create an atmosphere that fosters working with, not against, men to foster more equitable relationships between males and females.





Restrictive gender stereotypes can also hurt boys and men themselves, setting them up for failure in difficult economic or conflict situations if they do not live up to traditional gender norms or societal views of what a man must be or provide.

## **Common Obstables to Engaging Boys and Men**

Boys' and men's sport teams refusing to give use of facilities to girls' teams. Teasing by boys who see girl participants as unfeminine.

Limited sport opportunities in general, so when a sport programme is established in a community that didn't have one, and participation is limited to girls, boys may feel marginalised and resist.

Boys becoming jealous and aggressive toward girls who are part of a sport programme they are not part of.

Brothers wanting to participate alongside sisters in sport programmes, and feeling they have a right to do so. Concerns for safety of girls from harassment and abuse by boys and men.

Men from the community coming to sessions to intimidate girls.

### **Incentives or Motivations for Engagement**



Access to income opportunities officiating, coaching or working within the sport programme.



Recognition in the community as supporting girls.



Potential pathway to leadership in the community.

### Strategies for Engagement $\mathbf{\hat{Y}}_{\mathbf{A}}$



- Engage boys in the programme by planning tournaments where both girls and boys play (for more information, go to the Mixing Genders section of this guide).
- Create a system in which boys can be allies of the programme and help sisters and girls with chores at home.
- Partner with other sport and development programmes that work with boys and offer to do tournaments or exchanges with them.
  - Encourage female leaders and coaches to organise and coach groups of boys.
- This will create a space where boys can play too and one that challenges traditional gender roles.
- Encourage fathers or male caregivers to come to programme meetings. Often-
- times, mothers or female caregivers take on the responsibility of attending all meetings with teachers and sport coaches.
- Create a committee of male caregivers whose daughters are involved in the
- programme.
- Have male supporters strategise ways they could reach out to other males and institutions in the community to help promote their daughters' right to play as well as their rights in general. Examples could include meeting with influential groups in the community normally not accessible to women or gathering large crowds of supporters when there are matches or tournaments.
  - Involve males in organising tournaments or community events.
- Engage the boys in girls' lives when making the case for girls' sport
- programmes.

- Hold meetings or attend boys' tournaments and describe why girls' sport is good for the community and how it could be good for them as well.
- Partner with groups that engage both girls and boys and men. For example, dance troupes are often mixed and are acceptable in most communities; this can be used as a demonstration of positive engagement.



In the <u>Naz Foundation's</u> Goal programme, girl Goal Champions lead select life skills sessions as well as teaching netball skills to boys who would hang around during the girls' practices. The director of the programme realised that the boys wanted to know how to play netball because it was something new to them, netball being traditionally a girls' game. She used girls in her programmes who were leaders to teach those boys how to play netball and lead them through selected life skills sessions as well.



Football for All Vietnam (FFAV), a grassroots football for development organisations based in Hue City, actively seeks out and relies on volunteers from the community to act as referees, coaches, and club managers for their football activities, which are always 50% girls and 50% boys. This allows the organisation to engage boys and men, and get them on board with girls' football, in communities throughout Vietnam. These volunteers go back into the community and act as advocates for the girls. For a personal story of one dedicated volunteer, Mr Nguyen Van Xuan, check out the web article: FFAV's Companion.





At <u>Boxgirls</u>, boys are invited to train with the girls from time to time. Priest, the leader of the programme, often has a more experienced female boxer instruct a less experienced, younger male boxer. This encourages the boy's respect for the girl's mental and physical skill, while building the girl's confidence in themselves and their abilities.



MIFUMI uses karate and taekwondo to educate girls about domestic violence and empower them physically and emotionally against it. When the programme began, Project Coordinator Janet Otte reported that boys were physically attacking girls on their way home from training. The boys didn't have any understanding of martial arts and wanted to show the girls that they, too, could fight. Janet therefore made the decision to include boys occasionally to educate them about the non-violent principles of martial.



The <u>ICRW</u> conducted a programme in Mumbai, India, called Parivartan, which engaged cricket coaches and mentors in schools and the community to teach boys lessons about controlling aggression, preventing violence, and promoting respect. The programme used peer-to-peer education, engaging young cricket captains to act as role models and educate their teammates on GBV and positive behaviours.

# School Teachers and Headteachers

Some of our partner organisations engage directly with schools, whereas others work outside of schools but might rely on them for support and resources. In either case, teachers and school principals are very important allies for most organisations. Girls who have access to formal education spend much of their time at school, so teachers have a huge influence in their lives. Headteachers and teachers often have access to resources such as fields to play on, sport materials, and transportation that could be useful for your programme and to which you may not have access. Whether your programme works directly in schools or not, creating partnerships with school headteachers and teachers is a good way to build support for your programme and gain access to resources. Additionally, teachers often have a much-respected position in the community, and if your programme has their support and approval, it may influence other community stakeholders' opinions.

#### **Common Barriers**

Often teachers are overworked and are unwilling to take on further responsibility to practically support the development or running of sport programmes.

Misperceptions about girls and sport, and gender roles.

Fear of criticism from other community members.

## **Incentives or Motivations for Engagement**



Access to new skills and methods of teaching.



Gaining opportunities to learn and play sport themselves.



Gaining additional support or resources from the organisation.



Opportunity to build increased trust with girl students.



Respect from community members.



Prestige of hosting programme at their school.

# Strategies for Engagement $\P_{lack}$



- Try to schedule practices, games, and sessions at times that do not conflict with girls' school duties.
- Share your curriculum with teachers, so they are clear what girls are learning at your programme.
- Select a teacher in every relevant school in the community as a point person for your programme. This teacher can serve as a resource for the girls and an ally to your programme and can inform other teachers about the programme.
- Consider training teachers as coaches. If you do not have enough coaches, it is wise to train teachers as coaches so then they can also deliver sport to girls.
- Keep school personnel informed about girls' progress in both sport and life skills.
- Invite them to participate in events.
- Host community meetings at schools and ask teachers and headteachers to be part of the programme.





<u>Sadili Oval</u> delivers sport to girls in schools around Kibera in Nairobi through their Girl Power Clubs. At every school they ask the girls to select a 'patron' for the programme: a teacher who is then the point person for the Girl Power Club at the school. These patrons help build a relationship between Sadili Oval coaches and the school and servce as an important resource for the girls.



# Case Study: Kembatta Mentti Gezzima

At <u>Kembatta Mentti Gezzima</u> teachers are essential to the programme because parents trust their daughters' teachers, and therefore if the teachers support the girls playing sport, then the parents will. PE teachers are recruited as coaches and referees and are very involved in the programme delivery.



# Case Study: Right to Play

At <u>Right to Play</u> they are training teachers to facilitate sport curricula with young girls. The teachers have found that their students are more engaged and energetic during class time as a result of the sport sessions, and they are encouraging fellow teachers to attend Right to Play trainings.





<u>Football for All Vietnam</u> (FFAV) trains local female teachers as coaches and referees for the local leagues. One example is a 27-year-old teacher named Ms. Phan Thi Tuyen at a primary school in Huong Tra district in Hue Province. Before joining, she was shy and not confident as a teacher, but once she became involved with FFAV, she became confident, independent, and active. She was chosen to lead and supervise the FFAV team participating in the Norway Cup in 2010, in Oslo, Norway. She was then recruited as a club developer and eventually became a facilitator for training other community-based football coaches.

## **Community Leaders**

Power and influence in a community setting is often organised hierarchically, with political, educational, religious, or economic leaders at the top. The opinions of those at the top of the hierarchy shape a community's support for your programme. Créating positive partnerships with the leaders at the top develops important inroads across a community. The failure to do so can mean political, economic, and logistical hurdles for you down the line.

Engaging different community leaders may require a variety of approaches, depending on who they are and what their opinions are on girls in their community. For example, you would have to take a very different approach with a conservative male religious leader than with a woman community leader who is the head of the local women's committee. In order to navigate this, it is important to understand these stakeholders and to engage them when planning and implementing your programme. Creating alliances and working relationships with these leaders may ensure the sustainability of your programme.



<sup>2</sup> F. A. Kuponiyi. (2008). Anthropologist, 10(4), page 239-243.

Image source: Mart Productions, Pexels

### **Common Barriers**

Community leaders who feel that their authority is threatened if they are not consulted before the start of a new programme.

Traditional or conservative views on girls' position and behaviour (such as disapproval of girls wearing sport clothing).

Desire to uphold traditional cultural practices that can be harmful to girls (for example, female genital mutilation or cutting).

Demands of bribes or favours in exchange for support.





Being part of the planning of the programme means more knowledge and control over how it is implemented.



Recognition for doing something positive for girls in the community.



Increasing influence by working with your organisation.



Diversifying leadership roles.



Invitations to be a speaker or have a role with the programme.



The programme may complement an initiative for girls that they already support.

# Strategies for Engagement $\diamond_{\blacktriangle}$



- Organise community meetings and ask the community leaders to lead them to talk about your programme and the benefits.
- Meet individually with community leaders to discuss the programme before you have events or new activities. Maintain constant communication and transparency and have an open ear for advice and concerns. Be patient and understand that trust is built over time
- Offer community leaders advisory positions with your organisation. Be transparent about where your funds come from and how you spend them on the programme.
- Adhere to cultural and religious customs when appropriate.
- Solicit the help and expertise of community leaders and ask for suggestions when a problem arises. Consider asking them for referrals or for help linking you to people who they feel may help improve your programme. Once you contact the referral, remember to write or call back immediately and thank them.
- Host events in religious centres and ask permission from religious leaders, especially when searching for a venue.
- Don't demand more time and energy than community leaders are able and willing to give.
- Respect the cultural landscape and try to work within it, as long as expectations of girls do not conflict with their human rights.
- Remain nonpartisan. Aligning with a political party makes your programme susceptible to the rise and fall of that party. The well-being and development of girls is not a political issue, and constantly reiterate that your sport programme has no political agenda.
- Express gratitude. Follow up with letters, conversations and tokens of appreciation, like t-shirts, photos from events, etc.
- Recognise supportive community leaders with an award. Be clear to the rest of the community about what you are rewarding and why.



A <u>Coaching For Hope</u> programme working in conservative Muslim villages in Northern Burkina Faso has staff visit religious leaders with young women from neighbouring villages who themselves participate in sport. These young women explain that they wear the hijab when they play and that they have remained good Muslims while playing sport.



# **Case Study: BRAC**

BRAC Uganda hosts Community Leaders Workshops in the different communities where they implement the Livelihood for Adolescence Program (ELA Program). The ELA program is designed specifically to improve the quality of the life of vulnerable adolescents by organising them, creating spaces of their own and helping them develop a set of skills so that they can live and grow as confident, empowered and self-reliant individuals contributing to change in their own families and communities. The Community Leaders Workshops are events where prominent female figures from the community visit an ELA club to talk to the girls about sexual health, life challenges or a host of other topics. The girls can ask questions and make valuable connections to important and prominent women and create a network of mentors and advisors.

## Government



Operating within the legal mandates of a region, including that region's city, provincial, and national laws, is a simple and non-negotiable necessity for establishing your programme. Failure to do so, especially in corrupt government environments, can jeopardise your success and the safety of your participants. Positioning your organisation as a leader in girls and sport can show government leaders and ministries that you are an asset that could help them develop their policies or reach more children.

# **Common Obstacles When Engaging the Government**

Government officials who refuse permission to use public sport spaces.

Government officials who do not uphold the law and refuse to report instances of violence against girls.

Officials who expect bribes from organisations who want to work in their community.

Gender bias in government decision-making and actions.

Long bureaucratic procedures that affect timelines of project set up or implementation.

# **Incentives or Motivations for Engagement**



Recognition for supporting positive social project for girls.



Being asked to be a guest speaker.



If the programme has a positive community impact, then by being associated, the official is building community support.

# Strategies for Engagement $\diamond_{\blacktriangle}$



- Meet with all local government officials before the start of the programme, informing them about the programme, and ask for their help/advice.
- Find spaces to play that are not controlled by the government.
- Formally invite (in writing) government officials to all events and invite them to speak.
- Understand laws and abide by them. When required, register your organisation.
- Write letters to government officials to inform them of your programme details, intentions, and membership.
- Follow protocol regarding soliciting support. Sometimes this means approaching lower-ranking government officials first, who then will make introductions to higher-ranking officials.
- Invite police to monitor major events and thank them publicly for their support.
- Find out the ministry or department in charge of promoting sport and games and be sure to discuss your programme and how you can work together with this ministry.
- If police or government officials begin to expect financial compensation for their support, be strategic about engaging them less frequently or in front of other community partners who would frown upon such demands.
- Consider applying for government funding when available.
- Be aware of the policies and government position on issues and use this as leverage to claim support from the government.
- Gain allies by interacting with government officials informally as well to get insights of procedures and how to navigate political dynamics.



<u>Gregoria Apaza</u>, an organisation that addresses gender-based violence amongst indigenous girls and women of El Alto, holds rallies promoting different women's rights laws or legislation in La Paz. Two hundred people turned up at one rally, including members of the police and military. They marched in defence of women's rights alongside other men and women.



Kembatta Mentti Gezzima approached and engaged the Women and Youth Affairs officer in their community and included the officer in official community conversations and events planning. This has led to support from the government office, and the Women and Youth Affairs officer helps to facilitate the programme by providing resources and logistical support, as well as building approval in local government.



## **Case Study: NOWSPAR**

NOWSPAR (National Organisation for Women, Sport, Physical Activity and Recreation) partners with the national governing bodies of sport in Zambia to promote girls' and women's participation in sport throughout the country. Through this partnership they have access to professional athletes who can help them build support, as well as government officials whose support is essential to the sustainability of their programme. In addition, the Ministry of Education has offered NOWSPAR free office space in its building in Lusaka.



# Case Study: Youth Empowerment Foundation

A staff member of <u>Youth Empowerment Foundation</u> attended one of Women Win's Digital Storytelling trainings, where she produced a short video about sport and girls. She will use this to gain essential support from local government officials who need to give their approval in order for the programme to continue. She plans to invite officials to a meeting where she will show the stories and the officials will hear what a positive impact the programme has had from the girls themselves.

# Media //

The media can be a great ally in engaging the community and gaining support for your programme. Besides traditional media, such as television, radio, and print; new types of media, such as social media and other internet platforms, are providing organisations and girls themselves fast and easy ways to interact with the community and its multiple stakeholders.



### **Common Barriers**

Media outlets often give attention to men's and boys' sport and not women's or girls' sport.

The media may not understand the goals and the importance of your programme.

Media outlets may lack access to resources for sending reporters or media representatives to visit the programme.

Some media personnel will expect to be paid for covering your programme.





Opportunity to be seen as promoting important initiative for girls.



Girls' sport may be a new topic and one that has never been covered.



Build visibility of their radio station or television station if they attend an event and are seen there by the community.



Gaining original stories about local leadership that may not be accessible to them in other places.



# Strategies for Engagement 💠



- Invite media to all events that you host.
- Ask media contacts to feature stories about your participants, and ask participants if they want to learn more about the media.
- Inform the media early and thoroughly about your programme. Include radio stations, newspapers, local television, etc.
- Feature media publications about your programme on your website, or at your office.
- Follow up and thank media contacts whenever they publish something about your programme.
- Ask media organisations to support your project by donating shirts or equipment and offer to put up a poster or banner advertising them.
- Prepare as much content and material as you can, as some media personnel may not have an interest in your programme; the easier you make it for them to do an article, the higher your chances of publication.
- Invite media as participants in your meetings and planning of events in order to contribute to their understanding of girls' sport programmes in general, not just events.
- Ask media personnel to give talks and presentations at events and in the programme activities.

# Social Media

Social media, such as Facebook, Instagram, Tik Tok and Twitter, are free tools that you can use to keep in touch with your stakeholders and community members directly. Social media gives you the opportunity to share whatever you want and when you want, rather than waiting for traditional media to pick up a story or attend an event. It gives you complete control over how an event or information is portrayed and what to share. Girls themselves are usually knowledgeable about social media and the internet and can be great assets in helping you engage the community. Girls who are in positions of leadership within your programme can tell their stories about the positive influence of sport on their lives (for example through Digital Storytelling), which can then be distributed through the internet and will demonstrate to the community the benefits for girls who play sport.

### **Common Barriers**

You may not have anyone who knows how to effectively use social media. The internet connection may be unreliable, making it hard to post or upload social media content, and for the community to access this content.

There may not be enough time and enough staff to update social media content.

## **Incentives or Motivations for Engagement**



Social media is a free tool that is easy to use.



Organisations have complete control over content, how they portray themselves and their programmes, and when content is shared.



Content can have wide reach and influence if the community has access to internet.



Potential to engage international partners that would have otherwise not known about your programme or organisation.

# Strategies for Engagement 💠



- Enlist the help of the girls themselves, as they are often proficient in using social media and already have networks to which they are connected.
- Share digital stories or any other stories of empowerment online.
- Use social media sites (Facebook, Twitter) and blogs to engage with local and international partners and stakeholders.
- Stay active on social media; large lulls in activity might cause you to lose supporters online.
- Try creating a posting schedule and delegate posting duties to one or two people.



Gregoria Apaza is an organisation that addresses gender-based violence amongst indigenous girls and women. In addition to running life skills, employability, and sport programmes for girls and women, GA runs their own radio station. Named 'Pachamama Radio', the station features continuous coverage of issues critical to addressing gender in Bolivia. Several of the programmes are directed and emceed by youth and give girls the opportunity to share their voices with the community.



<u>Sadili Oval</u> has built a relationship with a local and a national sport radio station. Once a year Sadili Oval hosts a football tournament to raise awareness about safe space and HIV/AIDS and the radio station covers the tournament and interviews some of the girls from Sadili, which raises the status of the programme and raises awareness throughout Kenya.



## **Case Study: HODI**

Horn of Africa Development Initiative (HODI) uses social media, specifically Facebook, to re-engage graduates of their programme as well as peers of the girls who participate in their programme. They encourage graduates to remain involved in some capacity, even if they no longer attend sessions. They also use Facebook as a tool to engage and report to donors.



## **Case Study: Empodera**

Empodera, a non-profit organisation in Brazil, uses all types of sport to empower girls and work toward making a more gender equitable society. They use several social media platforms (Instagram, Facebook, Twitter and Youtube) to highlight their work and develop an online community following. They also provide young leaders and participants in their programmes opportunities to express themselves through Empodera's social media channels. This directly links the online community to girls and their stories and voices.

### **Resource Providers, Partners, and Donors**

The support of resource providers, partners, and donors is often necessary for the success of a girls' sport programme. Understanding how to engage with donors, funders, and resource providers, and create long-term, mutually-beneficial partnerships with them, is an important part of sustaining your programme and engaging with community groups.

Engagement styles and strategies with resource providers, partners, and donors will differ depending on the relationship they have to you, your organisation, or your community. When entering into partnerships with donors, funders, or other community resource providers and organisations, remember four important principles that will ensure the partnership is a success: Transparency, Equity, Accountability, and Mutual Benefit.

#### **Donors and Funders**

Although all the principles of successful partnerships apply to funders and donors, these relationships often require special attention and additional resources. Donors and funders could be local businesses, international NGOs, government bodies, or individual people in the community. Understanding how to engage with these funders and donors is essential in keeping them engaged with your programme and sometimes determines whether or not they offer funding or financially support the programme in some way.

Although all donors and funders are not the same, most do not like to be treated as cash machines, only being engaged when your organisation needs money. Most donors and funders, big and small, are very interested in updates about the programme, including its impact on the girls and the community, and require these updates through reporting. Most donors also value honesty and would prefer to be problem-solving partners with an organisation as opposed to getting updates that disregard all the problems and obstacles and highlight only successes.

### **Common Barriers**

Not enough staff or time to fundraise or seek out new opportunities.

Not enough staff or time to report thoroughly and effectively to donors and funders. Lack of access to funders and donors, both local and international.

High competition for the attention of particular funders and donors.





Supporting an innovative approach to empowering girls and women.



Exposure to new learnings from working with a different target group.



Increasing their presence in a particular country or region.



Diversity through funding a portfolio of various groups.



# Strategies for Engagement $\diamond_{\bullet}$



- Create a flier that concisely and attractively summarises your programme. In many places, a written document with photos goes a long way in making your programme look more official and respectable. This is especially important if it is a new programme. Include the names of your partners on your materials, if appropriate.
- Report on outcomes and impact. Show results in multiple forms, including statistics, written accounts, and photos.
- Treat every relationship as a partnership. Share discussions around successes and problem solving.
- Introduce funders to other individuals and organisations invested in the same causes or working in the same area.
- Share future goals and expectations.
- Invite funders and donors to events and ask them to speak if relevant.



# Case Study: Kick4Life

Kick4Life, a football for development programme that works with both boys and girls, partnered with telecommunications company Vodacom. Vodacom has donated more than 100 mobile phones to Kick4life football club as an initiative to enhance communication between the HIV/AIDS counsellors and their clients.

### **Resource Providers and Organisational Partners**

Finding resources to run your programme does not always have to mean spending money. Mutually beneficial partnerships can be a valuable way to secure equipment, facilities, expert advice, basic provisions, and other programme needs. These resource providers can include local businesses, schools, other organisations, government facilities, and more. In your strategy you should consider who has resources that you could benefit from and how you could begin to build a relationship with them that is mutually beneficial. It is important to remember that the partnership should be a win for both sides and not one side taking and the other only giving.

For example, if there is a local business that sells sport equipment, you can offer to advertise their business at events in exchange for a discount on equipment. Additionally, consider partnering with a local school to use their playing field for free so that you do not have to pay for a space. Understand that although partnerships are occasionally built on altruism, they are more frequently built and sustained when there is clear mutual benefit. Consider things like helping maintain the field at a local school by cleaning up litter after every training session or donating extra equipment you have to the youth centre that allows you to use their space.

### **Common Barriers**

Competition between organisations.

Reluctance to partner based on lack or misunderstanding of programme. Limited connection or networking opportunities with other organisations serving adolescent girls in the community (NGOs, government groups, businesses).

## **Incentives or Motivations for Engagement**



Advertising for their business or organisation.



A mutually beneficial partnership in which you provide them with a service and they provide you with resources.



Increased respect in the community.



Larger reach and more beneficiaries.

# Strategies for Engagement $\diamond$



- Communicate frequently and transparently about goals, needs, and challenges.
- Demonstrate the successes of your programme: people want to partner with a successful programme that is positively impacting girls and the community.
- Be communicative. Conduct regular meetings and follow up with reporting on progress, events, and impact.
- Assure them of visibility or invisibility, depending on the desire of the partner. Express gratitude, publicly thanking each partner for support, using logos and other materials provided by the partner.
- Be proactive, reaching out to organisations rather than waiting for them to contact you.
- Organise a day of dialogue, bringing together various organisations serving the same demographic in the community for discussions on ways to better work together.
- Offer to advertise for a local business partner at events.
- Connect with champions or advocates for your programme who are part of the resource provider's community; e.g., a caregiver who is in the Council whose land you use.
- Support other organisations and their activities through volunteer provision or promotion of information.



# **Case Study: Association of Kigali Women in Sports**

Association of Kigali Women in Sports has a very small budget, and prices to rent office space are very high. They have created a partnership with the Rwanda IOC and the Rwanda National Sport Association so that they have office space for free at the national football stadium in Kigali.



Girls and Football South Africa, an NGO based in Cape Town that works with adolescent girls using football and media, created a relationship with Banyana Banyana, the South African national female football team. Players from the team come to camps organised by the organisation and serve as role models, inviting the girls in the programme to national team games.

# O4 Strategies for Engaging the Community

It is important to plan your community engagement strategy in advance. The planning process starts with an understanding of what you and your organisation define as your community and who makes up that community (meaning stakeholders, groups, etc.). Once you understand who your community is, and who the key stakeholders and community groups are, you can begin planning how to best engage each of those groups.

## **Step 1: Defining Goals and Objectives**

The first important question to ask yourself in planning your community engagement activities is the same question that you ask yourself when you design the programme: what do you hope to achieve? By identifying what you hope to achieve with the programme, you can begin to identify who will be important to your programme's success and how. Break down that list of stakeholders into who your biggest potential allies are and who may prove to be a barrier to your programme's success. Make a list of your programme objectives and a list of stakeholders and their potential influences on your objectives. All of these will relate to your overall programme goal. Without clear goals for your girls' sport programme or a clear understanding of what you are trying to achieve, determining how to approach your stakeholders might be more difficult.

For more information on strategic planning and creating clear goals, look through the Common Ground Initiative resource.

# **Step 2: Understanding the Community**

The next step should be to understand who makes up your community. This can be done by simply making a list of all community members. Another way to do this is through community mapping. Community mapping is an activity that usually involves members of a community who visually represent (through drawings) what their community looks like. The focus of the community mapping exercise (identifying safe spaces, community resources, or types of community groups) determines what the maps look like when they are complete. This can be done in

a workshop setting or organization meeting, and can serve to provide you with a better understanding of the groups and stakeholders in your community.

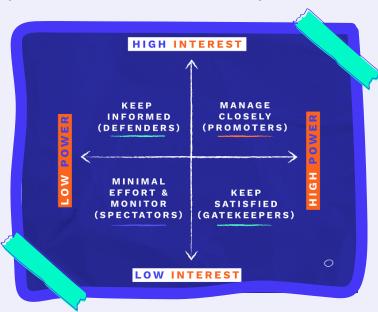
# Step 3: Identifying Stakeholders and Community Groups

In the section of this guide entitled Community Groups and Stakeholders you will find a list of possible community groups and stakeholders in your communities and the barriers that you may face in engaging them, as well as best practices to engage them.

The next step in your planning process is to make a similar list, narrowing down your list from Step 2. This may take some time, as the best way to do it is to speak to the people in the community and the girls who will participate in your programme to understand who the influencers and stakeholders are. As you make the list, note what potential barriers you might encounter and use the strategies presented in this guide to try and overcome those barriers.

Look at the Stakeholder Engagement Strategy chart below. Identify each stakeholder that you have mapped as one of the following categories:

- Promoters: Stakeholders that have a high interest in your programme and hold power in the community. You need to manage these relationships closely as they will promote your programme's needs to other stakeholders.
- Defenders: Stakeholders who have a high interest in your programme but do not hold a lot of power. They will defend the rights of your programme so although you may not need to manage them closely for impact, you should keep them informed to keep up their interest.
- Spectators: Stakeholders who have low interest in your programme and do not hold a lot of power. You should still try to engage them but not spend too much energy or resources, to focus on higher impact strategies.
- Gatekeepers: Stakeholders who have high power but low interest in your programme. You need to find a way to keep them happy and satisfied in order to keep your programme running. They do not need to be 'Promoters' but they do need to be satisfied enough.



## **Step 4: Engaging Key Stakeholders**

Once you have a list of the key stakeholders in your community, you can begin to design and implement approaches and engagement activities. Even if your programme is already in progress, you can always go back and engage more stakeholders. It is important that you are open to changing your programme based on your relationship to, engagement with, and input from stakeholders. If part of your strategy is to involve them in planning and implementation, then it is important that you respect their input and make changes where necessary, otherwise they will see that you have only involved them as a token gesture and it is not true involvement.

Sample Strategy and Plan

**Define Your Audience:** Not all stakeholders can be approached the same way. Each group requires a different approach in order to get their support. Make sure that you clearly understand the different groups and their needs and desires.

**Brainstorm Actions:** For each group, brainstorm ideas for how to approach or engage them, before, during, and after the programme.

**Create a Timeline:** Plot your actions for each group on a timeline and prioritise the groups that are most important for the programme first. Remember that even if a current programme or intervention is not taking place at a particular time, that doesn't mean you can't engage community groups or stakeholders. Focus on continuous year-round engagement to maximise support.

**Delegate Roles:** Assign roles and tasks within the organisation regarding actions. If each group of stakeholders feels like they have a point person or contact person within the organisation, they will be more likely to stay engaged.

# **Step 5: Measuring Impact**

The final step is to measure the impact of your efforts in the community. You may not be able to measure all of the impacts that you have, but with specific tools, such as a parent questionnaire, you will be able to capture what the change has been with certain community stakeholders. For more information and promising practices, go to the <a href="Measuring Impact">Measuring Impact</a> section.





# **Measuring Impact**

Measuring impact is an integral part of project design, implementation and completion, and should be considered at all stages within the project cycle. When Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning (MEL) is done well, it is seen and valued as an ongoing process, not just a donor reporting requirement. Monitoring activities help to identify trends (both positive and negative) during programme implementation in order to make real-time improvements in the programme, or course-correct if needed. Evaluation and learning should be processes of reflection and participation – helping staff and coaches to feel more connected and involved in the impact of the programme and inviting all stakeholders to be involved in improving the programme for future participants.

There's always more to learn, and we recommend taking one step at a time. Get started with what you have the time and resources to do. It might be helpful to write down which MEL activities your team is already doing, and what elements would be most useful and achievable to add, given your particular context and resources.

# Where are you?

This section of the International Guidelines will outline the Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning approach to designing sports programming.

In this PDF, you will explore the following topics:

1 What Is MEL and Why Do We Do It?

Designing and Planning for MEL

Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning in a Programme



# What Is MEL and Why Do We Do It?



MEL stands for Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning. It is the way that we ensure that we are doing good work, and is also a process of reflection, giving the opportunity to staff and coaches to see the results of their work on a higher

MEL can often seem very technical or boring, but it is an integral part of sport programming. Let's explore each step in the process in more detail:



**Monitoring** is a continuous practice that ensures activities are on track and that girls are successfully moving through the programme. In short, it is how you know your programmes are happening the way you planned.



**Evaluation** is an activity that usually occurs at the end of the programme that assesses whether or not a programme is achieving its intended objectives.



**Learning** is the process through which information generated from monitoring and evaluation (M&E) is reflected upon and intentionally used to continuously improve a programme's ability to achieve results.

### Why Do We Do It?

Measuring the impact of a sport programme on adolescent girls as well as the surrounding community provides important information for organisations, not only to show that what they are doing drives positive and social change, but also to improve their own strategies and approaches. Measuring impact through research, monitoring, evaluation and learning helps to ensure that organisations' strategies and programmes are as effective as possible in their efforts to achieve results in both the short and long term. The data gathered can help persuade communities to embrace sport as a strategy for girls, particularly in places where society is hesitant to let girls play.

## **Timely and Reliable MEL:**



Supports programme implementation with evidence-based input that informs decision-making to guide and improve programme implementation.



Contributes to programmatic and organisational learning and knowledge by encouraging reflection and insight-sharing.



Upholds accountability by demonstrating whether or not work has been carried out as agreed with participants, community members, partners and



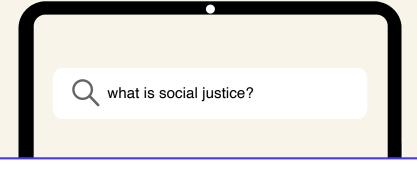
Provides opportunities for stakeholder feedback, especially participants and community members, to provide input into work, in order to learn from



Promotes and celebrates work by highlighting accomplishments and achievements, contributing to communications and resource mobilisation.

#### **Feminist MEL**

Feminist MEL is an overall approach to measuring and evaluating impact and change that explicitly challenges unequal power relations, and questions assumptions about gender identities and roles. MEL is feminist if it recognises the unique needs of adolescent girls and young women. It should prioritise their expertise and perspectives, acknowledging that their experiences need to be accurately represented through a process that emphasises participation, empowerment, and social justice.



**Social justice** is a communal effort dedicated to creating and sustaining a fair and equal society in which each person and all groups are valued and affirmed.

A feminist approach should also involve the active participation of programme participants across all stages of the MEL process, including design, implementation, analysis, and reporting. Some strategies to incorporate feminist MEL practices include:

Strategy 1: Engaging and training female participants to serve as data enumerators (i.e., someone who collects data).

Strategy 2: Using mixed methodology to ensure that stories that amplify female voices are included as a key component.

**Strategy 3:** Utilising participatory approaches from the design phase to data validation.

# Designing and Planning for MEL

Tracking a programme's success based on the intended objectives should be integral to an organisation's monitoring and evaluation strategy. Put simply, it is important to write down what change you expect to happen and how that change might come about.

There are many tools that can help you to map and organise your programmes' inputs, outputs and outcomes, and we recommend using a Logical Framework ('Logframe') or Theory of Change (ToC).



A **Logframe** is a common MEL planning tool consisting of a matrix which provides an overview of a project's goal(s), activities and anticipated results. It provides a structure to help specify the components of a project and its activities and for relating them to one another. Many donors require a logframe as part of the application process.

Theory of Change (ToC) is a description or illustration of how and why a desired change is expected to happen. A ToC fills in the 'middle' between outcomes and activities to explain HOW and WHY the desired change is expected to occur. Comparatively to a logframe, a ToC is a much more comprehensive methodology which shows a much bigger picture.

If you are getting started with a girls' sport programme, we suggest that you start with a simple logframe because it:

- Is a planning and management tool that helps to set out how the programme is expected to work and what it will achieve.
- Provides a framework for data collection and results monitoring.
- Articulates how change will be measured and monitored over time to stakeholders (and is often required by funders!).
- Is also used for accountability purposes, to report on programme progress and results.
- Can be used to track achievements and progress towards planned milestones and targets for each programme.



Image source: Moving the Goalposts, Kenya

# Logical Framework (Logframe) Example Template

	PROJECT SUMMARY	INDICATORS	MEANS OF VERIFICATION	RISKS/ ASSUMPTIONS
Goal	10% increase in the number of Grades 5-6 female primary school students continuing on to high school within 3 years			
Outcomes	Improve leadership competency of girls in Grades 5-6 by 20% within 1 year	Leadership proficiency among girls in Grades 5-6	Base/endline survey using leadership indicators	Improved sport skills provides self- confidence required to grow as a leader
Outputs	500 Grade 5-6 girls in low-income communities complete a football summer camp	Improve leadership competency of girls in Grades 5-6 by 20% within 1 year	Improve leadership competency of girls in Grades 5-6 by 20% within 1 year	Girls apply what they learnt in the summer camp
	500 parents of girls in Grade 5-6 in low-income communities support them to practice leadership at home	Number of parents reporting supporting their daughters	Survey of parents conducted at the end of each football camp	Girls are interested in sharing with their parents
Activities	Run five girls football summer camps, with 100 Grades 5-6 girls in low-income communities	Number of summer camps run	Summer camp records	Parents of girls in low-income communities are interested in them attending the camps
	Distribute 500 Activity Book kits to girls attending football summer camps	Number of activity books distributed	Activity book distribution records	Girls are interested and able to use the activity books at home

# **Learning Agenda**

Q what is a learning agenda?

A **learning agenda** is a tool that can help you seek solutions to problems, test assumptions, and support you to make more informed decisions that make your work more impactful and efficient.

Women Win also recommends **creating a learning agenda for any new girls' sport programme** that you embark upon. They include:

- A set of questions addressing critical knowledge gaps.
- A set of associated activities to answer them.
- Products aimed at disseminating findings and designed with usage and application in mind.

## **The Process**

To begin, the team should identify a set of short-term and long-term questions. Ideas for learning questions can come from many different sources, including:

- The existing project logframe and particularly the assumptions section.
- Problems that have been identified concerning how to implement the work.
- Identified gaps in the existing knowledge base relevant to the project.

#### For example:

### **Learning Questions**

#### **Short Term Learning Questions**

- Are girls interested in using the activity books at home?
- What kind of workbook activities do the girls like most?
- What are some of the reasons why parents would not be interested in their daughter attending a sport programme?

#### **Long Term Learning Questions**

- How do girls apply what they learned during the football camp to school?
- What are the key barriers to gaining selfconfidence for girls in the target communities?
- Are girls more likely to stay in sports after the football camp?

From here, the team should plan for answering each of the learning questions. Learn more about Learning Agendas <u>here.</u>

## **The Reporting Cycle**

Most programmes must stick to a donor reporting cycle, and compile data at the end of activities to share the impact of the programme. When MEL is planned and integrated from the start, learning and analysis can then easily be compiled, compared with the goals identified in the programme logframe, and detailed in communications and reports. It is an ongoing cycle of reflection, learning, and change that continues through programme planning, implementation, and reporting in order to create sustainable, long-term outcomes.

#### **IMPROVE**

- Use findings and insights to adjust your work
- Update objectives and planning for next cycle

#### **LEARN**

- Analyse the information you have collected
- Sense-check with participants and community members
- Draw conclusions and report to stakeholders

#### PLAN

- · Identify what you want to do
- · Decide how you are going to do it
- Agree upon what to measure, what information you need and how you will collect it

#### **MEASURE**

- · Do the work to achieve your goal
- Gather information and stories from those impacted by the work

# Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning in a Programme

In this section we will explore both quantitative and qualitative data collection methodologies and discuss best practices for carrying these out safely.

To gain an understanding of the many different changes that sport programmes can make in girls' lives, Women Win uses a unique framework of indicators based on what we call **B.A.C.K.S.** (Behaviour, Attitude, Condition, Knowledge, Status). B.A.C.K.S. is a framework that deconstructs individual social change into five dimensions and this framework allows us to contextualise outcomes and makes the change in girls more measurable and understandable. We use this framework to help guide the content of our MEL tools. The most common classification of MEL tools is quantitative and qualitative. Quantitative tools are those that typically collect data that can be counted or compared on a scale. Qualitative tools are those that collect narrative or descriptive data.

# B.A.C.K.S. – A Framework for Measuring Social Change

Our mission at Women Win is to equip adolescent girls to achieve their rights through sport. We believe that the progress our mission must be measured in outcomes – in other words, by measuring the social change that happens for an individual girl when she participates in sport and life skills programmes. We know that sport contributes to changes that are both internal and external to her (as opposed to those changes being attributed solely to the experience).

To gain an understanding of the more granular dimension of changes in girls' leadership, we Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning in a Programmehave developed a unique framework of indicators based on what we call the B.A.C.K.S. measures. B.A.C.K.S. is an acronym that deconstructs individual social change into fivedimensions, including and defined by the following:

**BEHAVIOUR:** 

The way in which one acts, especially towards others.

ATTITUDE:

A settled way of thinking or feeling – a point of view – that shows ones' sense of self and values (attitudes inform behaviour)

**CONDITION:** 

The state of a person against a specific situation, context or circumstance which affects the way in which one lives (i.e. conflict or safety) – an external measure

**KNOWLEDGE:** 

The facts, information and skills one acquires through experience or education

STATUS:

A position in a community – how one is perceived by their community – an external measure

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Lucy Knight. Outcome Evaluation: Three Workshops.

The B.A.C.K.S. framework allows us to contextualis eoutcomes, and makes the concept of leadership more measurable and understandable. In full collaboration our partners and the girls they serve,we have defined a set of key changes that we measure through the programmes we support. The follow table contains examples of those measures:

BEHAVIOUR:	<ul> <li>I am a leader</li> <li>I raise my voice</li> <li>I take care of my body and health</li> <li>I save money</li> <li>I take action to stop violence in my community</li> </ul>		
ATTITUDE:	<ul> <li>I want to learn and develop</li> <li>I am can influence my future</li> <li>I am confident and courageous</li> <li>I want to be a role-model and inspire others</li> <li>I am equal to others and have unique skills and talents</li> </ul>		
CONDITION:	<ul> <li>Increased awareness and respect</li> <li>Increased social mobility</li> <li>Increased equality and opportunities</li> <li>Increased stability and security Increased inclusion</li> </ul>		
KNOWLEDGE:	<ul> <li>I know my rights and how to act upon those rights</li> <li>I know how to take care of my body and health</li> <li>I know how to save money and become more economically secure</li> <li>I have increased skills related to my sport</li> </ul>		
STATUS:	<ul> <li>I am seen as educated</li> <li>I am recognised as a leader</li> <li>I am seen as courageous and determined</li> <li>I am seen as a girl with unique talents and skills</li> <li>I am seen as an athlete / sports-girl</li> </ul>		

We use this framework to help guide the content of our MEL tools. The most common classification of MEL tools is quantitative and qualitative. Quantitative tools are those that typically collect data that can be counted or compared on a scale. Qualitative tools are those that collect narrative or descriptive data.



#### Quantitative tools include:

- Participant Registration Forms
- Base/Endline Surveys
- Attendance Tracking



#### Quantitative tools include:

- Most Significant Change (MSCs)
- Case Study
- Picture Story
- Focus Group Discussions
- Reporting

For comprehensive MEL, we **recommend you gather both qualitative and quantitative data**, with both methods being used to complement one another. This process of combining data from several different research methods is called triangulation. Triangulation provides a more in-depth and accurate depiction of a programme by constructing a picture that includes both different perspectives and different types of data. From a **feminist MEL perspective**, it is best practice to leverage this 'mixed' methodology approach in order to give voice to participants and ensure that findings are grounded in the participants lived experiences. On the next two pages, you will find more information about these tools.



#### **Types of MEL Tools**

#### 1. Quantitative

<b>Participant</b>
Registration
Forms

If you have the same participants coming to your activities regularly, it makes sense to have them fill out a registration form when they begin participating or when they sign up for the programme. This allows you to collect key data on who your participants are, and key information about them such as their age and geographic location.

For more information, see: Goal Registration Form

Surveys are one of the most common monitoring and evaluation tools. You can use surveys to collect data from a sample of participants, which can then be used to inform:

- Progress towards your intended outcomes
- Future programme design
- Funder reporting
- Annual reporting
- Social media and website information.

#### Base/Endline Surveys

You can also use surveys to collect coach and staff feedback. Two important times to use surveys to collect data are before and after a new activity or programme. You can use a baseline survey to measure the level of knowledge or skills of a specific group before a programme begins. For programmes or activities that have an end-date and are not ongoing, you can use an endline survey to compare the knowledge level and compare the results to the baselines to measure progress.

For more information, see:

- Goal Baseline
- Roll Models Leadership Self Assessment Baseline

#### Attendance Tracking

Taking regular attendance at all programme activities is an important step in monitoring how many girls attend training sessions or activities and who exactly is showing up and how often. This is important information for organisations in terms of better scheduling activities for increased atten- dance or better engaging with girls and their families to understand why they are not able to come on a regular basis. This also helps organisations track their graduation rates and drop-out rates and track attendance patterns, which in turn, helps them better understand where they are failing and how to improve.

For more information, see: HeadsUp CPSO Attendance Sheet

#### 2. Qualitative

Most Significant Change (MSC)	Most Significant Change is a form of qualitative, participatory monitoring and evaluation that uses participant stories to understand changes in programme participants. Each story represents the storyteller's interpretation of impact, which is then reviewed and discussed. This can be a useful way to gain meaningful testimonials and share the participant's perspectives. The process offers an opportunity for a diverse range of stakeholders (programme participants, coaches, field staff, facilitators etc.) to enter into a dialogue about a programme, its impact and its future direction.  An example MSC question could be: "Looking back over the last months, what do you think was the most significant change regarding your self-esteem?"  For more information, see:  MSC Guide  MSC Guide Appendices  MSC Templates  MSC Story Selection Template
Case Study	Collecting Case Studies is a simple and flexible data collection method. Through a series of questions, participants are able to reflect on their time within a programme, describe their experiences, both positive and negative, and share these in their own words. It is similar to Most Significant Change but does not require the same specific question to be answered.  For more information, see:  Case Study Guide Case Study Template Case Study - Example Questions
Picture Story	Picture Story is a fun, engaging and participatory data collection method involving photos or drawings from participants. Picture Story uses images as a tool, posing meaningful questions and allowing participants to reflect and share their experiences, both positive and negative, represented in photos or drawings. The pictures selected are used along- side captions composed by the programme participants. Images and visual representation can evoke powerful emotions and reactions, making this a powerful methodology to demonstrate impact.  For more information, see:  Picture Story Guide Picture Story Template Picture Story Prompts

# changes in knowledge, attitudes, and behaviours related to certain topics. FGDs provide the opportunity to learn not only if participants' knowledge, attitudes, and behaviour changed, but also how they changed and how this has impacted other aspects of their lives. In this way, FGDs are a useful tool in

impacted other aspects of their lives. In this way, FGDs are a useful tool in measuring the changes in participants' status and condition, therefore gaining a more in-depth understanding of participants' broader experiences within their communities.

A focus group discussion (FGD) is a qualitative tool in a group interview format that brings together specific programme stakeholders for a discussion around topics related to the change in participants as a result of the programme they are in. The information captured in the FGDs can be used to compare findings from other MEL tools. Individual participant questionnaires primarily measure

For more information, see:

- FGD Guidline
- Example FGD Approach: Civic Signals

#### Reporting

Reporting communicates your programme's results to the funder(s) of the programme. Writing a detailed and accurate narrative report is one of the most important things to do to demonstrate the impact and effectiveness of your programme. Depending on the funder, you could be asked to provide a range of information such as:

- Programmatic updates
- Any challenges or difficulties experienced and how you mitigated these
- Any learnings and how you/your organisation will use these
- Description of upcoming events
- Quantitative data (number of participants, survey results, etc.)
- Qualitative data (case studies, testimonials, etc.)

#### What is 'Safe' MEL?

MEL practices are considered safe if they do not place staff, participants or local communities at risk of any kind. Safe MEL activities actively work to avoid exposing those involved to additional risks through their MEL inputs and actions. 'Safe' refers not only to the physical safety of staff, participants and/or local communities, but also their emotional and mental safety and wellbeing.



It is important to always prioritise the safety and well-being of all stakeholders involved in your programme. One way that you can ensure that your MEL practices do this is to involve these groups in conversations about MEL, especially when sharing and discussing learnings. This can make the process seem less intimidating and lead to more genuine, honest data and learnings.

Other general best practices for those responsible for carrying out MEL activities, such as coaches and MEL staff, include:

- Understanding the approach and be confident answering any questions participants may ask.
- Being aware of the organisation's safeguarding protocols in case any concerns are raised during data collection.
- Being aware of the various ways to address possible distress that might arise during data collection. This is of particular importance if addressing sensitive topics. Similarly, knowing of additional services and resources that might be helpful to participants.
- If engaging girls and women, where possible, ensuring that data collection processes are carried out by woman staff/coaches.
- Creating an environment where participants feel comfortable and able to ask questions if needed. Having a private or quiet space to carry out the MEL processes is preferable.

There are a variety of other considerations to take into account when thinking through how to embed safe MEL practices into your programme. These can depend on the approach taken to data collection, such as whether or not this is done in-person or virtually. For more information on safe data collection, safe digital data collection and safe data storage, please see Women Win's Safe MEL Guide for Partners.

For more information, also see:

Women's Resource Centre: Data Collection and Analysis for M&E





Alongside our partners, Women Win fights for gender equality globally and strives to amplify girls' and women's voices and believes that everyone has an equal right to protection from discrimination, violence, abuse, neglect, maltreatment and exploitation. Sport can play a valuable role in the well-being and development of adolescent girls; however, if safety and inclusion are not at the centre of your programme design, development and implementation, your programmes risk causing more harm than good.

#### Where are you?

This section will explain the importance of safeguarding in designing sport programmes for girls, discuss the unique safety risks and challenges when working with girls and sport, and provide practical tools and guidance on implementing safe programming.

In this PDF, you will explore the following topics:

- 01 What is Safeguarding?
- Safeguarding and Girls' Sport Programmes
- 03 Understanding the Risks and Priorities
- O4 Safeguarding Policies and Procedures within your Organisation



# 01 Safeguarding

Q what is safeguarding?

**Safeguarding** is the policies, procedures and practices that protect the health, safety, well-being, and rights of individuals and actively prevent violation of these rights.

This means upholding the highest standards of safety for participants, partners, staff and any other individuals involved, particularly vulnerable groups. Children are often one of the most vulnerable groups, and protecting them and their rights from harm and exploitation needs to be central to your approach. Additional information about safe guarding can be found in the International Safeguards for Children in Sport.

## Safeguarding and Girls' Sport Programmes

When designing sport programmes for adolescent girls and young women, it is particularly important to approach safe guarding with a **gender lens**.

Participation in sport programmes can have **countless benefits** for girls: they can offer a place of growth, learning and belonging.

They can also offer development opportunities, introduce role models, and provide a girl-centred space that otherwise might not exist.



<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> For the purposes of this resource, children refers to those younger than 18.



**However**, if this space is not both physically and emotionally safe for participants, these benefits are inhibited. If any of your girls is fearful of being in physical or emotional jeopardy, they will not take the risks necessary to experience the full benefits of a sport programme. If a girl is afraid, they may be ostracised or bullied, and are unlikely to share their personal questions and thoughts. If they feel unsafe or intimidated by the physical playing conditions during your practice, they might not want to play the game.<sup>2</sup>

#### **Centring Girls' Voices**

Girls' voices have been largely **left out of child protection and safeguarding discourse**, and they have not been supported in **taking an active role in their own protection**.

Children, and girls in particular, must be **given a voice within programmes and empowered to drive the agenda** by determining the meaning of protection in their context and in their sport. Creating truly safe **and inclusive spaces requires putting the participants at the centre of the process.** 

In order to ensure the safety of your participants, you must understand their whole reality. This means **actively engaging** with participants and creating spaces where they **feel valued**, can voice their concerns and needs without fear or judgement and are connected to others who will help keep them safe and protected.



<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Brady, Martha (2005). Creating Safe Spaces and Building Social Assets For Young Women In The Developing World: A New Role For Sport. Women's Studies Quarterly 2005, vol.33, no.1&2, pp. 44-45.

Image source: OWLA Programme, Empodera, Brazil

# Understanding the **Answers**Risks and Priorities



From the moment your organisation starts to think about designing and implementing a sport programme for girls, **safeguarding should be at the centre of every decision made in the process.** There is an inherent risk in achieving social change; your organisation should commit to reducing these risks and identifying what priority areas to address safeguarding in your programme design and in your organisation more broadly.

#### **Risks**

In order to keep girls' programmes safe, we must understand their whole reality and therefore it is important you identify risks in and around the context where you are planning to implement your programme. Some of these risks may occur in the day-to-day life of the girls in your context, but there are additional risks to consider when implementing a sport programme.

#### Some risks include:



If girls don't have the opportunity to practise a lot of sports and experience moving their bodies, they may be more susceptible to injuries.



If sports are not a culturally accepted practice for girls, there could be interference, harassment, or jeering from outsiders who disapprove of the girls playing in public spaces.



If a coach shows inappropriate interest in a player, the girl might not be aware that this attention is prohibited by the organisation's code of conduct and may feel powerless to stop the situation from happening.



The playing conditions: for example, during rainy seasons, the playgrounds could be flooded and slippery and be unsafe for girls to play on.



If the playing space is far from the homes of the participants, it can be a risk for them to travel long distances alone, or during some times of day. Safeguarding concerns may not be reported due to cultural influences or norms, particularly around cases of gender-based violence, child abuse, or sexual harassment.

To better understand the steps needed to create a safe programme, you must first identify and assess the risks that could occur in all elements of your programme. This includes the safety of the physical or virtual space where you meet with the girls and the transportation to and from the programme. To help in this step, you can complete the mapping exercise below to identify any potential risks when starting to work with this target group.

Complete the risk mapping by filling in the table for Activity 1 on the next page.

Ask yourself the following questions:



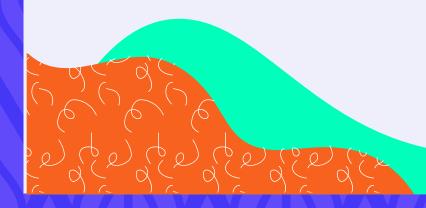
What are the daily risks faced by the girls who will participate in this programme?

What risks does participating in the programme pose to these girls?

After identifying all of the risks, you will be able to design plans and strategies to minimise or eliminate the risks identified. If you are unable to minimise or eliminate the risk, you should consider redesigning that element of the programme.

#### **Priorities**

Acknowledging your organisation's and programme's **strengths and weaknesses** in safe-guarding can help identify areas in which your organisation needs to grow in its commitment to providing girls with safe sport programming. You can use the **Gender Inclusion and Safety Self-Assessment** tool to think about elements that you might consider incorporating in your programme design in order to remove barriers to participation for girls and ensure they can also experience the full benefits of sport. The tool can also promote dialogue about safety and safeguarding within your organisations and coaches, and with the participants in your programmes.



# Activity 1: Mapping Risks

From other people (e.g. coaches)	Reporting concerns	In your environment	When travelling	Category	
				Weekly sessions for children, AGYW and women	
				Psycho-education workshops	
				Mental health clinics	
				Counselling and home based care	×
			0	Livelihoods and AGYW	



A key part of understanding how to create safe spaces in your programming is to include the voices of girls in defining safety, and understand their priorities in implementing safe sport programming. Rather than thinking about how to get more girls into your sport programmes, we need to rethink and redesign sports programming to make them safe and inclusive to all. The primary way to understand how to create safe spaces for girls is to ask them! Drawing the Line is a card game that follows a play-based and participatory approach to better understand the level of safeguarding and inclusion in programmes through the perspective of the programme participants. The tool is intended for girls in your programme, but it can also be used with coaches, volunteers, or administrators as a way to gather other viewpoints on the safety and inclusivity of programmes.

# Safeguarding Policies and **E**Procedures within your Organisation

Part of creating a safe space means **developing clear guidelines for all staff**, as well as participants. Creating a **Safeguarding Policy** is a crucial step to making sure that your organisation has the proper procedures and practices in place to ensure the safety and well-being of your participants, partners, staff and any other individuals involved in your programming, particularly vulnerable groups such as children and girls. There must also be clear and accessible processes and procedures stating what to do if these policies and codes are violated. Your safeguarding policy should include the following:

- Basic definitions of terms related to safeguarding, such as the different forms of abuse and discrimination
- A child protection policy or procedures
- Expectations and guidelines for all involved in your programming
- 04 A code of conduct for all involved in your programming
- O5 Clear reporting, response, and follow up procedures for safeguarding policy violations

# Child Protection Policy

While a safeguarding policy includes protections for everyone involved in your organisation and/or programming, child protection policies are also important for organisations that work directly with children. Even though sport programmes play a valuable role in the well-being of children, they can also be, if the proper policies and procedures are not in place nor practiced, a place where children are abused, excluded or exploited. Girls' greater vulnerability to violence many settings amplifies this risk. This is why child protection policies, especially policies and processes in which the children themselves take part in the creation, are extremely important to ensure that a sport programme reaches its objectives of empowering youth and contributing to their well-being. If child protection is overlooked, then your sport programme is in danger of putting those very children in situations that could expose them to even more harm and negative experiences. To ensure an atmosphere of child protection, their perspective must be at the centre of programme design, development and implementation. This means actively engaging with participants and creating spaces where they feel valued, can voice their concerns and needs without fear or judgement, and are connected to others who will help keep them safe and protected.

# Reporting and Karaman Response Processes

An important and necessary aspect of a safeguarding policy is the reporting, response and referral process. This means the required steps and procedures of reporting any safeguarding violations and the necessary follow up. Establishing these procedures is important because it provides a clear guide for coaches and other adults, as well as children, on how to handle policy violations and cases of abuse that may have happened within the organisation itself or at a participant's home. Without specific knowledge about how to report safeguarding violations or respond to a report, a coach, participant or organisation representative might be unprepared to best handle these situations.

In sport programmes, coaches are in a unique position to both identify safeguarding violations and be the recipients of reports. Because of this, your organisation should have specific, detailed guidelines about how to report violations, who to report them to, and what the response procedures are. This will help avoid additional harm to both the reporting and responding parties. However, coaches and organisation leaders must also be aware of what their role does not include. Coaches should not play the role of a social worker, therapist, police, doctor, or other qualified professional. It is important that there are referral processes in place for safeguarding policy violations or cases that should be passed along to a qualified professional or where the reporting part might have need of additional resources.

## Safeguarding Officer

One way to prepare your organisation to implement your safeguarding and child protection policy and processes is to **hire a Safeguarding or Child Protection Officer**, ideally someone with experience in this field. This could be someone who worked for a social services organisation previously or another community institution in which their role was to supervise safeguarding procedures and/or protection of children. This person should have deep knowledge about the local support resources available for children.

We recognise that most organisations might not have the budget to hire a staff member specifically for this role. Another option is to appoint a current staff member or volunteer for this role and train that person to be the person in charge of upholding the policy, procedures, and processes. You could also have that person attend other training by external organisations such as child welfare, social services or government agencies that deal with children and abuse.

This person should have the following responsibilities:

- Ensuring the implementation and upholding of the Safeguarding Policy and relevant procedures
- Organising safeguarding and child protection training for all involved in programming
- Overseeing the review and revision of the policy at regular intervals
- Involving participants (e.g. children, girls) in the definition and identifying of safeguarding practices and procedures
- Overseeing the reporting, responding, and follow up processes for safeguarding violations.



## Code of Conduct

Your organisation has a responsibility for zero tolerance of harmful practices such as sexual harassment, gender inequality and discrimination that are unfortunately a common reality and problem in sport programmes. Any girls' sport programme that truly takes into consideration the emotional and physical safety of its participants must create and implement a code of conduct that guides the behaviours, processes and procedures that ensure girls are protected.

It is important for your organisation, staff, administration and anyone else involved in the day-to-day operations, to identify a set of standards for a Code of Conduct. This could be as simple as a list of behaviours that are acceptable, not recommended and never acceptable. Once everyone agrees on them, have all staff members (and any visitors or volunteers) sign the code: everyone involved must commit to this Code of Conduct. This list should then be displayed in a public space within your organisation where all visitors, staff and, most importantly, the girls themselves can see what conduct they should expect from their coaches and what is not acceptable.



Click here to view of an example Code of Conduct



# Training for Internal Staff and Coaches

Everyone in contact with girls has a role to play in their protection. They can only do so confidently and effectively if they are aware of and have the necessary understanding of key principles of protection, and the opportunity to develop, practise and implement key skills. Therefore, you should ensure that every individual in you organisation that has regular contact with the girls receives annual safeguarding training. This may include basic safeguarding training delivered as part of the staff member or volunteer's induction or annual update.

Additionally, having guidelines on recruiting coaches, facilitators and other staff (including volunteers) is crucial to creating a safe environment for girls in your sport programme. When recruiting potential staff, make sure to have a standardised process that includes background checks for both male and woman coaches. Check not only with local police but also with the community and make sure that the coach would be an ideal role model or mentor for the programme. If you do have female participants and male coaches, make sure that you hire enough woman coaches or facilitators so that there is at least one female adult in each group coached by a male. Below are excellent safeguarding training resources produced by international sport organisations and offered free online.

**UEFA** online course

FIFA online course



# Integrating Girls' Voices

Girls from your context must be given a voice within your programme and should be empowered to drive the agenda by determining the meaning of protection in their context and in their sport. Integrating the girls' voices is important in all steps of your safeguarding:



By exploring and understanding the risks that may occur when they are participating in the programme.

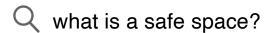


By giving them the opportunity to share what programme safety should look like.



By co-designing the response framework to collectively decide together on the next steps when a safeguarding concern arises.

### Creating Safe Spaces 🥢



A **safe space** is an environment where girls feel physically and emotionally secure. It is a place where they are protected from bodily harm, including sexual abuse and preventable sport injuries.

In a safe space, girls feel free to openly express themselves in a confidential environment and are comfortable sharing their concerns and asking sensitive questions without fear of judgement or intimidation. Ultimately, the definition of a safe space depends on how girls feel within that space; therefore, your programme space needs to be consistently evaluated and maintained by programme leaders and participants.

Without safe spaces, a girl's growth and willingness to take risks and be vulnerable are inhibited. If they feel they are in physical or emotional danger, they will not be able to experience the full benefits of participating in a sport programme. This responsibility to create safe spaces falls not only on your coaches and facilitators who directly interact with girls on a daily basis, but on all staff and administration of your organisation as well. Everyone involved in your organisation has the responsibility to ensure girls feel emotionally secure and comfortable within their sport environment, and protected from physical harm.



## Tips for creating a physically safe space:

- Ensure that the play space is free from harmful objects, such as broken glass.
- Always have First Aid materials ready in case of injury.
- Ensure that girls have adequate protective gear for sports that require it.
- Schedule sessions at times where girls do not have to walk to or from home in the dark.
- Establish the rules of the game girls are playing at the beginning of the game and enforce fair play.
- Adopt a no-fighting policy within the programme. This should apply to participants, coaches and volunteers and should include physical and verbal attacks.
- Train the coaches to ensure they are able to maintain safe spaces for the girls and de-escalate conflicts.
- Become acquainted with neighbours in the area.

## Tips for creating an emotionally safe space:

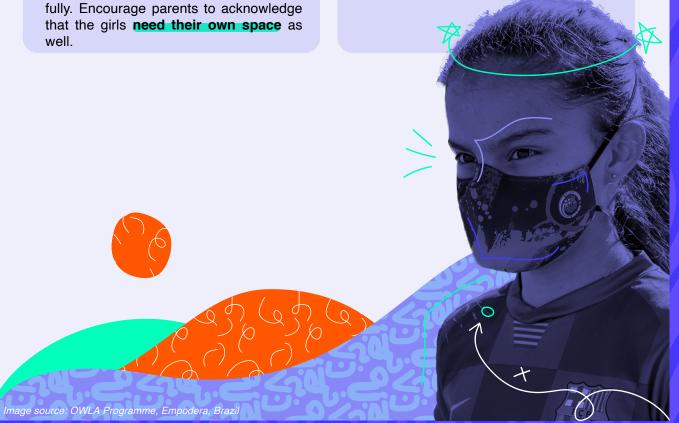
- Invite the girls to define what is important for the creation of their safe space.
   Explore using a participatory approach such as **Drawing the Line** to facilitate this discussion.
- Have girls create and sign a code of conduct that sets ground rules for training sessions and sensitive discussions. Have them decide what parameters will be put on confidentiality and the resulting penalties when the agreed upon code is broken.
- Teach girls healthy and positive communication skills to help them peacefully resolve conflicts among one another.
- Consider holding sessions in spaces that can be physically enclosed, to keep outsiders out and to help girls feel secure. These do not need to be built from scratch. Explore the possibility of using existing courts, gyms and public spaces with community groups and partners.
- If possible, do not allow non-participants
  from observing regular practice sessions and discussions as girls are likely to
  feel intimidated or inhibited in front of an
  audience. This includes romantic partners, parents, and people not related to
  the girls or programme.
- Ensure that there is always an adult woman present when a male is involved in sport training with the girls. In some cultures, creating an all-girl space is necessary for girls to feel emotionally and physically safe. This means no males watching girls play sports or in the room while discussions are held. If possible, consider having an all-female coaching staff when working with girls.



#### Creating an emotionally safe space continued:

- Discourage rumours and gossip and be aware of bullying. Demand individual respect from and for all girls, and address bullying incidents early.
- Set out a box for girls to give anonymous feedback and suggest conversation topics for discussions. Although anonymous question boxes can be useful tools for helping girls feel comfortable initially, it should not be considered permanent. In a truly safe space, girls feel comfortable expressing themselves openly.
- Allow girls to speak about sensitive topics in the language that is most comfortable to them. However, be aware that girls who do not speak the majority language may feel marginalised.
- Although you should encourage parents to be actively involved in the sport programme in some way, having too much parental involvement could actually keep girls from feeling comfortable and being able to express themselves fully. Encourage parents to acknowledge that the girls need their own space as well.

- Provide private changing rooms. Although a permanent girls-only space is preferable, it is fine to use a space to change that is used by both men and women, as long as boys are prohibited from entering during the time girls are using it. In more conservative cultures or contexts, it may be necessary to establish same-sex spaces and/or clothing accommodations to ensure girls are comfort able.
- Adopt a zero-tolerance policy for sexual abuse or harassment as well as procedures to ensure that if there is a violation of this policy, all participants and staff understand how to address the problem and the right channels to go through.
- Revisit these concepts continually.
   Many programmes have new members joining regularly, and it is important to discuss rules and expectations with new members. Older or more experienced members can lead these discussions.

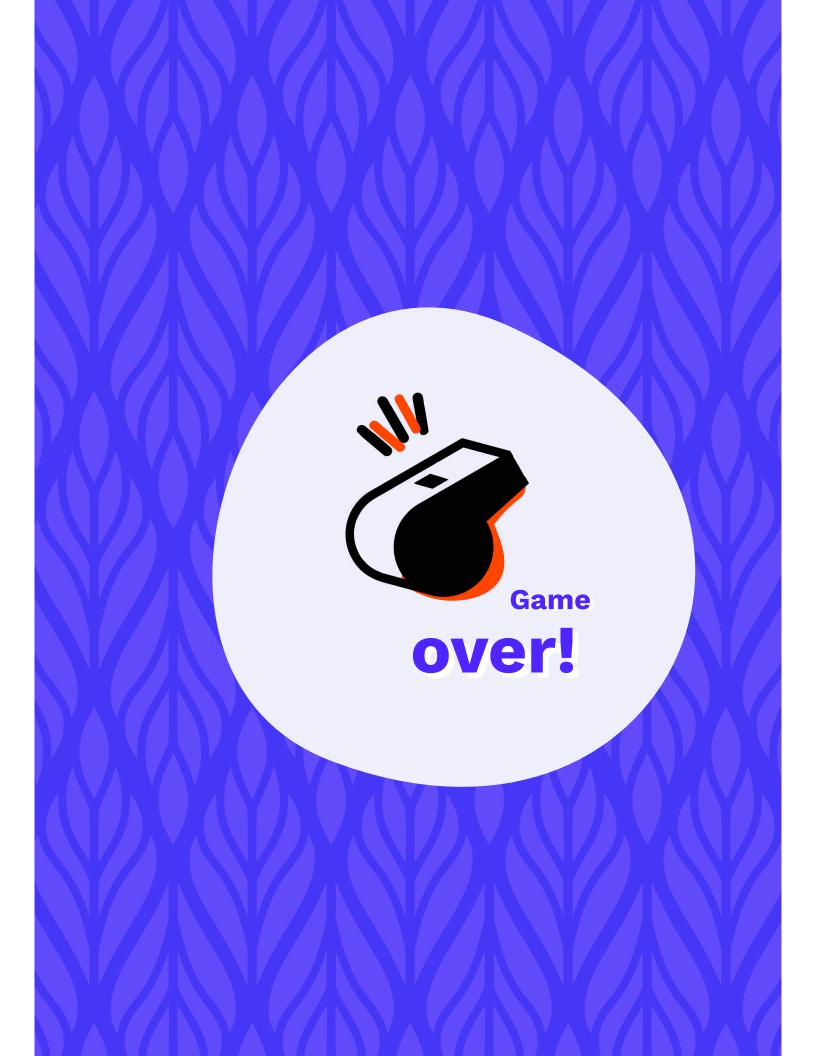




A key part of understanding how to create safe spaces in your programming is to include the voices of girls in defining safety, and understand their priorities in implementing safe sport programming. Rather than thinking about how to get more girls into your sport programmes, we need to rethink and redesign sports programming to make them safe and inclusive to all. The primary way to under stand how to create safe spaces for girls is to ask them!

Drawing the Line is a card game that follows a play-based and participatory approach to better understand the level of safeguarding and inclusion in programmes through the perspective of the programme participants. The tool is intended for girls in your programme, but it can also be used with coaches, volunteers, or administrators as a way to gather other viewpoints on the safety and inclusivity of programmes.





#### **Programme Sustainability**

Being able to identify what sustainability means in the context of your programme and then prioritise and plan around your unique goals is an important step towards designing and implementing sustainable programmes. This section will guide you through defining sustainability in the context of your programme and offer tools designed to help you create a dialogue and action plan around programme sustainability within your organisation.

#### Where are you?

This section of the International Guidelines will explore how to approach the development of a successful sport programme for girls.

In this section, you will explore the following topics:

- 01 What is Programme Sustainability?
- Aspects of Programme Sustainability
- Tools for Assessing and Planning for Programme Sustainability



Image source: Amazing Masaai Girls Project, Kenya

## **O** 1 What is Programme Sustainability?

Programme sustainability is a **dynamic concept** that relates to multiple aspects of a programme, including **long-term impact**, **family and community buy-in**, and the **financial viability of the programme in the future**. In this context, programme sustainability refers to the programme continuing beyond the end of the initial funding period, and the impacts of the programme being sustained beyond the end of the programme - this includes the impact on the participants, coaches, leaders and the community.

Oftentimes, what is needed to create sustainable programmes is resources, including funding, but also resources related to the institution and its context, such as human resources, social resources (trust, validation, support, etc.), environmental and political resources, among others.

Many of our partner organisations have different perspectives and priorities when it comes to programme sustainability depending on the context within which they operate. Let's consider the following real-life examples:

For <u>Plan International Nicaragua</u>, programme sustainability means 'strengthening the capacities of the target groups in such a way that they can sustain themselves over time independently. In other words, the target groups implement their own action plans, taking up their own capacities and resources.'

For <u>Naz Foundation</u>, programme sustainability means 'an organisation can continue working towards the project objectives without being constrained by resources, or the internal and external environment.'

At **Girl Move, Mozambique**: 'Financial sustainability: the ability to raise additional funds. Technical sustainability: the ability to maintain relevant human resources with solid training. Political sustainability: the ability to understand and monitor political and social stability. Environmental sustainability: the ability to adapt to the context and to make decisions to reduce the negative impact of the programme on the environment.'

For <u>Moving the Goalposts (MTG)</u>, Kenya programme sustainability is, 'the ability of a given project or programme to continue beyond initial funding by having its own resource acquisition strategies after funding.'

At **ChildFund and Lao Rugby Federation, Laos**: 'The sustainability of a programme should be considered at two key levels: participants and institutions. Within the Pass It Back programme in Laos, sustainability means that programme graduates make more informed decisions in the future by utilising the skills, knowledge and capacity they have been equipped with through the programme. At the institutional level, sustainability is considered to be the structural and systemic elements that organisations adopt, which go beyond the project itself and, therefore, have a broader impact on current and future work.'

#### **How to Design Sustainable Programmes**





It is vital to consider programme sustainability at the outset of your girls' sport programme design, and to continually address it during all stages of your programme - planning, implementation, and evaluation. Considering programme sustainability from the initial planning phase will allow you to design strategies so that the activities and actions carried out during the implementation aim to create a sustainable impact.

Monitoring implementation, getting feedback from participants, coaches, and community members, and promoting adaptations and adjustments while thinking about long-term impact will allow you to adapt the programme based on changing context or environment. The more integrated and adapted the project is to the community context and reality, the more likely it is to be sustainable.

Finally, evaluating the project will allow you to understand its impact on the target audiences and community. This will help **inform future experiences and identify beneficial elements to incorporate** into the organisational structure. In order to evaluate the programme, it is important to apply both **quantitative measurement** tools that allow visualising indicators of change, as well as **qualitative tools** that make it possible to incorporate the voices of the different actors involved. More information on monitoring and evaluation tools can be found in the **Measuring Impact** section.



## **O2** Aspects of Programme Sustainability

When discussing or planning for the sustainability of sports programmes to **empower adolescent girls**, there is an **additional gender and sport lens** that must be applied. Because of the sociocultural norms that limit girls to the roles of household care, preventing them from engaging in social/sport activities and the traditional stereotype of sports as a 'male' domain, sustaining a sport programme for girls has unique challenges.

Not only can it be more challenging to financially sustain girls' sports programmes, but it can also be difficult to develop other aspects of sustainability, such as obtaining support and encouragement from community leaders. Below are five key aspects to consider when thinking about the sustainability of programmes focused on promoting the empowerment of girls.

#### **Involvement of Families**



Girls' families have a great influence in their lives and on their decisions. Connecting with the families from the beginning of the programme and listening to their perspectives is critical to ensuring the engagement of your participants and the impact of your programme is sustainable.

If the families of the participants are not aware of the programme or not convinced of the benefits, it is often a barrier for the girl to participate. If the families are not supportive of the programme activities, this could also generate a lack of sustained engagement from the girls. Including the families and getting their support can lead to the girls participating in the programme, being understood and, in the long term, being supported in their search for future development opportunities.

Ways to involve families include:

- Workshops to establish a relationship with families and address issues relevant to the lives of girls.
- Meetings with family members to share information about the programme and listen to concerns.
- Media coverage to sensitise families and/or promote their participation.
- Home visits to meet and talk with the girls' families and references.
- Virtual communication (Calls, Facebook, WhatsApp, etc.) that allows you to listen, know and respond to families' concerns and questions remotely.
- Family events to promote bonding with girls, and offering families with opportunities to see their daughters/sibling in action.
- Creation of a committee for families or caregivers in which they can meet and make recommendations for the programme.



Identify which sports are most widely accepted by local families. This could be influenced by the culture of the community, the traditions or the ethnic identity or nationality of the families. **Promoting sports that are accepted by families will make it easier for them to support girls playing.** Otherwise, strategies will have to be generated to sensitise families about the proposed sports discipline.



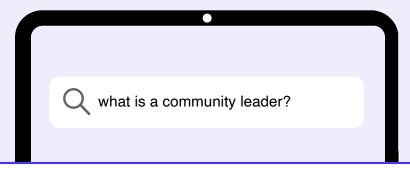
## Plan International – La League (Nicaragua)

La League recognised that fathers and other male relatives were as important as mothers in their roles as models of emotional behaviour for their daughters. For this reason, during the implementation, a parent manual was created and connection with girls was promoted through football. Eight awareness workshops were developed for parents and male relatives and community events were promoted as a way to strengthen this bond in a dynamic and fun way. Later on, female relatives were also actively involved, participating in workshops on gender norms, community events and intergenerational meetings and playing a central role in voluntarily supporting the action plans designed by girls.

## Girl Move - Mwarusi in Motion - Believe (Mozambique)

During 'Mwarusi in Motion - BELIEVE' a relationship with girls' families was sought in order to talk about and clarify certain topics that were addressed during the programme, such as sports, health, sexual violence, violence and menstruation. For this, different strategies were applied, for example: a letter was sent to the families talking about the programme, community meetings were held in schools and home visits were carried out in order to reflect and share concerns.

#### **Participation of Community Leaders**



A **community leader** is a person who plays a leading role in the community and has the power to influence the lives of others. They may be a leader because of political, educational, religious or economic reasons.

**Raising awareness** about the programme and working with community leaders can help increase community support for the initiative, increase the chances for sustainable impact, and create an opportunity to continue the activities in the community in the case that funding for your programme ends.

It is also beneficial to engage leaders related to the sports environment, such as the leader of a club, a sports journalist, or a person with professional experience in the sports field.

In programmes aimed at the empowerment of girls and young women, women leaders should be particularly involved and empowered, as this contributes to **breaking gender stereotypes and barriers**. The programme itself should promote gender equality in terms of balancing the number of women leaders involved, offering them training related to leadership, sports, administration or other topics, and assigning them to leadership roles, such as coaches, referees, and administrative positions. For more tips on developing leadership opportunities for women in sports programmes, see <a href="Coach Development">Coach Development</a>.



Identify female leaders in the community, and offer them emotional support and training tools that'll allow these leaders to empower themselves and be role models for girls.

Ways to engage with community leaders include:

- Generating spaces for dialogue with community leaders to involve them in the design, implementation, and evaluation of the programme.
- Meeting individually with community leaders to discuss the programme before events or new activities.

- Building networks between sports leaders/women leaders and girls through events, mentorship programmes, speaker series, tournaments, and community resource visits.
- Training leaders on gender perspective and/or feminist lens.
- If relevant, offering community leaders advisory positions in your organisation.



Contemplate whether there are community leaders from any sporting discipline interested in participating in and promoting your project, as this may be useful when deciding on the sport used in the programme. Promoting sports that have the presence of leaders in the community will allow local role models to motivate the participants.



#### **Case Studies:**

## Naz Foundation Trust - Goal Program (India)

Naz promotes communication with different leaders in the community, meeting with them individually or in groups in order to share the objective of the programme on gender equality. Naz has even managed to engage political leaders who have similar agendas to work on the development of the population in their electoral region. These political leaders were willing to offer their time to accompany the staff to carry out outreach activities in the community and provide community centres to run the programme, spaces that were useful to play netball and hold sessions. Political leaders have a duty towards overall development in their jurisdiction, therefore, making them accountable for their work by engaging them in programme is one of the strategies for sustainable development.

## Girl Move - Mwarusi in Motion - Believe (Malawi)

<u>BELIEVE</u> meanwhile, engaged university students to be leaders for the Girl Move LEAD programme, mentoring and inspiring the girls. They received a stipend or economic incentive and transportation expenses, to be able to take on this commitment and achieve their economic independence. The sisterhood circle is a unique aspect of the Girl Move model and its three main programmes, which are based on a path of learning and leadership for girls, youth, and adult women. Sisterhood circles connect girls with new positive female role models through sport.

## Collaborating with Existing Community Infrastructure

Identifying institutions that might be interested in supporting girls' development and have the desire to get involved with or support your programme is a central aspect of designing a sustainable programme. When your programme can connect to or integrate into existing structures, such as schools, sports clubs, neighborhood organisations, local government, etc., it can increase the sustainability of the programme. This also provides a chance to expand the network of opportunities for participants after their engagement in your programme, as well as an opportunity to influence other organisations, clubs, and public bodies in your community to make space for girls and women and support processes that s timulate their long-term empowerment.

Examples of ways to collaborate with existing community infrastructure are:

- Sharing methodologies and approaches with other actors (schools, organisations, governments) who can incorporate aspects of the programme in their ongoing work.
- Creating a bridge between the programme and existing sports clubs and supporting girls to access them.
- Integrating the project into the local school curriculum or extracurricular activities, or into existing neighbourhood structures, such as community organisations.





Find other community institutions that already have resources (like physical spaces for the sports practices, materials for projects, etc.) that are willing to collaborate with your programme, which could lower the barriers for girls to participate.





#### X

## **Moving The Goalposts - Youth Peer Providers (Kenya)**

The sustainability of the Youth Peer Provider programme relied heavily on the collaboration between the local government and MTG. Local government provided training, health facilities, and contraceptives, helping MTG meet the programme objective of preventing teen pregnancies.

## ChildFund Rugby and the Lao Rugby Federation - Pass It Back (Laos)

The <u>Pass It Back</u> programme was integrated into the Lao Rugby Federation's programming, which is a national governing body for sport registered under the Ministry of Education and Sport. This allowed the programme to have a greater, more sustainable impact on other organisations, particularly rugby clubs.

Schools were also engaged during the implementation of the programme, since the Pass It Back curriculum was delivered as an extracurricular activity. School authorities and teachers were invited to meetings and community engagement activities to learn more about what coaches and players were doing in their community teams. Additionally, rugby clubs played a key role in leading on sustainable impact and served as development pathways and community support organisations, since they offered opportunities for players over the age of 17 to participate in their training sessions and to join a network that promotes gender equality and safe and supportive spaces for ongoing and professional development.



#### **Leadership Pathways for Participants**

Generating leadership pathways for participants is essential to sustaining the impact of your sports programme and continuing to resource the programme with staff and coaches. This aspect is particularly important for adolescent girls and young women, as there are many cultural norms and patterns that lead to less development opportunities for them. For this reason, throughout your programme, girls should have the opportunity to develop skills that can be applied in different contexts of their lives.

Leadership development skills for girls include **communication**, **self-confidence and decision-making**. The opportunity to develop these skills is important to incorporate into your programme so that the girls can realise the benefits of your activities in their personal and professional lives.



When girls have opportunities to practise taking on additional responsibilities and leadership roles in your sports programme, they develop these skills and can create opportunities for themselves in other aspects of their lives.

Additionally, creating development opportunities and leadership pathways within your programme can lead to the creation of peer leaders, coaches, and even staff members to support the future of the programme. The presence of positive female role models and coaches is important to attract more girls to your programme and demonstrate the programme's success. Programmes can also be sustained by generating leaders from among the programme participants: this can be done by establishing leadership pathways, which start with being a player, continue to becoming a peer leader and end with the possibility of being a coach or staff member.

Examples of developing leadership pathways for participants are:

- Designing trainings, workshops, and leadership pathways for the participants to gradually take on greater leadership roles within the project.
- Giving leadership opportunities to all girls during practices, games, and other activities (not just the best athletes or the most natural leaders).
- Generating spaces or networks for girls that can be autonomous and self-sustaining.
- Connecting girls with existing networks of girls and women for future professional opportunities.
- Linking participants with new opportunities that may contribute to their economic empowerment in the future (e.g., scholarships, volunteering, internships).





#### **Case Studies:**

#### **Naz Foundation - Goal Programme (India)**

Through leadership pathways in the Goal Programme, young women who participated became instructors of other girls. In order to implement the programme, these young women went through an internship period, where they received training in both netball techniques and life skills and worked as community sports coaches. At the end of 2021, 80% of Naz staff were alumni of the programme. Among them, there were different levels of leadership from internship positions who received a travel stipend, to junior coaches, coaches and senior coaches, who had salaried positions.

## <u>Moving The Goalposts</u> - Youth Peer Providers (Kenya)

The YPP programme had a leadership structure in which the Peer Providers trained girl leaders in sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR) issues. After taking part in training, these girls could lead SRHR sessions with other girls from their own sports classes throughout the year. Through this process, the girls were empowered and trusted to replicate the knowledge learnt in their circles of trust and take on a leadership role in their local sports activities.

The YPP project has contributed to very successful pathways for girls out of MTG, thanks to the experience and investment in training and support of girls as they deliver the project. The majority of graduates have become community health workers, employed and engaged by NGOs, after they graduate from the programme as social workers and community volunteers.

#### **Additional Funding or Resources**

Identifying the resources and funds that are necessary to sustain your programme will allow you to make realistic decisions about the possible activities to maintain. These resources can be obtained through grants, donations, loans, material or in-kind donations (e.g., tools, machinery, equipment) or purchases and payments from the organisation's own funding or reserves. Diversifying the programme's sources of resources and funds increases the possibility of sustaining the project. Thus, it is preferable to have inputs and contributions from multiple organisations and individuals, rather than getting all resources from a single source.

Examples of ways to identify additional funding or resources are:

- Generating a budget for the programme components you want to continue Identifying the actors (companies, government agencies, international organisations, etc.) interested in promoting sport and / or gender equality.
- Having a person or team in charge of fundraising.
- Generating documentation that evidences the impact of the project (including quantitative and qualitative information).
- Generating unrestricted funds. This could include contributions from individual donations, income from events, collaborative financing (crowdfunding), and sales of products or services, among others.



Identify the actors in your region that promote gender equality and/or sport, making it possible to find potential allies for your programme. A database could be generated with companies, government areas, and institutions that work for the empowerment of girls and women and/or the promotion of sports in your region (or internationally).





## Naz Foundation India Trust - Goal Program (India)

Due to the success and proven impact of the programme, the Goal Program continued to be financed by Standard Chartered Bank after 2006, who supported its replication in other schools and communities. Over time, other economic contributions to Naz's programs were acquired. To obtain new funds, Naz has consolidated an effective team in fundraising that is responsible for communicating with donors to demonstrate transparency in their reporting and share the impacts of the programme. Standard Chartered Bank is no longer their primary donor, since Naz has the support of seven other sources, diversifying of the programme.

## ChildFund Rugby and the Lao Rugby Federation - Pass It Back (Laos)

As the tag rugby and life skills curriculum has taken shape, Pass It Back has emerged as a product that can be proposed to potential donors. Importantly, Pass It Back protocols ensure ongoing collection and analysis of qualitative and quantitative data each season to enable ongoing programmatic development. This analysis has proven concrete, measurable, and sustainable impact through the evidence against indicators that demonstrate the programme is a worthwhile investment. This makes the product attractive to potential donors. As such, the LRF can and has sought new financing opportunities to grow and replicate the programme in new districts and provinces.



## Tools for Assessing and Planning for Programme Sustainability

Based on the experiences of our partner organisations, we have created a set of tools to assist organisations in thinking about programme sustainability and how to create sustainable girls' sports programmes. The tools are a Programme Sustainability Self-assessment and a Sustainability Action Plan tool that guides organisations through the decision-making and planning process around programme sustainability. The Programme Self-assessment and the Sustainability Action Plan should be internal tools for your organisation: they are not intended to be a comparison with other organisations, but a snapshot of your organisation at a moment in time. These tools should be treated as living documents and be updated over time as your organisation grows and contexts change.

- The Programme Sustainability Self-Assessment is a useful tool to address the five aspects of program sustainability. It allows you to assess the sustainability of the programme at any stage of its development, and can be used as a tool to promote dialogue on sustainability with the team and the participants or stakeholders of your programmes. Additionally, it illustrates where your programme's strengths and areas of growth are related to sustainability.
- The Sustainability Action Plan is a tool that offers practical exercises to complete the different elements that make up a Sustainability Plan. This includes a reflection on the programme purpose, the definition of sustainability objectives, a mapping of key actors and community support, the identification of key actions and the creation of a budget.



