

The Power of Sport For Good



A Calacus White Paper



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Introduction

We all understand the power of sport to bring people together.

As Nelson Mandela put it at the inaugural Laureus World Sports Awards in Monaco: *"Sport has the power to change the world. It has the power to inspire. It has the power to unite people in a way that little else does."*

"It speaks to youth in a language they understand. Sport can create hope where once there was only despair. It is more powerful than governments in breaking down racial barriers. It laughs in the face of all types of discrimination."

Sport goes beyond fitness and competition. It teaches respect, focus, self-discipline, and improves mental as well as physical health.

After the past few challenging years, people young and old have benefited from the opportunities that sport provides to improve and enhance their lives and, in turn, benefit society as a whole.

A 2022 United Nations report states: *"Sport can be catalytic when it is shaped to improve people's opportunities, confidence, and sense of belonging in the short run, while laying the ground to change mindsets and build inclusive societies."*

"Women's and girls' participation in sport, for example, can boost confidence and self-esteem while challenging gender stereotypes and influencing the behaviour of men and boys."

The World Health Organisation estimates that regular physical activity can translate to a 30% reduction in obesity, depression, and other mental health conditions, helping to prevent up to 5 million deaths a year.

Research by Made by Sport earlier this year suggested that, in the UK alone, the average Social Return on Investment (SROI) for sport for good is £6 for every £1 spent, compared to £4 for every £1 spent on sports participation.

Yet only 0.5% of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) activity at FTSE 100 firms in the UK supports sport for good charities.

With a £600 million reduction of investment into sport by local authorities, it's no wonder that over 50% of UK sport for good clubs and organisations rely solely on volunteers.

There is no doubt that governments and big businesses can and should do more, but it's not all doom and gloom.

According to Deloitte, when companies align their purpose with doing good, they can build deeper connections with their stakeholders.

This, in turn, can amplify the company's relevance in their stakeholders' lives.

It also found that brands that have an authentic purpose, which overlaps with CSR, grow three times faster on average than their competitors.

The International Olympic Committee says: *"Making sport relevant and recognised as a key contributor of the community makes it more attractive for new members and also for government, private sector and philanthropic funding."*

This white paper showcases some of the best sport for good initiatives undertaken around the world – from a variety of organisations offering opportunities to those whose lives are being transformed by their sport for good support.

Arsenal F.C.

PROJECT OUTLINE

The No More Red campaign from Arsenal and Adidas was introduced in January 2022. It is a long-term programme that attempts to address the core causes of teenage violence by giving those who are most affected in the community alternative pathways through the establishment of safe places and mentorship.

It aims to inspire by showing affected youths that there are other options to violence if they concentrate on their goals and talents, and use the positive support available.

Sadly, over 750 UK youth centres have closed as a result of government budget cuts in recent years. In addition, 2021 saw the highest number of juvenile homicides in London on record as well as a persistent rise in knife crime.

Together, Arsenal and Adidas established this programme to aid in assisting the local London youth most in need.

In addition to their mentorship programmes, they contribute to the funding of new sports fields so that football may serve as a safe haven in the centre of neighbourhoods. In 2022, the first pitch was finished in Islington, and many more are in the works.

The initiative was introduced on a global stage at Arsenal's FA Cup third-round match against Nottingham Forest, which was live on television, and helped garner support from the likes of David Beckham, the London Metropolitan Police, and even sparked a debate in Parliament.

The stark all-white Arsenal kit, which replaced the team's traditional red, symbolised the campaign's aspirations.

The kit will never be offered for sale; instead, it will be given to those who are actively using their creativity to forge their own future and encourage those around them to do the same.

To help them realise their goals, those people also participate in the No More Red Collective, a mentorship initiative run by Adidas and Arsenal.

KEY STATISTICS

- 200+ young people have used the redeveloped community pitch in 2022, equating to 8,000 hours of play
- Over 70 young people have been awarded the white shirt
- The campaign was seen by 20% of UK population and 33 million+ worldwide



CASE STUDY

Verona has been attending the Arsenal Hub since she was 13.

"Growing up in North London has its ups and downs," she says. "Knife crime has been around for ages now, and we don't know how to tackle it. Hundreds of kids are dying for no reason, just because of a postcode. It doesn't make sense."

"I used to come to the hub – it was my kind of getaway. It was nice. You used to come to play football, link up with your friends, so in the sense, I was kind of lucky because I knew the hub was here. Whereas people that don't know the hub exists or any type of youth club or youth centre, you link up after school because there is nothing else to do but then you stay on the roads."

Verona left school and went to college to gain qualifications in sports science coaching. However, before the end of her studies, Verona's teachers noticed her becoming distracted and in collaboration with Arsenal, provided her with an art tutor.

"We worked together for six weeks. He was basically teaching me new techniques, trying to make it fun but then also showing me you could actually do this as a career. That to me was a shock."

"Arsenal and Adidas basically rang me up, they wanted me to design the match-day programme. If it wasn't for the hub I don't even think I'd be doing this. They hooked me up with one of the local artists, Stazzy, and then two years down the line now they are telling me they want to commission me for a piece of art."

"It's crazy to think that I'm involved and I'm part of such a big launch. The No More Red Campaign has such a strong message – it's a good platform for me to showcase my art. I kind of want the main focus of it to be just a sense of belonging really."

"The collective is going to really allow me to continue pursuing a career in art. I've been kind of linked properly with Arsenal from the age of 13, so by putting two things [together] that are really important to me, which are art plus this whole community, what more could you ask for in a sense?"

Verona's artwork appeared on the Arsenal vs Burnley matchday programme on January 22, 2022.



INTERNATIONAL OLYMPIC COMMITTEE

"The practice of sport is a human right. Every human being must have the possibility of practicing sport, without discrimination of any kind and in the Olympic Spirit, which requires mutual understanding and with a spirit of friendship, solidarity and fair play"

Olympic Charter Principle 4

PROJECT OUTLINE

More than 100 million people have been forced to flee their homes across the globe and the sport community can offer so much to ensure that young displaced people can thrive through sport.

When he announced the creation of the Refugee Olympic Team, International Olympic Committee (IOC) President Thomas Bach said that it serves to *"make the world better aware of the magnitude of this crisis."* The IOC Refugee Olympic Team was created ahead of the Olympic Games, Rio de Janeiro 2016, with a team of 10 athletes competing that year and a further 29 in Tokyo five years later.

Cyril Thatchett II, a member of the IOC Refugee Olympic Team in Tokyo, is a champion weightlifter who left Cameroon and sought asylum in the United Kingdom. He acknowledges that his training and ability to pursue weightlifting significantly helped his depression: *"I'd thought about suicide for a long time. I just wanted to end it all. Simply taking part in sports has allowed me to stop thinking, basically."*



Cyril began studying to become a mental health nurse in order to help rehabilitate others who experienced similar trauma to himself and graduated with a first-class degree from Middlesex University.

He now works as a lead mental health nurse for the National Health Service in the UK.

Sadly, one in five people living in displacement experience mental health issues such as depression, anxiety or post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), although many more are likely to experience some level of psychosocial distress.

The potential role of physical activity and sport is increasingly recognised as a cross-cutting strategy for delivering a range of health and psychosocial interventions. However, a number of barriers and challenges remain not least because sport is too often seen as a luxury and an afterthought when compared with other needs in emerging or protracted crisis situations.

The Olympic Refugee Foundation (ORF) was launched by the IOC in 2017 as an independent non-profit organisation committed to leveraging sport for the protection, inclusion and empowerment of young people affected by displacement across the globe.

The vision of the Foundation is a society where everyone belongs and its mission is to shape a movement that ensures young people affected by displacement thrive through sport.

CASE STUDY

Game Connect is a US\$1.5m ORF-funded programme in Uganda which runs from August 2020-August 2023.

Led by the AVSI Foundation in consortium with Right to Play, Youth Sport Uganda, the Uganda Olympic Committee (UOC) and United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), the programme aims to improve the well-being and mental health of refugees and host community young people aged 15-24.

The group sport sessions are further strengthened by community-level activities aimed at harnessing cohesion and peaceful co-existence which also reference mental health, livelihood and protection services coupled with life skills.

Monitoring and learning data generated by the programme highlights the following components necessary for the achievement of positive outcomes: peer and parental support, coach quality and individualised support, in addition to group activities.

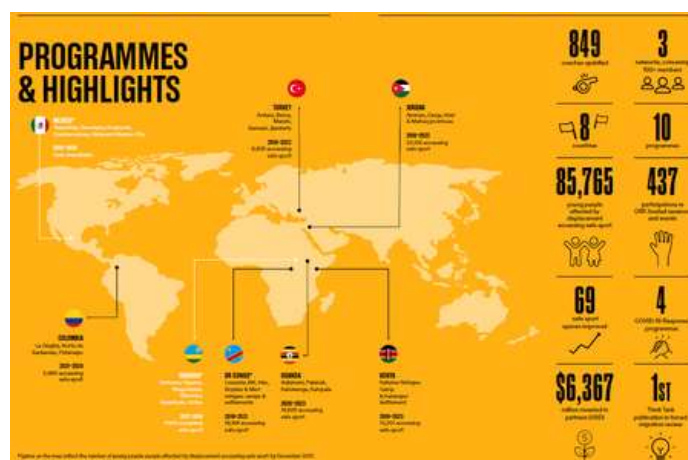
The local community-rooted programme helps vulnerable young people both in and out of school by developing skills and capacities that benefit their mental health and well-being and develop new and strengthened social and support networks.

Trained coaches support 20-25 young people over a four to six-month journey of self-realisation and various structured sports activities. The play-stop and reflect cycle is repeated for all interactive sessions to enable young people to connect the issues arising in the game to those affecting them off the field of play.



KEY STATISTICS

- More than \$6m has been invested to support its 13 programmes in 10 countries
- Pre- and post-participation assessment has shown anxiety levels decreased by 67%
- Depression levels have decreased by 69%



The Premier League

PROJECT OUTLINE

Premier League Kicks was established in 2006 and uses the power of football to encourage children to fulfil their potential, enhance their wellness, and create more secure and welcoming communities in the most in-need areas.

With a three-year funding commitment from the Premier League, the programme has grown to include 90 Premier League, EFL, and National League Clubs that provide sport and education sessions in their local communities.

The programme started with projects at Tottenham Hotspur, Manchester City, Fulham, and Brentford.



The initiative collaborates with youth in communities, the police and other stakeholders to help the younger generation's physical and mental wellness by raising their self-esteem, aspirations, and social abilities.

The aim is to enhance job prospects for people from all walks of life and to promote equality, diversity, and inclusion.

KEY STATISTICS

- 90 Premier League, English Football League and National League clubs deliver sessions at over 700 venues
- Over 175,000 young people will engage in the programme between 2019-2022
- 48 professional clubs will offer mentoring with Children in Need collaboration

Premier League Kicks offers a wide range of sports, music, and personal and educational development sessions, as well as offering pathways to education, training, and employment. This includes opportunities to play, coach, and officiate in a range of sports.

Communities across the nation have changed as a result, with involvement in sports and football sharply increasing. Rates of anti-social behaviour have significantly declined in communities hosting the sessions.

Over the course of the next three years, more specialised mentoring services will be offered to children and teenagers affected by violence as part of Premier League Kicks' collaboration with Children in Need.



CASE STUDY

Namja Shariffu began attending West Ham United Foundation's Premier League Kicks programme 11 years ago and has progressed from a participant to a full-time coach and programme coordinator.

"When I first started, I was extremely shy. I struggled a little bit with my anxiety so it was hard for me to go into new situations and interact with people that I didn't know," she says.

PL Kicks helped Namja overcome these fears and develop from an anxious newcomer to an active Premier League Kicks coach and mentor.

"I wanted to develop my playing ability but then when I came here, I realised that I've built relationships with coaches and with players.

"When I first started coaching, I didn't know how to project my voice so that the participants could hear me.

"I didn't know how to best engage with them to make sure that I was getting the most out of their development.

"But now I've been able to overcome all of those through building my confidence.



"I was given the opportunity to volunteer as a coach as well as opportunities to take part in employability programmes."

After completing her college studies and having volunteered with the programme, Namja gained her FA Level 1 badge to become a full-time Premier League Kicks coach in 2017.

"I thought that that was the best way for me to give back from everything that I gained from here. I think it's important to show the effects the Premier League has had on people's lives."

To mark the 15th anniversary of PL Kicks, Namja was chosen to be West Ham's Local Legend as recognition for her progress and commitment to the programme.



Laureus Sport for Good

PROJECT OUTLINE

Through the use of sport, Laureus Sport for Good's Global and National Foundations work to eradicate prejudice and violence against disadvantaged children and young people around the world.

Their goals are based on the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) set forth in the United Nations' 2030 Agenda. Health and Well-Being, Education, Women and Girls, Employability, Inclusive Society, and Peaceful Society are the six social focus areas of Laureus Sport for Good. They collaborate with a wide range of partners to launch programmes that drive change in these social areas globally.

Their Sport for Development initiatives seek to decrease the negative consequences of violence and prejudice, enhance employability, support the social and emotional development of children and young people, and inspire communities with the greatest needs. They also seek to strengthen sport for development research and bring significant social problems affecting children and young people to light.

Sport for Development programmes throughout the world receive funding, technical assistance, and expert coaching from Laureus to help organisations expand their capabilities.

For example, Laureus Sport for Good became the first official partner of The Cathay Pacific/HSBC Hong Kong Sevens in 2018. Through this cooperation and the ensuing fundraising, a variety of rugby programmes, including Deaf Rugby, have been supported, which has employed the first full-time deaf coach for the Hong Kong Rugby Union.



KEY STATISTICS

- Across 2021, 109,000 children and young people participated in inclusion-focused programmes
- 72,178 children and young people increased their sense of belonging in their communities
- More than 40 young deaf boys and girls are involved in the Deaf Rugby Project

CASE STUDY

Yuki Ng Hoi Yee was raised in a hearing family with little to no opportunity to communicate and learn sign language in the general school system.

In 2016, by chance, Yuki was given the option to volunteer as a photographer during the annual Deaf Rugby competition of the Hong Kong Rugby Union. Yuki has since joined the Deaf Rugby Team and has been accepted into a new community.



Yuki's involvement with the Deaf Rugby team has pushed her out of her comfort zone, but thanks to the supportive Deaf Rugby community and the focus on teamwork, her communication, leadership, and social awareness skills have improved dramatically.

Yuki has been able to hone her observational skills and confidence in her own abilities thanks to the diversity of the team, which includes hearing and non-hearing teammates.

This has been evidenced in her innovative solutions to keep up with the constantly changing game environment, which is simpler for her hearing teammates to adapt to.

These new connections have given Yuki the motivation she needs to spread the message that there aren't many distinctions between hearing and deaf individuals and that society has to be made aware of alternative messaging techniques like lip-reading and the value of body language.

Yuki was inspired to take up coaching and use the skills that Deaf Rugby has taught her to become a role model for young people at the Deaf Rugby Project and raise awareness of the obstacles that deaf children face. She hopes that by promoting the inclusive game, she will inspire others to follow in her footsteps.

ABILITY SPORTS AFRICA

PROJECT OUTLINE

Adaptive Sports was introduced by Ability Sports Africa in Northern Uganda in 2012 and aims to encourage inclusion by improving attitudes towards disability.

After 20 years of civil conflict in the region, the prevalence of physical disability is significantly higher than average. Not only did this foster discriminatory behaviour from the community, but also helped to shape negative views and stigma towards individuals with disabilities.

The Adaptive Sports programme aims to change these attitudes by dramatically improving the accessibility of sports and recreational activities for physically disabled people.

Since Adaptive Sports was established in Gulu, a densely populated area, a wealth of sporting opportunities, including wheelchair basketball, sitting volleyball, and blind football, among many others, have become available.

KEY STATISTICS

- Supported 560 individuals through different activities (including 360 male and 200 female)
- Trained 55 coaches in inclusive adaptive sports from 26 schools in the districts of Gulu City, Gulu and Amuru
- Successfully implemented 10 initiatives over two years



Ability Sports Africa launched the Reverse Inclusion initiative to further the effect of Adaptive Sports and the programme encourages physically disabled individuals to invite able-bodied people to their sporting events in order to increase awareness of disability and what it's like to be disabled, which has lessened stigma and caused a mentality shift.

At a recent Reverse Inclusion event, for example, the largest basketball team in the area competed against the wheelchair basketball team, which prompted a fresh appreciation of both the power of wheelchair basketball and the challenges faced by people with disabilities.

The establishment of these programmes has dramatically changed the region's perceptions toward disabilities and highlighted the power of sport as a catalyst for social transformation.

CASE STUDY

Ismail is the Games and Sports teacher at Pawel Angany Primary School in the Amuru District in Northern Uganda, and is proud of the increase in inclusivity since the adoption of Adaptive Sports.

"Before I got training in Adaptive Sports and inclusive games, it was really hard for me to inclusively engage learners with disabilities in my sporting programme at school," he said.

"I admit that lack of knowledge greatly contributed to segregation and exclusion of learners with disabilities in school.



"Many children with disabilities live inactive lifestyles. They usually fail to socialise with others, and when it comes to PE, their work is to take care of their colleagues' belongings. We thought this practice was normal to every child with disability.

"But after the training we realised that we were not inclusive and we did not meet the needs of the children. Instead we contributed to exclusion of these children with disabilities.

"When we introduced Adaptive Games at our school, we saw increased involvement of children with disabilities in different activities, with a number of them taking leadership roles to initiate activities.

"Now they don't take care of their colleague's properties, they are actively involved. Due to the different games and equipment, we have witnessed increased enrolment of children with disabilities in schools."

COMMON GOAL

PROJECT OUTLINE

Sadly, LGBTQ+ populations experience prejudice and marginalisation daily. This can take the form of offensive slogans or unfair laws, both inside and outside of sporting venues. Play Proud was developed to combat this.

Play Proud is a grassroots initiative that works with football stakeholders to offer training programmes on LGBTQ+ inclusivity in order to build safe sporting environments for LGBTQ+ youth and communities worldwide.

The programme was introduced in 2019 in North America, where coaches from 12 grassroots football organisations participated in training to provide them with the knowledge and skills to implement safe spaces within their organisations. In addition, training on restorative justice is provided to help prevent homophobia, biphobia, and transphobia at all levels of competition.

To ensure the availability of international safe spaces in the run-up to and during the 2026 FIFA Men's World Cup, Common Goal currently collaborates with eight American soccer teams, including Chicago Fire, Philadelphia Union, Angel City FC, San Diego Wave, Tigres UANL, Oakland Roots, San Diego Loyal, and Pacific FC.

They also collaborate with supporters' groups and other community organisations throughout North America.

Play Proud and Amplifier recently joined forces to produce the Play Proud artwork, which allowed artists, football businesses, social activists, and football players to collaborate on works of art.

To show their support for the LGBTQ+ community, Real Madrid and Juventus players wore kits displaying the artwork during their friendly at the Pasadena Rose Bowl, California, in August 2022.



CASE STUDY

Christina Kutumela is a young leader at Altus Sport, a Common Goal organisation.

Before she joined Altus Sport, Christina didn't believe she belonged in her community and struggled with self-acceptance.

"Play Proud has allowed me to accept many things in my life and love things about myself that I didn't think were possible," she explained.



"Now I know that there are ways to escape bullying. To escape discrimination. To change attitudes. And to create spaces to heal and understand yourself. I wouldn't be able to do that without football."

"Altus Sport and Play Proud have given me a space to heal and forgive myself for the things I have gone through in life and now I hope I can help others go through that same process."

KEY STATISTICS

- Across 2021 and 2022-23 coaches from soccer organisations across Europe, Africa and Asia have been involved
- Training was provided for 12 grassroots soccer organisations in North America
- Play Proud artwork on Real Madrid and Juventus' shirts was seen by 94,000 spectators

"Before, I didn't feel like it was possible for young people to have access to these spaces. I wish I'd known that was possible and that these spaces could exist."

"Football has played a big role in my life. It has given me a medium to share with people who are going through the same thing."

"The sport has provided an outlet to escape from the discrimination and bullying."



ADIDAS

PROJECT OUTLINE

Adidas' Breaking Barriers Project, launched in 2018, is a multi-year commitment to supporting and championing women and girls in sports, with the goal of supporting them in reaching their full potential.

The project is dedicated to breaking down the systemic barriers that women face on a daily basis including cultural stigma, lack of access, representation, and self-confidence, which often leave them on the sidelines, on and off the field.

The project currently works across Europe and is partnered with 12 non-profit sports organisations to provide local mentors and leaders, also known as 'Breaking Barriers Champions,' and the sports industry as a whole with the skills and tools they need to drive change.



KEY STATISTICS

Breaking Barriers aims to:

- Work with and support 15 non-profit organisations
- Train 100 champions and role models in local communities
- Impact 50,000 women and girls to break barriers in sport

The Breaking Barriers 360° approach encompasses The Learning Hub and The Academy, which includes gender equity and inclusivity learning programmes and activities.

Additionally the Innovations Lab supports women-led or women-focused start-ups through one-to-one coaching, mentorship, network development and financing opportunities.

With other non-profit organisations as partners, the initiative hopes to expand its reach and involve more women and girls in its programmes across the globe. It also aims to increase participation in sport and inspire girls to realise their potential whilst setting an example for the industry.

In May 2022 Adidas published a pan-European study aimed at outlining actionable opportunities for sports industry stakeholders to address barriers unique to women and girls in sport, and to help the barriers stay broken for everyone, forever.

CASE STUDY

Margherita Cicolin was born and raised in Turin, in the north-west of Italy, and started working for Balon Mundial three years ago.

She coaches the men's and women's football teams and also supports with team logistics and other administrative roles. She became a Breaking Barriers Champion two years ago, having resisted her parents' reluctance to let her play football.

"My journey through sport was not easy," she says. "The barriers I have encountered most recently are the great difficulty of recognising my work and therefore of receiving the right compensation for what is done.

"In addition, being a woman brings a lot of prejudices and therefore also limits the possibilities to access more paid jobs in the sports field. It is only when people see you at work and see that you know what you are doing that they start to say, 'You know, you are not so bad' or 'I did not think you were so good.'

"These are the same words they used to say to me when I played soccer with other children when I was little. So I have always had to prove with facts what I know and what I could do to change people's minds.

"The impact of Breaking Barriers has been huge. It has allowed a lot of girls and women to see that they are not the only ones thinking the same way and if they want, they can change the lives of children. It is important we continue to give them the tools and knowledge to implement change."

Margherita now hopes that she can set an example and support other women to make sport, and in particular football, become more accessible.

She added: *"Soccer has been my salvation in many difficult moments. Kicking a ball was my chance to vent my stress and nervousness and not to do other stupid things. I hope that in the future it can be the same for other girls who have had difficulties. Football can create the change necessary to create better people.*

"The best way for me to improve gender equality now is to continue to show that if you have a goal, you can reach it. I want to continue to do my best to be a good role model."



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