

**Major Research Paper**  
**An Analysis of the Efficacy of Sport-for-Development Programs in Developing  
Countries**

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**Disclaimer and Inquires**

This research paper was completed as part of the author's program requirements as a student of the School of International Development and Global Studies at the University of Ottawa. The views and opinions herein stated are those of the author solely and do not necessarily represent those of the supervisor, reader, department nor institute. Any inquiries on this work should be directed to the address below:

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## Table of Contents

<b>SECTION ONE</b> .....	<b>8</b>
<b>1.0 Introduction</b> .....	<b>8</b>
1.1 What is SFD? .....	9
1.2 Why Sport .....	9
1.3 Context.....	10
1.4 Statement of the Problem.....	11
1.5 Research Objective.....	12
1.6 Research Question.....	12
1.7 Hypothesis.....	12
1.8 Research Methodology .....	12
1.9 Organization of Paper.....	13
<b>SECTION TWO</b> .....	<b>13</b>
<b>2-0 SFD Industry Outline</b> .....	<b>13</b>
2-0.1 Sector Overview and Organizations .....	13
<b>2-1 Umbrella Organization Descriptions</b> .....	<b>14</b>
2-1.1 Laureus Sport for Good Foundation .....	15
2-1.2 The United Nations Office on Sport for Development and Peace .....	15
<b>2-2 Implementing Organization and Program Descriptions</b> .....	<b>16</b>
2-2.1 Football for Peace.....	16
2-2.1.1 Organization .....	16
2-2.1.2 Program Structure.....	16
2-2.2 Grumeti SportWorks Project.....	16
2-2.2.1 Organization .....	17
2-2.2.2 Program Structure.....	17
2-2.3 The Ishraq Project.....	17
2-2.3.1 Organization .....	17
2-2.3.2 Program Structure.....	17
2-2.4 Kicking AIDS Out.....	18
2-2.4.1 Organization .....	18
2-2.4.2 Program Structure.....	18
2-2.5 The Magic Bus India Foundation .....	18
2-2.5.1 Organization .....	18
2-2.5.2 Program Structure.....	19
2-2.6 Mathare Youth Sports Association .....	19
2-2.6.1 Organization .....	19
2-2.6.2 Program Structure.....	20
2-2.7 Moving the Goalposts .....	20
2-2.7.1 Organization .....	20
2-2.7.2 Program Structure.....	21
2-2.8 Physically Active Youth.....	21
2-2.8.1 Organization .....	21
2-2.8.2 Program Structure.....	21
2-2.9 Right to Play.....	22
2-2.9.1 Organization .....	22
2-2.9.2 Program Structure.....	22
<b>SECTION THREE</b> .....	<b>24</b>
<b>3.0 Impacts on Health</b> .....	<b>24</b>

3.1 Potential of Sport Relating to Health.....	24
3.2 Evidence on the Impact of SFD on Health .....	25
3.2.1 Malaria.....	25
3.2.2 HIV and AIDS .....	25
3.2.3 Cancer.....	27
3.2.4 Stress.....	28
3.2.5 Mental Health and Disability.....	29
3.3 SFD Programs Benefits to Development - Health .....	30
3.4 Summary.....	31
<b>SECTION FOUR.....</b>	<b>31</b>
<b>4.0 Impact on Education .....</b>	<b>31</b>
4.1 Potential of Sport Relating to Education.....	31
4.2 Evidence .....	32
4.2.1 Formal Education .....	32
4.3 SFD Programs Benefits to Development - Education.....	34
4.4 Summary.....	35
<b>SECTION FIVE.....</b>	<b>36</b>
<b>5.0 Impacts on Social Development.....</b>	<b>36</b>
5.1 Potential of Sport Relating to Social Development .....	36
5.2 Research and Evidence .....	36
5.2.1 Gender Equality and Self-Esteem .....	36
5.2.2 Confidence, Character and Respect.....	38
5.2.3 Peer Relationships .....	39
5.3 SFD Benefits to Development - Social Development.....	40
5.4 Summary.....	41
<b>SECTION SIX.....</b>	<b>42</b>
<b>6.0 SFD Shortcomings and Criticisms .....</b>	<b>42</b>
6.1 Design and Execution.....	42
6.2 Training and Delivery .....	42
6.3 Duplication.....	43
6.4 Lack of Evaluation Methods .....	44
<b>SECTION SEVEN.....</b>	<b>44</b>
<b>7.0 Conclusion.....</b>	<b>44</b>
7.1 Findings .....	44
7.2 Recommendations .....	45
7.3 Future Research.....	47
<b>BIBLIOGRAPHY.....</b>	<b>48</b>

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## **Abstract**

This paper explores the link between sport and development in terms of health, education and social development. Although the idea of using sport as a tool for development has been advocated by the United Nations since the 1950's, the idea has only recently been adopted by non-governmental organizations. The objective of this paper is to analyze the effectiveness of these programs in order to determine if they truly have a significant impact on development. The paper examines different programs with objectives relating to health, education and social development that are located in Africa, Asia and the Middle East. As research in this area is relatively new, the information presented and the findings of this paper are not necessarily applicable in each and every similar scenario, and the results of this paper should be taken as preliminary and specific to the programs discussed. It is argued that sport-for-development programs can have a significant impact on development, however it would be irresponsible to make such a definitive conclusion with limited evidence. It is therefore imperative for more research to be conducted in the area; this will provide more support for current findings as well as minimize the amount of criticism sport-for-development programs currently face. Most importantly, effective methods of evaluation for these programs must be established in order to better understand the relationship between sport and development and in turn, continue to create more effective programs.

## **List of Acronyms**

ADHD - Attention deficit hyperactivity disorder

AIDS – Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome

ARV - Antiretroviral

CVD – Cardiovascular disease

F4P – Football For Peace

HBV/HCV – Hepatitis B Virus/ Hepatitis C Virus

HIV – Human immunodeficiency virus

HPV - Human papillomavirus

IPSD - International Platform on Sport and Development

KAO – Kicking AIDS Out

LSGF - Laureus Sport for Good Foundation

MBIF – Magic Bus India Foundation

MDG – Millennium Development Goals

MTG – Moving the Goalposts

MYSA - Mathare Youth Sports Association

NGO – Non-governmental Organization

NORAD – Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation

RTP – Right to Play

SDP IWG - Sport for Development and Peace International Working Group

SFD – Sport-for-Development

UN – United Nations

UNDP – United Nations Development Program

UNESCO - United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization

UNOSDP – United Nations Office on Sport for Development and Peace

WB – World Bank

WHO – World Health Organization

YSP – Youth Sport Programme

## **SECTION ONE**

### **1.0 Introduction**

The link between sport, individual development and education was first recognized on the international platform in 1952 (UN Sport for Children and Youth, 2008). It was then, during the seventh session of the United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) General Conference in Paris, that the organization recognized sport as a useful instrument in education (UN Sport for Children and Youth, 2008).

Almost 20 years after the United Nations (UN) Declaration of the Rights of the Child recognized every child's right to play in 1959 (Unicef, 2014), UNESCO reinforced sport and physical education to be a fundamental right in the 1978 International Charter of Physical Education, and again at the UN General Assembly's adoption of the Convention on the Rights of the Child in 1989 (UN Sport for Children and Youth, 2008). Over the years since these milestones, national governments have also begun to acknowledge the importance of a child engaging in sport and play, leading to the UN General Assembly to adopt a resolution entitled "A World Fit for Children." This resolution called on governments, organizations, the private sector and society in general to make a conscious effort to ensure children's enjoyment of all human rights and freedoms, including the opportunity to engage in sport and play (UN Sport for Children and Youth, 2008). In recent years, the UN has made more progress on this issue. Between the years of 2003 and 2006, the UN General Assembly passed three resolutions entitled "Sport as a Means to Promote Education, Health, Development and Peace" and also proclaimed the year of 2005 to be the International Year for Sport and Physical Education (UN Sport for Children and Youth, 2008).

Unfortunately, millions of children around the world are born into communities that face significant challenges such as poverty and disease, and despite the progress the UN has made in promoting sport as a tool for development and peace, many do not have the opportunity to enjoy their right to play. The UN estimates that youth make up roughly 50 percent of the population in developing countries, and that this number will peak in the next two decades (UN Sport for Children and Youth, 2008). As a result, countries will face substantial pressure, and difficulties to eradicate infectious disease, fund education

and improve its citizens overall quality of life (UN Sport for Children and Youth, 2008). Although this is undoubtedly a major undertaking, this statistic also indicates the workforce will also grow exponentially over the next two decades. Therefore, if developing countries can educate and train their youth, these communities can make significant progress in terms of development in the coming decades. One avenue that can help in preparing these young populations for this undertaking is sport-for-development (SFD) programming.

### **1.1 What is SFD?**

SFD refers to using sport as a tool to promote and encourage peace and development (The International Platform on Sport and Development (IPSD) 2015). SFD programs combine sport with the relevant non-sport components in order to achieve peace and development (UNODSP, 2015). Rather than the everyday definition of 'sport', in this context 'sport' refers to any type of physical activity that contributes to physical fitness, mental health and social interaction (IPSD, 2015). As per the IPSD, this includes any type of recreation, play, casual or competitive modern-day sports, as well as indigenous sports and games (IPSD, 2015). SFD programs are integrated with other peace and development initiatives, both by governments as well as international organizations so as to be mutually reinforcing (UNODSP, 2015). The term 'development' also has a broad meaning in the context of SFD. Historically, sport has been understood to provide an alternative community and learning space, and also teaches and promotes relevant and practical skills. According to the Sport for Development and Peace International Working Group (SDP IWG), this can in turn contribute to individual development, health development (health promotion and disease prevention), promotion of gender equality, peace building and conflict prevention/resolution, post-disaster/trauma relief community development, economic development and other areas (IPSD, 2015).

### **1.2 Why Sport**

Support for SFD programs stems from the acknowledgement that sport possesses unique attributes, which are useful to the development and peace processes. According to the UNOSDP, individuals worldwide are attracted to sport, arguably more so than any other activity (United Nations, 2013). This is due to the fact that when sport is executed correctly, it is assumed to be a fun and enjoyment experience for everyone (United Nations,

2013). Moreover, sport is characteristically intended to develop and showcase individual's strengths. By doing so, sport empowers individuals, as well as promotes a positive outlook for the future, which is an essential component to achieving development (United Nations, 2013).

The UNODSP also states that sport's value in acting as an avenue for individuals to bond with one another is one of its most powerful features. Sport is naturally a social process in that it brings together players, coaches, volunteers and also spectators. As a result, it automatically creates an extensive interconnected web of relationships between individuals and organizations at the community, national and international levels (United Nations, 2013). Therefore, sport can help bring together people from different areas and backgrounds and is a useful tool in promoting peace and unity in post-disaster and/or conflict-ridden areas. As a result, the UNOSDP stresses that the value of sport should not be underestimated in situations where individuals face difficult challenges on a daily basis (United Nations, 2013).

Sport is also understood to be one of the most cross-cutting, highly effective and low-cost methods to address development challenges (United Nations, 2013). For this reason, as well as those discussed above, sport is increasingly used as a platform for community development as well as to strengthen individual capacity and livelihoods (United Nations, 2013).

### **1.3 Context**

The intention of SFD programs is to promote and encourage growth in developing countries by using the power of sport. The theory, which research supports, is that sport has the ability to improve the well being of individuals in terms of health and education as well as the social and economic conditions of a community (UNOSDP, 2015).

There are currently 611 organizations running SFD programs around the world (IPSD, 2015). Most of these organizations are headquartered in Europe while the majority of SFD programs are implemented throughout Africa and Asia (IPSD, 2015). In general, SFD programs follow a similar organization to North American youth sports leagues; a

specific activity is scheduled to occur at a pre-determined date, place and time. This provides participants with a form of structure and consistency. In terms of design, SFD programs are intended to teach its participants a variety of skills such as teamwork, communication and equality, while also educating them on critical issues including, but not limited to disease prevention and the importance of formal education. Depending on the organizations main objective, programs are implemented in a variety of ways. Some programs, such as Moving the Goalposts (MTG) in Kenya simply follow the basic rules of soccer to promote and encourage leadership and self-esteem amongst young girls (MTG, 2015), while others like Right to Play (RTP) create a new type of game such as 'Mosquito Tag' to teach children about the importance of mosquito nets (United Nations, 2013).

Although SFD is relatively new, many organizations have realized success in achieving their goals in the form of increasing school enrolment rates and decreasing the incidence of disease (United Nations, 2013). National governments and major organizations such as the UN, UNICEF and the Laureus Sport for Good Foundation (LSGF) have partnered with smaller non-governmental organizations (NGO) in hopes of increasing the reach of SFD programs to other areas.

Participating in sports or any extracurricular activity has always been seen as a positive for a variety of reasons, however as a result of the success of NGO's implementing SFD programs, sport is now considered to be a panacea for numerous development challenges by both NGO executives as well as some academics and researchers.

#### **1.4 Statement of the Problem**

A preliminary review of the current research found very few critical analyses of SFD. Although some programs have achieved successful outcomes through SFD such as improved education and health standards (Right to Play, 2007), it appears that the support to implement these programs is exaggerated. There are numerous examples of failed SFD programs, and initiatives that have backfired (Coalter, 2007).

However most of the current research and literature is not critically framed. That is, the

work does not question the intention, goals or efficacy of SFD programs, but rather assumes them all to be positive and realistic to achieve. For these reasons, most current research seems one-sided and overly simplistic.

### **1.5 Research Objective**

The research objective of this MRP is to critically analyze existing SFD programs, their goals, mandates and objectives in order to establish if they are truly effective.

Specifically, the MRP will analyze the existing literature on this topic and conduct a content analysis in order to answer three fundamental questions – (i) what are the objectives of SFD programs?, (ii) how are they implemented and, (iii) taking into consideration the benefits and limitations of these programs, are they truly effective?

### **1.6 Research Question**

This paper will focus on answering the following research question:

Taking into consideration the available information on the benefits, limitations and results of SFD programs, are these programs truly effective?

### **1.7 Hypothesis**

The primary hypothesis is that SFD programs can be effective on a small scale; they cannot be the solution to large-scale development challenges, such as promoting economic development without significant reforms and government partnerships. This is because SFD programs are implemented by NGO's that cater to small populations, thus achieving marginal results relative to a national scale. Therefore, unless governments partner with SFD programs, only small populations will realize the benefits of SFD. Moreover, many of the reasons as to why SFD programs were first created – to overcome the detrimental effects of war, political instability, natural disasters, etc., will continue to occur, and although SFD programs can be beneficial after the fact, they cannot prevent these instances from transpiring.

### **1.8 Research Methodology**

The analysis presented in this paper will be based on secondary information sources obtained via desk research. This includes academic journals, government publications, NGO annual reports as well as information from other professional third-party sources such as the World Health Organization, the World Bank, etc.

A part of the academic research will come from literature that focuses on analyzing the impact of sport in general, and not necessarily the impact of SFD programs specifically. This research is useful as it provides information on the impact of the types of activities that SFD programs are comprised of, and thus helps in assessing the efficacy of the programs. However, it is important to understand that the impacts of sports should not be confused with the impacts of SFD programs.

### **1.9 Organization of Paper**

The remainder of this paper will be organized in the following manner. The next section will provide an overview of the SFD field, as well as each organization and the SFD program it implements that is discussed within the paper. The purpose of this is to provide the reader with a background of the subject, organizations and/or programs as well as relevant information regarding their goals and objectives. The paper will then discuss three areas in which SFD programs aim to promote development: health, education and social development. Relevant academic research and studies as well as the outcomes and achievements of SFD programs will be discussed in detail. A section on criticisms and shortcomings on SFD programs will follow, ending with a section on conclusions and recommendations.

## **SECTION TWO**

### **2-0 SFD Industry Outline**

The following subsections, which figure one provides an illustration of, are meant to provide an overview of the SFD field.

#### **2-0.1 Sector Overview and Organizations**

SFD programs operate all over the world, in both developed and developing countries. However, as previously mentioned, the majority of SFD programs are implemented in Africa and South Asia, with more programs emerging in South America (IPSD, 2015). The goals and objectives of each SFD program are different. For example, in terms of health, SFD programs in developed countries place more of an emphasis on issues such as diabetes, whereas those in developing nations focus on disease prevention and sanitary practices. Moreover, since developing countries face many more large-scale obstacles in comparison to developed countries, such as reducing poverty and increasing access to

education, SFD programs in developing countries tend to focus on improving conditions on a larger scale.

The SFD industry is made up of NGO's and is not overseen by a governing body. Each organization is free to create its own structure. Any person(s) or group can create a SFD program, however the key to succeeding lies in obtaining funding and implementing a sustainable program.

SFD programs are primarily funded by grants received from NGO's known as an 'umbrella organizations'. These organizations oversee SFD programs and are funded by a combination of donations from private sponsors, governments, for-profit international organization as well as individuals around the world. These groups establish grant programs, which individual SFD programs can apply to for funding.

Alternatively, some SFD programs receive funding directly from the same sources as the umbrella organizations. However, the benefit of applying for grants from these umbrella organizations is that in addition to funding, they also oversee the implementation of the SFD programs and provide assistance in terms of organization, execution, marketing, etc. Some SFD programs, such as Right to Play (RTP) are overseen by an umbrella organization, in this case the United Nations Office on Sport and Development for Peace (UNOSDP), while also raising funds via the aforementioned means.

Due to the lack of a governing body, it is difficult to obtain a definitive figure of how large the industry is in terms of finances. That being said, in 2012 the LSGF distributed over \$7.5 million CAD in grants to 47 projects (Laureus Financial Statements, 2012). Taking into consideration there are over 600 organizations implementing SFD programs worldwide, this gives some indication of the scope of the SFD industry.

### **2-1 Umbrella Organization Descriptions**

The following subsection illustrates both of the SFD umbrella organizations that are discussed within this paper. A summary is provided in table one at the end of this section.

### 2-1.1 Laureus Sport for Good Foundation

LSGF was officially established in 2000 (Laureus, 2015). The organization does not implement any SFD programs itself, but rather raises funds for over 150 SFD projects worldwide (Laureus, 2015). The goal of the foundation is to assist children and youth in overcoming limitations such as poverty, war, abuse, discrimination, lack of education and disease (Laureus, 2015). LSGF has partnered with companies such as Mercedes-Benz and IWC Schaffausen to promote their efforts, and also have dozens of professional athlete ambassadors promoting the foundations efforts (Laureus, 2015). As of 2014, the foundation estimates that its fundraising activities benefit over half a million-project participants per year (Laureus, 2015).

### 2-1.2 The United Nations Office on Sport for Development and Peace

The UNOSDP was created in 2001 (UNOSDP, 2015). Its purpose is to coordinate the efforts of the UN relating to promoting sport as a tool by which to achieve development and peace (UNOSDP, 2015). According to the SDP IWG, sport is recognized to achieve benefits in areas such as, but not limited to, individual development, disease prevention, gender equality, economic development, peace building and conflict resolution (UNOSDP, 2015). The UNOSDP is also responsible for providing administrative support and coordination, as well as grants to worthy SFD programs in these areas, and publishes all related content (UNOSDP, 2015).

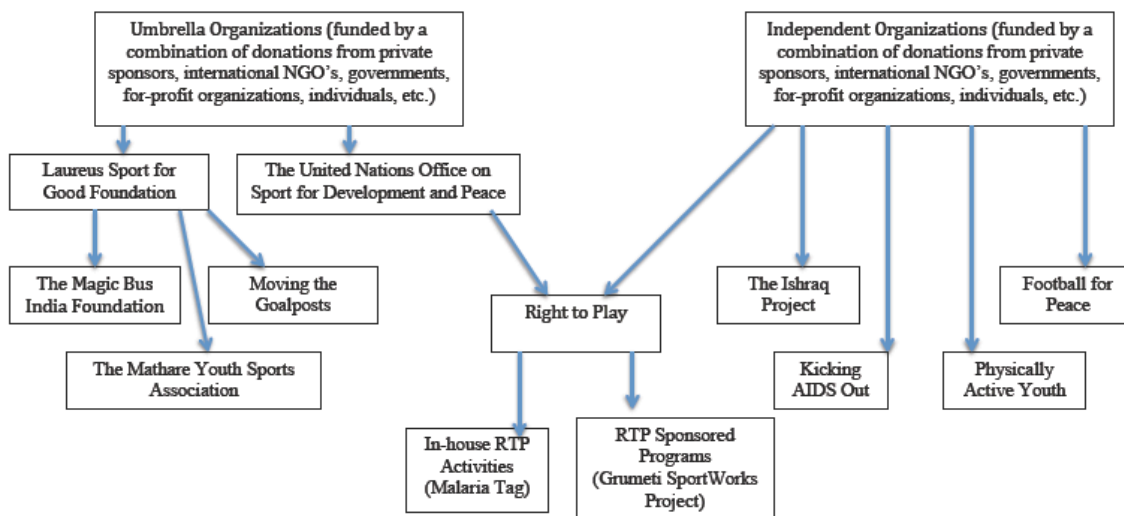


Figure One: SFD Sector Overview (using SFD program examples in the context of this paper)

## **2-2 Implementing Organization and Program Descriptions**

The following section illustrates each SFD group discussed within the paper. An outline of each organization and description of the SFD program it implements is presented. A summary is provided in table one at the end of this section.

### **2-2.1 Football for Peace**

The following sub-sections are based on descriptions and information provided by the Football for Peace (F4P) organization website.

#### ***2-2.1.1 Organization***

Football for Peace (F4P) is an SFD program based in Israel. The program was developed, organized and implanted by the University of Brighton, United Kingdom, and the British Council in 2001. The objective of the program is to promote and facilitate peaceful coexistence, as well as encourage friendships between Jewish and Arab youth. The organization places an emphasis on setting aside political tensions and the importance of treating one another as human beings first and foremost (Football for Peace, 2015).

#### ***2-2.1.2 Program Structure***

F4P uses soccer to achieve its goals. Before any game, all participants spend two hours together. During this time, the children commute to the activity site together where the coach presents the theme and/or lesson of the day. These lessons vary in content, although they all relate to peace, cooperation and teamwork in some way. The participants then work in small groups on a non-sport activity related to the lesson of the day. After the lesson is complete, the participants spend two hours on the soccer field. Here, the coach conducts trust activities, warm ups and ultimately the soccer game, during which the lesson of the day is emphasized. For example, if the lesson of the day were selflessness, the children would be encouraged to pass the ball rather than take a shot on goal (Football for Peace, 2015).

### **2-2.2 Grumeti SportWorks Project**

The following sub-sections are based on descriptions and information from a review of the RTP organization, conducted by the Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation (NORAD).

### ***2-2.2.1 Organization***

Designed by RTP and implemented in tandem with local schools, the Grumeti SportWorks Project (GSP) delivers sport and play programs to children and youth in Tanzania. The program seeks to engage those who have never had the opportunity to participate in a comparable program or atmosphere. The project has two primary, intertwined objectives - to overcome conflict-ridden social differences in order to achieve social cohesion, while also improving the overall development of children and youth via increasing school attendance and retention rates (Lange et al., 2006).

### ***2-2.2.2 Program Structure***

GSP is implemented in tandem with local schools and encourages children to attend school by incorporating dedicated time to sports within school hours. GSP can be thought of as the equivalent of gym class in the context of elementary school in North America, however rather than being a part of the educational curriculum, it is an SFD program. Due to the interest of playing sports, children are more inclined to either come to school more often, or enrol in the first place, thus contributing to improving enrolment and retention rates (Lange et al., 2006).

## **2-2.3 The Ishraq Project**

The following sub-sections are primarily based on descriptions and information from the Ishraq Project website. Information from other sources is otherwise referenced.

### ***2-2.3.1 Organization***

The Ishraq Project is an SFD program based in Egypt that uses games and activities to teach adolescent girls valuable life-skills. This specific demographic is at high risk for never obtaining an education and is more vulnerable to forced marriages, sexual violence and poverty. For these reasons, the group aims to increase self-esteem and confidence amongst girls.

### ***2-2.3.2 Program Structure***

The Ishraq Project program activities are held in girl-friendly safe spaces, typically youth centres, over a 13-month time-span. The first three months are devoted to introducing participants to the goals and structure of the program, as well as all the rules of the 10 sports incorporated into the program (IPSD – Ishraq, 2015). Over the next 10 months participants engage in sport sessions twice a week, each for an hour and a half (IPSD –

Ishraq, 2015). Throughout the program, sessions on topics related to health, marriage, violence against women and other issues are held for participants to attend as they please (IPSD – Ishraq, 2015).

#### **2-2.4 Kicking AIDS Out**

The following sub-sections are based on descriptions and information provided by the Kicking AIDS Out! (KAO) organization website.

##### ***2-2.4.1 Organization***

KAO is an international network of 22 organizations that share the common goal of raising awareness regarding HIV and AIDS. It is an initiative of the Edusport Foundation of Zambia that has since been adopted by NORAD. The organization primarily focuses on youth who live with HIV and/or AIDS, and encourages participants to discuss issues that they feel impact their lives and members of their communities due to their diagnoses (KAO, 2015).

##### ***2-2.4.2 Program Structure***

The KAO program achieves its goals by combining sports, games, role-playing and other recreational activities to create a safe and welcoming environment. As the participants become more comfortable and discuss their personal issues and concerns regarding HIV and/or AIDS, KAO uses a variety of sports and activities, many of which are indigenous and traditional South African games, to address and educate the participants on their concerns. The games used are altered to include HIV-prevention messages as well as information on how to live with the infection. As a result, participants feel more comfortable with their diagnosis and learn about methods to reduce the spread of the disease, as well as what they can do to improve their livelihoods despite having already contracted HIV and/or AIDS (KAO, 2015).

#### **2-2.5 The Magic Bus India Foundation**

The following sub-sections are primarily based on descriptions and information from the Magic Bus India Foundation (MBIF) website. Information from other sources is otherwise referenced.

##### ***2-2.5.1 Organization***

MBIF is the first of its kind in India. The foundation strives to use the power of sport in order to teach essential life skills to children and youth from marginalized groups and

neighbourhoods. The idea is to encourage and enable these individuals to live and earn a living wage in a dignified manner, as well as become an engaged and contributing member of society. MBIF uses various sports and games to teach youth about a range of information on health, gender, equality, importance of education, employability and more. The foundation also uses these games to teach important life skills relating to communication, teamwork and confidence. As of 2014, MBIF has expanded to the United States, United Kingdom and Germany, and over 300,000 children and 8000 youth volunteers participate in the program on a weekly basis (MBIF – Laureus, 2015).

### ***2-2.5.2 Program Structure***

The MBIF program has three phases, learning, leading and earning, and is implanted over an eight to ten year period. During the learning phase, the foundation uses an Activity Based Curriculum (ABC) method and holds 40 sessions per year. In doing so, a sport or game is combined with a lesson on a topic such as education, gender, health and other issues that are relevant in the communities they reside in. The focus of this phase is to teach children basic information on each topic while also improving physical, social and personal skills. The focus of phase two is for youth to become more confident, accountable and respectful. In order to achieve this, the youth become mentors and role models to younger children in phase one, and are trained to conduct the ABC sessions. This gives the youth some responsibility and confidence in their abilities. The third phase is known as the “Connect Program”. During this phase, there is little involvement in sport or activity. Rather, the youth are now encouraged to complete training and courses using the skills and information they have learned in the previous two phases. Upon completion of this phase, the youth are sufficiently equipped to pursue further education, or enter the workforce, including the Magic Bus Foundation employability program (MBIF, 2015).

### **2-2.6 Mathare Youth Sports Association**

The following sub-sections are based on descriptions and information from the LSGF website on the Mathare Youth Sports Association (MYSA) organization, as well as the MYSA organization website respectfully.

#### ***2-2.6.1 Organization***

MYSA was created in 1987 in the Mathare slum-area of Nairobi, Kenya, and has since hosted over 200,000 children. The association’s main objectives include encouraging

cooperation and respect, improving self-esteem and promoting physical health within the community, particularly in relation to AIDS and HIV. By participating in the program, children rise to become role models and leaders within their communities, hundreds of whom have received training to lead HIV and AIDS awareness, prevention and counseling programs. MYSA was the first project sponsored by the LSGF and has been nominated for the Nobel Peace Prize twice (MYSA – Laureus, 2015).

### ***2-2.6.2 Program Structure***

The MYSA program focuses on engaging and educating its participants through an incentive-based points system. The core of the SFD program is similar to most recreational sports leagues in North America; MYSA creates teams of children who play recreational soccer games and keeps track of the team rankings. However, in addition to receiving points for winning a game, every child also receives points for their team each time they take part in a game, giving them an incentive to participate.

The organization implements additional activities to achieve its other developmental goals, such as HIV/AIDS awareness sessions, community cleanup projects and volunteering opportunities within the organization. The organization offers participants the ability to earn additional points for their team by attending and completing such activities, and thereby educates its participants on critical issues via these endeavors. Individuals can also earn leadership points by participating in certain activities that can lead to earning an educational scholarship. These points are earned on an individual basis and MYSA presents the participants who accumulate the most leadership points with scholarships to further their education (MYSA, 2015).

### ***2-2.7 Moving the Goalposts***

The following sub-sections are based on descriptions and information from the LSGF website on the Moving the Goalposts (MTG) organization. Information from other sources is otherwise referenced.

#### ***2-2.7.1 Organization***

MTG is an initiative based in Kilifi, Kenya and is sponsored by the LSGF. The organization was founded in 2002 to address the lack of formal opportunities for women in terms of schooling, leadership and employment within the region. Like most other

NGO's, MTG's goal is for its participants to develop the necessary skills in order to take on a leadership role within the organization as coaches, referees or committee members. Since its inception, over 7000 girls have participated in the project, which is run entirely by women (MTG – Laureus, 2015).

#### ***2-2.7.2 Program Structure***

The MTG program structure is rather simple. The organization uses soccer as a tool to teach girls between the ages of 10 to 25 valuable skills such as teamwork and leadership, while also developing more confidence and self-esteem. At the same time, MTG provides optional workshops and lessons on gender equality, HIV and AIDS, reproductive health and sanitary practices. Similar to MYSA, participants earn points for participating in these optional activities or by volunteering to plant trees, clean up public areas and assist in orphanages (MTG, 2015). Those who earn the most are awarded with a sponsorship of 5000 Kenya shillings that can be put towards either education or an entrepreneurial venture (MTG, 2015). Thus, although the educational portion of the program is optional, there is an incentive for the girls to participate

#### **2-2.8 Physically Active Youth**

The following sub-sections are based on descriptions and information from the Physically Active Youth (PAY) website.

##### ***2-2.8.1 Organization***

PAY is a SFD program based in Namibia. The organization was implemented in order to support high-school students and focuses on promoting and encouraging education amongst youth. PAY's focus is to encourage youth to attend or re-enroll in school by providing them with an environment in which they can engage in activities such as dance, sports and outdoor education, while also receiving educational assistance in the form of tutoring. PAY also incorporates HIV and AIDS, sexual and reproductive health education, as issues relating to these areas are common amongst drop-out participants.

##### ***2-2.8.2 Program Structure***

PAY activities are held on a daily basis for three hours. During the first two hours, participants receive tutoring relating to their schoolwork. Afterwards, a light meal is provided and followed by sports and recreational activities. Every Friday a different type of life-skills training program is held in order to teach participants other types of valuable

skills in order to empower them to become more active in their community's development (PAY, 2015).

### **2-2.9 Right to Play**

The following sub-sections are primarily based on descriptions and information from the RTP website. Information from other sources is otherwise referenced.

#### ***2-2.9.1 Organization***

RTP was founded in 2000 and is one of the largest international SFD organizations in the world (UNOSDP, 2013). The organization currently has over 13,500 volunteers and 600 staff members implementing programs in over 20 countries. The organization aims to use the power of sport to educate and empower children in order to overcome conflict, disease and poverty. RTP uses games and sports to teach children about the importance of education, vital health information and essential life skills. As of 2012, over one million children participate in RTP programs on a weekly basis. The UNOSDP has commended RTP for the organizations efforts and recognizes its initiatives as significantly contributing to achieving some of the Millennium Development Goals (MDG) (UNOSDP, 2013).

#### ***2-2.9.2 Program Structure***

RTP is presently running SFD programs in over 20 countries. The structure of each program is different. This paper only includes examples of programs that follow a similar structure; a sport is combined with an educational lesson in order to convey important information to participants. The main objective of these RTP programs is to educate participants on a critical issue that is currently impeding development in their community, in order to help the community overcome this hurdle and improve its circumstances. One example of the common structure of an RTP program can be seen in the following example of a game called 'Mosquito Tag'. The goal of Mosquito Tag is to run away from being tagged with the infection, however those who are tagged must freeze and act out symptoms of malaria such as shivering, until another child acting as a doctor heals them. The game teaches children about the detrimental effects of malaria and the importance of preventative action, such as sleeping under a mosquito net, through the use of sport.

	<b>Football for Peace</b>	<b>Grumeti SportWorks Project</b>	<b>The Ishraq Project</b>	<b>Kicking AIDS Out</b>	<b>Magic Bus India Foundation</b>	<b>Mathare Youth Sports Association</b>	<b>Moving the Goalposts</b>	<b>Physically Active Youth</b>	<b>Right to Play</b>
<b>Structure/ Organization</b>	Independent	Sponsored by Right to Play	Independent	Independent	Funded and overseen by Laureus Sport for Good Foundation	Funded and overseen by Laureus Sport for Good Foundation	Funded and overseen by Laureus Sport for Good Foundation	Independent	Sponsored by UNOSDP
<b>Region</b>	Israel	Tanzania	Egypt	Present throughout Africa – founded in Zambia	India	Mathare (slums of Nairobi)	Kenya	Namibia	Worldwide – examples of African programs
<b>Area of Focus</b>	Social development	Social development	Health, education and social development	Health and education development	Health and education development	Health, education and social development	Health and education development	Health, education and social development	Health, education and social development
<b>Participants</b>	Jewish and Arab Youth	Children and youth	Female youth, women	Youth, primarily those living with HIV and/or AIDS	Children and youth from marginalized groups and neighbourhoods	Children and youth	Female children, youth and adults	High-school students	Children and youth
<b>Activity and Delivery</b>	Soccer, four hours per session on a continuous basis	Various sports and activities during school hours	Various sports and activities over minimum 13 month period in “girl safe” spaces	Various sports and activities on a continuous basis	Various sports and activities for a minimum of eight to ten years	Soccer and other optional activities on a continuous basis	Soccer and other optional activities on a continuous basis	Various sports and activities for three hours on a daily and continuous basis.	Various sports and activities

Table One: SFD Organizations Summary

## **SECTION THREE**

### **3.0 Impacts on Health**

One of the primary goals of SFD programs is to improve health conditions. The UN specifically advocates for, and states that sport and SFD programs are seen to have benefits in the area of health promotion and disease prevention (UNOSDP, 2015), and many NGO's use this endorsement as support for implementing SFD programs.

Numerous SFD programs targeted to improve health conditions are implemented around the world, however not all organizations focus on the same aspects of health. The World Health Organization (WHO) defines health as “a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity” (WHO, 1948).

Although it would certainly be ideal for individuals in all nations to achieve this, it is far from being a reality. Different countries and regions experience dissimilar types of health-related challenges. For example, the developing world still struggles to overcome acute, but preventable diseases and thus SFD programs in these areas focus on promoting general health practices, AIDS, HIV and malaria prevention and education, as well as improving sanitary practices. However, SFD programs in developed countries tend to focus on combating cardio-vascular issues as well as obesity and diabetes. Given the focus of this work is on developing countries, for the purposes of this paper, the discussion on the relationship between SFD programs and health will focus on, but is not limited to issues of the latter type.

### **3.1 Potential of Sport Relating to Health**

The WHO states that physical activity is an important element of healthy living (WHO – Physical Activity, 2015). It estimates that 80 percent of premature deaths could be avoided by a healthy diet, regular physical activity and avoiding tobacco (WHO – Physical Activity, 2015). Although there is little research to support a direct link between physical activity and cardio-vascular disease (CVD) in developing countries, there is evidence that the instance of CVD, due to low rates of physical activity, is increasing amongst Indians and in various sub-Saharan African countries (Walker et al., 2003). As countries continue to try and better their health care systems in order to improve efficiency, quality of care, and reduce the number of preventable deaths in a more cost-effective manner, many developing nations require assistance at a much more basic level.

These countries suffer from poor health education, unsanitary and unsafe practices and lack an adequate healthcare system, all of which lead to high levels of disease and poor general health. However, there is widespread agreement that there are numerous beneficial outcomes of participating in physical activity to the health of individuals, communities and nations (WHO, 1995), and that participation in sports tends to encourage better overall health (Kirk, 2005).

### **3.2 Evidence on the Impact of SFD on Health**

#### ***3.2.1 Malaria***

There are several examples of successful SFD programs that focus on improving health practices. RTP uses a game called ‘Mosquito Tag’ to teach kids about how to prevent contracting malaria (United Nations, 2013). This is a particularly problematic issue in sub-Saharan Africa as it is the leading cause of death for children under the age of five, and a major contributor to adult mortality (United Nations, 2013). Moreover, reports suggest that adults who survive malaria subsequently face large impediments such as depression and low productivity in the workplace (United Nations, 2013). Since the organization created and implemented the game, 84 percent of its participants in Uganda have reported sleeping under a mosquito net to prevent the spread of malaria (United Nations, 2013). In comparison, only 10 percent of the national population takes this precaution (United Nations, 2013). These results suggest that the children are actively learning and practicing the teachings of this SFD program. The organization follows a similar structure to create other games and activities in order to address similar issues. Currently, 82 percent of RTP participants in Uganda report washing their hands after using washroom facilities whereas only 59 percent of non-participants did (United Nations, 2013). Based on these statistics, it appears that the SFD programs organized by RTP can have a significant impact in disease prevention.

#### ***3.2.2 HIV and AIDS***

HIV and AIDS continues to be a major health epidemic. As of 2013, the disease has claimed over 39 million lives (WHO – HIV/AIDS, 2015). Approximately 35 million people currently live with the disease worldwide, 25 million of which reside in Sub-Saharan Africa (WHO – HIV/AIDS, 2015). Unfortunately, there is no cure for the HIV infection and the only effective treatment that can control the virus in order for

individuals to enjoy productive lives is via antiretroviral (ARV) drugs (WHO – HIV/AIDS, 2015). However, only 20 percent of children and 33 percent of adults who live with HIV in developing countries receive ARV treatment (WHO – HIV/AIDS, 2015).

Prevention of spreading HIV and/or AIDS has been the focus of many studies conducted in the SFD field, and SFD programs have traditionally concentrated on educating participants on preventative practices. In terms of evidence of SFD programs successfully providing education on the prevention of HIV and AIDS, RTP has seen success in decreasing the instance of HIV and AIDS by following an identical structure to “Malaria Tag”. Accordingly, 92 percent of participants in Tanzania knew of methods that could be employed to reduce the risk of transmitting HIV versus only 50 percent of non-participants (United Nations, 2013). A review of KAO’s achievements by NORAD also indicates that the organization has made progress in achieving its goal of increasing awareness regarding HIV and AIDS (Lange et al., 2006). Although qualitative data is limited, the results of interviews with participants indicate progress. Of the interviewed participants, 93 percent said they learned that they have the right to say no to sexual relations and can thus avoid contracting HIV and/or AIDS (Lange et al., 2006). Of these participants, 54 percent had been KAO members for over a year, while 24 percent had only been participants for between six months and a year, and 22 percent had been members for less than six months (Lange et al., 2006). On the other hand, only 60 percent of non-KAO participants said they understood their right to say no, while the remaining 40 percent indicated that they had not learned to make their own decision regarding sexual participation (Lange et al., 2006). The report also references interviews with coaches and staff which suggest that the program had a significant impact on the participants. The study thus concluded that the large discrepancy could be attributed to KAO’s SFD programs (Lange et al., 2006). Moreover, the study also indicates that KAO participants have a slightly greater set of life skills versus the non-participants, which is another positive externality of the SFD program (Lange et al., 2006). An analysis on the MYSA in Kenya also supports the above-mentioned findings, and further suggests that SFD programs can decrease the vulnerability of young girls contracting the virus by

educating children on the topic through innovative sport-based programs (Zakus et al., 2007). Overall, these results suggest that these SFD programs do result in significant health benefits, particularly by reducing the number of new HIV-related cases. However, the evidence is not unambiguous. A study of an SFD program in Malawi, which focused on HIV education showed that due to equipment being stolen over a period of two years, the program was no longer sustainable (Ross et al., 2006).

More recently, the discussion and practice of SFD programs has gradually shifted towards incorporating information and practices relevant to individuals who have already contracted and currently live with HIV and/or AIDS. Numerous studies on AIDS and the HIV infection have found exercise to be beneficial in reducing the rate of progression (Smit et al., 2006). Research has also shown that engaging in exercise a minimum of three times a week is associated with slower advancement of the AIDS virus (Mustafa et al., 1999; Zakus et al., 2007), and that AIDS and physical activity have an inverse relationship with one another (Bopp et al., 2004; Zakus et al., 2007).

Research supports the idea of using SFD programs to promote HIV education and risk avoidance among youth in developing countries and has established there is a mutual interest between SFD programs and preventing the spread of HIV and AIDS (KAO, 2015; Right to Play, 2007; UNOSDP, 2015). However, in order to successfully do this, it is important for SFD programs to be feasible, accessible, affordable and effective in achieving its goals. More quantitative studies need to be conducted in order to determine the true efficacy of these programs. Although NORAD stresses the importance of its qualitative observations, the organization also acknowledges that a more quantitative and systematic method would be useful to determine the impact and effectiveness, as well as communicate the impact MYSA is making to the public (Lange et al., 2006). Specifically, future research should focus on determining effectiveness based on three criteria: the type of intervention, previous sexual behavior and behavioral change (Zakus et al, 2007).

### ***3.2.3 Cancer***

As of February 2015, the WHO estimated that approximately 14 million new cases of cancer and 8.2 million deaths due to it occurred in 2012 (WHO - Cancer, 2015).

According to the WHO, the number of new cases of cancer is expected to rise by 70 percent over the next two decades, and it is estimated that 60 percent of the total number of new annual cases will occur in developing nations in Africa, Asia and South America (WHO - Cancer, 2015). This suggests that the number of cancer-related deaths in developing nations could significantly increase. Moreover, HBV/HCV and HPV, all preventable types of viral infections are the cause of roughly 20 percent of cancer-related deaths in low and middle-income countries, and it is estimated that 40 percent of all cancers could be prevented by following a healthy diet, engaging in physical activity, and avoiding the use of tobacco (Zakus et al., 2007). Lack of physical activity has particularly been determined to play a distinct role as a risk factor for cancer (Zakus et al., 2007), and the UN also acknowledges that participation in sport can contribute to reducing the likelihood of developing cancer and reiterates this fact in the majority of its SFD publications.

Research conducted over the past two decades shows a consistency in its findings in that physical activity reduces risks of cancer (Zakus et al., 2007; Krakow, 2011; Rush, 2014). Although no major NGO's currently states cancer prevention as a primary objective of its SFD program, the benefits of participating in the physical activities of SFD programs are widely acknowledged by major organizations such as the UNOSDP, UNICEF, RTP and the LSGF. Given the above-mentioned research and the fact that a large proportion of cancer-related infections and deaths occur in developing countries, the activities implemented by SFD programs could potentially be efficient in reducing these numbers. Moreover, the fewer cancer-related illnesses in developing countries in itself contributes to development in terms of health. Thus, in this way, any SFD program, regardless of its main objectives is indirectly contributing to health development.

### ***3.2.4 Stress***

Exercise is known to reduce stress in adults (Edwards et al., 2004), and some children can experience as much, and possibly even more stress, depression and anxiety than adults (Allender et al., 2006; Dickson et al., 2011). Research has also indicated that physical activity is just as important for children as it is for adults. In terms of developing countries, considering that the types of communities SFD programs are implemented in

tend to be low-income, conflict ridden and/or post-disaster, sport can also be beneficial in developing communities in these respects as well (United Nations, 2013; Right to Play, 2007).

The relationship between SFD and stress is similar to that of SFD and cancer; although SFD organizations acknowledge the benefits of SFD programs on stress, it is not the main objective of any program. Rather, participants of any SFD program automatically realize the benefit of stress relief regardless of the programs main objective (Right to Play, 2007). Although the literature on the relationship between stress and development is limited, it is understood that lower levels of stress are beneficial in terms of overall health and happiness, and can also lead to an increase in productivity (Edwards et al., 2004). In these ways, SFD programs can contribute to health and economic development.

### ***3.2.5 Mental Health and Disability***

In terms of mental health, the UNOSDP reports that individuals with mental health issues often suffer from other negative externalities, including but not limited to social isolation, increased mortality and lower than average quality of life (United Nations Office on Sport for Development and Peace, 2007). Mental health problems can also exasperate treatment of other chronic conditions such as AIDS and cancer, causing an even larger hindrance for individuals and governments (Right to Play, 2007). In terms of social and economic costs, the UNODSP states that there are treatments for most of these disorders, which could help those affected and contribute to them becoming more abled members of society (United Nations Office on Sport for Development and Peace, 2007).

Unfortunately, most middle to low-income countries contribute less than one percent of health expenditure to mental health initiatives (United Nations Office on Sport for Development and Peace, 2007). This has significant economic costs as it is difficult for these individuals to secure employment and contribute to the economy or any type of development in their community (Zakus et al., 2007). Research suggests that it is thus more cost-effective to invest in mental illness treatment, as the cost to society from an economic perspective is much greater (Zakus et al., 2007).

However, creating and implementing an effective health care system, let alone one that can effectively treat mental illness in developing nations is far beyond the abilities of a SFD program. In the meantime, SFD programs can continue to attempt to mitigate the negative externalities of living with such conditions by promoting education and awareness in the hopes of encouraging acceptance of individuals who suffer from such conditions. Moreover, research also suggests there are significant psychological benefits in relation to mental health and disability that can be realized via sport and the types of physical activities implemented by SFD programs. Research shows that exercise plays a therapeutic role in relation to a number of psychological disorders (Scully et al., 1998), and there is also evidence that engaging in physical activity can promote self-worth (Biddle et al., 2000), thus participating in any SFD programs activities can be beneficial in this regard. This is particularly significant in the case of disability and mental health as this could lead to an improvement in self-esteem, leading individuals to lead happier lives and even contribute to development by way of working or volunteering (Fox, 1999; Biddle et al., 2000). SFD programs such as RTP, and numerous projects supported by the LSGF recognize these benefits and successfully encourage individuals who suffer from these conditions to participate in their programs. Although SFD programs can help mitigate the effects of these conditions, it is a well-documented fact that mental illnesses can significantly impact, and be impacted by chronic conditions such as AIDS, HIV, CVD and cancer (Biddle et al., 2000). This can negatively impact the treatment of both mental health conditions as well as chronic conditions. Therefore, although SFD programs can help increase awareness, acceptance and the societal contributions of those who suffer from mental health issues, its impact is limited to this extent. It is still imperative for these individuals to gain access to sufficient healthcare.

### **3.3 SFD Programs Benefits to Development - Health**

Having a healthy population is imperative to achieve any type of development. In order for a nation to grow, the population must be healthy enough to maintain a strong labour force. This is particularly important in developing countries where SFD programs are implemented, as the availability of capital is scarce, use of technology is limited and the infrastructure is weak. Moreover, developing countries cannot afford expensive technological alternatives, thus maintaining a healthy population is vital. For these

reasons, SFD programs that assist in improving overall health and life expectancy via reducing the instance of disease, educating participants on sanitary and healthy practices and promoting health in other ways can have a major impact on long-term development.

### **3.4 Summary**

The evidence suggests that SFD programs can help in a variety of aspects relating to individual health. Statistics show that SFD programs that incorporate health education with sport have helped raise awareness on methods to prevent the spread of malaria, HIV and/or AIDS. Despite no SFD programs specifically targeting areas such as cancer and stress relief, research on these issues suggests that participating in the physical activities offered by SFD programs can in themselves be beneficial.

Although SFD programs can help raise awareness on how to prevent the spread of disease, and the activities of SFD programs assist with certain health concerns as well, SFD programs cannot replace professional medical care. Moreover, the WHO estimates that the instance of CVD and cancer cases will increase among developing countries in the coming decades unless individuals have access to adequate healthcare. In the meantime however, SFD program activities can assist in preventing increases in the rates of disease.

## **SECTION FOUR**

### **4.0 Impact on Education**

Improving school enrolment rates, particularly for females, is a major challenge in developing countries. Moreover, engaging disadvantaged groups and the physical and/or mentally disabled in any type of formal or informal educational endeavour is often the focus of SFD programs (Right to Play, 2007; UNOSDP, 2015). As many examples of alternative education relating to health were touched upon in the previous section, the following section will examine research findings and SFD programs in terms of formal educational undertakings.

#### **4.1 Potential of Sport Relating to Education**

In terms of SFD programs with a focus on improving education, there is widespread agreement amongst SFD organizations that these programs can provide significant

assistance in improving academic literacy (United Nations, 2013; Right to Play, 2007; MBIF, 2015; Unicef, 2014). The UNOSDP states that SFD programs have contributed to increasing school enrollment rates, provides an alternative learning space and helps in reducing the stigma associated with disabled children attending school (United Nations, 2013). Moreover, the UN also states that the strides made in this area have significantly contributed to accomplishing the MDG of achieving universal primary education (United Nations, 2013).

## **4.2 Evidence**

Research indicates that physical activity has been shown to assist in developing skills in mathematics, reading and memorization (Dickson et al., 2011). Numerous studies show that participation in sport is correlated with better academic performance; those who play sports tend to earn higher grades in school as well as higher scores on standardized tests (Musch, 2001; Rush, 2014). These students also have lower secondary school dropout rates and are more likely to gain admission into a post-secondary institution (Rush, 2014). Although developing countries tend to face more educational concerns at earlier ages, this literature suggests that participation in sport via SFD programs could provide a solid foundation for future success (United Nations, 2013; Right to Play, 2007; Coalter, 2013). Moreover, Dr. Fred Coalter, a renowned academic in the SFD field, discusses the importance of sport and SFD programs in relation to education in many of his books and research papers. He suggests and presents evidence supporting the idea that sport can be used to attract youth to enroll and stay in school, which can lead to better employment opportunities in the long run, thus contributing to development (Coalter, 2007; Coalter, 2013).

### ***4.2.1 Formal Education***

Research on the link between SFD programs and education consistently presents a strong positive correlation. A study on the MBIF found that 96 percent of SFD program participants have an attendance rate of over 80 percent, and 98 percent of female youth participants attend secondary school (MBIF, 2015). These results are significant as the current nationwide attendance rate for primary schooling is 78.5 percent and only 54 percent for secondary school students (Unicef, 2015). Moreover, the nationwide secondary school enrollment rates for female youth is only 60 percent (Unicef, 2015).

Therefore, the study concluded that the MBIF SFD program is successfully achieving its objectives in terms of education.

Research on PAY has also shown tremendous success in promoting education via SFD. An independent study found that PAY's target group faces a high-risk of dropping out of school, falling into unemployment, abusing drugs and contracting HIV and/or AIDS if they were to fail the mandatory grade 10 national exam, which approximately 50 percent of test-takers do (Zakus et al., 2007). However, the study also found that as the number of individuals who participated in the PAY program increased, so did the number of students who passed the exam (Zakus et al., 2007). When specifically analyzing the results of the PAY participants, the study found that 92 percent of participants passed the exam (Zakus et al., 2007). As a result, the study concluded that the SFD program has a motivational effect on students in terms of continuing their education, and the organization is achieving its goals while also contributing to the educational development of youth (Zakus et al., 2007).

While the specific cognitive benefits of participating in SFD programs are still debated, research supports the idea that participation in such activities does not impede or interfere with academic achievement (Bailey, 2006). Moreover, there is a significant amount of research that concludes there is a strong link between SFD programs and improvements in academic performance (United Nations, 2013; Right to Play, 2007; Coalter, 2013). Although research on the link between SFD and education in developing countries is still limited, the UN states there is good reason to believe that the correlation exists and SFD programs can improve school enrolment and retention rates, as well as connect disadvantaged children and youth with educational opportunities (UN Sport for Children and Youth, 2008). This is due to the significant progress SFD programs that focus on education have made. The results from field research conducted on two Zambian provinces where the Focus on Sports (FoS) SFD program is currently implemented, shows significant increases in school enrolment as well as attendance (UN Sport for Children and Youth, 2008). This program uses sport to attract children who are not in the education system to enrol. Moreover, qualitative evidence from the GSP shows that

school attendance rates have improved since the program has been implemented, particularly on the days on which there is a scheduled sport practice. This suggests that the SFD program acts as an incentive and motivator for children to attend school. The UN reports similar results in comparable programs in El Salvador and Zambia (UN Sport for Children and Youth, 2008).

That being said, researchers have not yet been able to provide definitive proof about any direct causality between SFD and improved academic achievement (Coalter, 2007; Bailey, 2006). Therefore, it appears this result can only be achieved under the right conditions, which are currently unconfirmed (Bailey, 2006). For this reason, it is important to understand these unknown conditions are likely responsible for any SFD programs that have been successful in improving cognitive development, and not every SFD program that aims to promote development by way of improving education will necessarily be successful at doing so.

#### **4.3 SFD Programs Benefits to Development - Education**

Improving access to education, literacy rates and basic levels of knowledge and understanding can translate into better employment prospects (UN Sport for Children and Youth, 2008). Moreover, realizing these benefits can significantly improve economic conditions. A more educated population can lead to lower unemployment and poverty rates, higher wages and GDP, and an overall more productive and efficient society (United Nations Office on Sport and Development for Peace, 2007). This in turn leads to higher tax collection by local and/or national governments, and thus more funds are available to dedicate to other areas of development (UN Sport for Children and Youth, 2008). Therefore, SFD programs which target improving education can have a significant impact on the communities and nations they are conducted within.

Of course in order for these benefits to be realized, there must be employment opportunities available (UN Sport for Children and Youth, 2008). Although the majority of countries where SFD programs are implemented do not have exceptional employment prospects, there are endeavours being implemented to improve these prospects. The International Labour Organization (ILO) is working to create partnerships between its

Youth Sport Programme (YSP) and SFD programs in order to assist participants to enter the labour market (UN Sport for Children and Youth, 2008). The YSP currently has an initiative in Senegal to create a national inventory of sport-related jobs for youth, and is conducting similar programs in Albania and Mozambique (UN Sport for Children and Youth, 2008). Furthermore, as described in the section on SFD organization and program descriptions, many SFD programs aim to create employment opportunities within their organizations for their participants to become involved with upon entering the workforce. Moreover, a more educated population can also create more entrepreneurial ventures, which would also contribute to economic development.

Lastly, the OECD reports that a more educated population is correlated with higher life expectancy (OECD, 2013). Accordingly, SFD programs that improve education can also realize the benefits to development that arise from SFD programs which aim to improve health conditions as discussed in the previous section.

#### **4.4 Summary**

The evidence suggests that SFD programs can help improve participants average school attendance rates as well as improve their academic performance. Moreover, some research also suggests incorporating SFD programs into school curriculums as well as after-school tutoring programs provides program participants with an incentive to enroll, re-enroll and/or continue to attend school.

However, there are still difficulties in evaluating programs and determining causality. In the context of education, it is unclear as to whether participation in sport and SFD programs directly causes higher academic participation rates and/or improved academic achievement, or rather these programs cause individuals to be healthier and more socially developed, resulting in them to be able to attend school more regularly and thus excel academically.

## **SECTION FIVE**

### **5.0 Impacts on Social Development**

Many organizations recognize social development, which for this purposes of this paper, is defined as the changes and improvement of social and life skills within individuals, as one of the largest benefits of implementing SFD programs (United Nations, 2013; Right to Play, 2007; Unicef, 2014). As quantitative studies in these respects are limited, a large portion of the evidence in this section is derived from qualitative research findings.

#### **5.1 Potential of Sport Relating to Social Development**

Participation in athletics from an early age is proven to have a positive correlation with building confidence and character (Musch, 2001; Gould et al., 2008). This relationship is particularly strengthened when such development is a targeted goal of the activity (Gould et al., 2008) as it is with global SFD NGO's such at the UN, RTP and the LSGF. Lastly, research emphasizes that those who participate in physical activity develop superior peer relationships, which is another common goal of SFD programs (Smith, 2003; Right to Play, 2007).

#### **5.2 Research and Evidence**

##### ***5.2.1 Gender Equality and Self-Esteem***

Research conducted on the MYSA suggests that SFD programs and similar initiatives can be successful in bringing about social change (Zakus et al., 2007). This is because the adolescent years, when children transition into adulthood, is a critical time period to introduce programs that aim to change an individual's traditional mentality (Zakus et al., 2007). During this period of change, males tend to establish a higher sense of independence and privilege, and begin to view their female counterparts as less worthy (Zakus et al., 2007). Thus, introducing SFD programs that aim to break gender stereotypes at this time can, and have been proven to be successful (Zakus et al., 2007). The report found that MYSA has been able to successfully achieve this while providing girls with a safe and supportive environment where they learned new skills (Zakus et al., 2007).

There are instances where SFD programs fail to achieve some of the goals that are intended. For example, gender equality is promoted as a benefit of implementing SFD programs. However in a study of 376 programs, 77 percent were comprised entirely of females (Hancock et al., 2013). This imbalanced ratio could contribute to further social divisions between men and women rather than help to decrease gender inequality (Hancock et al., 2013). Similarly other goals such as acceptance, conflict resolution and tolerance may also suffer and be further exasperated rather than resolved if programs do not include a wide variety of people (Hancock et al., 2013). Many SFD programs also operate under the assumption that females want to be seen and treated as equals to their male counterparts, and thus encouraging their participation in SFD programs is positive. However, depending on the cultural norms and practices of the host country, there is a possibility that girls could be punished by their family or community for behaving inappropriately. In these cases, SFD programs do not achieve their goals, but rather cause more damage (Hancock et al., 2013). Therefore, it is important for organizations to understand that social development cannot simply focus on young and adolescent females, but must also address the cultural mentality of males and females of all ages (Hancock et al., 2013).

Self-esteem amongst girls is a common concern around the world. However, it is a much more pressing issue in developing countries. Fortunately, research provides reason to believe that SFD programs can improve the levels of self-esteem and other positive outlooks relating to self-worth in these regions. One study qualitatively observed participants of SFD programs conducted by MYSA (Brady et al., 2002), while a later study followed the same procedure with Ishraq in Egypt (Brady, 2005). The researchers of both studies concluded that both SFD programs played a major role in improving the sense of self-empowerment, self-esteem and feelings of personal space and freedom amongst its participants (Brady et al., 2002; Brady, 2005). A third study was conducted on SFD programs implemented by MTG using more qualitative techniques. This study also supported these findings and concluded that participation in the soccer-based SFD program significantly increased the participant's levels of self-esteem (Zakus et al., 2007). Moreover, studies conducted on the efficacy of the MBIF also provided similar support.

According to an independent study funded by Comic Relief in 2012, 82 percent of participants reported that they felt sports are equally important for girls and boys, and 83 percent stated they believe it is equally as important to invest in girls and boys (MBIF, 2015). It is important to note that only 42 percent of the MBIF programs participants are female, indicating that the foundation is succeeding in achieving its goal of promoting gender equality as well (MBIF, 2015).

There is also evidence that supports a negative relationship between participation in sports and suicide. Research conducted on American females shows that girls who participated in sports were less likely to attempt suicide than non-active girls (Sabo et al., 2005). Although this study was not conducted in a developing country, the authors of the paper suggest that the results could be relevant in those communities as well (Sabo et al., 2005). The author's rationale is that many girls in both developed and as well developing countries often suffer from low self-esteem during their youth, and engaging in sports has been proven to improve female attitudes towards themselves (Sabo et al., 2005). For this reason, the findings of this study could also be applicable in developing countries, and thus SFD programs, although may not be specifically implemented to prevent suicides, could in fact be helping females in this regard as well. However, as previously stated, the impact of sport should not be equated with the impact of SFD programs and more research must be conducted in this context before any credible inferences can be made.

### ***5.2.2 Confidence, Character and Respect***

Overall, SFD programs seem to have positive influences on social development. As previously mentioned in the discussion on self-esteem, SFD programs have been shown to increase confidence, particularly amongst girls. MTG provides women with numerous leadership opportunities within the organization, which qualitative observations indicate promote self-confidence (Zakus et al., 2007). MYSA participants have also made significant progress in terms of character and respect. While interviewing participants, male participants of MYSA expressed that the program has taught them to be more supportive and respectful of females. Specifically, the males mentioned they now look out for their female counterparts in and around the community to ensure their safety (Brady et al., 2002). Research also indicates that there is a strong correlation between a

youth's confidence level and their inclination to behave more responsibly in terms of sexual health (Lange et al., 2006). Therefore, implementing SFD programs as a tool to build confidence could potentially have a positive impact on health and decrease the spread of sexually transmitted diseases as well.

However some research suggests that the SFD can also negatively impact some participants in certain situations. The results of a study on SFD programs suggest that when a child experiences negative interaction with their peers, the activity can be perceived as challenging (Hansen et al., 2003). As a result, their level of confidence can decrease and the SFD program will have caused more harm.

Overall, limited research on the link between social development and SFD does not allow for an unambiguous conclusion to be made about the impact of the latter on the former.

### ***5.2.3 Peer Relationships***

Research suggests that sport activities incorporated in SFD programs can help foster improved peer relationships through increased frequency of interaction, as well as healthy competition with one another (Hansen et al., 2003). There is evidence of SFD success in the context of developing peer relationships. When interviewed, organizers of the F4P program report that the more involved a child is in the program, the better they bond with other participants (Sugden, 2006). This is significant as evidence suggests that participation in sport can promote better behavior between peers after a friendship is formed (Sugden, 2006). Moreover, as children grow up, they increasingly rely on friends and peers for information and feedback, both sport and non-sport related (Smith, 2003), thus SFD programs that improve peer relationships can be very valuable in terms of long-term social development.

F4P organizers also place a large emphasis on changing the overall culture of sport in Israel and promoting different communities coming together to learn from one another (Football for Peace, 2015). The F4P program is an example of a particularly complicated undertaking, which could quite easily have ended poorly, and/or have ignited more conflict. However, thanks to a strategic and well-implemented SFD program, F4P is

successfully promoting social development in 40 different Israeli communities as well as many more throughout Ireland and Jordan (Football for Peace, 2015). This suggests that SFD programs can have a significant impact in terms of social development as well as conflict resolution and peace building if they are implemented thoughtfully and strategically (Sugden, 2006).

What is most interesting about F4P is that there are no major issues regarding participating with individuals from a different community, from neither the participants nor their parents (Sugden, 2006). Based on interviews conducted with F4P participants and community members, researchers concluded that F4P is supported by the local community and has the ability to continue to achieve its objectives (Sugden, 2006). This is largely due to the strategic implementation of the program. Although the organization faces challenges such as a disproportionate ratio of Arab to Jewish participants, difficulty with language and translation as well as recruiting female participants, F4P has managed to overcome perhaps the biggest challenge of all; the complex and deep-rooted socio-political tensions (Sugden, 2006). Despite these pressures, F4P has been able to implement a program that appears to be making significant strides in the social development of its participants and the community at large.

### **5.3 SFD Benefits to Development - Social Development**

Improving social development has a major impact on the growth of a community as well. Research states that the majority of a child's brain development occurs before the age of six, and the experiences children have during this time have a major impact on their health as well as their behaviour, way of learning and ability to develop relationships (UN Sport for Children and Youth, 2008). For these reasons, early childhood experiences are important for lifelong individual development. The UN has established that children who live in poverty, disadvantaged and/or conflict-ridden communities and other insecure environments are more likely to have been deprived of a stable childhood, which can have severe negative consequences (UN Sport for Children and Youth, 2008). SFD programs can be beneficial in this respect by providing children with positive experiences in a safe and friendly environment. As the research and evidence has shown,

SFD program participants develop important characteristics and learn valuable skills via the experiences they have in SFD programs. Participating in these activities also provides children with routine, structure, a supportive environment and a sense of belonging, all of which are important to their cognitive development (United Nations, 2013).

Similar to education, engaging in SFD programs that promote and enhance social development can also impact employability (UN Sport for Children and Youth, 2008). By developing skills and characteristics such as leadership, teamwork, confidence and self-esteem, individuals can improve the likelihood of gaining employment and/or raising their level of income (UN Sport for Children and Youth, 2008). Moreover, these individuals are more keen on volunteering within their community and develop a more optimistic outlook on their future (UN Sport for Children and Youth, 2008). The ILO also supports this outlook by stating that employers view the skills acquired through SFD programs as very valuable attributes in future employees (UN Sport for Children and Youth, 2008). The ILO further adds that individuals who possess skills learned from SFD programs are more likely to be creative, effective team players and tolerant of others behaviour, all of which are important skills in the job market (UN Sport for Children and Youth, 2008).

#### **5.4 Summary**

The research and evidence presented suggests that SFD programs can benefit social development in terms of promoting gender equality and self-esteem, confidence and respect, as well as encourage superior peer relationships. Research also suggests that improvements in these characteristics can also lead to economic development, although no definitive evidence has been compiled to support this claim.

In terms of gender equality and self-esteem, it is imperative to have a mixture of both males and females in any SFD program. If the ratio of genders is too dominant on either side, not only is promoting gender equality more difficult, but the problem could be further exacerbated. SFD programs that focus on social development must also consider the regional dimensions of incorporating programs in certain communities. Cultural norms in areas such as the Middle East and South Asia can limit the number or frequency

of female participants in SFD programs. Moreover, SFD programs do not necessarily take regional and cultural norms into consideration when implementing programs, thus those females who do participate may face repercussions from her family or community in the form of physical and/or sexual abuse, isolation and other forms for behaving inappropriately (UNOSDP, 2015). This could have a significant impact of the efficacy of SFD programs in this context, and it is therefore imperative that more tangible research be conducted in this area of SFD programs impact on social development.

## **SECTION SIX**

### **6.0 SFD Shortcomings and Criticisms**

Despite the numerous benefits that SFD programs seem to generate, these programs are not without their shortcomings and are subject to criticism.

#### **6.1 Design and Execution**

SFD programs are based on the principle that sport in itself can play a major role in achieving peace and development in communities. However, participating in sport alone will not deliver these benefits. Research shows that sport activities that are overly competitive and/or fail to convey healthy development as the main objective can create negative experiences (UN Sport for Children and Youth, 2008). The UN also states that SFD programs that are not implemented in the correct manner can cause harm to individuals such as, but not limited to, decreasing self-esteem and confidence, poor sportsmanship, exposure to sexual and physical abuse as well as perpetuate aggressive, violent, racist and/or discriminatory behaviour (UN Sport for Children and Youth, 2008). Therefore, SFD programs must be strategically developed and implemented. However, in unpredictable communities like those where most SFD programs are carried out, it is difficult to conclusively state these programs will always be executed as planned. Thus, it is unclear how effective the average SFD program will likely be.

#### **6.2 Training and Delivery**

A key component in the delivery of SFD programs is the quality of the coaches, teachers and volunteers involved. In order for SFD programs to be effective and provide a positive atmosphere and experience for its participants, organizations must ensure their volunteers are willing and capable of executing the programs as intended. However, a review of

RTP by NORAD found that volunteers are not always inclined to do so due to anger directed towards the organization (Lange et al., 2006). After conducting interviews with RTP volunteers from various programs in different countries, researchers found that many volunteers become involved with projects in the hopes of receiving monetary compensation (Lange et al., 2006). Other volunteers also stated they hoped to move up in the organization and obtain full-time employment with RTP as well as participate in trips to other countries (Lange et al., 2006). Although RTP does not suggest these expectations are always feasible upon recruiting volunteers, the researchers found many volunteers had a high level of frustration with the organization, especially those who were aware of other RTP programs in the region where volunteers were paid a stipend for their services (Lange et al., 2006). This can result in volunteers either quitting altogether, or not engaging and implementing the programs correctly, which as discussed earlier can cause many types of negative repercussions. At present, there is no literature which indicates that this is a concern for all SFD programs. However, considering RTP is one of the largest SFD organizations in the world with just under \$17 million CAD in net assets (Right to Play, 2013), it is quite plausible that other SFD organizations could face this problem as well.

### **6.3 Duplication**

Another large criticism of SFD programs is the coordination and efficiency of efforts. Although the idea behind SFD programs is to encourage, promote and achieve development in order to improve the livelihoods of others, critics argue that SFD programs can backfire and cause more trouble than good (Coalter 2010; Ireland-Piper, 2013). Large NGO's such as RTP and LSGF support numerous small projects around the world, many of which aim to achieve the same goals in the same regions. Not only does this create duplicate initiatives, but it also creates competition in terms of recruiting participants, developing local partnerships, etc. (Ireland-Piper, 2013). This occurs between both the local organizations as well as the large NGO's (Ireland-Piper, 2013). As a result, duplicate efforts cause competition for funding, which has significant consequences (Ireland-Piper, 2013). Due to the competition for funding, the focus of organizations shifts from developing an effective SFD program aimed to promote development and peace, to creating a program that fits funding criteria, regardless of if it

would provide any value to its participants or achieve any progress in terms of development (Coalter 2010; Ireland-Piper, 2013). It is therefore argued that not only are SFD programs inefficient in their efforts due to duplication, but this can also cause organizations to hinder development (Ireland-Piper, 2013).

#### **6.4 Lack of Evaluation Methods**

Lastly, the results of SFD programs are incredibly difficult to evaluate and quantify (Ireland-Piper, 2013). Although correlations can be seen, there is not enough qualitative data to determine the exact relationships and causal effects between many of the variables involved (Coalter, 2010). Moreover, it is difficult, if not impossible to quantify some of the perceived benefits from SFD programs such as increases in self-esteem and confidence (Coalter 2010; Ireland-Piper, 2013). As a result, critics state that reports on the success of SFD programs cannot be perceived as entirely credible until a universal and systematic evaluation method for SFD programs is created and successfully implemented (Ireland-Piper, 2013).

## **SECTION SEVEN**

### **7.0 Conclusion**

#### **7.1 Findings**

The evidence from the reviewed literature and organizations suggest that SFD programs can encourage positive healthy, social, educational and in turn, community development. The findings of this analysis of SFD programs suggests that SFD programs can be effective at achieving their stated goals and objectives, in terms of promoting specific aspects of human and social development. Although the initial hypothesis indicated skepticism in the ability of SFD programs to have an impact on economic development without significant changes, both qualitative and quantitative studies provide evidence of current SFD programs making contributions and progress in the areas of health, education and social development. This progress can in turn stimulate development endeavors, particularly those relating to economic growth.

At the same time however, there are valid criticisms of the field, which cast some doubt on how much potential SFD programs have. As numerous researchers have stated, there

is simply not enough evidence to empirically conjecture on the exact relationship between sport and development, particularly due to the difficulty in quantitatively evaluating SFD programs. While research or theoretical analysis of causal relationships suggest that SFD can be beneficial for various aspects of human and social development, it is too early to make any deterministic conclusions. Further research is needed to prove or disprove the theoretical assertions.

The findings of this analysis and discussion of SFD criticisms also bring to light the issues of long-term potential and self-sustainability of SFD programs. Although SFD programs appear to have the potential to have a significant impact on development, it appears that the configuration and execution of any program must be completed very tactically. Failing to do so could result in any, or multiple negative externalities occurring and causing significant developmental setbacks. Similar to the majority of development programs, it is difficult to conclusively state if SFD programs currently have, or will develop the ability to be self-sustaining and continue without assistance from donors or other organizations. Although many SFD programs aim to train their participants to become involved with the program in a volunteer or paid-employee capacity in an effort to continue to operate, there is little to no information on the success of these endeavors. Moreover, there is no indication that any organization or NGO has the means to support itself from a financial standpoint.

## **7.2 Recommendations**

The overall consensus in the current literature suggests that if approached correctly, SFD programs have the potential to facilitate human and social change in developing countries. But achieving this result will depend on effectively implementing the programs, which in turn will depend on the skills and ability of the program staff and volunteers. It is essential that the personnel involved in these programs have the motivation and training to effectively implement them. This step is essential to the success of SFD programs as without the appropriate atmosphere and instruction, the programs will not achieve any accomplishments. Moreover, as critics have outlined, participants will not benefit and could very well experience negative repercussions from being in an ineffective

environment. For this reason, it is suggested that SFD programs devote more resources towards ensuring all staff and volunteers are sufficiently trained and implementing the programs to the best of their abilities.

The evidence also suggests that government involvement and collaborations with SFD programs make these programs more sustainable, and significant progress has been made with SFD programs that have partnered with local schools. If local, provincial (or equivalent) or national governments can partner with SFD programs, the programs can be brought to scale, resulting in benefits for more individuals and communities.

Governments should also promote SFD programs as a rights based approach and an essential component of sustainable development, rather than a luxury within a broader development strategy (United Nations Sport for Development and Peace, 2007).

Finally, incorporating the private sector in SFD initiatives via methods such as public-private partnerships or shared-value partnerships, where one business and one non-business entity collaborate with each other, could be beneficial for both development and the private sector. In the case of an SFD shared-value partnership, a business entity makes an investment in an SFD organization. This is beneficial to the organization as it now has more financial resources to dedicate to its programming, and also benefits the business entity by appearing morally appealing to customers. Private corporations have significantly more access to financial resources, and could provide alternative sources of funding for the NGO's, as well as provide programs with more support. Moreover, the private sector may have the means to provide SFD program volunteers with a stipend or some kind of financial incentive to continue to run the programs effectively. These partnerships would also be beneficial for private companies as consumers are becoming increasingly more conscious about social issues and the companies from which they purchase goods and services from (Bimal et al., 2015; Reed et al., 2009). These consumers have indicated they would opt to support companies that are more socially responsible (Bimal et al., 2015; Reed et al., 2009), thus partnering with SFD programs could be a valuable marketing tool for private companies.

### **7.3 Future Research**

Future research in the field should focus on providing more evidence on the efficacy of the SFD programs. In particular, establishing and understanding the specific mechanisms and conditions under which sport makes positive contributions to development is necessary. It is imperative to develop a systematic method by which researchers can measure the progress and impact SFD programs have on communities. Without a sound evaluation system, the positive outcomes SFD programs achieve will continue to be perceived as speculative and uncertain.

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