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SPORT AND DEVELOPMENT POLICY IN AFRICA
TOWARDS AN AFRICAN SPORT POLICY INDEX

A collaborative approach of 11 countries in Africa
SPORT AND DEVELOPMENT POLICY IN AFRICA
RESULTS OF A COLLABORATIVE STUDY OF SELECTED COUNTRY CASES

Research investigation undertaken by the
Interdisciplinary Centre of Excellence for Sport Science and Development (ICESSD)
University of the Western Cape

Editors:
Professors Marion Keim and Christo de Coning
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This research project is regarded as an important first step in establishing good basic information on the standing of African policies on sport and development. As such the purpose of this project is to develop a baseline study on sport policy in 11 selected African countries. The study used a multi case study approach in African Member States, focusing on some ECOWAS countries (Nigeria, Benin, Burkina Faso) EAC countries (Kenya, Uganda, Rwanda and Tanzania), selected SADC countries (Malawi, Namibia, South Africa) and Mozambique, selected from the PALOP countries. Despite certain shortcomings, it was decided to include a Chapter on Tanzania in this report as the information below at least provides some benchmark for comparison and as a foundation for further research.

The intention is that more detailed research will be conducted on the selected countries in future therefore the scope for this research did not include detailed policy analysis or research on sport policy content of individual countries. It is hoped that the study may be extended to other African countries and that possible collaboration, such as with the establishment of an extended network of researchers and the development of a sport monitoring and evaluation system, is considered in future.

The key sport and development policy issues examined in this study included:

- The status and standing of sport policy and legislation;
- Strategy, planning and implementation;
- Monitoring and evaluation arrangements;
- Compliance with international protocols
- Linkages to national development plans;
- Institutional arrangements
- Sport and gender
- Physical education and Sport as part of school curricula;
- Traditional Sport and games;
- Gender and disability;
- Interfaces between sport and health; and
- Sport and development initiatives.

The research was also aimed at suggesting guidelines to address institutional and capacity gaps and propose direction for policy reform. Final recommendations addressed challenges concerning the current situation, challenges, and opportunities in related sport areas and a suggested approach to guidelines for addressing institutional & capacity gaps for policy reform. The African Sports Index study found that the existence and quality of public policy and legislation concerning sport and development varied greatly amongst the countries that were studied. In some instances sport policy contains contemporary approaches and some of the world’s cutting edge approaches to sport and development and in other instances both policy and legislation on sport was found to be virtually absent.
The study found that huge opportunities exist to share policy experiences across the continent and that collaborative action, which is at a very low level at present, amongst African countries may have a drastic impact on the improvement of sport policies and their support systems. Generally speaking it was found that where good policies and legislation existed, public sector officials had far more guidance as to what to do and which priorities to pursue to ensure results and good performance. However, it was also found that in some countries where policies and legislation were virtually absent or of poor quality some of these somehow still reported high levels of compliance with international protocols.

An exciting feature of the ICESSD African Sports Index study was that very valuable experiences on the various elements of sport policy and implementation were found in the different countries and these issues are reported on below. The study showed that although some macro-economic, public finance and other government performance areas were being reported on in terms of normal government (public finance) reporting systems, that government-wide, Results-based Monitoring and Evaluation System (RBMES) was not yet established in the vast majority of countries that we studied. In fact, the only exception was South Africa that have adopted a comprehensive approach and that has a Performance monitoring and Review Department in the Presidency.

The research conducted for the ICESSD African Sports Index study showed that sport and development policy in Africa had a poor standing but that the growing popularity and rightful role of sport and development was a growing force in terms of socio-economic development initiatives and in terms of government recognition. The research noted that sport and development initiatives were strongly driven by civil society and that specific lessons of experience have emerged that hold much potential for replication in all African countries.

The key findings of our study on sport policy in the selected 11 African countries have shown that where basic sport policies and legislative arrangements are in place the further potential exists to improve policy analysis and policy content. Specific conclusions regarding individual countries have been made in this respect. Where policies are weak or non-existent it is recommended that technical assistance be made available to support sound policy processes and institutional arrangements for this purpose. It is concluded that in most instances a need existed to improve policy implementation, the development of strategies as well as improving the reporting on international protocols and the development of specific indicators to monitor the implementation of performance in sport and development.
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HON FIKILE MBALULA (MP) MINISTER OF SPORT AND RECREATION SOUTH AFRICA

LYNDON BOUAH, CHIEF ADVISOR FOR CULTURAL AFFAIRS AND SPORT, WESTERN CAPE

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