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A photograph of a basketball hoop and net, viewed from the side, set against a dark blue background with a white circular arc. The net is white and the hoop is orange.

# PREVENTING VIOLENT EXTREMISM THROUGH SPORT

TECHNICAL GUIDE

CRIMINAL JUSTICE HANDBOOK SERIES



UNITED NATIONS OFFICE ON DRUGS AND CRIME  
Vienna

# **Preventing Violent Extremism through Sport**

## **Technical Guide**

CRIMINAL JUSTICE HANDBOOK SERIES



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## TERMINOLOGY

**Countering violent extremism:** Proactive, non-coercive actions to counter efforts by violent extremists to radicalize, recruit and mobilize followers to violence, and to address specific factors that facilitate and enable violent extremist recruitment and radicalization to violence.<sup>1</sup>

**Counter-terrorism:** Actions and activities to prevent, deter and disrupt terrorist acts and to weaken terrorist organizations and networks.

**Deradicalization:** The process of changing one's belief system, rejecting extremist ideology and embracing mainstream values. Deradicalization refers primarily to a cognitive rejection of certain values, attitudes and views – in other words, a change in mindset. It implies a cognitive shift, that is, a fundamental change in understanding resulting from activities intended to help individuals to renounce radical or extreme ideas, beliefs and groups.<sup>2</sup>

**Disengagement:** The social and psychological process whereby an individual's commitment to, and involvement in, violent extremism is reduced to the extent that the person is no longer at risk of involvement and engagement in violent activity. Disengagement from using, or supporting the use of, violence does not necessarily mean a change in an individual's commitment to a radical or extremist cause. Disengagement involves a change in behaviour (renouncing the use of violence) rather than a change in fundamental beliefs.<sup>3</sup>

**Evaluation:** The ongoing process of undertaking a systematic and objective examination of monitoring information in order to answer agreed questions and make judgments on the basis of agreed criteria. Evaluation may be concerned with the efficiency, effectiveness, impact and sustainability of an organization or programme. The intention is not simply to assess what impacts have arisen, but why they have arisen and what lessons can be drawn on how to improve the organization or programme.<sup>4</sup>

**Facilitator:** For the purposes of the present guide, the term “facilitator” (or “coach”) is used to describe all types of qualified practitioners who deliver or implement sport-based interventions and/or programmes. Facilitators should possess professional, social and methodological competencies to instil positive values and convey life skills to their participants through sports. Sport coaches, workers at non-governmental organizations, teachers and/or other community workers might act as facilitators in sport-based interventions for the prevention of violence and crime, including violent extremism.

**Gender:** “A concept that refers to the social differences, as opposed to the biological ones, between women and men that have been learned, are changeable over time and have wide variations both within and between cultures”.<sup>5</sup> Gender-based roles and other attributes therefore change over time and vary in different cultural contexts.

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<sup>1</sup>Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE), *The Role of Civil Society in Preventing and Countering Violent Extremism and Radicalization that Lead to Terrorism: A Guidebook for South-Eastern Europe* (Vienna, 2018), p. 6.

<sup>2</sup>UNODC, *Handbook on the Management of Violent Extremist Prisoners and the Prevention of Radicalization to Violence in Prisons*, Criminal Justice Handbook Series (Vienna, 2016).

<sup>3</sup>Ibid.

<sup>4</sup>Fred Coalter, *Sport-in-Development: A Monitoring and Evaluation Manual* (Stirling, University of Stirling, Scotland, 2008).

<sup>5</sup>European Commission, Directorate-General for Employment, Industrial Relations and Social Affairs, *One Hundred Words for Equality: A Glossary of Terms on Equality between Women and Men* (Luxembourg, Office for Official Publications of the European Communities, 1998).

**Human rights approach:** A conceptual framework that integrates the norms, standards and principles of the international human rights system into the policies, programmes and processes of development and humanitarian actions. It therefore focuses on both procedures and outcomes.<sup>6</sup>

**Monitoring:** The regular and systematic collection and analysis of information related to a planned and agreed programme of action. These activities provide evidence of the extent to which a programme is being delivered as intended, meeting its targets and making progress towards the achievement of its objectives. Monitoring information can also reveal the extent to which changes and adaptations are required.

**“Plus sport” programmes:** Initiatives that intentionally use sport as a vehicle to engage young people in other non-sport activities, such as education, aiming at resilience-building and youth engagement and empowerment.

**Prevention of violent extremism:** Efforts to influence individual and/or environmental factors that are believed to create the conditions in which violent extremism can flourish, using social or educative rather than security-driven measures.<sup>7</sup>

**Radicalization:** A dynamic process whereby an individual may adopt ever more extreme ideas and goals. The reasons behind the process can be ideological, political, religious, social, economic and/or personal. A radical may seek to bring about a system-transforming radical solution for government and society through violent or non-violent means (e.g., democratic means using persuasion and reform).<sup>8</sup> There are several phases in the radicalization process to take into consideration, such as activism, extremism, violent extremism and terrorism, each constituting different levels of growing radicalization.<sup>9</sup> In the present guide, radicalization is acknowledged as a process leading into violent extremism, and the importance of preventing that process, including through sport and sport-based interventions, is also acknowledged in the context of primary prevention.

**Safeguarding:** Protecting people’s health, well-being and human rights and enabling them to live free from harm, abuse and neglect.<sup>10</sup> For the purposes of the present guide, safeguarding is used to refer to the responsibility that organizations, programmes and individuals have to ensure that operations, programmes and actions do no harm to participants and beneficiaries, including children, meaning that they do not expose them to the risk of harm and abuse and that any concerns the organization has about the safety and protection of participants are reported to the appropriate authorities.

“Do no harm” is a principle that has been used in the humanitarian sector but can equally be applied to the development field. It refers to organizations’ responsibility to minimize the harm they may do inadvertently as a result of their activities.

**Sport:** Unless specified otherwise in the present guide, the term “sport” is used as a generic term, comprising sport for all, physical play, recreation, dance and organized, casual, competitive, traditional and indigenous sports and games in their diverse forms.<sup>11</sup>

<sup>6</sup> UNHCR, “The context, concepts and guiding principles”, in *A Manual on a Community-Based Approach in UNHCR Operations* (Geneva, 2008).

<sup>7</sup> William Stephens, Stijn Sieckelinck and Hans Boutellier, “Preventing violent extremism: a review of the literature”, *Studies in Conflict and Terrorism*, 2 January 2019, pp. 1–16.

<sup>8</sup> UNODC, *Handbook on the Management of Violent Extremist Prisoners*.

<sup>9</sup> Kees Van Den Bos, *Why People Radicalize: How Unfairness Judgments Are Used to Fuel Radical Beliefs, Extremist Behaviors, and Terrorism* (New York, Oxford University Press, 2018).

<sup>10</sup> International Service, Safeguarding Policy, “Safeguarding children, young people and vulnerable adults policy”. Available at [www.internationalservice.org.uk/safeguarding-policy](http://www.internationalservice.org.uk/safeguarding-policy).

<sup>11</sup> Kazan Action Plan, adopted at the sixth International Conference of Ministers and Senior Officials Responsible for Physical Education and Sport, held in Kazan, Russian Federation, in July 2017.

**Sport-based approaches:** The utilization of sport as a key component of policies, programming or interventions aimed at achieving economic, human or social development outcomes.

**Sport for development and peace:** The intentional use of sport to coherently and systematically establish partnerships and build bridges between individuals and across communities. Since 2000, the United Nations has encouraged the use of sport to attain health, education, development and peace objectives.<sup>12</sup>

**“Sport plus” programmes:** Sport programmes and interventions that aim to deliver social value and educational messages as a by-product of sports participation.

**Terrorism:** Although there is no universally agreed definition, terrorism can be broadly understood as a method of coercion that utilizes or threatens to utilize violence in order to spread fear and thereby attain political or ideological goals.<sup>13</sup>

**Violent extremism:** There is no universally agreed definition of violent extremism. However, it is used to refer to the beliefs and actions of someone who promotes, supports, facilitates or commits acts of violence to achieve ideological, religious or political goals,<sup>14</sup> which can encompass terrorism and other forms of politically motivated violence.<sup>15</sup> Typically, violent extremism also identifies an enemy, or enemies, who are the object of hatred and violence.<sup>16</sup> General Assembly resolution 70/291 on the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy Review contains references to “terrorism and violent extremism as and when conducive to terrorism” and “terrorism and violent extremism conducive to terrorism”. In line with that resolution, the terms “violent extremist” and “violent extremism” in the present guide should always be regarded as referring to “violent extremism as and when conducive to terrorism”.

**Youth:** There is no universally agreed definition of the term “youth”. For statistical purposes, the United Nations defines “youth” as persons between the ages of 15 and 24 years. It is also recognized that Member States use other definitions of the term. The Secretary-General recognizes that, apart from that statistical definition, the meaning of the term “youth” varies in different societies around the world. However, age is the easiest way to define this group, particularly in relation to education and employment, because “youth” is often used to refer to a person between the ages of leaving compulsory education and finding their first job.<sup>17</sup>

For the purposes of the present guide, the term “youth” is used to refer to persons between 15 and 24 years of age. At the same time, it is noted that, as defined in article 1 of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, all persons under the age of 18 years are “children” and enjoy specific rights and safeguards under international law. If different age ranges for youth are used, they will be specified in the text.

**Youth engagement:** The meaningful inclusion of young people in all stages of developing, implementing, monitoring and evaluating programmes, policies and investments of resources, as well as in decision-making that affects them and others.<sup>18</sup>

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<sup>12</sup>Right to Play, *Harnessing the Power of Sport for Development and Peace: Recommendations to Governments* (Toronto, Canada, Sport for Development and Peace Working Group, 2008).

<sup>13</sup>UNODC, “Module 1: Introduction to international terrorism”, Education for Justice University Module Series: Counter-Terrorism (Vienna, 2018).

<sup>14</sup>UNODC, *Handbook on the Management of Violent Extremist Prisoners*.

<sup>15</sup>UNESCO, *Preventing Violent Extremism through Education: A Guide for Policymakers* (Paris, 2017), p. 19.

<sup>16</sup>Ibid.

<sup>17</sup>United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, “Definition of youth”.

<sup>18</sup>Women Deliver, “Engage youth: a discussion paper on meaningful youth engagement” (New York, April 2016).

**Youth violence:** Violence is broadly defined as “the intentional use of physical force or power, threatened or actual, against oneself, another person, or against a group or community, that either results in or has a high likelihood of resulting in injury, death, psychological harm, maldevelopment or deprivation”.<sup>19</sup> Youth violence is defined as violence that occurs among individuals aged 10–29 who are unrelated and who may or may not know each other, and that generally takes place outside of the home.<sup>20</sup>

## ACRONYMS

<b>PVE:</b>	Prevention of violent extremism
<b>UNDP:</b>	United Nations Development Programme
<b>UNESCO:</b>	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
<b>UNHCR:</b>	Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
<b>UNICEF:</b>	United Nations Children’s Fund
<b>UNODC:</b>	United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime

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<sup>19</sup>World Health Organization (WHO), *World Report on Violence and Health* (Geneva, 2002).

<sup>20</sup>WHO, *Preventing Youth Violence: An Overview of the Evidence* (Geneva, 2015).

# INTRODUCTION

## AIM AND APPROACH

In recognizing that sport can offer a space for learning and improve mutual understanding and peaceful coexistence, UNODC promotes sport as a vehicle to strengthen youth resilience to crime and violence, including in the context of preventing violent extremism. The present guide was developed by UNODC as a tool to support Member States in their efforts to prevent violent extremism. In particular, it is designed to guide policymakers and implementing organizations in order to support and strengthen programming and activities in this field. The contents of the guide can also be utilized by sports coaches, associations and clubs, as well as community organizations that work with youth in sport and community settings. The practical application of this tool may include using it as a reference document for capacity-building activities, applying the theory of change explained in the guide when designing and measuring the impact of sport-based activities for the prevention of violent extremism, and more generally developing a deeper understanding of how sport can be used in the context of preventing violent extremism.

The present guide is one of a series of tools developed by UNODC to support Member States in preventing violent extremism. It was developed in the context of the Office's work on youth violence and crime prevention and its work on counter-terrorism, under its Global Programme for the Implementation of the Doha Declaration. The guide was also prepared in response to General Assembly resolution 74/170, in which the Assembly called upon UNODC to continue identifying and disseminating information and good practices on the use of sport and sport-based learning in connection with crime and violence prevention and to provide advice and support to policymakers and practitioners. In terms of prevention, the guide recognizes the importance of promoting the well-being of children and youth and applies an approach that encourages prosocial behavioural development and good safeguarding and welfare practices, with a particular emphasis on educational measures in line with the Guidelines for the Prevention of Crime.<sup>1</sup> This is further supported by the guidance developed by United Nations entities in related areas, such as the UNODC *Handbook on the Crime Prevention Guidelines: Making Them Work*,<sup>2</sup> the UNESCO guide entitled *Preventing Violent Extremism through Education: A Guide for Policymakers* and the UNESCO publication "A teacher's guide on the prevention of violent extremism".

The aim of the present guide is to explore and, where possible, promote the use of sport as an effective prevention tool that seeks to disrupt the radicalization and recruitment processes, addressing primarily push factors towards violent extremism, and not as a tool for disengagement from violence and the reintegration of individuals who have already joined violent extremist organizations (i.e., countering violent extremism). It is however, acknowledged that action to prevent and counter violent extremism must be aligned and combined.

In addressing the specific challenges of preventing the recruitment and exploitation of children by terrorist and violent extremist groups and the protection and treatment of those children, UNODC developed the *Handbook on Children Recruited and Exploited by Terrorist and Violent Extremist Groups: The Role of the Justice System*. That publication has been complemented by supporting materials on prevention, the rehabilitation and reintegration of children, and access to justice for children.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Economic and Social Council resolution 2002/13, annex.

<sup>2</sup>United Nations publication, Sales No. E.10.IV.9.

<sup>3</sup>For example, UNODC, Global Programme to End Violence against Children, "Roadmap on the treatment of children associated with terrorist and violent extremist groups" (Vienna, 2019).

The focus of those materials is on adopting a holistic, multidisciplinary approach to the phenomenon of child recruitment and exploitation by terrorist and violent extremist groups. To that end, UNODC guidance calls for a multi-agency approach that engages not only the justice system, but also other related sectors, such as child protection, health, education and law enforcement.

Furthermore, the UNODC *Handbook on the Management of Violent Extremist Prisoners and the Prevention of Radicalization to Violence in Prisons* addresses the manifestation of radicalization to violence and violent extremism in prison settings. It provides practical guidance on the management of violent extremist prisoners, on preventing the progression to violence in prisons and on interventions aimed at disengaging prisoners from violent extremism, facilitating their social reintegration and developing their life skills.

### Approaches and key principles

The present guide approaches the topic at hand from different perspectives, with a view to presenting contextually appropriate, effective and safe measures for sport and prevention of violent extremism interventions and programming. Those perspectives include the following:

- Safety and contextual awareness, which seeks to strengthen protective environments for youth, coaches, volunteers, administrators and policymakers and reduce their risk factors for abuse, stigmatization, exploitation and violence, thereby safeguarding participants and adhering to the “do no harm” principle
- Youth empowerment, which identifies and encourages the use of collective and individual youth assets and potential
- Sport as a tool for development and peace, which stresses the role that sport can play in providing an efficient, flexible and cost-effective way of promoting peace, education and development across societies
- The rule of law and human rights, which acknowledges that all youth, regardless of age, gender, ability, religion, ethnicity or ideological or political views, are endowed with rights by virtue of their humanity and deserve to have those rights affirmed and protected
- Gender equality and women’s empowerment, which aims to ensure equal opportunities that take into account the contrasting and comparable experiences of young people of different genders in relation to the risk of exposure to violent extremism

The guide also provides value by promoting meaningful and effective benefits for youth, local actors and communities affected by programming on the prevention of violent extremism. The considerations set out below summarize the key principles underlying all recommendations made in the guide.

### ***Adherence to fundamental human rights, recognizing the rights of children and youth, international standards associated with the prevention of violent extremism, and good sport practice***

Any efforts to utilize sport for the prevention of violent extremism must serve to promote tolerance, pluralism and respect for human rights and equality and must apply the “do no harm” principle, including by looking at the broader context in which activities take place and by mitigating potential negative effects and additional risks to which people may be exposed. This is especially important when working with marginalized individuals and communities in volatile, developing or low socioeconomic environments and/or facing social exclusion. Special consideration must be given to the recruitment of

children and the contextual factors that tend to make them more vulnerable to recruitment and exploitation by violent extremist groups. The principles of good sport practice set out in the present guide are informed by the need to protect children and youth by adhering to the principles enshrined in the Convention on the Rights of the Child and the Optional Protocol thereto on the involvement of children in armed conflict.<sup>4</sup> Equally relevant is the protection of the right to hold an opinion and to have or adopt a religion or belief of one's choice.

Sport can be a powerful tool and an apolitical mechanism for recognizing and challenging beliefs or behaviours that threaten human rights or feed manifestations of discrimination, prejudice or violence that translate into restrictions of personal freedom. All sport and prevention of violent extremism programmes need to adhere to fundamental rights and incorporate them to influence codes of practice and project cultures and philosophies. This includes a commitment by organizations and staff to adopt specific strategic mechanisms for safeguarding children's rights and to ensure inclusivity and gender equality in projects.

### *Need for meaningful engagement of participants and local communities*

Vulnerability to violent extremism and extremist recruitment remains unchanged when the relevance of sport to learning is unclear, when aims are ambiguous and when participants are not meaningfully engaged and empowered to influence change within a project. The present guide encourages co-creation and participatory approaches to build and explicate the relevance and impact of sport and prevention of violent extremism programmes. Meaningful consultation with and participation of communities targeted by such interventions are essential to ensuring their relevance and effectiveness. The design and content of sport-based initiatives and programmes in this field must ensure that proposed interventions are conducted in close cooperation with local experts, stakeholders and community leaders in order to encourage engagement and wider impact, and they must be linked as much as possible to other, potentially broader efforts to prevent violent extremism that are implemented in the target community.

### *Importance of defining and differentiating violent extremism and youth*

The present guide reiterates that the root causes and factors underlying and affecting violent extremism are contextual and culturally situated. Therefore, definitions of violent extremism cannot and should not be applied without a sound knowledge and understanding of local contextual factors. It should also be remembered that not all radicalization is negative or a precursor to violent extremism. Only a very small number of young people who hold extreme beliefs become violent,<sup>5</sup> and it is therefore important to differentiate between thought and action. The main focus of activities in countering and preventing violent extremism is on disengagement from violence (actions) rather than thought processes (deradicalization). This is critically important when working with youth populations who are often internally conflicted, are still developing their own sense of identity and are impressionable to both negative and positive influences. Within the scope of the present guide, there are a number of contested or context-bound terms, such as youth, violent extremism and to a certain extent the meaning and place of sport as an entity that is culturally and contextually understood. In the guide, sport and sport-based learning are promoted as a tool for prevention and early interventions aimed at disrupting the radicalization and recruitment processes of violent extremism.

<sup>4</sup>UNODC, *Handbook on Children Recruited and Exploited by Terrorist and Violent Extremist Groups: The Role of the Justice System* (Vienna, 2017), pp. 22–25.

<sup>5</sup>UNODC, *Handbook on the Management of Violent Extremist Prisoners*, p. 135.

### *Importance of defining and differentiating “sport plus” and “plus sport” interventions*

In the present guide, two distinct categories of sport-based interventions are acknowledged: “sport plus” and “plus sport”.<sup>6</sup> “Sport plus” initiatives are primarily focused on sport skills and increasing sport participation, and they usually involve competitive sport structures. Any potential health, social, psychological and behavioural benefits are seen as a by-product of participation. Essentially, sport comes first, and specific development activities and learning are delivered around sport participation. On the other hand, “plus sport” projects are interventions that use sport as a “hook” for participants, with a primary focus on non-sport aims and objectives. In these projects, theories of change and action are focused on social benefits, such as health and well-being or conflict management, and they prioritize outcomes in the form of behaviour changes, capacity-building and social, cultural and economic impact. Sport is used as a tool for creating learning opportunities and gaining access to often marginalized or at-risk populations. The present guide includes opportunities, challenges and implementation strategies for both frameworks. As a starting point, the approach taken by organizations, projects and individuals will influence a project’s theory of change, aims, objectives and programme design. In the specific context of preventing violent extremism, “plus sport” organizations focus primarily on achieving prevention outcomes, and sport is one of many tools used to that end. For “sport plus” organizations, on the other hand, the main objective is to develop interest and skills in sport, although their mission statements, codes of conduct and additional activities may also promote its potential to support prevention outcomes.

### *Importance of inter-agency and multi-agency approaches, building partnerships, collaboration and stakeholder engagement*

In the words of former Secretary-General Kofi Annan, “People in every nation love sport. Its values are universal. It is a global language, capable of bridging social, cultural and religious divides. It can be a powerful tool for fostering understanding, tolerance and peace. I believe sport contributes to personal development and growth. It teaches us teamwork and fair play. It builds self-esteem and opens doors to new opportunities. This, in turn, can contribute to the well-being of whole communities and countries.”<sup>7</sup> Such values and the global popularity of sport have enabled the sport for development and peace sector to bring together Member States, national and international policymakers, sporting bodies, civil society movements, athletes and public and private funders to drive the vision and aims of achieving the Sustainable Development Goals. Sport lends itself well to building partnerships and forming collaborations, and this has been a particular strength of the sport for development and peace movement.<sup>8</sup> In the context of preventing violent extremism, there are various sensitive contextual and cultural factors and risks that may require specialized knowledge or engagement with experts. Building partnerships and networks between those experts and the movement will facilitate the acquisition of such expertise and opportunities for capacity-building.

### *Specific challenges posed by the threat of violent extremism and at-risk youth*

While both violent extremists and other criminals may employ violence to attain specific goals, “most violent extremists are motivated by ideological, religious, or political gain, and believe that they are

<sup>6</sup> Fred Coalter, *A Wider Social Role for Sport: Who’s Keeping the Score?* (Abingdon, Oxon, United Kingdom, Routledge, 2007).

<sup>7</sup> United Nations, “Secretary-General’s remarks at media lunch on the impact of sports in the world”, 25 January 2006.

<sup>8</sup> Bruce Kidd, “A new social movement: sport for development and peace”, *Sport in Society*, vol. 11, No. 4 (June 2008), pp. 370–380.

fighting for a cause”<sup>9</sup> This can have a significant impact on the way initiatives related to sport and preventing violent extremism are received within communities, implemented by facilitators and experienced by youth participants. Sport and prevention of violent extremism programmes may entail significant complexities and risks in defining and collaborating with a specific target population, including unpredictable emotional and behavioural responses during such activities, the potential for violence provoked through sport, an increased risk of feeding labelling stigmas and the possibility of programme exploitation for recruitment purposes. In this context, safeguarding both facilitators and participants is an essential element of programming. The present guide provides key information on managing risk and collaborating with individuals and local communities to increase capacity and local ownership of projects.

## STRUCTURE OF THE GUIDE

In order for sport to be relevant in the context of preventing violent extremism, it is important that programmes and activities build on the unique ability of sport to actively and meaningfully engage youth who are often found to be hard to reach through more formal interventions. Sport-based programmes can help to divert youth away from crime and delinquency or violent behaviour and in turn offer a pathway to further interventions and services. Sport can be embedded in specific interventions to address risk factors for crime, including violent extremism, and to achieve specific social objectives and positive personal development outcomes.<sup>10</sup> Cooperating with youth professionals and applying participatory pedagogical methods can create opportunities for youth to enhance prosocial behaviours and attitudes and life skills that make them resilient to ideological exploitation and the lure of violence and crime.

With this in mind, the guidance offered in the present publication is structured around five focus areas (referred to as “zones”) that specifically address different aspects of sport for the prevention of violent extremism and that are informed by the key principles outlined above.

**Figure 1. Five zones for sport and the prevention of violent extremism**



<sup>9</sup>UNODC, *Handbook on the Management of Violent Extremist Prisoners*.

<sup>10</sup>Report of the Secretariat on the outcome of the expert group meeting on integrating sport into youth crime prevention and criminal justice strategies (A/CONF.234/14).

The introduction contains information on the scope of the guide and places it in the context of the work of UNODC on preventing violence and crime, including the prevention of violent extremism, while underlining the importance of an inclusive, human rights-based, participatory and multi-agency approach in applying sport as a tool for the prevention of violent extremism.

Chapter 1 draws on evidence and recent research on the root causes of violent extremism and the push and pull factors for the radicalization and recruitment of young people. That chapter also includes an explanation of how sport and sport-based programming can be utilized to amplify efforts and priorities set in the global framework and in comprehensive regional, national and local approaches to preventing violent extremism.

Chapter 2 focuses on five key prevention outcomes (“zones”) that can be achieved through sports, with a view to collective disengagement and social transformation to counter the threat of violent extremism (see figure 1).

Chapter 3 addresses key programming elements for sport and the prevention of violent extremism, drawing attention to and providing guidance on, among other things, a human rights approach, applying a gender perspective and safeguarding children’s rights and the rights of other vulnerable participants.

Chapter 4 provides guidance on developing a monitoring and evaluation framework for sport and prevention of violent extremism programmes, including the development of a theory of change and measurement indicators on the basis of the five zones of intervention.

Lastly, chapter 5 provides a summary of practical guidance and recommendations for policymakers and practitioners, including programme managers and facilitators, when designing and implementing sport for prevention of violent extremism programmes.



## Chapter 1.

Understanding  
the prevention of  
violent extremism

## 1.1 Identifying root causes

Identifying the root causes of violent extremism is a complex process that requires an appreciation of the social, cultural and contextual nuances associated with a rapidly evolving globalized landscape.<sup>11</sup> Violent extremism is multifaceted, fuelled by multiple virtual and interconnected spaces and related to specific historical, political and geopolitical, economic and social conditions within which indoctrination and radical ideologies can emerge.<sup>12</sup> The root causes of violent extremism may also include the acceptance and normalization of social inequalities, intolerance, mental health issues and disconnected communities and groups. It is, however, important to recognize that the drivers of violent extremism go beyond superfluous notions of disenfranchised or disengaged individuals, especially in the context of youth populations.

Violent extremism is inspired by a larger variety of ideologies than once assumed, thus exacerbating the challenges for government institutions and localized prevention programming. The challenges are in part due to the evolving motivations of individuals and groups, sources of financing, types of violence and choices of targets. Accordingly, violent extremism and terrorism have taken on new forms, capacities and capabilities, with extremist groups occupying territories and finding strategies for income generation.<sup>13</sup> Violent extremist groups are also capitalizing on advances in technology to find new ways of engaging with disaffected youth, taking advantage of social networking sites, online video channels and radical chat rooms.<sup>14</sup> The capacity for extremist groups and individual actors to spread propaganda widely, more rapidly and more effectively than Governments are able to spread counter-messages against them is a significant challenge for strategic preventive measures.<sup>15</sup>

Young people in particular may be drawn to radical and violent movements through purposeful manipulation techniques and various socialization processes, often facilitated by personal, emotional or psychological factors, such as alienation, uncertainty, a search for identity and respect and a desire for revenge for previous mistreatment, and that is often manifested through virtual communities and digital platforms that target youth populations.<sup>16</sup> It is therefore important to recognize the complexity of the operating environment in which prevention programmes are required to safely deliver both sport and non-sport activities.

Preventing people from joining violent extremist groups thus requires contextual and localized information and reflection on the sociocultural fabric of societies and groups at risk of violent extremism. With an emphasis on prevention, policymakers and practitioners need to identify culturally informed root causes, risks and indicators of the drivers of violent extremism in order to consider good practices and safe, appropriate intervention measures.

## 1.2 Relevant United Nations frameworks

Recognizing the root causes of extremism and addressing violent behaviours as a product of radical and extreme beliefs and ideologies is an ongoing concern and priority for the United Nations and its

<sup>11</sup>Richard Giulianotti and Roland Robertson, "Glocalization", in *The Wiley-Blackwell Encyclopedia of Globalization*, George Ritzer, ed. (Malden, Massachusetts, United States, Wiley-Blackwell Publishing, 2012).

<sup>12</sup>UNDP, "Preventing violent extremism through promoting inclusive development, tolerance and respect for diversity: at development response to addressing radicalization and violent extremism" (Oslo, 2016).

<sup>13</sup>UNODC, *Handbook on the Management of Violent Extremist Prisoners*.

<sup>14</sup>European Commission, "Preventing radicalisation to terrorism and violent extremism: strengthening the EU's response", document COM/2013/0941 final.

<sup>15</sup>UNODC, *The Use of the Internet for Terrorist Purposes* (Vienna, 2012).

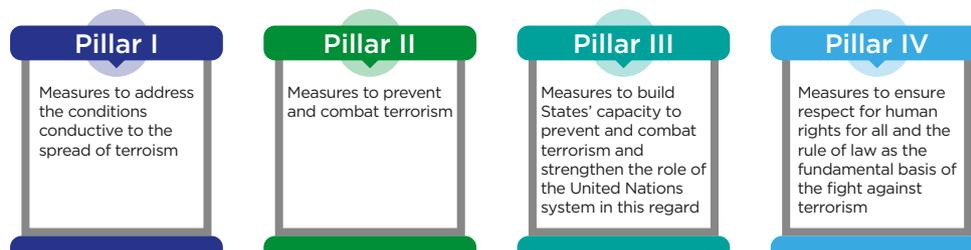
<sup>16</sup>UNDP, "Preventing violent extremism through promoting inclusive development, tolerance and respect for diversity".

Member States. Addressing the evolving patterns of violent extremism, including the varying forms of and strategic measures used in violence and terrorism, as well as their key drivers and recruitment strategies, has increasingly triggered cooperation and collaboration between United Nations entities and Member States.

The “All of United Nations” approach has enabled significant steps to be made towards establishing a comprehensive approach incorporating policy coherence, guidance and prevention action planning.<sup>17</sup> Educational interventions, cultural and contextual appropriateness, youth-focused programming and policy guidance have framed much of the United Nations response to violent extremism.<sup>18</sup>

The main reference framework for countering and preventing violent extremism is the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy, adopted by the General Assembly in its resolution 60/288, in which it is recognized that acts of terrorism cannot be prevented through repressive and security measures alone, and that it is of paramount importance to address the conditions conducive to the spread of terrorism. The Strategy addresses prevention as an important component of United Nations guidance for collaborating entities, partners and Member States. To that end, the first pillar of the Strategy is dedicated to measures addressing conditions that are conducive to the spread of terrorism. According to the Strategy, such conditions include prolonged unresolved conflicts, dehumanization of victims of terrorism in all its forms and manifestations, lack of the rule of law, violations of human rights, ethnic, national and religious discrimination, political exclusion, socioeconomic marginalization and lack of good governance. The General Assembly reviews the Strategy every two years, making it an evolving and dynamic document to support Member States. The 2018 review reaffirmed the prevention of violent extremism as a core principle within the Strategy, as well as the importance of education and the positive contribution of youth to preventing violent extremism.<sup>19</sup> Furthermore, in its resolution 2250 (2015), the Security Council urged States “to consider ways to increase inclusive representation of youth in decision-making at all levels in local, national, regional and international institutions and mechanisms for the prevention and resolution of conflict, including institutions and mechanisms to counter violent extremism”.

**Figure 2. Four pillars of the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy**



Source: Office of Counter-Terrorism, *Reference Guide: Developing National and Regional Action Plans to Prevent Violent Extremism* (September 2018).

<sup>17</sup> Office of Counter-Terrorism, *Reference Guide: Developing National and Regional Action Plans to Prevent Violent Extremism* (September 2018).

<sup>18</sup> UNESCO, “A teacher’s guide on the prevention of violent extremism” (Paris, 2016) and UNESCO, 197 EX/Decision 46 on UNESCO’s role in promoting education as a tool to prevent violent extremism.

<sup>19</sup> United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy Review (General Assembly resolution 72/284).

In 2016, the Secretary-General’s Plan of Action to Prevent Violent Extremism<sup>20</sup> set out a comprehensive approach to the challenge of violent extremism, encompassing systematic preventive measures that directly address the drivers of violent extremism at the local, national, regional and global levels. It stressed that violent extremism undermines common humanity on a global scale and that it is an affront to the purposes and principles of the United Nations. “No country or region is immune from its impacts. ... Violent extremism is a diverse phenomenon, without clear definition. It is neither new nor exclusive to any region, nationality or system of belief.”<sup>21</sup> The Plan of Action refers to several drivers of violent extremism, such as the lack of socioeconomic opportunities, marginalization, intolerance, discrimination, poor governance, violations of human rights and the rule of law, and prolonged and unresolved conflicts. Religious, social and cultural intolerance, when conducive to violence and terrorism, continues to pose a threat to world security, universal human rights and sustainable development, and undermines the core values of the United Nations.<sup>22</sup> “Preventing violent extremism is a commitment and obligation under the principles and values enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations [and] the Universal Declaration of Human Rights”,<sup>23</sup> and therefore interventions and effective and sustainable policymaking and programming in this area must be in line with the obligations of Member States under international law and firmly grounded in respect for human rights, child rights and the rule of law.

**Figure 3. Secretary-General’s Plan of Action to Prevent Violent Extremism: seven priority areas for action**



In focusing on prevention, United Nations agencies and Member States are encouraged to adopt a comprehensive multi-agency approach to engage with the drivers of violent extremism as well as its consequences. The approach involves both the alignment of ongoing humanitarian, development, peacebuilding, security and political interventions with the goals of preventing violent extremism and the implementation of specific prevention programming in targeted contexts. Under this approach, activities

<sup>20</sup>A/70/674.  
<sup>21</sup>Ibid., paras. 1–2.  
<sup>22</sup>Ibid., paras. 1, 2 and 12.  
<sup>23</sup>Ibid., para. 40.

aligned with and those specific to the prevention of violent extremism cover a wide range of areas, with the intention of achieving their objectives in contextually appropriate ways. In this context, sport and sport-based interventions are positioned as key tools to enhance and support Member States’ approaches and measures for interventions specific to the prevention of violent extremism.

The comprehensive Plan of Action paves the way for collective action, partnership-building and collaborative, inter-agency dialogue and guides Member States and partners with new approaches to preventing violent extremism. In order to support and direct the “All of United Nations” approach and the implementation of the Plan of Action, the Secretary-General established a high-level action group on the prevention of violent extremism, which consists of the heads of the 22 agencies, funds and programmes working in this area. The United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Coordination Compact has taken up the task of ensuring a coordinated approach across United Nations entities towards counter-terrorism and preventing violent extremism.<sup>24</sup>

The “All of United Nations” approach feeds into the multiple levels of the policy framework for preventing violent extremism. In recognition of the need for collective action, the framework highlights the need for collaboration and systematic engagement to mobilize action, on the basis of an “all of society” approach and an “all of Government” approach and at the community, national and regional levels. The Secretary-General’s Plan of Action to Prevent Violent Extremism and the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy serve as key points of reference for the development of national and regional action plans and for the design of interventions to prevent violent extremism through sport.

Together with key United Nations partners, including UNODC, the Office of Counter-Terrorism has developed a reference guide to exchange good practices and guidance on the development of national and regional action plans to prevent violent extremism with the support of the Counter-Terrorism Implementation Task Force inter-agency working group on preventing violent extremism. The reference guide suggests overarching, procedural and substantive principles and includes implementation examples that can serve as guidelines for Governments and regional organizations in developing their own effective plans of action to prevent violent extremism. Recognizing that there is no one-size-fits-all model, those guidelines place emphasis on inclusive and comprehensive action plans that address the context-specific drivers of violent extremism based on evidence-based policies.

Office of Counter-Terrorism, Reference Guide: Developing National and Regional Action Plans to Prevent Violent Extremism (September 2018), p. 3.

**Figure 4. Secretary-General’s Plan of Action to Prevent Violent Extremism: global framework for preventing violent extremism**



<sup>24</sup> See [www.un.org/counterterrorism/global-ct-compact](http://www.un.org/counterterrorism/global-ct-compact).

### 1.3 Youth and the prevention of violent extremism

The world today is home to the largest generation of young people in history, with approximately 1.8 billion 10- to 24-year-olds contributing to the global population.<sup>25</sup> While population size alone does not necessarily lead to vulnerability to violent extremism, such figures need to be taken into account when considering violent trends and any threats to global peace and security. This is particularly important when statistics show that at least one in four young people (aged 15–29) is affected by violence or armed conflict in some way.<sup>26</sup> In the context of preventing violent extremism, research has supported a consistent relationship between age and violent extremism for some time, and “engagement in violent extremism seems to increase through the later stages of adolescence and into emerging adulthood”.<sup>27</sup> Scholarship suggests that youth, contextually and locally defined, are most vulnerable because they are relatively independent from the authorities of childhood (i.e., parents), are in the most exploratory phase of their lives and are not yet committed to the projects of adulthood.<sup>28</sup> Although the crucial role that youth can play in promoting peace, security and peacebuilding is broadly recognized and acknowledged, negative stereotypes and stigmatization that associate young people with violence, including violent extremism, may ignore the fact that most young people are not involved in violence,<sup>29</sup> but many are in fact positively contributing to peacebuilding and development efforts. The engagement and participation of youth in crime prevention efforts is fundamental. “Connected to each other like never before, young people want to and already contribute to the resilience of their communities, proposing innovative solutions, driving social progress and inspiring political change, in urban as well as rural contexts.”<sup>30</sup>

#### Why are youth at risk?

Young people often find themselves in a precarious socioeconomic position, perceived as both perpetrators and victims of political violence, social unrest and violent extremism.<sup>31</sup> Violent extremism disproportionately affects young people, and this is highlighted by their superior numbers within the critical core of paramilitary and terrorist groups.<sup>32</sup> The surge in radicalization and violent extremism in the past 15 years has been associated in part with the political and socioeconomic disaffection of young men, and increasingly young women, who join terrorist groups such as Boko Haram, Al-Shabaab and Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant.<sup>33</sup> This trend is also consistent with the far-right, neo-fascist and white separatist movements gaining traction across Europe. Children and youth are particularly vulnerable, as they are considered to be more easily coerced, controlled and indoctrinated and are viewed

<sup>25</sup>United Nations Youth Strategy, “Youth 2030: working with and for young people” (2018).

<sup>26</sup>UNESCO, “Prevention of violent extremism through youth empowerment in Jordan, Libya, Morocco and Tunisia”. Available at <https://en.unesco.org/>.

<sup>27</sup>Christoffer Carlsson and others, “A life-course analysis of engagement in violent extremist groups”, *British Journal of Criminology*, vol. 60, No. 1 (January 2020), pp. 74–92.

<sup>28</sup>Ibid.

<sup>29</sup>Graeme Simpson, *The Missing Peace: Independent Progress Study on Youth, Peace and Security* (New York, United Nations Population Fund and Peacebuilding Support Office, 2018).

<sup>30</sup>United Nations Youth Strategy, “Youth 2030”, p. 4.

<sup>31</sup>Draft report of the expert group meeting “Youth, peace and security: social issues and social policies”, held in Rome on 30 and 31 October 2017.

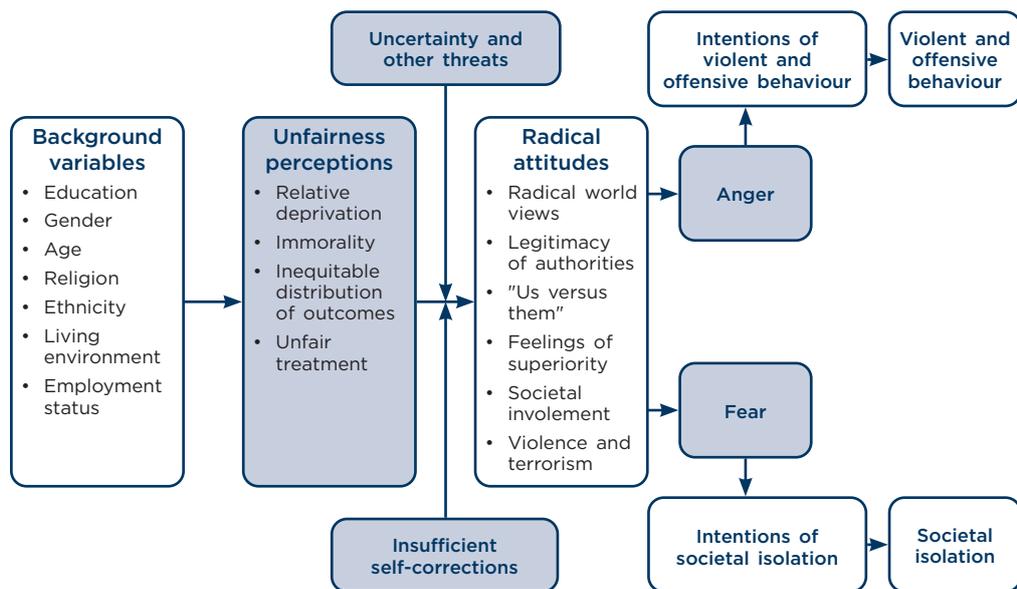
<sup>32</sup>UNDP, “Preventing violent extremism through promoting inclusive development, tolerance and respect for diversity: a development response to addressing radicalization and violent extremism” (New York, 2016), p. 30.

<sup>33</sup>Draft report of the expert group meeting “Youth, peace and security: social issues and social policies”.

as cheap, effective and obedient fighters.<sup>34</sup> They are also less likely than adults to fully comprehend the long-term consequences of risk-taking behaviour.<sup>35</sup>

Another key concept that may cause risk to youth in the context of violent extremism is the perception that certain things in life are unfair, such as how their group is being treated or how certain moral rules are violated. The social psychology of terrorism and radical behaviour<sup>36</sup> requires an appreciation of how strong emotional reactions, such as anger, are exacerbated when youth feel uncertain about themselves or feel threatened in society. This is particularly significant when children and youth are insufficiently experienced, prepared or skilled to control their emotional responses.<sup>37</sup> The notion of fairness and justice is often important to youth as they continue to build their identity and position in society. Indicators and psychosocial variables pertaining to the perceptions, attitudes and behaviour in youth that lead to radicalization are identified in the conceptual framework developed by Van den Bos (see figure 5) and address the factors that increase the vulnerability of at-risk youth to violent extremism. The model highlights important conceptual principles for youth and the prevention of violent extremism as they relate to the uncertainty and perceptions of unfairness that lead to radical attitudes and violent behaviours.

**Figure 5. Conceptual framework on uncertainty and unfairness perceptions**



Source: Kees van den Bos, *Why People Radicalize: How Unfairness Judgments Are Used to Fuel Radical Beliefs, Extremist Behaviors, and Terrorism* (New York, Oxford University Press, 2018).

<sup>34</sup>Yvonne Kemper, "Youth in war-to-peace transitions: approaches of international organizations – executive summary and introduction", in *Work with Youth in Divided and Contested Societies*, Doug Magnuson and Michael Baizerman, eds. (Rotterdam, Netherlands, Sense Publishers, 2007).

<sup>35</sup>UNODC, *Justice for Children in the Context of Counter-Terrorism: A Training Manual* (Vienna, 2019).

<sup>36</sup>Van den Bos, *Why People Radicalize: How Unfairness Judgments Are Used to Fuel Radical Beliefs, Extremist Behaviors, and Terrorism* (New York, Oxford University Press, 2018).

<sup>37</sup>Ibid.

## Youth, mental health and psychological well-being in the context of violent extremism

Research suggests that mental illness does not determine who will engage in violent extremism; rather, it culminates in greater risk of involvement.<sup>38</sup> However, the relationship with mental health concerns and mental health disorders cannot be ignored in multi-agency and coordinated interventions to prevent violent extremism.<sup>39</sup> This is especially significant in the context of youth and the prevention of violent extremism in the light of recent warnings issued by the World Health Organization: “Worldwide 10–20% of children and adolescents experience mental disorders. Half of all mental illnesses begin by the age of 14 and three-quarters by mid-20s.”<sup>40</sup> The findings of a literature review published in 2018 point to the following key elements and relationship between mental health and violent extremism:<sup>41</sup>

### Trauma

- Higher exposure to trauma leads to an increased risk of developing post-traumatic stress disorder, which is associated with increased anger and hostility, which in turn increases the likelihood of supporting violent extremism.
- Traumatic experiences during childhood can lead to a greater desire to construct individual identities and seek acknowledgement by others during youthhood, which can be exploited by extremist groups.

### Depression

- Joining violent extremist groups can counteract the manifestations of depression as it gives a sense of belonging.

### Mental health and lone-actor extremists

- Research suggests a strong link between mental health disorders and lone-actor violent extremists. For example, in a 2013 study, a statistically significantly higher frequency of mental illnesses was observed in “lone wolf” far-right extremists compared with other far-right extremists.<sup>42</sup>
- However, it is acknowledged by researchers that lone-actor motivation is embedded in an ideological cause and developed over time alongside a number of other risk factors, and that mental disorders are not the driving force.

It is important to apply a balanced and considered approach to mental health and its influence on violent extremism. No specific mental health disorder is proven to be a predictor of terrorist and violent extremist involvement.

## Push and pull factors of violent extremism

Beyond psychosocial factors and factors relating to well-being, which can expose and incite behaviours and emotional responses conducive to violent extremist exploitation and involvement, there are other social, economic, cultural and contextual contributing factors that may affect or influence youth choices. In order to prevent the radicalization of youth that may lead to violent extremism and their

<sup>38</sup>Dylan O’Driscoll, “Violent extremism and mental health disorders”, Knowledge, Evidence and Learning for Development (K4D) Helpdesk Report (Brighton, United Kingdom, Institute of Development Studies, 2018).

<sup>39</sup>Valerie De Marinis and Eolene Boyd-MacMillan, “A mental health approach to understanding violent extremism”, Ex Post Paper, RAN Policy and Practice (Paris, Radicalization Awareness Network, 2019).

<sup>40</sup>WHO, Maternal and child mental health, “Child and adolescent mental health”. Available at [www.who.int/mental\\_health/maternal-child/child\\_adolescent/en/](http://www.who.int/mental_health/maternal-child/child_adolescent/en/).

<sup>41</sup>O’Driscoll, “Violent extremism and mental health disorders”.

<sup>42</sup>Jeff Gruenewald, Steven Chermak and Joshua D. Freilich, “Distinguishing ‘loner’ attacks from other domestic extremist violence: a comparison of far-right homicide incident and offender characteristics”, *Criminology and Public Policy*, vol. 12, No. 1 (February 2013), pp. 65–91.

recruitment and exploitation by violent extremist and terrorist groups, it is essential to understand the complex overall push and pull factors conducive to that process. Some of the push and pull factors that influence recruitment and engagement with violent extremism are identified in table 1.

**Table 1. Push and pull factors in violent extremism recruitment**

Push factors	Pull factors
Exposure to poverty, marginalization and discrimination create weakened social structures that make recruitment easier.	Exposure to propaganda and indoctrination make group membership attractive. Terrorist and violent groups exploit children to boost their visibility and normalize violence.
A lack of protection and social or family support systems makes children and young people vulnerable to recruitment. Some families may also be coerced or coerce their children into joining such groups.	Revenge through indirect identification with victims is achieved through the dissemination of images and messages about the “suffering” caused by the enemy.
Loss of identity and sense of belonging, and loneliness. <sup>a</sup>	Violent extremist groups alleviate loneliness through a shared sense of purpose; acts of violent extremism may also occur as a result of mental stress build-up (e.g., shootings in North America attributed to mental health issues). <sup>b</sup>
Lack of a feeling of autonomy and self-identity may lead young people on a search for answers within groups that appear to have a sense of purpose.	Previous offences in the justice system make recruitment easier and may initiate a progression for children and young people.
Frustration with injustice, corruption and human rights abuses by law enforcement and State institutions	Violent extremist groups may claim to be fighting for justice and better lives.
Lack of opportunities for education and employment may lead children and young people to seek those opportunities in groups.	Material inducements offered to recruits make it easier to justify association with such groups.
Community expectations: There are circumstances in which either violent extremist groups or radical political groups are perceived as a form of community defence against a threat. In such circumstances, family and communities may expect youth to join the ranks of such groups.	Youth are attractive recruits because of their low economic expectations and advantages. Youth with low economic mobility and capacity may value even minimal economic gains.
Girls may be induced to “fall in love” with a member of a group through social media.	Girls may seek to escape from structural violence or family pressure at home by marrying terrorist fighters.

Sources: Adapted from UNDP, “Preventing violent extremism through promoting inclusive development, tolerance and respect for diversity: a development response to addressing radicalization and violent extremism” (Oslo, 2016); UNDP, Regional Bureau for Africa, *Journey to Extremism in Africa: Drivers, Incentives and the Tipping Point for Recruitment* (New York, 2017); and UNODC, *Handbook on Children Recruited and Exploited by Terrorist and Violent Extremist Groups: The Role of the Justice System*.

<sup>a</sup>Umair Asif, “‘Sport for development and peace’ and violent extremism: the role of sports for development and peace programs to prevent violent extremism among youth in Pakistan”, dissertation, Seoul National University, 2018.

<sup>b</sup>National Council for Behavioral Health, *Mass Violence in America: Causes, Impacts and Solutions* (Washington, D.C., August 2019).

Prior analyses, defining the prevention of violent extremism in context and understanding national and local drivers of violent extremism are essential in developing effective interventions to prevent violent extremism through sport.

### Recognizing young people as positive agents of change

While young people may be more vulnerable to violent extremism, great value should be placed on recognizing them as positive agents of change with the capacity to participate meaningfully as valued community members. This can be achieved by pursuing a strength-based model of development which focuses on strengthening assets as opposed to remedying deficits. A growing body of literature has called for positive youth development and for youth to play a more central role in the social transformation of societies.<sup>43</sup> Therefore, the conceptual framing of youth interventions must not only address the protection and preventive skills and needs of youth, but also empower them to exercise their capabilities and capacities for adopting roles within the process. The United Nations recognizes the central role that youth play in the context and process of preventing violent extremism:<sup>44</sup> “Young people are already at the heart of the phenomenon, whether as targets for recruitment, victims of violence, exclusion and repression, or as peacebuilders and activists at the forefront of efforts to prevent violent extremism.”<sup>45</sup> The United Nations has responded by placing emphasis on partnership-building with youth for meaningful development and engagement.

*“We must build on the work that has been done with the support of Member States, the Youth Envoy and civil society. But this cannot be an initiative by old people discussing the younger generation. The United Nations must empower young people, increase their participation in society and their access to education, training and jobs.”*

—Secretary-General António Guterres

To effectively prevent violent extremism and strengthen social cohesion, the provision of adequate support for youth from different backgrounds is considered vital.<sup>46</sup> Adopted at the Thirteenth United Nations Congress on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice, the Doha Declaration contains commitments of Member States relating to the prevention of crime, including violent extremism, and stresses the fundamental role of youth participation in crime prevention efforts.<sup>47</sup> The importance and positive contribution of youth in efforts to counter terrorism and to prevent violent extremism which can be conducive to terrorism, as well as for the promotion of peace and security, was also underlined in General Assembly resolution 72/284 on the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy Review. In support of the commitments made in the Doha

Declaration, the Secretary-General’s Plan of Action to Prevent Violent Extremism calls for a number of measures aimed at empowering youth in building cultures of tolerance and resilience against violent extremism. This is in addition to the United Nations Youth Strategy, which prioritizes participation, engagement, advocacy and amplifying youth voices for the promotion of peace.

Affirming this recognition and approach, the Youth Strategy reads: “With this large and increasing number of young people across the globe, it is abundantly clear that it is only by engaging and working with them, supporting them in standing up for their rights and creating the conditions allowing them to progress and play an active role, that the international community will be able to achieve peace, security, justice, climate resilience and sustainable development for all.”<sup>48</sup> In addition, the World Programme of

<sup>43</sup>Stephanie Schwartz, *Youth and Post-Conflict Reconstruction: Agents of Change* (Washington, D.C., Institute of Peace Press, 2010).

<sup>44</sup>For example, Security Council resolution 2250 (2015) on youth, peace and security.

<sup>45</sup>UNDP, *Frontlines: Young People at the Heart of Preventing and Responding to Violent Extremism*, UNDP Global Report (June 2018), p. 16.

<sup>46</sup>Security Council resolution 2250 (2015).

<sup>47</sup>General Assembly resolution 70/174, annex.

<sup>48</sup>United Nations Youth Strategy, “Youth 2030”, p. 4 (see footnote 25).

Action for Youth provides a policy framework for Member States to promote fundamental freedoms and human rights for young people. In line with that framework, and in the context of preventing violent extremism, working with children and youth requires special attention. For practitioners, this means that great care should be taken to avoid stigmatizing language and assumptions that may single out certain participants.

## 1.4 Sport in the context of preventing violent extremism

Crime prevention, including the prevention of violent extremism, requires the promotion of inclusion and social cohesion, and sport can play a unique role in that respect by generating social capital and helping to mobilize communities and promote social inclusion and solidarity.<sup>49</sup> Sport can act as a tool to overcome conflict and social tension and “promote peace, tolerance and understanding by bringing people together across boundaries, cultures and religions”.<sup>50</sup> Sport has long been considered valuable for fostering communication and building bridges between communities in conflict,<sup>51</sup> and it is believed to have special features and attributes that can contribute to achieving non-sport goals, including inclusion and cohesion. Those features of sport include the following:

- Transcending national, cultural, social, economic and political boundaries as a result of its universal popularity
- Serving as an effective communication tool thanks to its capacity as a powerful global communications platform
- Connecting youth and widening social networks, as sport is an inherently social process that brings together players, teams, coaches, volunteers and spectators
- Empowering, motivating and inspiring people with its natural ability to draw on, develop and showcase individual strengths and capacities<sup>52</sup>

“Sports (...) and physical activity have the power to change perceptions, prejudices and behaviours, as well as to inspire people, break down racial and political barriers, combat discrimination and defuse conflict”

General Assembly Resolution, A/RES/73/24, 2018 on “Sport as an enabler of sustainable development”.

Sport fosters important human values and can be used as a tool to promote respect for rules and for others, teamwork, a sense of belonging and community, tolerance, diversity, hospitality and empathy. In this context, sport can serve as an effective platform to address the ideologies and root causes of violent extremism<sup>53</sup> by strategically providing a tool to create ideal conditions for learning, social participation and the meaningful and positive engagement of youth within communities. At the same time, it has to be clear that sport and sport-based programmes for the prevention of violence and crime, including violent extremism, can be effective only when applied as part of a more holistic and comprehensive set of knowledge-based initiatives that target the various relevant risk factors. It is also important to give due consideration to the limitations of sport interventions in the context of

<sup>49</sup> Report of the Secretariat on the outcome of the expert group meeting on integrating sport into youth crime prevention and criminal justice strategies (A/CONF.234/14).

<sup>50</sup> Ingrid Beutler, ed., *Sport for a Better World: Report of the International Year of Sport and Physical Education, 2005* (Geneva, United Nations Office of Sport for Development and Peace, 2005), p. 80.

<sup>51</sup> Richard Giulianotti, “The sport, development and peace sector: a model of four social policy domains”, *Journal of Social Policy*, vol. 40, No. 4 (October 2011), pp. 757–776.

<sup>52</sup> Right to Play, “What is sport for development and peace?” (n.p., n.d.).

<sup>53</sup> Hedayah and Global Centre on Cooperative Security, “Thinking outside the box: exploring the critical roles of sports, arts, and culture in preventing violent extremism”, Policy Brief (February 2015).

preventing violent extremism. It is critical to remember that sport does not automatically lead to positive outcomes and needs to be supported by certain conditions and programme elements to increase the likelihood of positive results. More information can be found in the chapters that follow.

A good example of how sport has been used in the context of preventing violent extremism is drawn from the findings of an evaluation of the More than a Game programme, a sport-focused youth mentoring initiative in Melbourne, Australia. The project was aimed at developing a community-based resilience model using team sports to address issues of identity, belonging and cultural isolation among young Muslim men in order to counter violent extremism. While the project findings are directly relevant to the domain of preventing violent extremism, they also contribute to a growing body of literature on the complex yet significant relationship between team-based sport, cross-cultural engagement, the development of social resilience and inclusion, and community-building.<sup>54</sup>

*“Football is the one universal language that evaporates language, cultural and religious barriers the world over ... Role models from the world of football speak volumes using the power of sport. Seeing their favourite players saying ‘we need to foster change’ provides greater examples and shows unity for our future generations; ‘get out on the field and kick a ball’ is a key way to speak to young people.”*

—Kashif Siddiqi, Football for Peace co-founder

The findings highlight that sport, in particular team sport, offers an opportunity for youth to develop soft skills and life skills that foster cooperation and sportsmanship and promote respectful competition and experiences to manage conflict.<sup>55</sup>

The development of soft skills through sport is also a significant outcome that aligns with the overarching objectives of primary prevention programmes. This form of sport-based development in specific contexts relating to the prevention of violent extremism is discussed in the UNODC *Handbook on the Management of Violent Extremist Prisoners and the Prevention of Radicalization to Violence in Prisons*. Sport is positioned as an important positive intervention in prisons, as it fosters teamwork and social and leadership skills, promotes goal-setting and instils a sense of identity and belonging.

### Relevant United Nations frameworks on sport

Within the United Nations system, sport is considered an important enabler of sustainable development that builds capacity and creates opportunities for collaboration. The notion of participation is central to the concept of sport for development, and it is a fundamental characteristic of the alignment of sport with key development, peacekeeping and education goals. The United Nations has been committed to leveraging sport in its global development agenda to enhance and promote effective partnerships for the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals.<sup>56</sup> The use of sport as an important enabler of peace and development is also reflected in Security Council resolution 2419 (2018).

The following frameworks and action plans relating to sport are particularly relevant to the context of the present guide and the potential of sport for preventing violent extremism:

- The revised International Charter of Physical Education, Physical Activity and Sport, adopted by the General Conference of UNESCO in 2015, promotes inclusive access to sport for all without any form of discrimination. It sets ethical and quality standards for all actors designing, implementing and evaluating sport programmes and policies.

<sup>54</sup>Amelia Johns, Michele Grossman and Kevin McDonald, “‘More than a game’: the impact of sport-based youth mentoring schemes on developing resilience toward violent extremism”, *Social Inclusion*, vol. 2, No. 2 (August 2014), pp. 57–70.

<sup>55</sup>Hedayah and Global Centre on Cooperative Security, “Thinking outside the box”.

<sup>56</sup>Department of Economic and Social Affairs and Sustainable Development Goals Fund, *The Contribution of Sport to the Achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals: A Toolkit for Action*, Anita Palathingal, ed. (New York, 2018).

- The Kazan Action Plan, adopted at the sixth International Conference of Ministers and Senior Officials Responsible for Physical Education and Sport, held in Kazan, Russian Federation, in July 2017, and acknowledged by the General Assembly in its resolution 73/24, identifies sport as a means of promoting education, health, development and peace and acknowledges its role in promoting tolerance and respect and its contributions to the empowerment of women, young people, individuals and communities, as well as to social inclusion objectives.
- The United Nations Action Plan on Sport for Development and Peace, as updated in 2018,<sup>57</sup> provides a framework of reference for Governments, civil society and the private sector to identify and promote the ways in which sport can contribute to the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals. The Action Plan uses the overarching policy commitments of the Kazan Action Plan as the basis for a strengthened global framework on sport for development and peace, including in relation to realizing the Goals and targets of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.
- The 2019 report of the Secretary-General on policies and programmes involving youth<sup>58</sup> acknowledges the promotion by Member States of young people's well-being through mechanisms such as sports, including work that is focused on sports for groups in vulnerable situations.

In addition, the General Assembly recently adopted two resolutions that are worth mentioning in this context:

- In its resolution 74/170, the Assembly recognized that sports and physical activity have the power to change perceptions, counter prejudices and improve behaviour, as well as to inspire people, break down racial and political barriers, promote gender equality and combat discrimination. The Assembly also encouraged Member States to advance the integration of sport into cross-cutting crime prevention and criminal justice strategies, called upon Member States to strengthen community-based support measures for youth to address risk factors of crime and violence, and encouraged Member States to provide sport and recreational facilities and programmes in that regard.
- In its resolution 74/16 on building a peaceful and better world through sport and the Olympic ideal, the Assembly recognized the potential of sports to “prevent and counter terrorism and violent extremism as and when conducive to terrorism, and its contributions to building resilience against radicalization to violence and terrorist recruitment”.

### What can sport offer in the context of preventing violent extremism?

In recognizing the link between the prevention of violent extremism, youth and the potential of sport, young people can become central actors in future sport-based action plans focused on preventing violent extremism. One issue of special concern is the extent to which any evidence base exists to substantiate the impact of sport in this context,<sup>59</sup> as scholarship in this field has tended to focus on studying why an individual becomes radicalized to violence rather than the impact of sport-based interventions and similar programmes on preventing radicalization that leads to violent extremism.<sup>60</sup>

<sup>57</sup> A/73/325.

<sup>58</sup> A/74/175.

<sup>59</sup> UNODC, *Desk Review on Sport as a Tool for the Prevention of Violent Extremism* (December 2018).

<sup>60</sup> Ibid.

At the same time, it is important not to rely too heavily on sport to solve more deeply rooted social issues, but instead to leverage sport in conjunction with wider efforts to prevent violent extremism. There is evidence suggesting that sport can be an effective tool not only for diverting young people away from crime and violence, but also for strengthening youth resilience.<sup>61</sup> It has also been suggested that sport has the capacity to connect youth to positive adult role models and provide positive development opportunities, as well as to promote the learning and application of life skills.<sup>62</sup> Those findings serve as a reminder of the importance of sport in the process of preventing violent extremism and the critical necessity of recruiting positive adult role models who are sufficiently experienced and trained.

In order to have an impact in the context of prevention, sport-based programmes should be combined with comprehensive, holistic interventions and strategies for preventing violent extremism that also address issues of social and personal development. This requirement connects with key findings from criminological research, which have shown that training in life skills can be effective for early prevention.<sup>63</sup> In this sense, sport enables positive relationship-building with adults and peers and provides an opportunity to develop and practise life skills, thereby increasing resilience among young people and reducing their risk of indoctrination and violent extremism. Furthermore, a significant body of research highlights the social, personal, cultural and broader development potential of sport that can be applied and integrated in diverse and challenging contexts and interventions in this area. The sport-based theory of change used in the present guide (see chap. 4) identifies five key preventive zones through which sport can support primary prevention in these contexts. The focuses of the five zones are as follows:

1. Safe spaces
2. Social inclusion
3. Education
4. Resilience
5. Empowerment

Accordingly, the clear link between the primary preventive role that sport plays for youth in the context of preventing violent extremism is presented in figure 6 and discussed in detail in later chapters of the guide.

In line with the key learning points provided throughout the present chapter, tips for policymakers and facilitators on how sport and prevention of violent extremism initiatives can support youth engagement in primary prevention efforts are listed below.

- **Active participation:** Sport can be a tool for actively engaging youth, and this provides initial opportunities to position at-risk individuals and groups as active participants, and not as passive recipients, in sport interventions and learning.
- **Life skills:** Sport is seen as an ideal strategy to empower youth participants through decision-making and leadership processes in sports activities. One of the key benefits of sport-based interventions is that they can also facilitate trusting relationships between facilitators and youth.

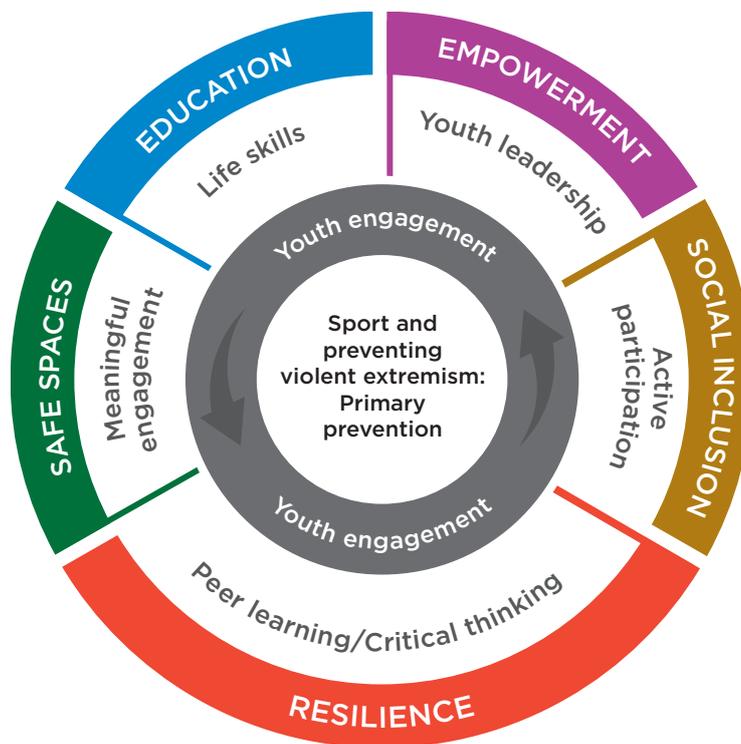
<sup>61</sup>Albert J. Petitpas and others, “A framework for planning youth sport programs that foster psychosocial development”, *Sport Psychologist*, vol. 19, No. 1 (March 2005), pp. 63–80.

<sup>62</sup>Elizabeth Mulholland, *What Sport Can Do: The True Sport Report* (Ottawa, Canadian Centre for Ethics in Sport, 2018). See also Public Safety Canada, “Research highlights 2017-H03-CP: crime prevention – sports-based crime prevention programmes”.

<sup>63</sup>David P. Farrington and Brandon C. Welsh, *Saving Children from a Life of Crime: Early Risk Factors and Effective Interventions* (New York, Oxford University Press, 2007).

- **Meaningful engagement:** Through sport activities, youth can safely communicate and meaningfully engage in contextually appropriate dialogue on attitudes towards violence and extremism. Participants' experiences and reflections can also be captured as part of the programme monitoring and evaluation process (see chap. 4).
- **Youth leadership:** Youth can adopt diverse roles in sport programmes, such as those of coaches, referees, captains, administrators and team managers, and they can use those roles to collaborate and lead in activities related to the prevention of violent extremism.
- **Peer learning and critical thinking:** Sport can establish and support youth mentoring and peer-to-peer learning on the prevention of violent extremism on the sports field. Great care needs to be taken in deciding how best to engage youth and children in a way that is safe and consensual and ensures their right to be heard and participate in such a way that their inherent dignity is respected.

Figure 6. Sport and preventing violent extremism: primary prevention



### Addressing push and pull factors in the prevention of violent extremism through sport

In the light of the connections between the drivers of extreme ideologies and violence, youth and the role of sport, a framework has been constructed that accounts for the social, cultural, political, ideological and historical conditions that are conducive to violent extremism and their relationship to the potential impact of sport.

Building on the overall list of push and pull factors relevant to violent extremism, table 2 contains a non-exhaustive list of factors that can be addressed through well-designed and effectively implemented sport programmes.

**Table 2. Addressing push and pull factors in the prevention of violent extremism through sport**

<b>Push factors (conditions conducive to violent extremism)</b> 	
Lack of socioeconomic opportunities (poverty, unemployment, corruption)	Sport can provide increased opportunities for income generation through capacity-building and networking.
Marginalization and discrimination, including experiences of exclusion and injustice, stigmatization and humiliation	Sport provides an opportunity to foster social inclusion and a sense of belonging in larger groups (teams).
Poor governance, violations of human rights and the rule of law; lack of means to make voices heard or to vent frustrations	Sport allows the voices of young people to be heard through intervention programming, utilizing a collaborative approach within activities and responding flexibly to the needs of participants.
Prolonged and unresolved conflicts	Peer-to-peer dialogue can open the doors to conflict resolution through sport-based activities and programmes that encourage socialization between conflicting groups.
Radicalization processes in prisons leading to the legitimization of violence	Sport provides an alternative to violent behaviour and a means of disengaging from violence.
<b>Pull factors (individual motivations)</b> 	
Individual backgrounds (existential and spiritual search for identity and purpose, utopian world vision, boredom, adolescent crisis, sense of mission and heroism, promise of adventure and power, attraction to violence)	<p>Sport has been proven to break down barriers between ethnicities and individual backgrounds.</p> <p>Sport can provide a sense of purpose, belonging and being heard.</p> <p>Sport sets the scene for excitement, the creation of new heroes from professional athletes, captains and coaches, and recognition for good performance.</p>
Identification with collective grievances and narratives of victimization that provoke powerful emotional reactions, which can be manipulated by charismatic leaders	Sport programmes can help to create safe spaces to challenge negative notions of identity. Critical thinking skills can be enhanced through sport-based initiatives, which helps to build resilience against manipulation and empowers young people to make good decisions.

Distortion and misuse of beliefs, political ideologies and ethnic and cultural differences (“us versus them” mentality)

Sport can create new, positive social groups that safely challenge notions of difference.

Attraction of charismatic leadership and social communities and networks (e.g., a charismatic recruiter providing access to money and power, a sense of belonging to a powerful group or community)

Sport can form new, positive and charismatic leaders, such as youth leaders and captains, and can inspire active youth engagement.





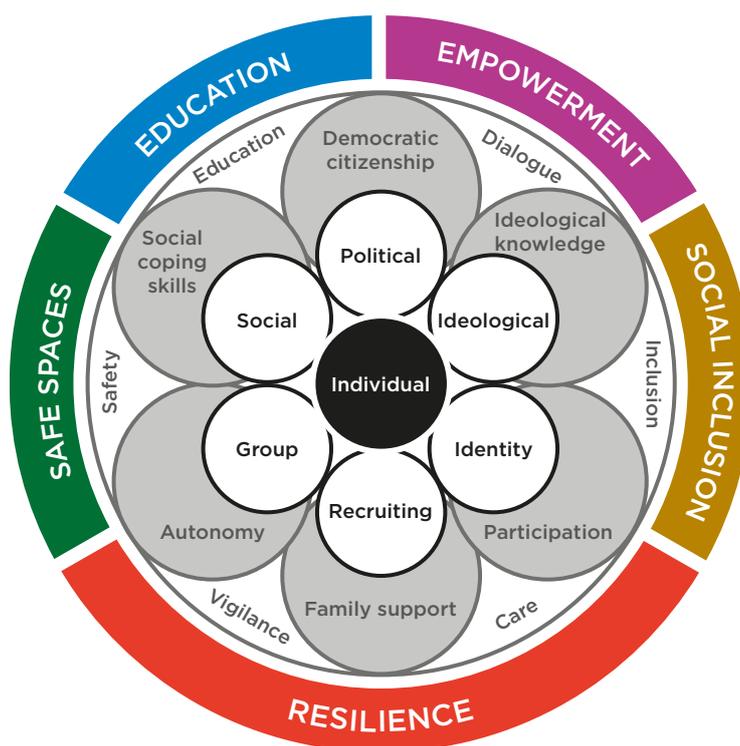
## Chapter 2.

Five zones for  
the prevention of violent  
extremism through sport

Sports can contribute substantially to the prevention of violent extremism and of recruitment to such extremism. However, it is critical to remember that sport does not automatically lead to positive outcomes and needs to be supported by certain conditions and programme elements in order to increase the likelihood of positive results. Cooperating with professional services and applying diverse pedagogical methods can create opportunities for youth to work on the behaviours and life skills that make them resilient to ideological exploitation and the lure of violent extremism. The prevention of violent extremism through sport builds on the unique ability of sport to engage youth actively and meaningfully and to gain access to young people who are often hard to reach through other, more formal interventions.

The theory of change presented in the present guide is constructed through the identification of the drivers of violent extremism, protective factors and the potential of sport to help young people develop key soft skills, to instil psychosocial well-being and to enable educational opportunities for the overall goal of youth empowerment. Recognizing the key principles of constructing a sport-based theory of change, Ranstorp provides a kaleidoscopic overview of risk factors of violent extremism and important protective and promotive factors.<sup>64</sup> Similarly, the kaleidoscope model in figure 7 provides a visual representation of the relationship between sport and the prevention of violent extremism.

Figure 7. Sport and prevention of violent extremism kaleidoscope



At the core of the figure is the individual. Personal risk factors can include victimhood, anger, feelings of humiliation and perceptions of unfairness. The individual is surrounded by the remaining risk factors described by Ranstorp<sup>65</sup> as social factors (e.g., exclusion, social immobility and crime), political factors (e.g., foreign policy, far-right movements and war), ideological/religious factors (e.g., historical

<sup>64</sup> Magnus Ranstorp, "RAN Issue Paper: the root causes of violent extremism", European Commission, 4 January 2016.

<sup>65</sup> Ibid.

missions and Ummah), cultural/identity factors (e.g., lack of belonging, identity crisis and marginalization), recruiting factors (e.g., pull of the extremist milieu, social media and targeting of the vulnerable) and group dynamics (e.g., friendship and kinship, groupthink and social media). In building a theory of change for sport and preventing violent extremism, these risk factors represent core principles for sport to socially develop, educate and enact change for youth populations.

The two intermediate layers of factors in the kaleidoscope contain the main preventive elements. Those factors maintain a distance between the individual and deviance or harm. The layers represent the relationships between sources of risk and areas of opportunity for gaining support, knowledge, positive participation experiences and care. Each element mitigates risk and promotes individual resilience in relation to a particular risk factor (e.g., recruitment mitigated by family support). Overarching and intersecting principles of prevention (i.e., vigilance, care, inclusion, dialogue, education and safety) are shown in the second-to-last layer.

The various dynamic combinations of factors are held together by the final layer, which comprises the five key preventive factors that predict societal resilience and empowerment through sport: (1) safe spaces; (2) social inclusion; (3) education; (4) resilience; and (5) empowerment.

**Zone 1: Safe spaces and social safety.** This zone essentially involves providing youth with institutionalized protection and creating safe spaces for meaningful sport interventions. It also involves mentoring and building relationships with youth and their families, using their own definition of problems and their participation in sport as a starting point. The strategic challenge and objective here is to gradually transform risk into empowerment through the zones for the prevention of violent extremism through sport.

**Zone 2: Social inclusion.** This form of inclusion is fostered by promoting cultures of unity and safety through sport. Extremist recruitment excels at exacerbating societal strife over identities and societal diversity. Messages of celebrating unity in diversity are important and can be achieved through the aims and objectives of sport and social inclusion.

**Zone 3: Education.** In this zone, the didactic and pedagogical challenge lies in engaging with youth participants in a way that relates to their experiences, perceptions and world views. Given its popularity and, at times, its neutrality, sport can serve as an effective tool for connecting to youth culture and subcultures in society. Sport also enables education and learning through curricula, focused sports programming and the development of long-lasting relationships with other institutions in professional networks.

**Zone 4: Resilience.** Being watchful over youth and their influencers and investing in cooperation between communities, citizens and organizations are important functions of sport for prevention of violent extremism programmes. These programmes aim to build the resilience of youth through various skill-building opportunities and, in turn, to increase protection against recruitment and attraction to violent extremism. By being vigilant to the early warning signs and being aware of the protective measures that can be offered, violent extremism experts and sport practitioners contribute to the protective framework for children and young people.<sup>66</sup>

**Zone 5: Empowerment.** Policymakers should consider encouraging and enabling sport practitioners to opt for an approach that ultimately aims to empower youth. Empowerment is seen as a crucial outcome of sport for prevention of violent extremism programmes and should include policies and sport-based practices that give a voice to youth who are considered marginalized and at risk of violent extremism. A key outcome of the empowerment zone is the management of voice by the young people who have concluded the programme.

<sup>66</sup>UNODC, *Prevention of Child Recruitment and Exploitation by Terrorist and Violent Extremist Groups: The Role of the Justice System – A Training Manual* (Vienna, 2019).

The components in a kaleidoscope are not static; they shift and alter constantly. Likewise, the factors in programming for the prevention of violent extremism are not static. The parts combine and dissolve, resulting in different combinations and perspectives, as seen in individual cases in this field. In the light of the five-zone approach, this analogy can be extended, as the kaleidoscope may be viewed as taking the form of a bouncing ball. The outer layer of sport and preventive factors helps to keep the protective factors in place in order to effectively encapsulate the risk factors. In the face of severe problems and difficulties, preventive factors will give way to risk factors. Integral policies aimed at creating safe spaces, social inclusion, resilience, educational outcomes and empowerment will react by enhancing preventive and promotive mechanisms that can help not only in overcoming the given challenge, but also in learning from it so as to better cope with similar issues in the longer term.<sup>67</sup>

These five key prevention outcomes are represented in the form of zones through which youth at risk of violent extremism could potentially journey in different sport-based community programmes. Each zone represents a critical step towards scoring a goal against violent extremism.

Selected case studies from around the world that correspond to the prevention outcomes are presented along with each of the five zones. Although not all of them are focused on preventing violent extremism, the case studies include specific thematic programming elements that can be applied to settings and programmes in this context.

The section that follows provides some guiding notes on each of the zones to which coaches, as well as immediate and wider practitioners, can refer as they implement their respective sport for prevention of violent extremism programmes, without overgeneralizing or being excessively prescriptive.

## THE ZONES EXPLAINED

### Zone 1: Safe spaces

The concept of a “safe space” goes beyond the physical elements of a location. There are other key components that come into play when considering what makes a place safe, such as the trust and confidentiality that are built there; the creation of an area free of discrimination, violence and “othering” of those from different ethnic, religious and socioeconomic groups; a secure setting; and, lastly, a place that provides room for the respectful co-creation of values, ideas and solutions through sport.

The cultivation of safe space is an important precursor to any collaborative activity and paramount in community development and conflict transformation efforts.<sup>68</sup> In order to enhance the contribution of sport to the Sustainable Development Goals, specifically Goal 11, spaces and facilities for sport and active recreation should be designed to offer safety and accessibility for all.<sup>69</sup> The target group of sport for prevention of violent extremism programmes should be actively involved in identifying a neutral location where sport sessions will occur. This will give participants an enhanced feeling of trust and agency. Examples could be a school playground, an open field in the community, social halls or indoor gymnasiums.

With specific regard to the present guide and the engagement of at-risk youth participants, factors that coaches and participants need to bear in mind when they identify a location and begin the process of creating a safe space include the following:

<sup>67</sup>Stijn Sieckelinc and Amy Jane Gielen, “RAN Issue Paper: protective and promotive factors building resilience against violent radicalisation” (April 2018).

<sup>68</sup>Ramón Spaaij, “Cultivating safe space: lessons for sport-for-development projects and events”, *Journal of Sport Management*, vol. 28, No. 6 (2014), pp. 633–645.

<sup>69</sup>Iain Lindsey and Tony Chapman, *Enhancing the Contribution of Sport to the Sustainable Development Goals* (London, Commonwealth Secretariat, 2017).

- Participants need to feel welcome and be given opportunities to interact with each other on casual and neutral topics. Sport-related conversations often work as icebreakers. This process of building trust could carry on for some time, and the coaches need to be patient, as the main aims of this zone are to build rapport and trust and to ensure repeated attendance. Over time, conversations will gravitate towards preventing violent extremism.
- Participants should be actively involved in creating codes of practice/rules and consequence documents for the project. Concepts in sport such as fair play, equality, respect for rules and teamwork should be introduced, and cultures and project philosophies should be created.
- Participants should be made aware that it is their project and that it is free from formal regulation/ownership by the outside community. A box or basket with questions or suggestions can be passed around during discussions if the participants prefer to stay anonymous when submitting their questions and ideas at first. Flexibility is required in order to foster an inclusive, resilient and healthy space for playing and learning.
- Coaches and participants need to initiate the process of building rapport and trust.

### Zone 2: Social inclusion

Social inclusion refers to the process of encouraging shared interaction between people with different socially relevant attributes as a means of enhancing all spheres of social life.<sup>70</sup> The accessibility of and inclusion in sport has been acknowledged by Governments as “not only a challenge to be overcome but moreover a call to proactive action purposefully to pursue and embrace diversity as an enhancer to common practice.”<sup>71</sup> Elements that coaches and practitioners need to consider and promote in their activities in this zone include the following:

- Participants need to understand the value of teamwork. Coaches should gradually increase the number of games that focus on team activities and dependability.
- Coaches should consider co-creating games which include elements of trust.
- Peer-to-peer dialogue is important between participants to develop understanding and acceptance.
- Coaches should help participants to recognize individual skills and encourage them to support each other.
- Coaches should build activities that help participants to recognize that differences can and should be celebrated.
- Participants should be encouraged and provided with opportunities to build friendships.
- Coaches need to help participants to develop social skills.

### Zone 3: Education

In this zone, participants get a chance to delve into the push and pull factors towards violent extremism that they should look out for and what they need to do to stay safe. Games and group exercises should reflect these important discussions and create room for young people to identify other pre-emptive measures against the appeal of violent extremism that they could consider. In this zone, the following should be taken into account:

<sup>70</sup>Hilary Silver, “The contexts of social inclusion”, Department of Economic and Social Affairs Working Paper No. 144, ST/ESA/2015/DWP/144 (October 2015).

<sup>71</sup>Kazan Action Plan, para. 10.

- Coaches should provide opportunities for participants to learn from external specialists about topics such as safe practices on social media, recognizing extreme ideologies and grooming, soft skills, employment skills and job interview techniques.
- Coaches need to utilize informal education opportunities, including guest talks by representatives of local organizations (sport and non-sport), throughout the programme.
- Participants need to be provided with opportunities to gain vocational qualifications (e.g., in coaching).
- Participants should be encouraged to develop and practise peer mentoring skills. Group exercises on those skills can be curated during the sessions, offering opportunities for reflection when the day is done.

#### Zone 4: Resilience

Resilience in the context of preventing violent extremism is an important but often contested concept<sup>72</sup> owing to the multilayered and complex relationship between the terms “resilience” and “vulnerability”. Resilience in the context of sport requires programme practitioners to provide holistic support to at-risk youth beyond the sports field. In other words, the programme should account for the external factors that contribute to the participants’ vulnerability to violent extremism. When they leave the programme, the new skills they have gained will contribute towards positive social and economic mobility, thus countering the primary root causes of risks relating to violent extremism. This resilience will provide young people with the psychosocial and emotional support that they need throughout the process. Some of the points that coaches and youth participants need to consider as they work through this zone are as follows:

- Coaches need to incorporate activities that strengthen skills for overcoming peer pressure and inequality and help to address perceptions of unfairness.
- Participants need to recognize and appropriately discuss injustices and be mindful of other participants and their life experiences prior to the sport programme.
- Participants need to be encouraged to recognize their strengths and their ability to overcome difficulty. This will reinforce their psychosocial well-being and critical thinking in relation to the push and pull factors towards violent extremism.
- Participants need to be provided with opportunities to engage in team sport activities that require them to overcome adversity and build the strength needed to not give up on themselves and others.
- Participants need to discuss vulnerability as a concept and the strength that comes from acknowledging the challenges in their surroundings that may make them more vulnerable to radicalization and violent extremism in the first place. In addition, such discussions give coaches a real opportunity to use sport to reinforce lessons on the power of resilience.

#### Zone 5: Empowerment

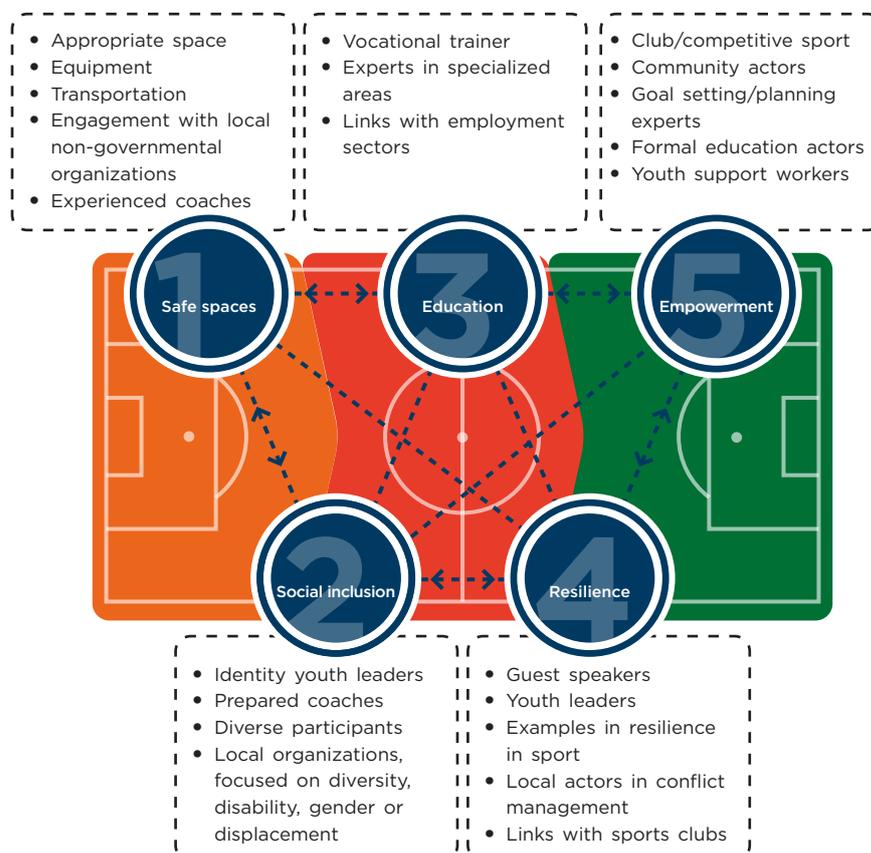
In the present guide, empowerment represents the transformational zone in which young people begin to confidently voice their ideas and develop practices towards good decision-making. This zone emphasizes the collective participation of all youth in a space for building knowledge and skills through sport. Top-line considerations for coaches and practitioners include the following:

<sup>72</sup>Ruth Simpson and others, *Amman Forum on Measuring, Monitoring and Assessing PVE: Meeting Report* (Amman, UNDP, Regional Hub for Arab States, 2019).

- Participants should be encouraged to use their new skills and social networks to make good decisions and recognize negative and dangerous influences that can inhibit their development.
- Participants should be able to feel a heightened sense of positive belonging and recognize that they are safe and can return to the project if they wish.
- Participants should also be able to recognize that they are part of a team and peer group.
- Participants should see themselves as strong and resilient and feel empowered by their new knowledge and skills.
- Participants should be able to confidently draw from the skills and knowledge acquired in order to increase their social and economic mobility. For those still developing their confidence and struggling with fear, the coaches and other stakeholders involved should assure the participants that they are there for them.
- Participants should be encouraged to recognize their individual and group development and achievements and should be given opportunities to set goals for their future.
- Project staff should support participants with their plans after the project, helping to connect them with relevant stakeholders and work opportunities towards financial and social empowerment.
- Participants should be encouraged to act as youth role models for future participants, with a particular focus on nurturing healthy networks and offering services for young people after they finish the programme.

A summary diagram of the zone-based learning process is presented in figure 8.

**Figure 8. Zone component framework for the prevention of violent extremism through sport**



## 2.1 ZONE 1: SAFE SPACES

*"You are now entering a safe zone."*

### Information

As the Director General of UNESCO, Audrey Azoulay, stated, "Ensuring 'safe spaces' for young people means creating the conditions for harmonious personal development, providing a climate of confidence in which they may freely express their potential and strengthen their self-esteem",<sup>73</sup> which makes it possible to foster critical thinking skills.

The concept of "safe spaces" is fundamentally important to the process of youth empowerment and development in all facets and stages of young people's lives. The United Nations advocates for the creation of safe spaces for youth by promoting access to safe cities and safe public spaces, ensuring the availability of safe learning and recreational spaces for refugee children and youth,<sup>74</sup> integrating the power of sport to reduce susceptibility to social pressures to use drugs and engage in crime<sup>75</sup> and providing youth with safe civic spaces that ensure employment and access to human and labour rights.<sup>76</sup>

In the present guide, the identification and co-creation of a safe space is essential to laying the right foundation for the roll-out of a sport-based programme for preventing violent extremism. Collaborating with participants and the community in identifying what makes a location "safe" is vital to ensuring overall support and the continuity of the programme. In locations at risk of or affected by violent extremism, a safe space represents a place where participants and coaches feel confident that they will not be exposed to discrimination, criticism, harassment or any other emotional or physical harm. In turn, this will allow youth to openly express their individuality, protect their dignity and pursue opportunities to participate in sport while engaging in meaningful dialogues that deconstruct barriers of judgment, hate speech and violence.<sup>77</sup>

### Sport and safe spaces

Safe space is conceptualized as a multidimensional process that involves physical, psychological, sociocultural, political and experimental dimensions.<sup>78</sup> Sport can enable the construction of safety and safe spaces through strategic planning of sport-based activities and the inherent power, neutrality and popularity of sport. The six dimensions to consider when identifying a safe space for the use of sport against violent extremism are discussed below.

#### *Dimension 1: Physical dimension*

- Accessible to all
- Adequate facilities

<sup>73</sup>Audrey Azoulay, Director-General of UNESCO, "Message on the occasion of International Youth Day, 12 August 2018", 8 August 2018.

<sup>74</sup>United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA), "Education in emergencies: ensuring quality education in times of crisis" (June 2017).

<sup>75</sup>UNODC, *Line Up Live Up: Life Skills Training through Sport to Prevent Crime, Violence and Drug Use – Trainer Manual* (Vienna, 2017).

<sup>76</sup>United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, *World Youth Report: Youth Civic Engagement* (New York, 2016).

<sup>77</sup>United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Division for Inclusive Social Development, Programme on Youth, and United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat), "International Youth Day 2018: safe spaces for youth – informational packet" (July 2018).

<sup>78</sup>Ramón Spaaij and Nico Schlenker, "Cultivating safe space: lessons for sport-for-development projects and events", *Journal of Sport Management*, vol. 28, No. 6 (2014), pp. 633–645.

- Community approval for access
- Creativity to ensure that the space is appropriate and safe for participation in sport

### ***Dimension 2: Psychological dimension***

- Physical safety alone does not create a safe space.
- The psychological dimension is essential to protect participants and coaches from harm. It is also necessary to ensure that participants feel welcome and protected.
- Psychological support is necessary for coaches to ensure that they are coping well as individuals.

### ***Dimension 3: Sociocultural dimension***

- Similar to the second dimension, but more abstract
- Understanding and appreciation of social and cultural differences in a sensitive and appropriate manner
- Goal of creating familiarity where all participants feel comfortable with each other in order to share meaningful interaction regardless of background

### ***Dimension 4: Political dimension***

- Acceptance of political differences and creation of open dialogue
- Sport-based activities can be perceived as a neutral environment through which sensitive dialogue on political and cultural differences and perspectives can be achieved.

### ***Dimension 5: Experimental dimension***

- The space should be safe and free of violence, but not protected from conflict.
- Participants need to accept that conflict is part of everyday life (and sport) and should learn to manage conflict and to appreciate and be sensitive to differences.
- Non-violent conflict provokes creativity, critical thinking and problem-solving and builds communication skills.

### ***Dimension 6: Mobile dimension***

- Youth-led ownership of safety and safe spaces can help to transform youth expectations and understandings of safety.
- Knowledge transfer from participants to community members and outside social networks
- Safe space becomes mobile.

## **Process**

The process of identifying and safeguarding against violent extremism through sport within the safe spaces zone is presented in figure 9. Sport and sport-based activities are increasingly introduced into the programme, targeting four key elements, namely, psychological, sociocultural, political and experimental elements, which will transform the idea of a safe space from a physical location into a moving representation of the values that embody such a space. As a result, young participants will be able to reflect on the positive lessons learned and ideas gained in the safe space and widen their networks.

Figure 9. Sport, prevention of violent extremism and safe spaces kaleidoscope



Participant’s perspective

The process is also better understood when viewed from a participant’s perspective. The sample process dialogue shown in figure 10 is intended as an overview for coaches and other practitioners on the thoughts and development of participants within this zone. The texts represent significant statements that might be made by participants to indicate the progress and impact of the programme. Such statements can build a narrative on the monitoring and evaluation of the specific aims of the zone.

Figure 10. Youth process dialogue in the safe spaces zone



### Risk factors and protective measures

Table 3. Risk factors and protective measures in the safe spaces zone

Risk factors	Protective measures
<p>If poorly designed and managed, sporting events or projects can actually contribute to marginalization by strengthening the very social divisions and inequalities that they are expected to bridge.</p>	<p>The global popularity and universal appeal of sports opens up safe spaces (both physical spaces and safe dialogue) and opportunities to “break the ice” in hard-to-reach communities.</p> <p>Coaches need to commit to policies that celebrate and welcome diversity. Sport can challenge gender stereotypes, perceptions of disability and political and cultural differences.</p> <p>This risk can be offset by adopting a multi-agency approach that includes all relevant stakeholders from the outset.</p>

**Table 3. Risk factors and protective measures in the safe spaces zone (continued)**

Risk factors	Protective measures
<p>Sport is inherently unpredictable, and conflict is often part of the competitive experience. If not managed appropriately, conflict can result in violence.</p>	<p>Conflict is part of everyday life and should not be feared. In fact, coaches can use such incidents as appropriate opportunities for discussion and for developing conflict management skills.</p>
<p>Local populations and communities are important actors that can affect access to and the acceptance of sport spaces.</p>	<p>All coaches and participants need to adhere to a collaborative code of practice and behaviour to which all participants agree, which includes nurturing and sustaining an open and safe space.</p> <p>Incorporating former local or national star athletes as part of the team can help to sell the programme more effectively and increase trust between the coaches and participants.</p>
<p>Individuals and groups associated with extremist ideologies and violent extremism can attempt to infiltrate sport spaces and projects to disrupt the safety and impact of the sport intervention.</p>	<p>Coaches and youth leaders need to be aware of the potential for their space to be used as a recruitment opportunity and aware of attempts to isolate individual participants. This can be achieved through separate capacity-building and training of coaches on such potential attempts.</p>
<p>Creating safe spaces for physical and psychological freedom, open dialogue and confronting political and sociocultural differences can be potentially harmful and traumatic if not guided and supported appropriately. Contextual understanding, sensitivity and cultural awareness are crucial.</p>	<p>Sport can be used as a buffer when confronting difficult and sensitive topics of discussion. Practitioners can use sport to reduce the sensitivity of the process and protect youth from psychological harm. This form of dialogue needs to be youth-led and supported by coaches and secondary experts on preventing violent extremism who are experienced and can identify trauma or harm. Consider having psychosocial support in place for both participants and coaches.</p>
<p>Sport is an enabler of social cohesion and helps to create a sense of belonging, but this group dynamic can prevent others from gaining access to the space if participants become overprotective or domineering.</p>	<p>“Active community” programmes can run alongside youth-focused sport programmes to increase local support and reduce any forms of local resistance.</p> <p>It is important to encourage participants to develop tolerance and acceptance of at-risk youth who may be referred to the programme.</p>
<p>Coaches and facilitators are crucial to the on-field implementation of the programme, but without the right capacity-building and supplementary training support, they too can become targets of radicalization.</p>	<p>It is advisable to create a separate programme for coaches in which they can check in on a weekly basis to receive supplementary psychosocial and employability skills training.</p> <p>In addition, coaches are not to be perceived as experts; it is important to continually ask for their feedback to improve the programme in order to reduce any incentive or the lure of recruitment.</p>

## Opportunities and challenges

A number of opportunities and challenges are linked to the use of sport to promote the establishment of a safe space for at-risk youth, and coaches need to be aware of them in the implementation of the sport for prevention of violent extremism programme.

Opportunities include the following:

- Sport can serve as an icebreaker and an entry point into communities.
- Sport can be used to facilitate open dialogue with and between the participants by establishing rules for participation.
- Sport can be used to create a positive sense of belonging that may have been missing before participation in the programme. The search for a sense of identity, belonging and acceptance is cited as one of the reasons for youth involvement in violent extremism.<sup>79</sup>
- Sport can be positioned as a neutral activity, although this is typically not always the case and requires coaches and facilitators to manage conflict and contrasting views as teachable moments in the field.
- Sport can be a tool to manage conflict and develop skills for group cohesion. It can also be used to establish a process for dealing with complaints and tensions within a group.
- Sport can transform the concept of safe space into a mobile phenomenon. The young participants will carry with them the prosocial values learned from their participation in activities in this zone.

Challenges include the following:

- Maintaining community support: This could be a challenge, especially for the participants when they return to their homes after the sessions. One way to address this challenge is to hold regular community dialogues with key stakeholders or representatives of the community in order to update them on the process and ensure buy-in to the programme goals.
- Adapting the programme to the local context, leaving room for creativity in the manner in which it is rolled out, while managing the expectations of the funders or government partner.
- Preparing for cultural sensitivity: Given that it may be a mixed group of at-risk youth, participants will need to be educated about the possible outcomes of their participation and the need to respect different viewpoints.
- Ensuring that conflict does not escalate to violence: Have trusted secondary supporting practitioners (e.g., social workers, volunteers and community leaders) as mediating points of reference if necessary.
- Potential misuse of safe spaces: There should be procedures in place to address any violations of the rules and regulations set out at the beginning.
- Psychological harm caused by open dialogue: This can emerge from the sharing of personal experiences and reflections within the group. Facilitators and other personnel in the programme need to receive relevant training for such an event. Moreover, along with ongoing training and adequate resource allocation to ensure that training is completed to an appropriate level, the

<sup>79</sup>Deborah Erwin, "Young people and extremism: a resource for youth workers" (n.p., SALTO Cultural Diversity Resource Centre, 2016).

engagement of specialized staff and experts is recommended; programme activities could also benefit from a multi-stakeholder, inter-agency approach.

- Managing the programme participants’ overprotectiveness of the space to the point that it excludes new members, and “othering” people of different cultures, ethnicities and religious standing: This challenge can be mitigated by involving the participants in the development of locally based safeguarding principles and procedures to explain what will happen in the next stage/zone.

The opportunities and challenges that emerge from this zone can be harnessed by coaches and facilitators to promote mentorship and relationship-building among participants in the sports space.

### Practical guidelines

Establishing clear procedures and guidelines for the use of sport in promoting safe spaces for preventing violent extremism is vital;<sup>80</sup> however, it also requires coaches to remember to remain flexible and adapt programmes according to their context. Practical tips and guidelines for coaches, teachers, and practitioners from the wider community are provided below.

Coaches and facilitators should consider the following principles prior to the start of the programme and reflect on them throughout the process:

- › Be welcoming. A diverse group of youth will be enrolled.
- › Gain local support and access. Establishing community buy-in to the programme will lead to a more holistic reintegration of at-risk youth into their society.
- › Build trust and rapport through sport. Sport can provide a neutral playing field upon which discussions and trust can be shared. However, this is not always possible, as contexts vary.
- › Collaborate with youth to construct a code of practice and rules.
- › Use sport as an icebreaker and an entry point into sensitive or risky discussions.
- › Encourage peer-to-peer dialogue and interaction, as this will help to build a good rapport within the safe space, which will then spill over into strong social bonds and positive networks outside the programme.
- › Involve volunteers to promote intercultural dialogue and offer extra support in programme delivery.
- › Facilitate games that introduce participants to each other.
  - Say your name as you pass the ball.
  - Say the name of the person receiving the ball.
  - Ask a question of the person receiving the ball.
- › Play games where success is based on teamwork.
  - This approach encourages group interaction and communication and reduces opportunities for exclusion.

<sup>80</sup>UNHCR, International Olympic Committee (IOC) and Terre des hommes, *Sport for Protection Toolkit: Programming with Young People in Forced Displacement Settings* (Geneva, 2018).

- It also establishes a culture of participation and develops soft skills over competition and winning.
- › Encourage participants to organize their own warm-up games to initiate the process of youth managing their own space and gaining a sense of control over it.
- › During each session, nominate a different participant to be a leader.
  - This empowers youth participants and allows individual participants to be heard.
  - It also reduces the dominance of individual youths.
  - It will also ensure that all participants’ voices are heard.
- › Encourage group reflection and dialogue sessions after game play.



### CASE STUDY: SAFE SPACES

The Youth Guidance Becoming a Man (BAM) Sports programme was a collaborative project that combined the Becoming a Man programme<sup>a</sup> with World Sport Chicago youth sport programmes, which provide safe spaces for young people in low-income neighbourhoods. The BAM Sports partnership programme<sup>b</sup> aimed to empower high school boys across the United States of America to make positive life choices and to direct them away from street violence and violent crime in underresourced communities by providing counselling and mentoring within school settings, combined with emotional regulation skill-building and strengthening social cognitive skills. The results of a randomized control trial conducted at the University of Chicago showed sizeable declines in violent crime arrests among participants.

The core goal of the BAM Sports project was to instil social cognitive skills, which include self-control, conflict resolution, future orientation and social information processing, such as the ability to accurately infer the intentions of others.<sup>c</sup>

The key findings relating to the programme include the following:

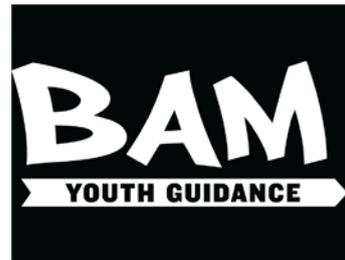
- Participation in the programme significantly increased school engagement and performance during the programme year. As for the impact of the programme, the future graduation rate increased by approximately 10 to 23 per cent over the control group’s graduation rate.
- Programme participation also reduced violent crime arrests by 50 per cent (8 fewer arrests per 100 participants) and arrests in the “other” (miscellaneous) category, which includes vandalism and weapons crime, by 36 per cent (11.5 fewer arrests per 100 participants) during the programme year. These findings are particularly noteworthy given the challenging settings in which the intervention took place. The study conducted on the programme is closer to what evaluation researchers would call an “effectiveness trial”.<sup>d</sup>

<sup>a</sup>See [www.youth-guidance.org/bam/](http://www.youth-guidance.org/bam/).

<sup>b</sup>The BAM Sports partnership programme is no longer active.

<sup>c</sup>University of Chicago Crime Lab, “BAM Sports Edition”, Research and Policy Brief (July 2012); and Pamela R. Dodge, “Managing school behaviour: a qualitative case study”, dissertation, Iowa State University, 2011.

<sup>d</sup>University of Chicago Crime Lab, “BAM Sports Edition”.



## 2.2 ZONE 2: SOCIAL INCLUSION

*“You are part of the team.”*

### Information

Social inclusion can be defined as the process of improving the terms of participation in society, in particular for people who are disadvantaged, by enhancing opportunities, access to resources, voice and respect for rights. Social inclusion may also refer to a process by which social interaction is encouraged between people with different socially relevant attributes, or to an impersonal institutional mechanism for opening up access to participation in all spheres of social life.<sup>81</sup>

Social inclusion efforts at the micro, meso and macro levels of society are particularly important when it comes to working with youth populations, as social inclusion strengthens their sense of self and offers opportunities for positive identity formation, thereby reducing their inclination towards violent extremist activities or groups. It is important to intentionally construct opportunities for social investment across all levels of society, as youth are growing up in highly individualistic and globalized societies. Research on the importance of social networks, identification and engagement in the process of recruitment to terrorist or violent extremist groups justifies the need to include a social inclusion dimension in any discussion or intervention focused on violent extremism.<sup>82</sup>

### *Recognizing the differences between social inclusion and integration*

From a young person’s perspective, social inclusion is the process of an individual’s self-realization within a society and of the acceptance and recognition of one’s potential by social institutions and communities.<sup>83</sup> It is the process by which efforts are made to ensure equal opportunities so that everyone, regardless of background, can achieve their full potential in life. Such efforts include policies and actions that promote equal access to (public) services and enable citizens to participate in the decision-making processes that affect their lives.<sup>84</sup>

Social inclusion and integration are not the same. Inclusion means that people have the same rights, access and choices in a community, whereas integration refers to the incorporation of individuals from different groups into society or an organization.

Integration is always a two-way process in which both individuals or groups and local residents or institutions become adjusted to each other. Integration is promoted by a safe and non-discriminatory environment and a feeling that one can trust other people and the authorities. That feeling of security and integration is undermined by experiences of discrimination and violence. Integration is promoted by a sufficient functional capacity that makes it possible for an individual to participate in day-to-day activities and to have meaningful social contact.

In the context of the present guide, the importance of social inclusion and developing a multidimensional approach is paramount in reinforcing a sense of community and positive peer group interactions. Those elements are important in the context of preventing violent extremism, as violent

<sup>81</sup> Silver, “The contexts of social inclusion” (see footnote 70).

<sup>82</sup> Yvon Dandurand, “Social inclusion programmes for youth and the prevention of violent extremism”, in *Countering Radicalisation and Violent Extremism Among Youth to Prevent Terrorism*, vol. 118, Marco Lombardi and others, eds, NATO Science for Peace and Security Series (Amsterdam, IOS Press, 2014), pp. 22–36.

<sup>83</sup> Siyka Kovacheva, “EU-CoE youth partnership policy sheet: social inclusion”.

<sup>84</sup> United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, “Social inclusion”. Available at [www.un.org/development/desa/socialperspectiveondevelopment/issues/social-integration.html](http://www.un.org/development/desa/socialperspectiveondevelopment/issues/social-integration.html).

extremist groups have found ways to reach at-risk youth through different online and offline media.<sup>85</sup> Social inclusion represents a defence against violent extremism and connects strongly to building resilience and setting the psychological and sociological grounding for being open to learning and making good decisions, including actively rejecting the push and pull factors towards violent extremism and terrorism. This is because, in today's world:

“Violent extremism represents not the resurgence of traditional cultures, but their collapse, as young people unmoored from millennial traditions flail about in search of a social identity that gives personal significance and glory. This is the dark side of globalization. They radicalize to find a firm identity in a flattened world.”<sup>86</sup>

Within the United Nations system, the importance of social inclusion is connected to a variety of youth-led agendas and the Sustainable Development Goals and targets, including Goal 8, to promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all; target 10.2, to empower and promote the social, economic and political inclusion of all, irrespective of age, sex, disability, race, ethnicity, origin, religion or economic or other status; Goal 11, to make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable; and Goal 16, to promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels. In the Secretary General's Plan of Action to Prevent Violent Extremism, both marginalization and weak or individualistic social networks are acknowledged as drivers of violent extremism. Therefore, intervention programmes with social inclusion as a strategic outcome allow preventive measures and interconnecting outcomes to be achieved through an enhanced sense of belonging and connection to others.

### Sport and social inclusion

“Regardless of age, gender or ethnicity, sport is enjoyed by all; its reach is unrivalled. More importantly, though, sport promotes universal values that transcend language and culture, particularly inclusion. History abounds with examples of inspiring stories of how expanding sporting opportunity leads to greater inclusion in society overcoming prejudice against women, ethnic minorities and people living with a disability.”<sup>87</sup>

Sport has been increasingly recognized within the United Nations system and by Member States for its growing contribution to the empowerment of communities and individuals — in particular women and youth — as well as to health, education and social inclusion.<sup>88</sup> Sport as a tool for realizing and strengthening social inclusion can be highly impactful when utilized within the framework of a well-structured programme, in particular one that addresses issues of social and personal development<sup>89</sup> of youth who are considered to be at risk of violent extremism. However, the notion of social inclusion is complex and contested, and therefore a multidimensional approach is necessary to unpack the many functions and manifestations of attitudes, beliefs and behaviours surrounding social constructs and notions of inclusion.

<sup>85</sup>Vivienne Chin, “Collateral damage of counter-terrorism measures and the inevitable consequence of the social exclusion and marginalization of vulnerable groups”, in *Countering Radicalisation and Violent Extremism Among Youth to Prevent Terrorism*, vol. 118, Marco Lombardi and others, eds., NATO Science for Peace and Security Series (Amsterdam, IOS Press, 2014), pp. 11–22.

<sup>86</sup>Scott Atran, “Role of youth: countering violent extremism, promoting peace”, *Psychology Today*, 5 May 2015.

<sup>87</sup>Audrey Azoulay, Director-General of UNESCO, “Message on the occasion of the International Day for Sport and Peace”, 6 April 2019.

<sup>88</sup>2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (General Assembly resolution 70/1).

<sup>89</sup>Public Safety Canada, “Research highlights 207-H03-CP” (see footnote 62).

The development of social inclusion through sport can be aligned with the conceptual lens provided by the notion of sport and social capital.<sup>90</sup> Social capital builds upon the intragroup and intergroup networks that exist within a society.<sup>91</sup> As a term, it has become more common in academic and political discourse since the 1980s and can be viewed as a set of resources that are inherent in group relationships and community-based social organizations and can be utilized for the cognitive and/or social development of individuals. Social capital then is the set of social and group relationships occurring in a community context that reinforce specific sets of networks and ties that result in community and social cohesion.<sup>92</sup> Research suggests strong links between targeted sport programmes and the development of prosocial behaviours and strategies that facilitate the expansion of social networks and participation.<sup>93</sup> All of those factors are regarded as central to developing feelings of membership, engagement, social inclusion and belonging to a community. The link between sport, social inclusion and preventing violent extremism supports “protective factors” that should influence a sport-based theory of change.<sup>94</sup>

Owing to the complexities discussed above, the concept of social inclusion goes beyond establishing new social networks or acting as an antithesis to exclusion. Therefore, a multidimensional approach is necessary. Bailey’s approach to social inclusion, for example, allows practitioners to consider networks, integration, participation, proximity to others, developing a sense of belonging, challenging power relations and acquiring new skills and understanding, all of which sport has been proven to facilitate.<sup>95</sup> Bailey’s interconnected dimensions are set out below.

- **Social networks:** Sport facilitates new social networks and a sense of belonging to new groups, which is an important part of the process of mobility and enhancing social capital.
- **Civic norms:** The connection between prosocial behaviour development through sport and civil structures.
- **Social integration:** Sport can facilitate the process of incorporating at-risk youth into a social structure that encourages prosocial development and learning.
- **Community structures:** Sport can both construct new forms of community through shared interests and provide opportunities to positively engage with the wider community.
- **Civic participation:** Sport enables individuals and groups to address issues of public concern or to engage with and/or challenge public values in order to enhance inclusive behaviours and beliefs.<sup>96</sup>

<sup>90</sup>Ramón Spaaij, “Sport as a vehicle for social mobility and regulation of disadvantaged urban youth: lessons from Rotterdam”, *International Review for the Sociology of Sport*, vol. 44, Nos. 2–3 (July 2009), pp. 247–264.

<sup>91</sup>Simone Digennaro, “Playing in the jail: sport as psychological tool for inmates”, *International Review on Sport and Violence*, No. 2 (2010), pp. 4–24.

<sup>92</sup>Robert Townsend, “Australian adult education and its impact on diversity, social inclusion and social capital”, *Magis, Revista Internacional de Investigación en Educación*, vol. 1, No. 2 (January-February 2009), pp. 305–315.

<sup>93</sup>Leesa Morris and others, “Sport, physical activity and antisocial behaviour in youth”, *Youth Studies Australia*, vol. 23, No. 1 (March 2004), pp. 47–52.

<sup>94</sup>Johns, Grossman and McDonald, “‘More than a game’: the impact of sport-based youth mentoring schemes” (see footnote 54).

<sup>95</sup>Peter Donnelly, “Approaches to social inequality in the sociology of sport”, *Quest*, vol. 48, No. 2 (1996), pp. 221–242.

<sup>96</sup>Richard Bailey, “Evaluating the relationship between physical education, sport and social inclusion”, *Educational Review*, vol. 57, No. 1 (February 2005), p. 76.

### *Recognizing the nexus of connected dimensions of social inclusion and sport*

The principles above can all be looked at through the four paradigms of social inclusion highlighted by Bailey:

- **Spatial:** Social inclusion relates to proximity and the closing of social and economic distances through sport.
- **Relational:** Social inclusion is defined in terms of a sense of belonging and acceptance, which sport and team games can strengthen and encourage.
- **Functional:** Social inclusion relates to the enhancement of knowledge, skills and understanding to increase personal development and social mobility. Sport can facilitate intentional and unintentional learning opportunities through which those skills can be enhanced.
- **Power:** Social inclusion assumes a change in the locus of control. A transgressive approach to sport programmes can cultivate internal cultures in which there is no dominant group or individual and all participants are equally valued.

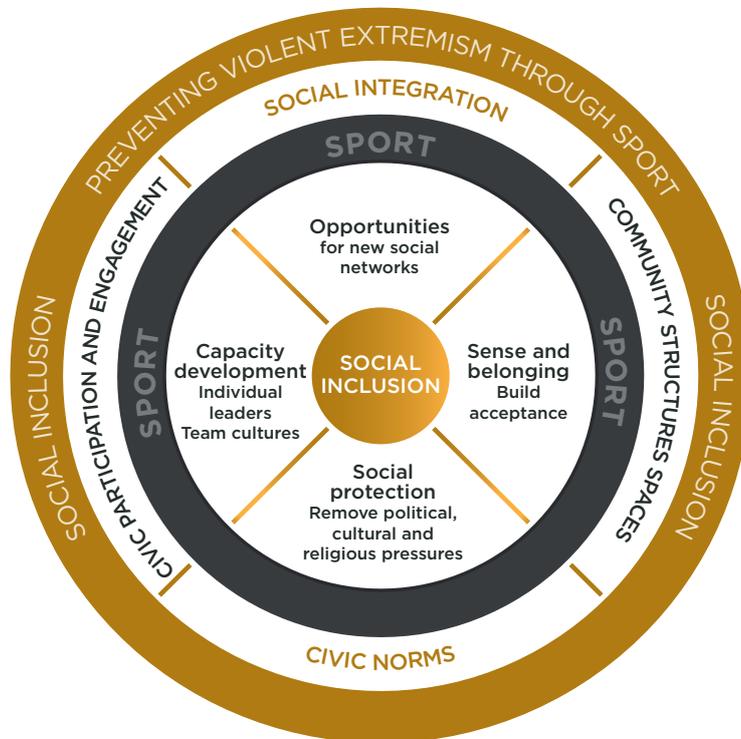
The concept of social inclusion can therefore be aligned to a series of social, economic, cultural and emotional dimensions that can be realized through sport. In the context of zone 2, social inclusion through sport will increase positive social bonds between participants who are at risk of violent extremism and provide them with a feeling of purpose,<sup>97</sup> thereby countering the onset of radical activities.

### Process

The process of social inclusion in sport activities to prevent violent extremism is presented in figure 11. At the outset, young participants will be cautious as they join the sport programme. Their perspectives will reflect the perceived and real feelings of social exclusion in society. However, over time, through regular interaction in sports activities and peer-to-peer interaction, there will be increased opportunities for new social networks and a sense of belonging to emerge. Participants will then begin to see each other outside of their individual political and cultural beliefs and to recognize that they can exist under the common umbrella and identity of youth. Through sport and sustained dialogue and reflection, youth leaders and a strong sense of team culture will develop.

<sup>97</sup> Cara Richardson, Paul A. Cameron and Katherine M. Berlois, "The role of sport in deradicalization and crime diversion", *Journal for Deradicalization*, No. 13 (2017).

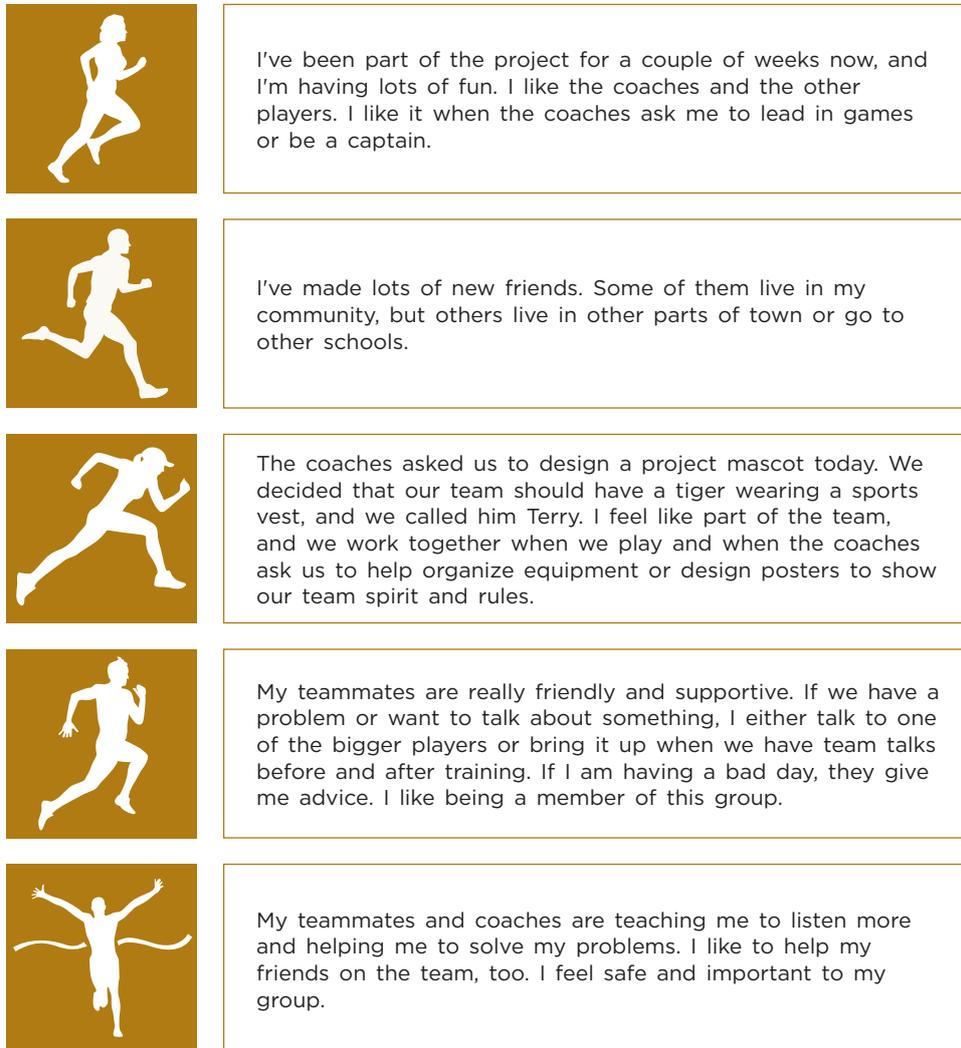
Figure 11. Sport, prevention of violent extremism and social inclusion kaleidoscope



### Participant's perspective

The process is also better understood when viewed from a participant's perspective. The sample process dialogue shown in figure 12 is intended as an overview for coaches and other practitioners on the thoughts and development of participants within this zone. The texts represent significant statements that might be made by participants to indicate the progress and impact of the programme. Such statements can build a narrative on the monitoring and evaluation of the specific aims of the zone.

Figure 12. Youth process dialogue in the social inclusion zone



Risk factors and protective measures

Table 4. Risk factors and protective measures in the social inclusion zone

Risk factors	Protective measures
The conception of belonging, membership and citizenship draws upon history and cultures of particular places and sport.	All stakeholders and partners need to have a contextual and cultural understanding of their specific social context at their specific location before opening up the space for participants and designing a programme.
Perpetrators of violent extremism can threaten the space and disrupt social inclusion.	Coaches and administrative staff need to act as role models who demonstrate inclusive practices and to be aware of potential risks posed to participants beyond the project.

**Table 4. Risk factors and protective measures in the social inclusion zone (continued)**

Risk factors	Protective measures
Contextual ideas of inclusion are embedded in institutions that both constrain individual choices and behaviour and shape social cleavages and collective identities.	Youth leaders and coaches need to be able to recognize exclusion and discuss strategic measures to prevent it. The culture of the project should aim to create new ideas of individual and group identity through positive interactions between young people from different backgrounds.
Social inclusion is conceived in many alternative ways, depending on ideology. That can create barriers for girls and women, persons with disabilities, marginalized populations and ethnic minority groups.	Coaches need to facilitate games and lessons on the sports field that highlight the need for the soft skills required to enhance inclusive interaction: effective communication, respect, fair play, equality, teamwork and active listening.
Creating a platform that encourages a group or team mentality can lead to exclusion.	Inclusion should be part of the good practice philosophy and culture of the club, team or project. Coaches need to recognize exclusion and prepare for the reintegration of excluded individuals through youth leaders.
The goal of winning in games and sport situations can provoke opportunities for subgroups to be formed or social hierarchies to be established based on skill.	Winning in sport should be contextualized and shaped to include success through teamwork, taking on responsibility, and learning. Coaches need to be aware of the potential for separate networks to be formed and should use youth leaders to prevent such separation. <sup>a</sup>

<sup>a</sup> Justin P. Andrews and Gavin J. Andrews, "Life in a secure unit: the rehabilitation of young people through the use of sport", *Social Science and Medicine*, vol. 56, No. 3 (February 2003), pp. 531-550.

### Opportunities and challenges

A number of opportunities and challenges are linked to the use of sport to promote social inclusion of at-risk youth in different societies.

Opportunities include the following:

- Sport provides a chance to communicate human rights messages in a meaningful and engaging way.
- Sport allows the principles of the Olympic Truce to be realized.
- Sport challenges inequality, intolerance and exclusion.
- Sport increases the engagement of socially excluded groups (especially youth, women and girls).
- Sport can be used as a vehicle to enhance social and life skills.
- Sport can generate enhanced community involvement.

The challenges of using sport for social inclusion include the following:

- Understanding the complexity of violent extremism in context
- Appreciating that it takes time and patience to gain the trust of participants, especially those who carry deep-seated feelings of marginalization and isolation
- The competitive nature of sport can challenge and disrupt the attainment of objectives relating to social inclusion.
- The impact of sport can be bound to delivery spaces, and the experience of exclusion can return once participants return to their social realities away from programme settings.
- Feelings and behaviours that may lead to exclusion can be difficult to identify.
- It is necessary to rely on networks of individual and groups, that is, coaches, youth leaders, participants and community members, to reinforce the principles of the programme. If there is no collective effort and accountability, youth development can be fragile.

These opportunities and challenges can be cultivated by all participants to promote positive identity and celebrate diversity within the group.

### Practical guidelines

Practical tips and guidelines for coaches, teachers, and practitioners from the wider community working within this zone are provided below. In this context, it is necessary to consider the adaptability of programme activities without strict adherence to a fixed curriculum.

- › Work to encourage participants to influence and adopt good practice and social inclusion policies for the project and team.
- › Facilitate games that require communication and encourage active listening, such as:
  - Games that require instruction or direction
  - Games that require participants to work in pairs (suggestion: one teammate is blindfolded, and a partner must give instructions to direct that teammate to a particular area to score a point)
- › Facilitate games that rely on teamwork, such as:
  - All participants must assume a role within the team.
  - A point cannot be scored until every player touches the ball.
- › Allow participants time between activities to reflect on and discuss the lesson in the game.
  - Coaches may need to lead or direct such discussions to focus learning.
  - Prompts might include: What did you think the game represented? How did that make you feel? What stood out for you in this game?
- › Plan activities that deliver messages of fair play, respect for each other and for rules, equality and celebrating differences.
- › Reinforce positive messages through sport and acknowledge the challenging situations of everyday life outside of sport and the skills that participants are learning to support themselves and each other.



## CASE STUDY: SOCIAL INCLUSION

### Brighton Table Tennis Club

The Brighton Table Tennis Club in the United Kingdom uses table tennis as a powerful tool to engage people of all ages, transform lives and widen opportunities for inclusion in the community. The project has been particularly successful at breaking down barriers and prejudice by placing high value on its fair play vision, including respect, solidarity and community engagement through sport competition. The club has been awarded Club of Sanctuary status for its work on integration and social inclusion.<sup>a</sup>

The club is a good example outside the sphere of preventing violent extremism that shows how participants from all backgrounds can effectively participate in joint programmes. It also prevents children participating in such programmes who are considered to be associated with terrorist and violent groups from being given “special” treatment in the eyes of the rest of the community, and it can avoid singling these children out from others. The club also offers a pathway for refugees and migrants to integrate with the local community through its refugee integration project, which incorporates sport, community integration and mathematics and English language skills. Today, the club has its own centre with 10 tables in the Kemptown area of Brighton and runs 100 tables across the city, located in parks, squares, schools, sheltered housing schemes, a centre for homeless people, sports centres and a psychiatric hospital. It also operates in two prisons outside the city.

More than 1,250 people play in the club’s weekly sessions, including people with learning disabilities, young people from the Brighton travellers site, looked-after children, people with physical disabilities, people from the lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender community and young asylum seekers.

<sup>a</sup>Brighton Table Tennis Club, “Brighton Table Tennis Club named first UK sports Club of Sanctuary for work with unaccompanied refugee minors” (2016).



## 2.3 ZONE 3: EDUCATION

*“This is how you can use your strengths.”*

### Information

Education plays an all-encompassing, cross-cutting role across all zones in the use of sport for the prevention of violent extremism. It has been leveraged to both radicalize and deradicalize young people,<sup>98</sup> hence the need to inculcate prevention principles in both students and out-of-school youth in current and youth-friendly ways. In the context of the present guide, education plays a role in each identified zone; it represents the critical point at which discussions delve into the complexities of violent extremism, encouraging participants to reflect on the associated push and pull factors in their contexts and on past experiences, and allowing them to develop and strengthen key skills.

This zone provides the link to the formation of new ideas, identities and perspectives in order for participants to begin the development of new socioeconomic pathways as they move towards the goal of being empowered and integrated into society.

A distinction can be drawn between two types of interventions used by the education sector in efforts to prevent violent extremism: (a) providing access and quality education to all, in an effort to address issues related to marginalization, inequality, unemployment, etc., or, in other words, some of the underlying factors of violent extremism; and (b) targeted, location-specific programming focusing on populations that have a higher probability of being attracted to violence (e.g., recent religious converts, specific ethnic or clan groups, those with existing familial links to violent extremist entities).<sup>99</sup>

In sport interventions, it is critical to ensure that the educational environment, pedagogy and supporting policy complement each other. For its part, UNESCO has created guidelines to aid in the creation of policies for quality physical education in Member States.<sup>100</sup> The guidelines are designed to create impact-oriented curricula that promote movement competence to structure thinking, express feelings and enrich understanding. Through competition and cooperation, learners come to appreciate the role of rule structures, conventions, values, performance criteria and fair play, and they celebrate each other’s varying contributions. In turn, those elements strengthen physical literacy, academic achievement, inclusion and health.

UNESCO also advocates dynamic forms of values-based education, a philosophy utilized within that organization’s promotion of values education through sport, in order to generate benefits from the values derived from sport, such as fairness, respect, discipline, inclusion and team building, and to “help students to transfer and put values into action outside the school environment, by getting

The *Sport Values in Every Classroom* toolkit, which was developed in cooperation with UNESCO partners for teachers working with 8- to 12-year-old students, is aimed at supporting the development of healthy citizens who participate fairly in society and in sport, and at complementing existing curricula to promote student engagement and movement while helping teachers and educators, regardless of their specialities, to instil in their pupils some of the core values synonymous with sport: respect, equity and inclusion.

UNESCO, *Sport Values in Every Classroom: Teaching Respect, Equity and Inclusion to 8-12 year-old Students - A Quick Guide* (Paris, 2019).

<sup>98</sup> Samantha de Silva, “Role of education in the prevention of violent extremism” (Washington, D.C., World Bank, 2017).

<sup>99</sup> Ibid.

<sup>100</sup> Nancy McLennan and Jannine Thompson, *Quality Physical Education (QPE): Guidelines for Policymakers* (Paris, UNESCO, 2015).

engaged in their communities, making informed decisions, being sensitive and respecting the others and the environment”.<sup>101</sup>

The principles of values education through sport can be adopted to different country-level plans and can be further tailored to fit the needs and socioeconomic opportunities that exist for youth in different locations. The idea of conveying sports values through classroom education has also been advocated by the International Olympic Committee in its Olympic values education programme.<sup>102</sup>

### Sport and education

Sport has the power to provide an opportunity to learn values that contribute to the development of the soft skills needed for responsible citizenship. Ultimately, the goal of sport programmes targeting the prevention of violent extremism is to help participants to transfer the skills learned and values gained through programmes and put them into action in their communities and lifestyles. Therefore, the quality of the climate of an intervention in this area is key to facilitating a fair-play mentality that promotes resilience, tolerance, acceptance and dialogue and provides positive social experiences.

Learning opportunities may arise throughout the programme, whether within formal training workshops or through sport’s informal “teachable moments”. Hence, the goals of education through sport can be achieved through the development of learning experiences that foster reflection, self-development and skills that facilitate the prevention of violent extremism.<sup>103</sup>

To ensure positive programme delivery, participants should be encouraged:

- To participate in group activities so as to discuss learning, exchange thoughts and challenge each other in a controlled manner
- To conduct peer-to-peer dialogues to contextualize learning

Facilitators and other staff should:

- Be adequately trained in interpersonal interactions and the skill-building component of the activity
- Be approachable to participants who may have different learning needs or questions
- Be mindful of any conflicts or behaviours that could disrupt learning and contradict the values of the programme. In the event of a conflict, it is necessary to have rules and regulations that the staff can turn to and remind the participants of their commitments to the programme and to each other.
- Serve as mentors and role models. They should uphold their commitment to being trustworthy and dependable individuals as the youth make the transition out of risk.
- Prepare to deal with a variety of factors “on the job” and be able to refer youth to the appropriate institutions for additional support
- Ensure the engagement of participants to avoid feelings of exclusion and to ensure more impactful learning

<sup>101</sup> UNESCO, Social and Human Sciences, “Values education through sport: innovative education for development”.

<sup>102</sup> IOC, *The Fundamentals of Olympic Values Education: A Sport-Based Programme* (Lausanne, Switzerland, 2017).

<sup>103</sup> Ramón Spaaij and Ruth Jeanes, “Education for social change? A Freirean critique of sport for development and peace”, *Physical Education and Sport Pedagogy*, vol. 18, No. 4 (2013), pp. 442–457.

- Be sensitive and responsive to individual backgrounds. Not all participants will be vocal or comfortable in sharing their experiences and thoughts. Thus, facilitators and staff need to remain alert to those who may still be reluctant to contribute to discussions and group work.

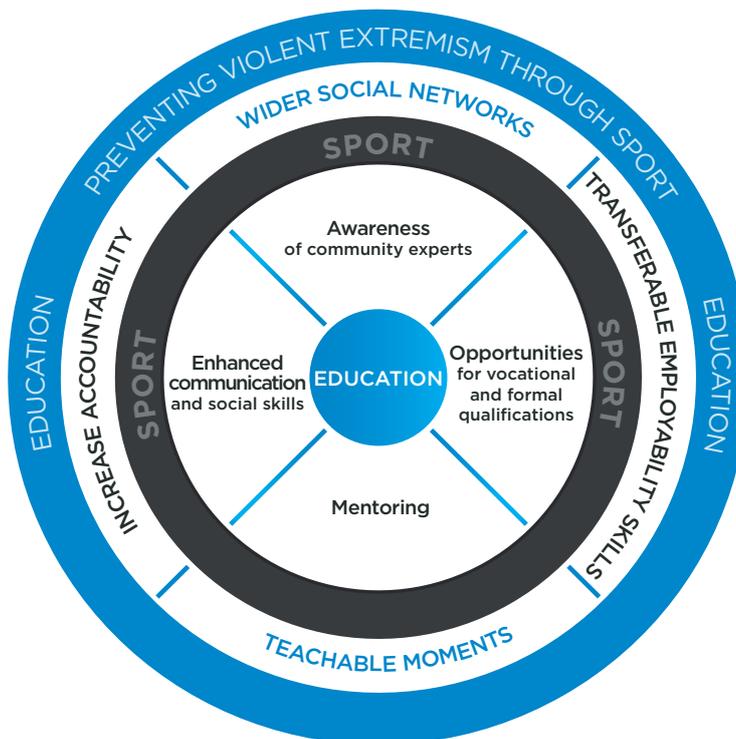
Programmes should:

- Maintain safe spaces for participants and cater to contextual needs
- Be flexible and adaptable in terms of education and learning activities
- Cultivate empowerment skills
- Integrate wider social circles and families
- Disseminate accurate information about religions, cultures and ideologies and counter false perceptions

### Process

In this zone, education is the focus. The process of integrating education into programmes for the prevention of violent extremism through sport is shown in figure 13. Teachable moments arise throughout the zones, and some activities are also complemented with formal education workshops. The goal is to have more knowledgeable participants and to give them opportunities to develop their cognitive and practical skill sets. Education is strengthened by enhanced social skills, an awareness of available community leaders and experts, opportunities to earn formal qualifications, and mentoring by internal or external members of the project.

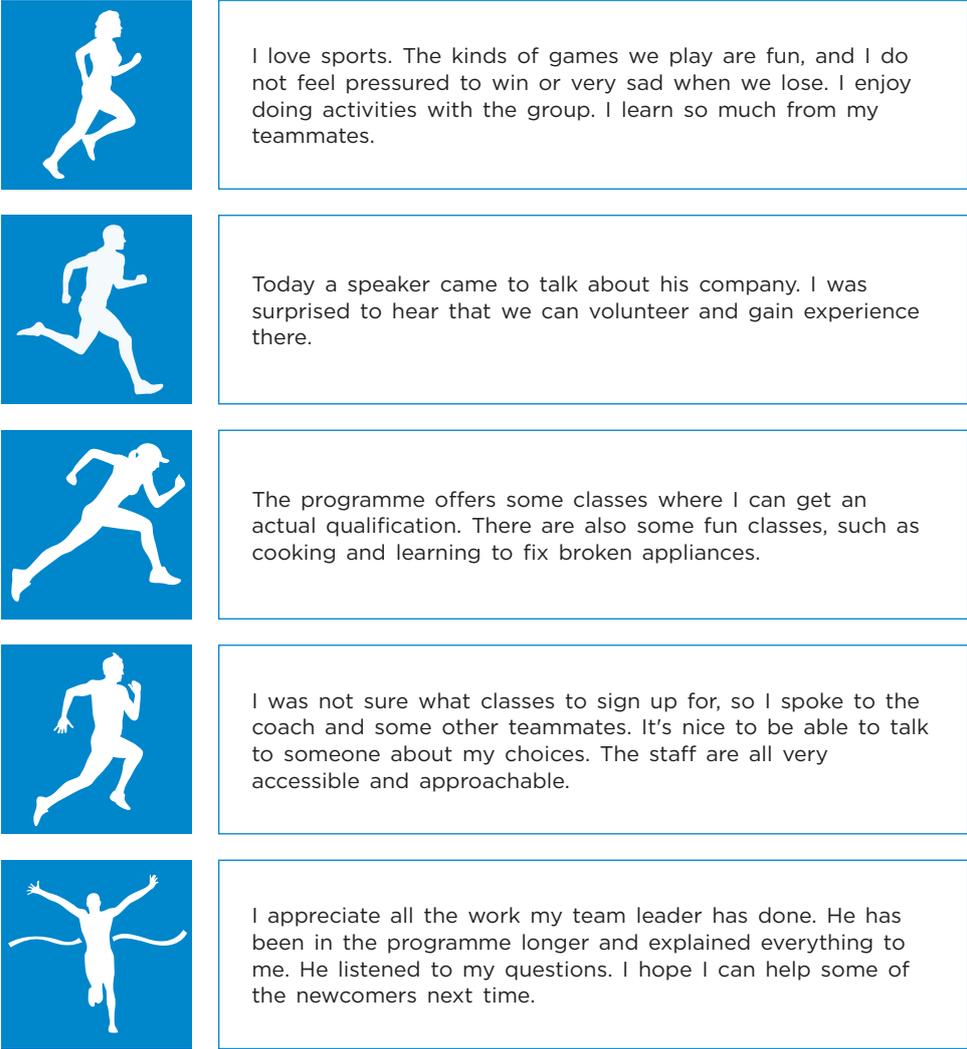
**Figure 13. Sport, prevention of violent extremism and education kaleidoscope**



Participant's perspective

The process is also better understood when viewed from a participant's perspective. The sample process dialogue shown in figure 14 is intended as an overview for coaches and other practitioners on the thoughts and development of participants within this zone. The texts represent significant statements that might be made by participants to indicate the progress and impact of the programme. Such statements can build a narrative on the monitoring and evaluation of the specific aims of the zone.

Figure 14. Youth process dialogue in the education zone



Risk factors and protective measures

**Table 5. Risk factors and protective measures in the education zone**

Risk factors	Protective measures
Traumatic experiences lead to violent behaviour that, if not understood by coaches, can be worsened through punishments.	The sport programme environment provided by coaches must take into account the diverse experiences and educational backgrounds of participants.
Educational opportunities that have little to do with knowledge and skills needed in the job market or that aid in the development of life skills will be seen as a waste of time.	Coaches and administrative staff need to facilitate positive programme experiences without focusing too heavily on sport or non-sport components. There needs to be a balance of both, with positive experiences in all aspects of the programme.
If educational opportunities are not integrated within sporting activities and throughout the programme, participants will not benefit from teachable moments and may miss valuable learning outcomes.	Partnering with experts and community leaders helps to create pathways for participants towards improving their livelihoods.
Participants with weaker educational backgrounds or weaker skills may feel excluded.	Life skills such as negotiation, active listening, teamwork, critical thinking and communication should be emphasized just as much as formal qualifications.
The participants' desire to play sport may not be enough motivation for them to join educational classes.	Formal qualification and vocational training opportunities should be provided through programmes.
Educators who are not aware of the participants' background may unintentionally offend or exclude certain participants.	Programme activities should be used to expand educators' and participants' knowledge through peer-to-peer learning.

Opportunities and challenges

A number of opportunities and challenges are linked to the use of sport to promote education for at-risk youth.

Opportunities include the following:

- Sport can facilitate teachable moments and lessons on the playing field.
- Sport activities can be used as informal educational opportunities through various games.
- Sport can be used as a “hook” for formal qualification training courses.
- A sense of belonging is strengthened by shared learning experiences and team bonding.
- Sport can be used to develop communication and social skills.
- Links between mentors and participants can be facilitated through programme settings.

The challenges of using sport to promote education for at-risk youth include the following:

- Practitioners must be adequately trained to be able to convey good practices and standards in their contexts. Inexperience or a lack of training may lead to a diminished sense of trust among the participants, who have come to know and depend on the facilitators.
- Sport and non-sport components must be used in tandem. This can be a challenge, especially if the topic is sensitive or the participants just wish to play.
- Components cannot be generalized easily; policymakers can simply set a general direction. The lack of specific aims or intended learning outcomes for each session may lead to a dilution of the process and the risk of regression.
- Policymakers must always take contextual differences into account. This is especially important because policies need to be relatable to young participants.
- Educational experiences may be spontaneous and may not follow a curriculum, making it very difficult to plan and standardize programme experiences.
- Complementing programmes with external experts and speakers may not always be feasible.

Learning opportunities can be facilitated, and challenges overcome through better understanding and programme planning.

### Practical guidelines

Practical tips and guidelines for coaches, teachers, and practitioners from the wider community are provided below. In this context, it is essential to remain aware of the contextual environment and adapt activities accordingly.

- › Facilitate games that focus on certain learning outcomes.
  - Begin games with a question to gauge levels of understanding and encourage discussion, for example on awareness of religious differences.
  - Convey information throughout game sessions.
  - Conclude by re-asking the initial question.
- › Play games that encourage communication and social skills.
  - Players can pass the ball only after saying something about the learning outcome.
  - Allow for post-training dialogue in a facilitated group setting (e.g., by sitting in a circle).
- › Invite partners and internal staff members to speak about their experiences.
- › Invite external speakers relevant to a particular learning topic to reinforce certain skill sets, expand knowledge or provide vocational training opportunities.
- › Connect participants with opportunities to earn formal educational qualifications.
- › Simulate mentorship opportunities and apprenticeships.
  - Encourage experienced participants to explain the game to newcomers.
  - Allow for question-and-answer sessions.
  - If a participant has a specific talent or skill, allow him or her to demonstrate it to others.



## CASE STUDY: EDUCATION

The Youth and Sport Task Force,<sup>a</sup> established by UNESCO, is centred around educating and nurturing dynamic youth leaders across the Asia-Pacific region to capitalize on sport as a tool for positive social change in their communities, including in work to prevent violent extremism. The core belief underlying the Task Force is that youth are in control and are part of the co-creation of knowledge and solutions for all activities. This is exemplified by the way in which youth are regarded as the key drivers in designing their own programmes, setting their own priorities and collectively deciding on the strategic direction of the Task Force. Its motto reflects that commitment to co-creation, stating that it is “By youth. With youth. For youth.” UNESCO supports the growth and capacity development of the Task Force by providing opportunities for members to connect and learn from their peers and experts in similar fields at the regional and global level.

Currently, the Task Force comprises 60 members, who represent 28 Asia-Pacific countries. At the 2019 UNESCO Sport and Sustainable Development Goals Funshop, for example, 70 youth leaders came together to discuss the contribution of sport to preventing violent extremism and driving education, social inclusion and gender equality. Even though the Task Force is not a fully fledged programme for the prevention of violent extremism, it has incorporated the education of youth on how sport can be used to counter and prevent the spread of violent extremism in its areas of work. This is indicative of a programme that uses co-creation and participation to bring about more meaningful and effective solutions through sport.



<sup>a</sup> See [www.youthandsport.org](http://www.youthandsport.org).

## 2.4 ZONE 4: RESILIENCE

*“We need your strengths.”*

### Information

Understanding resilience requires an acknowledgement of the continued hardships, tragedy and/or loss faced by individuals or communities. Resilience reflects the capacity to “navigate and negotiate” one’s way to the psychological, social, cultural and physical resources that sustain well-being.<sup>104</sup> One measure of the psychosocial well-being of young people is their resilience, or their ability to “bounce back”<sup>105</sup> from setbacks and personal difficulties, drawing on their inner strength and interpersonal and community connections. They can also demonstrate resilience through their resistance to extremist messaging and discourse, where they can show strength in their arguments as to why they would never join an extremist group.<sup>106</sup>

Resilience exists within all individuals; it is a matter of building those skills that makes one person more resilient than another. Strengthening youth resilience to violence is a key component of the prevention of violent extremism. In this context, “the resilient individual” is one who cannot be easily swept towards violent extremism and can overcome the hardships and crises that are often conducive to violent extremism. Specific skills that can be addressed to build resilience include the following:

- **Cognitive capacities**
  - Purpose: to equip the individual with the necessary tools to become aware of propaganda and messages aimed at promoting violent extremism and recruitment, and to be able to assess, resist and question “us versus them” ideologies
  - Focus: critical thinking, agency
- **Soft skills, values and character traits**
  - Purpose: to encourage the development of qualities and skills aimed at countering dehumanization perspectives and strengthening values that deter moral disengagement
  - Focus: self-esteem, empathy, tolerance
- **Community engagement**
  - Purpose: to promote a supportive community environment that facilitates positive interactions and strong relationships and provides necessary reinforcement
  - Focus: networking, community-building, dialogue

Resilience-based strategies strengthen local communities and limit instances of violence based on the ability to manage and overcome hardships in a non-violent manner.<sup>107</sup> However, one of the major challenges in developing local resilience-based strategies for violent extremism is the shift away from conceptual definitions of violent extremism towards more meaningful, context-specific ones.<sup>108</sup> This is

<sup>104</sup> See <https://resilienceresearch.org/resilience/>.

<sup>105</sup> UNHCR, IOC and Terre des hommes, *Sport for Protection Toolkit* (see footnote 80).

<sup>106</sup> Paul Joosse, Sandra M. Bucerius and Sara K. Thompson, “Narratives and counternarratives: Somali-Canadians on recruitment as foreign fighters to Al-Shabaab”, *British Journal of Criminology*, vol. 55, No. 4 (July 2015), pp. 811–832.

<sup>107</sup> UNDP, Regional Bureau for Arab States, *Building Resilience in Response to the Syria Crisis* (Amman, 2015).

<sup>108</sup> Caroline S. Clauss-Ehlers, “Sociocultural factors, resilience, and coping: support for a culturally sensitive measure of resilience”, *Journal of Applied Developmental Psychology*, vol. 29, No. 3 (May-June 2008), pp. 197–212.

where sport can be used as an integration and coping resource to foster dialogue between at-risk youth and other key stakeholders.

### Sport and resilience

As part of its efforts to support the implementation of the Doha Declaration, UNODC has launched a global youth crime prevention initiative that builds on the power of sports as a tool for peace. The initiative is designed to promote sports and related activities in order to prevent crime and effectively build the resilience of at-risk youth.

Both “sport plus” and “plus sport” programmes can be used to develop a sense of community for at-risk youth, as they provide grounds for increased resilience and cultural adjustment,<sup>109</sup> though to varying degrees. Resilience can benefit from the “sport plus” approach because the space for participation and connection already exists. Sport has already neutralized the area, meaning that it is free from the stigma of “intervention” and separation from the rest of society. In such a setting, the participants might just be playing sport, but in essence they are also increasing their sense of community and positive identity formation. The at-risk youth will not feel further marginalized and will begin to build their resilience and social capital with the peers enrolled in the same programme for the prevention of violent extremism through sport.

On a related note, people who practise sport have often been described as being resilient in the face of stress, and a growing body of evidence points to involvement in sport programmes as a way to foster resilience.<sup>110</sup> Given the many pressures and challenges faced through sport, some scholars even consider resilience to be a prerequisite for success in sport.<sup>111</sup>

As a result, youth resilience and sport appear to be functionally related, with athletes expected to serve as positive role models of the “resilient individual”. Their ability to overcome injuries, keep their composure in the face of adversity and deal with loss, and their discipline in training make athletes ideal role models for resilience. Sport therefore presents itself as a complement to resilience-building efforts. Relating these findings to the prevention of violent extremism suggests that there is great potential to integrate sport activities and skill-building programmes as described above in order to foster resilience among participants.

### Process

The process of using sport to build resilience is shown in figure 15. Sport needs to build on certain psychosocial principles that aid the development of social effectiveness. Those skills and capacities include critical thinking, the ability to overcome loss, empathy and conflict resolution. Games and programmes within this zone will therefore focus on those capacities.

<sup>109</sup> Nina Fader, Eric Legg and Allison Ross, “The relation of sense of community in sport on resilience and cultural adjustment for youth refugees”, *World Leisure Journal*, vol. 61, No. 4 (May 2019).

<sup>110</sup> Rhiannon L. White and Andrew Bennie, “Resilience in youth sport: a qualitative investigation of gymnastics coach and athlete perceptions”, *International Journal of Sports Science and Coaching*, vol. 10, Nos. 2–3 (June 2015).

<sup>111</sup> Andrew Mills and others, “Identifying factors perceived to influence the development of elite football academy scholars”, *Journal of Sport Sciences*, vol. 30, No. 15 (August 2012).

Figure 15. Sport, prevention of violent extremism and resilience kaleidoscope



### Participant's perspective

The process is also better understood when viewed from a participant's perspective. The sample process dialogue shown in figure 16 is intended as an overview for coaches and other practitioners on the thoughts and development of participants within this zone. The texts represent significant statements that might be made by participants to indicate the progress and impact of the programme. Such statements can build a narrative on the monitoring and evaluation of the specific aims of the zone.

Figure 16. Youth process dialogue in the resilience zone

	My teammates are great. They like playing with me, and we talk about things we enjoy doing, like playing video games. Even though we go to different schools, we have so much in common!
	In today's game, whenever the other team scored, they got two points and whenever we scored, we got one point. We took it as a challenge, and our team was able to tie the score 4-4!
	Games don't have to be only about winning and losing. We all enjoyed playing today, and my team got bonus points for not complaining to the referee.
	The other team was told to shoot only with their left foot today. It must have been hard for them. The post-game talk helped us understand their experience.
	My team and coaches have helped me realize that we can overcome our disadvantages. I feel more ready to handle whatever I face.

Risk factors and protective measures

Table 6. Risk factors and protective measures in the resilience zone

Risk factors	Protective measures
A lack of socioeconomic opportunities makes it harder to face challenges.	Participants are given opportunities and access to various resources within their communities that help to expand their networks.
If not managed well, group dynamics can lead to marginalization and discrimination and isolate victims.	Positive engagement with other groups will help to create bridging capital.
Poor governance within programmes will yield disorder and pose too many challenges for participants.	Building relationships with authority figures and official organizations establishes links that strengthen youth resilience.

**Table 6. Risk factors and protective measures in the resilience zone (continued)**

Risk factors	Protective measures
Violence during training sessions can escalate if conflict is not controlled and used as a learning opportunity.	Coaches need to facilitate games that are attuned to the normalization of violence in the everyday lives of participants.
Recruitment may occur through groups that target sports participants because of their desired physical ability.	Coaches need to be aware of the risk of programme exploitation. The role of family is highlighted as a vital component that protects participants and sustains their resilience.
Activities must not be deemed too difficult by participants, as too much hardship and adversity may lead to an increase in dropout rates.	Coaches should gauge participant attitudes towards violence and incorporate games that suggest positive ways in which youth can address the drivers of violent extremism.
Adversity games may lead to “us versus them” mentalities if not accompanied by dialogue.	Controlled adversity games can facilitate better understanding and encourage empathy.

### Opportunities and challenges

To foster the capacity-building process described above and to build resilience, coaches need to be aware of a number of opportunities and challenges in the implementation of the programme.

Opportunities include the following:

- Sport clubs can be utilized as safe spaces in which participants can be confronted with moments of adversity (through sport) in a controlled space.
- Sport clubs can also be used as sites of socialization that decrease the polarization of society.
- Dealing with loss and defeat is part of sport and can be turned into a teachable moment for the participants.
- Sport activities can be used to foster commitment and discipline through regular training sessions and programming.
- Sport can foster collective experiences.
- In-game action can be used as a real-world simulation of the pressures encountered by youth.
- Sport can help individuals to recognize their strengths.

Challenges include the following:

- Resilience is not a fixed trait; it needs to be built up constantly.
- Resilience is negatively affected when an individual is faced with too many challenges; this needs to be managed within the setting of the sport programme.
- Isolating some participants based on a lack of talent or skill will adversely affect the process.
- Maintaining a “we are in this together” attitude is critical, but not always easy with large numbers of participants.

- Individual-level changes do not automatically translate into society-level changes. Problems embedded within society require resilience at the society level, not just at the individual level.
- The context and surrounding environment cannot always be controlled.
- Support from community leaders is needed to facilitate positive experiences.

Recognizing these opportunities and challenges better equips coaches and staff to plan programmes and helps programme organizers in their design and implementation efforts.

### Practical guidelines

Practical guidelines for coaches and in-game tips are provided below. In this context, it is critical to keep in mind that resilience is not built up from zero. Rather, a strength-based approach should be utilized whereby the practitioner builds on the participants' existing resilience through positive language that is promoted throughout the programme.

#### *Basic principles for building resilience*

- › Encourage critical thinking. A variety of creative research approaches can be employed here, including the use of reflection diaries, photovoice or drawings. Such activities will open up room for more insights to be shared outside of post-game group reflections.
- › Expand the participant support network. This includes drawing on both the communal and professional networks available outside of the programme.
- › Manage conflicts; do not let them escalate to violence. Have a rule of engagement and a plan in place to reach out for further psychological and psychosocial support in the event of challenges or traumas.
- › Build understanding and recognition of difference to foster tolerance. In multicultural and pluralist societies, it can be difficult to connect different individuals and groups.
- › Use sport as an opportunity to showcase hardships, loss and adversity in a controlled setting.
- › Encourage reflection to foster empathy and tolerance.
- › Use reinforcing language that builds self-determinism in participants.
- › Engage the community in efforts to build society-level resilience through partnerships and outreach programmes and by involving the community through stakeholder engagement and articulating local needs.

#### *Other guiding points for coaches during sport sessions*

- › Facilitate games that purposefully simulate unfair situations.
- › One team can use only their left leg/arm, while the other team is free to use both.
- › Allow more players on one team than the other.
- › Play games in which participants can practise peacebuilding and conflict resolution.
- › Facilitate a game negotiation between teams to decide who gets the ball first.
- › Encourage youths to select their team captains on the basis of certain values, not sporting ability.

- › Include post-training opportunities for reflection so that groups can discuss any hardships or conflicts they may have encountered.
  - › Allow opportunities for networking between participants and community involvement in order to help youth to realize the support network they have.
  - › Allow for critical reflection about advertisements and impactful messages.
  - › Connect participants with partnering organizations and the community.
- Community engagement through events and inviting high-profile community leaders during activities (e.g., tournaments, social events and visits) decreases polarization and allows participants to expand their networks and resources.



## CASE STUDY: RESILIENCE

### SambaSports (Kenya)



SambaSports Youth Agenda is an organization created in February 2018 as a social platform in Kwale County, Kenya, to encourage behavioural transformation in young people in response to growing concern about the rate at which they were engaging in habits such as drug abuse, crime and more serious offences leading to violent extremism.

SambaSports uses its targeted, integrated sports and life skills approach to “colour the world” of youth and to challenge the pull factors of violent extremism. By providing platforms to help young people to express themselves physically, verbally and emotionally and to develop their skills, the organization aims to mitigate their vulnerabilities and risk of being drawn into violent extremism. Young people experience a positive alternative through the programme and can aim for higher and better results in school, at home and in the community.

The two principle characteristics of the programme are as follows:

- *Targeted:* The initiative targets youth who are at risk of exposure to antisocial and criminal behaviours, including those linked to violent extremism. SambaSports reaches out to youth, their parents, students, Muslim preachers, pastors, elders and mainstream society. The platform gives them a space to express themselves and an opportunity to seek guidance, support, advice and clarity on issues that matter to them.
- *Integrated:* Sports and life skills are integrated to achieve programme goals. Activities to this end include technical training sessions as well as sensitization talks by trained people from organizations dealing with drug rehabilitation and peacebuilding, educational skits and performances to drive lessons home for the adolescents, as well as guest speeches by role models who can motivate young people to focus on their education and to develop discipline as a way of marketing their talents and shaping their lives.

## 2.5 ZONE 5: EMPOWERMENT

*“You are ready.”*

### Information

Youth empowerment refers to an attitudinal, structural and cultural process by which youth gain agency and leadership opportunities to implement change in their own lives and the lives of others in their communities and wider society. The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees defines the term “youth empowerment” as a philosophy that identifies and encourages the use of youth’s assets and potential.<sup>112</sup>

In the present guide, the term “empowerment” represents the transformational zone in the model. It is the zone in which young people begin to voice their ideas confidently and practise good decision-making. The zone emphasizes the collective participation of all youth in a space for building knowledge and skills through sport. However, the guide also recognizes that the term “empowerment” is understood, interpreted and experienced differently across cultural and religious contexts, and practitioners are therefore urged to remain aware of those differences as they co-create inclusive approaches towards empowerment with the youth in their communities.

Empowerment should be developed in the context of community-based social-developmental interventions for primary prevention, with the aim of enabling at-risk youth through sport-based programmes and cognitive and/or behavioural learning and helping them to build resilience to violence and crime, including – and especially – to violent extremism.

The United Nations encourages Member States to ensure that youth are at front and centre in discussions and actions against the drivers of violent extremism. Youth are also the ones who are most susceptible to the lures of violent extremism owing to the global “violence of exclusion” from economic, political, social and cultural life.<sup>113</sup> As a result, national Governments and the United Nations have made it a priority to find ways of engaging youth as active partners in sustainable development efforts, recognizing them as the torchbearers of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.<sup>114</sup>

The United Nations system has developed programmes with this notion in mind. For example, a project implemented by UNESCO with support from the Office of Counter-Terrorism aims to create “opportunities for young women and men to engage as change-makers and peacebuilders in their immediate communities and wider societies, and to promote a constructive vision of young people as leaders”.<sup>115</sup> Eliminating the violence of exclusion of youth is a primary step towards the prevention of violent extremism.

### Sport and empowerment

It is worth recognizing that the mere process of playing sport can be empowering at times, even without any messaging. Providing the opportunity to participate in sport and to be part of a positive environment can have a lasting impact on the development of youth participants. In fact, sport has been called a major contributor to the empowerment of women and girls by showing that women in sport defy gender stereotypes and social norms, make inspiring role models and show men and women as

<sup>112</sup> UNHCR, IOC and Terre des hommes, *Sport for Protection Toolkit* (see footnote 80).

<sup>113</sup> Simpson, *The Missing Peace* (see footnote 29).

<sup>114</sup> United Nations, *World Youth Report* (see footnote 76) and General Assembly resolution 70/1.

<sup>115</sup> UNESCO, “Prevention of violent extremism through youth empowerment” (see footnote 46).

equals.<sup>116</sup> Still, there is a great need to increase the number of female sporting role models for young women and girls in the sports domain, as the selection of male sporting role models by females may be related to the unavailability, scarcity and invisibility of female sporting role models, which is also due to the low popularity of competitive sports in which females are thriving.<sup>117</sup> Role modelling is a decisive transfer enhancer<sup>118</sup> and leads to further confidence-building for participants in sport-based programmes.

In relation to sport programmes for the prevention of violent extremism, women and girls need to actively participate and lend their voices to the solution process, as they are part of the micro settings in which those extremist narratives are perpetuated. Their empowerment would better equip them in the face of victimization or recruitment to violent extremism.

Beyond women and girls, and surpassing gender stereotypes, empowerment in this context should:

- Increase young people's confidence to make good decisions
- Enhance their empathy towards people from the same or different backgrounds
- Increase their confidence to lead
- Bring out their goal-setting skills
- Support their transformation into youth leaders for their immediate community and wider society

Given the increasing complexity of violent extremism, an empowerment programme in the context of sport and the prevention of violent extremism will need to:

- Build on positive reinforcement and trust gained in safe spaces and resilience zones
- Foster social encounters that encourage the realization of ideas such as social enterprise, and advocate collective agency
- Carefully teach participants to be responsible with their new knowledge and to avoid overconfidence
- Encourage participants to reflect on what empowerment looks like to them and what it means to them and their community
- Reinforce positive community connections to decrease mistrust and strengthen social connections
- Encourage youth to voice their localized solutions through sport
- Encourage trust-building among participants and intervening stakeholders
- Achieve community buy-in to extend the reach and influence of the programme beyond the sports grounds

<sup>116</sup>Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka, "Op-ed: empowering women through sport", United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women), 2 April 2019.

<sup>117</sup>Robin J. Ely, "The effects of organizational demographics and social identity on relationships among professional women", *Administrative Science Quarterly*, vol. 39, No. 2 (June 1994), pp. 203–238; Donald E. Gibson and Diana I. Cordova, "Women's and men's role models: the importance of exemplars", in *Mentoring Dilemmas: Developmental Relationships within Multicultural Organizations*, Audrey J. Murrell, Faye J. Crosby and Robin J. Ely, eds. (Mahwah, New Jersey, Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, 1999).

<sup>118</sup>Paul J. Taylor, Darlene F. Russ-Eft and Daniel W. L. Chan, "A meta-analytic review of behavior modelling training", *Journal of Applied Psychology*, vol. 90, No. 4 (2005), pp. 692–709.

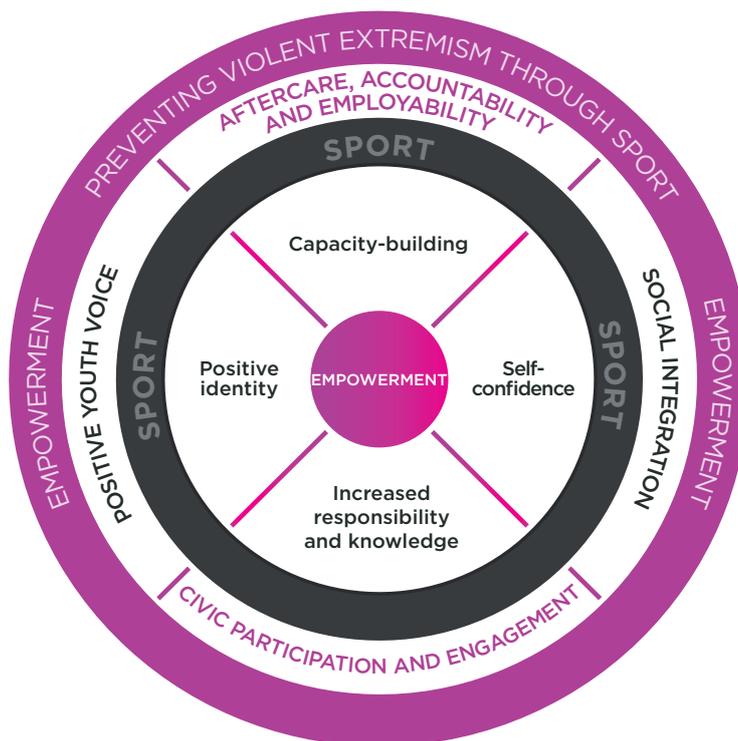
- Avoid the use of stigmatizing terms, especially in areas facing heightened levels of violent extremism

Leveraging the lessons from the empowerment zone better equips coaches and staff to guide participants to overcome any future challenges.

### Process

The kaleidoscope process chart shown in figure 17 represents the distinct elements leading to the increased empowerment of participants. In this final stage of a programme for the prevention of violent extremism through sport, the participants will have acquired new knowledge and education to make better-informed decisions. A positive sense of self will emerge, creating increased opportunities to build their capacity and employability in different local and national sectors. Apprenticeship or buddy/shadowing opportunities with different stakeholder organizations will have been introduced in the education zone and should lead to increased responsibility and a new pathway to empowerment.

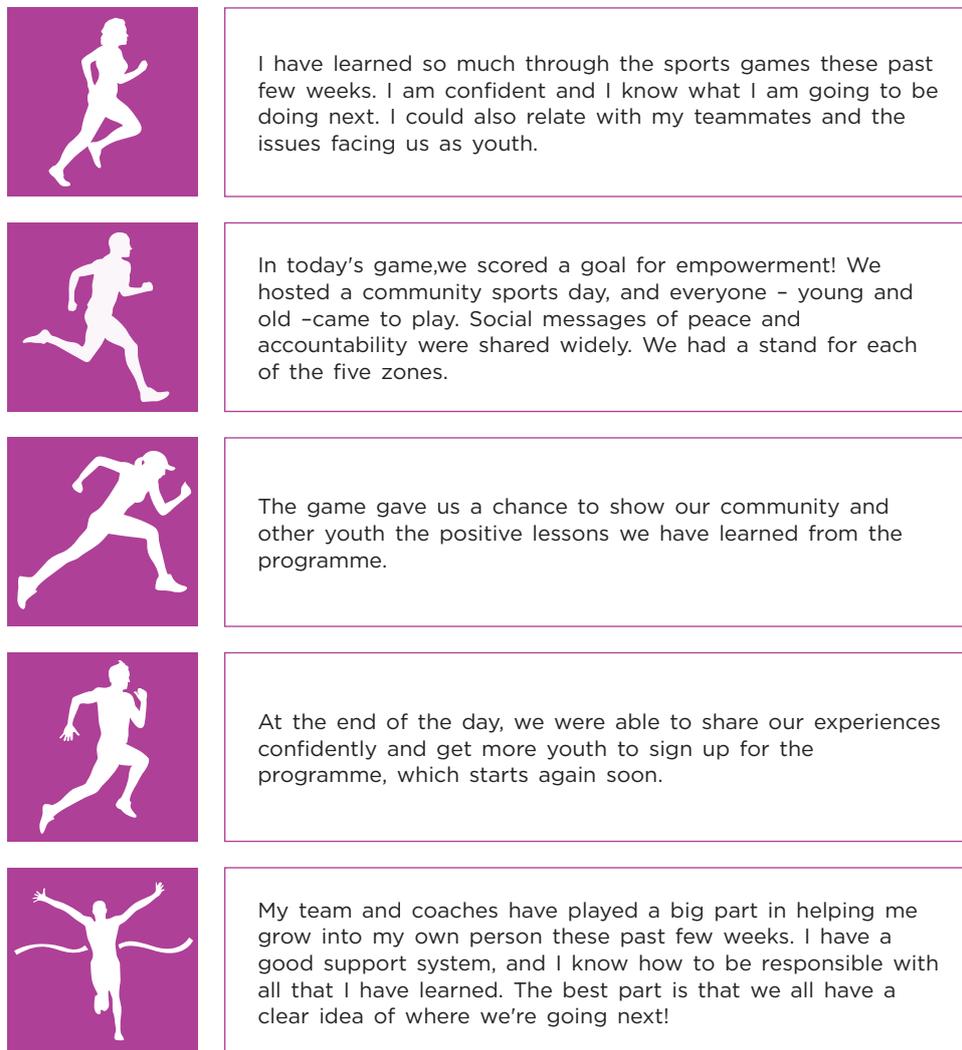
**Figure 17. Sport, prevention of violent extremism and empowerment kaleidoscope**



### Participant's perspective

The process is also better understood when viewed from a participant's perspective. The sample process dialogue shown in figure 18 is intended as an overview for coaches and other practitioners on the thoughts and development of participants within this zone. The texts represent significant statements that might be made by participants to indicate the progress and impact of the programme. Such statements can build a narrative on the monitoring and evaluation of the specific aims of the zone.

**Figure 18. Youth process dialogue in the empowerment zone**



**Risk factors and protective measures**

**Table 7. Risk factors and protective measures in the empowerment zone**

Risk factors	Protective measures
<p>Empowered youth can easily become overconfident and potentially confrontational.</p>	<p>Practitioners will need to monitor and guide youth on how to be responsible with their new-found knowledge and skills. Coaches and secondary experts/ practitioners will need to commit to framing the language and lessons on empowerment through sport taught to their participants so that they remain respectful of their cultural environments.</p>

The sociocultural constraints attached to the participation of young women and girls in sport could be a barrier to their empowerment.

Coaches and other practitioners could work with female role models and sports teachers when seeking community buy-in for the participation of girls in a programme, ensuring that the space and timing of the programme are gender-friendly and accommodative of parents' and guardians' requests.

Inadequate planning for what comes after the programme

The programme should be designed to use the bridge that is sport to connect young people to different pathways that will ensure their smooth transition into society.

A continuity strategy should be established for the opportunities given to youth who will be completing the programme. All stakeholders will need to participate in these efforts.

A referral mechanism should be established for those in need of specialized support and/or services.

Possibility of negative in-group dynamics, with some participants dominating and not looking out for other team members

Coaches should encourage youth participants to exercise good decision-making grounded in the positive values of sport (i.e., teamwork, fairness, respect and discipline).

Practitioners can skilfully use the values and power of sport to increase the leadership and independence of youth who will be finishing their learning from the programme.

Risk of the programme relying on output-focused rather than process-focused funding

Programme management and stakeholders should discuss and agree from the outset what funding model the programme will adopt, and they should stress that the focus is not a tokenistic approach (i.e., with a focus on the number of participants), but an investment in the youth successfully completing all aspects of the five-part process. The focus should be on the transformation of youth in their local context.

Risk of sustainable funding, as most programmes tend to work with those who are not most vulnerable in order to sustain funding

Programmes should encourage buy-in among the community and local stakeholders regarding the need for such a programme in order to strengthen the reach for funding and to show ownership, which will translate into sustainability. Facilitators also need to be aware of the need to design a programme that is operational and relevant to the local community.

## Opportunities and challenges

Several opportunities and challenges are linked to the use of sport to promote the empowerment of at-risk youth in different societies. In this context, it is important to bear in mind that empowerment is a continuous process for the participants.

Opportunities to use sport to enhance empowerment include the following:

- Sport can encourage individual empowerment, helping to realize opportunities to develop new, positive ideas and perspectives that will be supported by the group.
- Sport can foster empathy and tolerance among the participants by providing opportunities to listen to different viewpoints and ideas from group members.
- Sport can help participants and the community to come up with home-grown solutions to violent extremism.
- Sport can help create new, positive truths.
- Sport can increase the participation of women and girls in sports and leadership.

The challenges of using sport as an empowerment tool include the following:

- Receptivity to new skills and support in managing newly acquired skills. Part of the empowerment process should include managing a new-found identity and knowledge to ensure the participants' receptivity to new ideas. Providing training and mentoring after the programme could support young people in using and adapting to these new skills.
- Lack of community and family support for the programme. This builds on the previous point of receptivity to new-found skills and amplifies the need to find ways of engaging the wider micro system within which the young people operate once they are no longer at risk.
- Empowerment can become time- and space-bound if strategies are not put in place for youth once they have completed the programme.
- Sport may not always be the preference of youth or even encouraged by their families. Certain sports can also ostracize participants.<sup>119</sup>
- Feelings of empowerment can be affected if a deficit of trust with stakeholders exists.

## Practical guidelines

Practical tips and guidelines for coaches, teachers, and practitioners from the wider community are provided below. The list is by no means exhaustive, and coaches in particular will need to adapt it to their cultural and contextual environment. In addition, it is crucial to remain aware of the cultural sensitivities at play.

- › Coaches and other stakeholders should encourage participants to organize a one-day community sports tournament.
  - The event will provide them with an opportunity to practise their new-found sporting and dialogue skills.
  - They can also co-create the themes around empowerment that will be covered during the community match.
  - The event will also facilitate the mobility of safe spaces and positive learning outcomes outside the zone.

<sup>119</sup>Hedayah and Global Centre on Cooperative Security, "Thinking outside the box" (see footnote 53).

- › Coaches should play games that encourage participants to recognize the positive social outcomes of being empowered. As part of the games, coaches should welcome questions on the next steps and link them to opportunities outside the empowerment zone.
  - Such games will build participants’ confidence in showing others who they are and who they have become.
  - They will also increase opportunities for youth to expand their social networks within a safe and thriving space.
  - The games will help youth to improve their goal-setting skills.
- › Youth should be encouraged to create their own empowerment games around the prevention of violent extremism.
  - This initiates the process of youth adapting to their transition out of the programme.
  - It also sharpens their decision-making skills.
- › Coaches and heads of the programme need to plan for the funding of follow-up services that they will need to offer the empowered youth for the following purposes:
  - To provide them with a solid, sustainable pathway to employment with other stakeholders
  - To reduce the risk of recurring vulnerability to recruitment and indoctrination owing to the lack of a continuity strategy
  - To enable better integration into the community and acknowledgement of the programme outcomes and participants’ skills



## CASE STUDY: EMPOWERMENT

### Galz and Goalz: UNICEF Namibia

The Galz and Goals programme was launched in 2009 by UNICEF, in partnership with the Namibia Football Association, in schools across the country with a view to encouraging more girls to play football, promoting individual health and social responsibility and empowering women. The programme developed a curriculum for teachers, coaches and parents that included information on HIV/AIDS, alcohol abuse and gender discrimination. A key strength of the programme is its holistic involvement of all stakeholders, including sport actors, in the lives of the young women and girls.<sup>a</sup> The project has benefited thousands of young girls in primary and secondary schools across the country.

The programme stems from the belief in the positive outcomes that can result from sport-based programming. “Sport and play are important to UNICEF because they are vital elements in the health, happiness and well-being of children and young people,” commented the UNICEF Representative in Namibia, Ian MacLeod.<sup>b</sup> UNICEF believes that the Galz and Goals project will provide girls with a safe environment to enjoy sport while also gaining the knowledge and confidence to make smart choices in their lives.

<sup>a</sup>UNICEF, “UNICEF launches ‘Galz and Goals’ programme to promote sport for girls in Namibia”. Available at [www.unicef.org/infobycountry/namibia\\_51687.html](http://www.unicef.org/infobycountry/namibia_51687.html).

<sup>b</sup>Ibid.





## CASE STUDY: ALL ZONES

### Darfur Dreams sport for development and peace initiative for internally displaced persons in Darfur, Sudan



A case study showcasing possible ways to implement activities in line with the five-zone approach is Darfur Dreams, an initiative implemented in 2019 by the Save the Dream organization in cooperation with the Qatar Fund for Development and Qatar Charity, and in partnership with various sport and educational entities, such as Aspire Academy. The initiative was designed and implemented by Save the Dream and its partners with the aim of promoting peace and preventing violent extremism.



Targeting internally displaced persons and receiving communities in Darfur, Sudan, the programme used sport for integration into society, peacebuilding and reconciliation.<sup>9</sup> Field activities, which were primarily implemented in the city of El Fasher, North Darfur, comprised multiple sport and cultural initiatives, advocacy campaigns and training workshops on sport for development and peace, with the main aim of building participants' capacity to design and manage sustainable projects in that domain. Save the Dream involved several role models, such as Tegla Loroupe, Kenyan long-distance runner and captain of the Refugee Olympic Team, who became a female sporting role model and addressed gender equality and the empowerment of girls through sport and elevated the confidence level among participants.



To build trust and confidentiality with youth and their families, a local committee comprising 80 community leaders from Darfur was established to support the creation of a physical and cultural safe space (zone 1) where youth could meet and interact without any obstacles, such as gender issues.



The safe space contributed to collaboration, trust-building and ownership of the project by the local community. The topic of physical safety was addressed by training participants in the use of equipment and the management of playing grounds at the grass-roots level, particularly when children were involved and with due attention to the treatment of people with different abilities.



Furthermore, 50 youth leaders from communities of internally displaced persons received training on project development, conflict resolution, strategic planning, sport tournament organization and the prevention of violent extremism. Key messages were delivered as part of informal educational elements (zone 4) that were integrated throughout the project. The trained and empowered youth leaders (zone 5), acting as agents of change, have reached out to and coached over 20,000 young internally displaced persons. All participants worked together in various sessions and formed teams with youth from different backgrounds to facilitate community engagement and social inclusion (zone 2). The wider community in El Fasher and local families were engaged and given the opportunity to interact with the internally displaced persons and to benefit from the programme through the organization of a sports festival, which expanded the local social network and ensured greater support for the initiative.

Participants were also supported in building resilience (zone 3) by engaging in team sport activities that helped them to develop the skills needed to overcome peer pressure, inequality and unfairness in the light of the injustices they have faced.

<sup>9</sup> Save the dream, "'Sport for development and peace' initiative in Darfur". Available at <http://savethedream.org/>.

# Chapter 3.

Sport and prevention  
of violent extremism  
programming



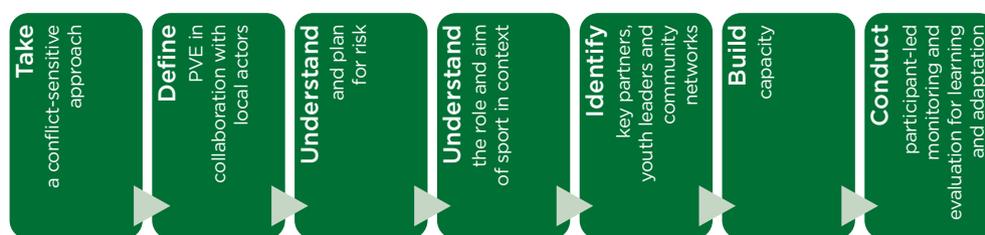
Building on existing guidance for programming and reflecting on the key approaches and principles that informed the development of the present guide (see Introduction), the present chapter provides guidance on programming for the prevention of violent extremism through sport. In particular, the chapter focuses on key principles of programming in this field and includes a sport typology and information on different types of programmes and how they can be applied effectively in the context of primary prevention as part of comprehensive frameworks for the prevention of violent extremism. It also provides support for a human rights approach and for the development of referral mechanisms as an essential element to maximize and sustain the results of such programmes.

### 3.1 Design principles for sport and prevention of violent extremism programmes

When designing sport programmes for the prevention of violent extremism, it is critical to understand the role of sport and the cultural norms associated with gender, age, youthhood, ability and disability, class, geographical location, education, economic and social mobility opportunities and marital status. It is also suggested to avoid or limit specific references to the terms “radicalization” and “prevention of violent extremism” in naming the programmes and to focus instead on broader programme aims for the benefit of individuals and society. This is to avoid stigmatization of the programme and its participants.<sup>120</sup> Sport is to be used both as a tool to attract participation and as an integral and enabling part of programming through the incorporation of “plus sport” activities with broader outcomes relating to the prevention of violent extremism (see chap. 2).

A commitment to enhancing contextualized understandings makes it possible to design more relevant interventions in the fields of sport for development and peace<sup>121</sup> and the prevention of violent extremism,<sup>122</sup> appreciating that there is no fixed programme curriculum and that ongoing learning and refinement are intrinsic parts of programme development.<sup>123</sup> Thus, a definitive step-by-step guide cannot be produced for replication across multiple sites. However, some general design principles may be identified. Although programmes can be conceptualized from the top down (by the government) or from the bottom up (at the level of grass-roots actors),<sup>124</sup> partnerships have emerged as an accepted and advocated approach to increasing resources and capacity that strengthens the impacts of programmes.<sup>125</sup>

**Figure 19. Prevention of violent extremism and programme design principles**



<sup>120</sup> Steven Lenos and Annelies Jansen, “The role of sports and leisure activities in preventing and countering violent extremism”, RAN EX Post Paper (Radicalization Awareness Network, March 2019).

<sup>121</sup> Iain Lindsey and others, *Localizing Global Sport for Development* (Manchester, Manchester University Press, 2017).

<sup>122</sup> UNESCO, *Preventing Violent Extremism through Education: A Guide for Policymakers* (Paris, 2017).

<sup>123</sup> Nico Schultenkorf and Ramón Spaaij, “Commentary: reflections on theory building in sport for development and peace”, *International Journal of Sport Management and Marketing*, vol. 16, Nos. 1–2 (2015).

<sup>124</sup> David Black, “The challenges of articulating ‘top down’ and ‘bottom up’ development through sport”. *Third World Thematics: A TWQ Journal*, vol. 2, No. 1 (2017), pp. 7–22.

<sup>125</sup> Iain Lindsey, “Partnership working and sport development”, in *Routledge Handbook of Sports Development*, Barrie Houlihan and Mick Green, eds. (London, Routledge, 2011).

Key principles in sport for prevention of violent extremism programming include the following:

- **Take a conflict-sensitive approach.** Take the context as the starting point and define violent extremism in a culturally specific and appropriate way. Set your level of ambition and be realistic about what you can achieve given your time frame, mandate and context.
- **Define the prevention of violent extremism in collaboration.** Develop a clear and shared definition of the prevention of violent extremism and ensure that the definition is contextualized. Programme content and monitoring and evaluation frameworks should be developed collaboratively with local actors and groups to ensure relevance and that contextual considerations are taken into account.
- **Understand risk.** Anticipate any possible unintended outcomes and barriers to programme facilitation that can affect participant and community well-being. This is especially important when considering the unpredictability of sport and working with children and youth. Context and cultural analysis, as well as an understanding of the local and international legal frameworks, make it possible to consider potential risks and protective factors in programming.
- **Understand the role of sport.** Be realistic in setting the goals of sport programmes and be careful not to be overambitious or forget to plan for monitoring and evaluation procedures. Ensure that you understand the role of sport in context and the cultural norms associated with gender, age, youthhood, ability and disability, class, geographical location, education, economic and social mobility opportunities and marital status.
- **Identify key partners.** Involve stakeholders and the community and ensure an inclusive, multi-agency approach. Invite relevant external experts and specialized trainers or local contributors who can help to build a sense of belonging and ownership of the programme. Community leaders can also positively engage with groups of participants. Speakers who have successfully transitioned out of violent extremism can also share their success stories.
- **Build capacity.** Build networks with local sports organizations, clubs and recreational facilities and develop their capacities for work on the prevention of violent extremism. Through increased cooperation and partnerships, programmes can also build the capacities of other organizations and a larger network of partners that work with youth in the prevention of crime and violence.
- **Conduct participant-led monitoring and evaluation for learning and adaptation.** Position young participants as important actors in monitoring and evaluation mechanisms. The most important priority is to track and understand the impact of the programme, and participants are integral to capturing that information. This can be done by engaging youth and other actors in developing the programme's theory of change and codes of conduct (see chap. 4). When developing the theory of change and the strategy of the programme, consider both the intended and unintended impact an intervention can have, and accept the unpredictable nature of sport intervention programmes. It is vitally important that any engagement of children and youth always adhere to ethical standards and safeguards for their participation.

The principles above should be read and applied in conjunction with the overarching principles explained in the introduction. Furthermore, from a programming perspective, it is important to recognize and apply these principles throughout all stages of a programme, including the design, implementation and monitoring and evaluation stages.

Lastly, although sport is considered a low-cost approach to development, resources and equipment, such as sports equipment, access to facilities, administrative staff, coaching staff, access to training and

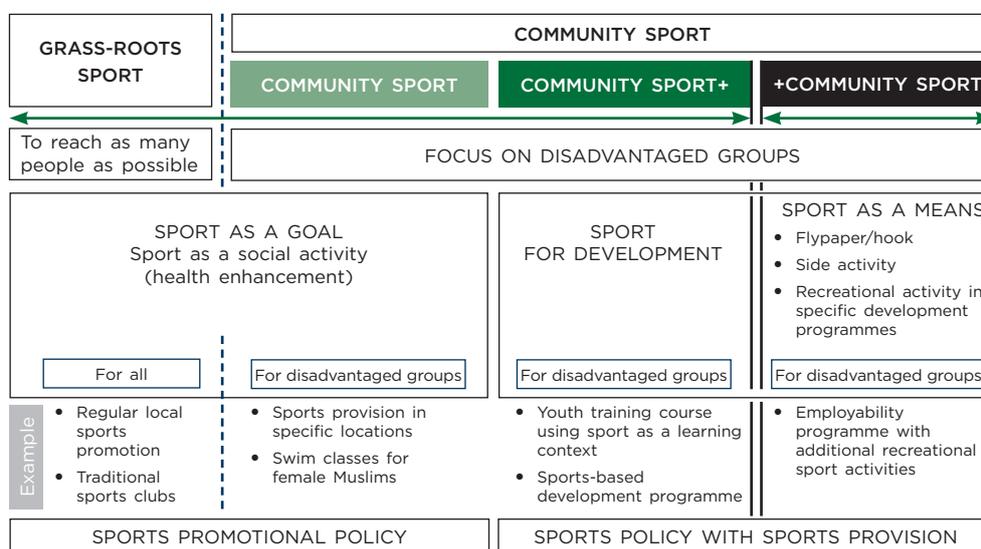
possible costs associated with transport or monitoring and evaluation processes, may still be required for implementation. With the increased recognition of the potential of sport to support prevention work in the context of extreme violence and social division, there are now increased opportunities for corporate and commercial partnerships. Sport for development and peace projects have become an important component of many corporate social responsibility programmes.<sup>126</sup> International governing bodies, such as the Fédération Internationale de Football Association (FIFA) and the Union of European Football Associations (UEFA), have also committed funds and advocated for the important role of sport in peacebuilding and educational contexts.

### Understanding sport

Understanding how sport can contribute to preventing violent extremism requires a better grasp of sport for development and peace. To begin with, a distinction exists between development of sport and development *through* sport.<sup>127</sup> The former focuses on improving sport participation and performance, while the latter emphasizes social and economic change resulting from sport. For interventions aimed at preventing violent extremism, the more commonly used approach is “plus sport”, and the majority of programmes deliver sport in addition to supporting the prevention of violent extremism and other activities.

The typology developed by Buelens, Theeboom and Vertonghen is a useful reference<sup>128</sup> to visually represent the difference between “sport plus” and “plus sport” interventions and to enable programmes to position their own projects accordingly, depending on the desired focus.

**Figure 20. Typology of community and grass-roots sports**



Although a distinction can be drawn between grass-roots sport and community sport, research suggests that these are fluid terms that lack universal conceptual definitions. Grass-roots sport could be considered an organized practice linked to voluntary sports clubs, often regarded as the first phase

<sup>126</sup> Aaron C. T. Smith and Hans M. Westerbeek, “Sport as a vehicle for deploying corporate social responsibility”, *Journal of Corporate Citizenship*, No. 25 (2007).

<sup>127</sup> Roger Levermore and Aaron Beacom, eds., *Sport and International Development*, Global Culture and Sport Series (London, Palgrave Macmillan, 2009).

<sup>128</sup> Evi Buelens, Marc Theeboom and Jikkemien Vertonghen, “Een vernieuwde kijk op buurtsport: bouwstenen en positionering”, (Brussels, Vrije Universiteit Brussel, Sport and Society Research Group, 2018), p. 16.

towards competitive and/or elite participation, whereas community sport includes neighbourhood sport programmes and after-school clubs.<sup>129</sup> Grass-roots sport is often tasked with providing participation opportunities and increasing participation numbers, whereas community sport is more targeted and focused on particular social groups or disadvantaged groups. In both categories, sport is considered a development tool to achieve specific goals and is used to address varying objectives, including conflict resolution and intercultural understanding, empowerment of marginalized groups, awareness through education, and health improvement.<sup>130</sup>

In its resolution 74/170 on integrating sport into youth crime prevention and criminal justice strategies, the General Assembly specifically recognized “the complementary nature of youth crime prevention and criminal justice efforts and work on sport for development and peace” and invited Member States, the United Nations system and other stakeholders to “use sport as a tool to promote peace, justice and dialogue”. As such, “plus sport” programmes focusing on the prevention of violent extremism would be likely to use grass-roots and community sports as platforms to attract young people to a programme supplemented by non-sport activities, such as life skills training.

### Uses of sport programmes

Sport and sport-based programmes for the prevention of violence and crime, including for the prevention of violent extremism, can be effective only when they form part of a holistic and comprehensive approach and when due consideration is given to the limitations and potential shortcomings of such interventions. In any programme, it is important to understand the boundaries of the inherent power of sport to foster development, and to acknowledge that sport on its own cannot transform societies and that sport in itself is not meant as a “magical” solution to social issues.<sup>131</sup>

One limitation lies in the assumption that sport is a universal activity that can engage everyone. Simon Darnell questions this notion: “If sport is to be used as a ‘hook’ that brings young people to development programmes, so that they can subsequently be taught life skills or messages of peace, what happens when young people do not like sport or their interests lie elsewhere?”<sup>132</sup> It is therefore important for programmes to apply a broader definition of sport that includes physical play, recreation, dance, online sports and competitive, traditional and indigenous sports and games in their diverse forms<sup>133</sup> in order to encourage engagement of those who do not enjoy traditional sports.

Sport should also be applied as part of a comprehensive ecosystem for development and learning. Sports activities should be linked to opportunities for civic engagement, participation and personal development and “must not be over-relied upon to be the vehicle best equipped to alleviate poverty and temper social tensions” in order to avoid negative side effects.<sup>134</sup>

The limitations and shortcomings of sport and sport-based programmes include the following:

- The positive outcomes of sport cannot be guaranteed or presumed, since sport could, in certain conditions, also exacerbate conflict and incite violence.

<sup>129</sup> Hebe Schailleé, Rainhardt Haudenhuysse and Lieve Bradt, “Community sport and social inclusion: international perspectives”, *Sport in Society*, vol. 22, No. 6 (2019), pp. 885–896.

<sup>130</sup> Roger Levermore, “Sport: a new engine of development?”, *Progress in Development Studies*, vol. 8, No. 2 (April 2008), pp. 183–190.

<sup>131</sup> Jay Coakley, “Assessing the sociology of sport: on cultural sensibilities and the great sport myth”, *International Review for the Sociology of Sport*, vol. 50, Nos. 4–5 (May 2015).

<sup>132</sup> Simon Darnell, “Sport as a means of advancing international development”, *UN Chronicle*, vol. LIII, No. 2 (August 2016).

<sup>133</sup> Kazan Action Plan.

<sup>134</sup> Will L.A. Bennett, “Idle youth: using sport to address the youth bulge in Sierra Leone”, *Inquiries Journal*, vol. 2, No. 5 (2010).

- The responsibility assigned to sport to improve critical issues is exaggerated; in fact, research suggests that sport itself does little to challenge or change the root causes of social marginalization and poverty.<sup>135</sup>
- The power and popularity of sport is not always used in positive ways and is susceptible to abuse, exploitation and welfare concerns.
- The long-term impact of sport is questionable, and the sustainability of the positive outcomes of “plus sport” interventions is fragile once the activities are finished and participation comes to an end, especially in the case of youth in developing countries.<sup>136</sup>

Therefore, sport programmes must be used in a holistic manner, as part of a wider strategy for preventing violent extremism. Programmes need to be designed through key mechanisms and programme principles to maximize the impact of activities and learning opportunities. It is essential to link programmes to wider support networks, including through identification and referral mechanisms, in order to maximize and sustain impact (see guidance below).

The recommendations and practical guidance provided in the present section are aimed at underlining key programming elements that are essential for leveraging the potential of sport in the context of preventing violent extremism, including by mitigating risks and possible shortcomings, and at enhancing impact by applying the five-zone approach presented in chapter 2.

### *Leveraging the power of sport in the context of preventing violent extremism*

While the positive power of sport is not dismissed, its use is actively advocated within wider efforts for social change or “under carefully constructed and managed circumstances”.<sup>137</sup> In order to amplify the positive benefits of sport-based programmes, it is important to do the following:<sup>138</sup>

- › Identify clear objectives and outcomes.
- › Contextualize interventions and allow programmes to integrate elements relevant to the particular geographical, cultural and material context within which they are carried out, noting that there is no one-size-fits-all approach.
- › Facilitate positive participation experiences to encourage increased and consistent participation. This is done by developing social relations with facilitators, staff and other participants and by fostering strong role models and mentors.
- › Engage the wider community, including families, funders and stakeholders, to expand the programme’s social network and to ensure greater support for the programme.

<sup>135</sup>Douglas Hartmann and Christina Kwauk, “Sport and development: an overview, critique, and reconstruction,” *Journal of Sport and Social Issues*, vol. 35, No. 3 (August 2011), pp. 284–305.

<sup>136</sup>Holy Collison, *Youth and Sport for Development: The Seduction of Football in Liberia* (London, Palgrave MacMillan, 2016).

<sup>137</sup>John Sugden and Alan Tomlinson, *Sport and Peace-Building in Divided Societies: Playing with Enemies* (New York, Routledge, 2018).

<sup>138</sup>UNESCO and UNODC, recommendations of the joint expert group meeting on sport as a tool for the prevention of violent extremism, held in Vienna on 11 and 12 December 2018.

Sport and physical activity have the power to change perceptions, counter prejudices and improve behaviour.<sup>139</sup> Thus, in the light of the growing contribution of sport to the realization of development and peace in its promotion of tolerance and respect,<sup>140</sup> the potential contribution of sport for development and peace to preventing violent extremism lies in its ability to:<sup>141</sup>

- Respond to the changing nature and scope of global violence and build on the platform provided by sporting events and activities to establish opportunities for dialogue and engender respect and understanding. The reduction of all forms of violence, including gender-based violence, can be specifically addressed through “plus sport” programmes. Such programmes enable increased dialogue and community-building by promoting tolerance and respect.
- Limit abuse, violence and exploitation in sport by enhancing good governance in sport and intensifying efforts to safeguard all sport participants, as well as by promoting effective, accountable sporting institutions.
- Apply a human rights-based approach, safeguarding and promoting human rights.
- Reflect on localized and community-level violence through social inclusion and the creation of safe spaces in “plus sport” programmes.
- Intensify efforts to safeguard participants and link to conflict prevention, community-building and youth development interventions.

### *Typology of sport-based programmes relevant to the prevention of violent extremism*

It has also been suggested that different types of sports and activities may be more suitable for certain objectives or more attractive to certain groups. For example, some sports are more strongly characterized by certain forms of violence than others,<sup>142</sup> while other sports are considered more masculine or unfeminine, which may deter participation. In creating a programme curriculum and effectively selecting the type of sport activity to be used within sport-based programmes for the prevention of violent extremism, it is critical to consider the popularity and contextual relevance of the sport and to encourage participation in order to ensure the impact and effectiveness of the programme.

The typology set out below provides an overview of certain desired outcomes relevant to interventions for the prevention of violent extremism and the corresponding characteristics of such sport-based interventions (based on research from several studies) that help to better inform design choices in sport for prevention of violent extremism programmes.

<sup>139</sup> General Assembly resolution 74/170.

<sup>140</sup> General Assembly resolution 70/1, para. 37.

<sup>141</sup> Oliver Dudfield and Malcolm Dingwall-Smith, *Sport for Development and Peace and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development* (London, Commonwealth Secretariat, 2015).

<sup>142</sup> Sébastien Guilbert, “Sport and violence: a typological analysis”, *International Review for the Sociology of Sport*, vol. 39, No. 1 (March 2004), pp. 45–55.

**Table 8. Prevention of violent extremism and sport typology**

Outcome	Activity characteristics	Example
Reduced youth violence	<p>Programmes designed to act as diversions from street violence by keeping young people busy playing sports are more impactful.<sup>a</sup> Longer-term programmes are better suited for this purpose, and activities that incentivize participants to attend for longer periods, such as participation in regional tournaments or activities that build up to larger events based on attendance, are recommended. Mentorship and role models play a major role in adding support systems for disadvantaged youth and helping them to envision positive future directions. Certain sports have also been found to increase the participants' sense of belonging to violent representations and forms (e.g., judo, karate, soccer and basketball),<sup>b</sup> while others do not involve violent physical behaviour (e.g., swimming, tennis, table tennis and volleyball).</p>	<p>The Becoming a Man Sports programme was a collaborative project that combined the Becoming a Man programme, which helps high school boys make positive life choices and directs them away from street violence and violent crime in disadvantaged communities by providing mentors within school settings and strengthening social-cognitive skills, with the youth sport programmes of the World Sport Chicago organization, which provide safe spaces for young people to gain access to sport in low-income neighbourhoods. The results showed sizeable declines in violent crime arrests among participants in the programme, which helped participants to build emotional regulation skills.<sup>c</sup></p>
Increased participation of women	<p>Safe spaces, ease of access and mitigating the risk of injury are key. It is also important to avoid unsafe environments (e.g., road running) and injury-prone sports or those that are not commonly accepted within gender norms and to challenge stereotypes and normative beliefs conducive to inequality. Evidence also suggests that girls are more likely to practise individual sports than team sports<sup>d</sup> and to engage in more leisurely physical activities than competitive sports.<sup>e</sup> However, this is not always the case, as seen in the example provided in the right-hand column.</p>	<p>The Galz and Goals programme was launched by UNICEF, in partnership with the Namibia Football Association, in schools across the country with a view to encouraging more girls to play football, promoting individual health and social responsibility and empowering women. The programme developed a curriculum for teachers, facilitators and parents that included information on HIV/AIDS, alcohol abuse and gender discrimination.<sup>f</sup></p>

Outcome	Activity characteristics	Example
Social cohesion among members of different factions or divided groups	It is worthwhile to consider beginning programmes with non-contact sporting activities or activities with lower chances of physical violence (e.g., volleyball) to minimize physical contact. Other team sports can also be used, but with safeguarding in place to minimize violent confrontations. Individual sports are less likely to foster positive interaction opportunities owing to the nature of those activities compared with team sports, which facilitate increased interaction and communication.	PeacePlayers International uses basketball “to unite divided communities through sport”, <sup>g</sup> focusing on building youth leadership skills and changing perceptions through interaction between young people from different backgrounds.
Social integration	Integration into the community is fostered through sport. <sup>h</sup> Programmes can help to facilitate learning about the local culture and increased interaction opportunities with community members and can encourage community links and networks. Learning about national sporting practices and fandom helps migrants socialize and promotes a shared identity. <sup>i</sup>	The Brighton Table Tennis Club offers a pathway for refugees and migrants to integrate with the local community through its refugee integration project, which incorporates sport, community integration and maths and English skills. <sup>j</sup>
Strengthened prosocial behaviours	By encouraging greater self-control and discipline and teaching participants how to deal with difficult situations, programmes for the prevention of violent extremism through sport can reduce antisocial behaviour that may lead to violent extremism. Activities need to integrate reflective, collaborative group sessions to develop communication skills and greater respect. Trained youth workers are key, and programmes are more impactful when utilized within wider development efforts in education and support (e.g., by incorporating integrated mentoring, training, volunteering and work experience programmes). <sup>k</sup>	HITZ is a rugby programme that aims to attract young people aged 16–18 who are currently not in education, employment or training, with the aim of reintegrating them into education and employment environments. The programme offers apprenticeships, qualifications, employer-led sessions and physical enrichment through its rugby activities. <sup>l</sup>

**Table 8. Prevention of violent extremism and sport typology (continued)**

Outcome	Activity characteristics	Example
Reduced gang violence	Programmes may be aimed at reducing repeat offences and helping participants to transition out of gang environments. Having a strong support network and connecting participants with mentors greatly increases the chances of impact. Sporting activities are often complemented by employability workshops on writing curricula vitae or building skills.	The Air Sports Network works with gang members and those recently released from prison to offer multi-sport programmes that provide them with alternative ways to spend their time and capacity-building workshops that help them to transition into better lives. <sup>m</sup>

<sup>a</sup>Simon McMahon and Jyoti Belur, “Sports-based programmes and reducing youth violence and crime”, Project Oracle Children and Youth Evidence Hub, Synthesis study No. 02/13 (October 2013).

<sup>b</sup>Sébastien Guilbert, “Sport and violence: a typological analysis”, *International Review for the Sociology of Sport*, vol. 39, No. 1 (March 2004), pp. 45–55.

<sup>c</sup>University of Chicago Crime Lab, “BAM Sports Edition”, Research and Policy Brief (July 2012).

<sup>d</sup>Deidre Scully and Jackie Clarke, “Gender issues in sport participation”, in *Young People’s Involvement in Sport*, John Kremer, Karen Trew and Shaun Ogle, eds. (London, Routledge, 2005).

<sup>e</sup>Emma Guillet and others, “Understanding female sport attrition in a stereotypical male sport within the framework of Eccles’ expectancy-value model”, *Psychology of Women Quarterly*, vol. 30, No. 4 (December 2006), pp. 358–368.

<sup>f</sup>UNICEF, “UNICEF launches ‘Galz and Goals’ programme to promote sport for girls in Namibia”. Available at [www.unicef.org/infobycountry/namibia\\_51687.html](http://www.unicef.org/infobycountry/namibia_51687.html).

<sup>g</sup>Peace Players, “Annual report 2018” (Washington, D.C., 2019).

<sup>h</sup>Sport England, *Review of Evidence on the Outcomes of Sport and Physical Activity: A Rapid Evidence Review* (London, May 2017).

<sup>i</sup>Ramón Spaaij and others, “Sport, refugees, and forced migration: a critical review of the literature”, *Frontiers in Sports and Active Living*, vol. 1, No. 47 (October 2019).

<sup>j</sup>Elisa Sandri and Mark Doidge, *Active Integration: Brighton Table Tennis Club Refugee Integration Project – Final Report* (May 2018).

<sup>k</sup>Laureus Sport for Good Foundation and Ecorys, “Sport scores: the costs and benefits of sport for crime reduction” (London, 2012).

<sup>l</sup>Premiership Rugby, Community, “Award-winning HITZ programme”. Available at [www.premiershiprugby.com/community/hitz/](http://www.premiershiprugby.com/community/hitz/).

<sup>m</sup>Air Sports Network. Available at [www.airnetwork.co.uk/](http://www.airnetwork.co.uk/).

The typology above is not to be taken as a set formula, but rather as a way to better inform programme design beyond the choice of sport. Again, it is important to recognize that context is critical in understanding the popularity and acceptance of an activity, and engaging local actors and potential beneficiaries can therefore help practitioners to ascertain the best choice of sport and decide on programme elements.

### Capacity-building, training and education

Trainers, coaches and other facilitators are integral actors in the process of preventing violent extremism through sport, yet there is very limited knowledge on how community sports coaches can create optimal social conditions for the development and transfer of life skills.<sup>143</sup> Research has shown that “sports facilitators are key players in creating social conditions and a motivational climate for positive

<sup>143</sup>Sabina Super, Kirsten Verkooijen and Maria Koelen, “The role of community sports coaches in creating optimal social conditions for life skill development and transferability: a salutogenic perspective”, *Sport, Education and Society*, vol. 23, No. 2 (2018), pp. 173–185.

youth and skills development”.<sup>144</sup> This recognition should be the basis for strategic planning and resource allocation when developing a programme.

It is critical that funding be dedicated to the provision of capacity-building, training and education for coaches, trainers and other facilitators of “sport plus” interventions for the prevention of violent extremism. Given that coaches and other facilitators are the faces of sport programmes and have the most sustained interaction with programme participants, their observations, insights and skills support programme impact, sustainable change and the welfare of often young and at-risk populations. Their personal characteristics, along with direct and indirect teaching strategies, influence whether learning processes occur in the sports setting and whether those processes lead to the transfer of life skills to other societal domains.

Coaches and other facilitators must be aware of the programme’s core values, mission and approach. Because facilitators both deliver the sporting aspects of the programme and play a non-sporting role as trusted figures who nurture skills related to preventing violent extremism, it is necessary to ensure that their training encompasses both the sport and development components, which could include the following:

- Understanding extreme ideologies and violent extremism
- Gender equality
- Human rights
- Child rights
- Monitoring and evaluation
- Safeguarding, welfare and inclusive practices

Furthermore, coaches, trainers and other facilitators need to be trained to understand key contextual, cultural and social indicators that affect vulnerability to violent extremism, youth behaviours and decision-making, and to understand the appropriate steps needed to support change. In the light of their role, which involves observing and noting invaluable development and behavioural shifts, they also become part of the monitoring, evaluation and learning process. As a result, allocating time and resources to the training of facilitators is a critical success factor in programming for the prevention of violent extremism and will be reflected in the quality and effectiveness of “sport plus” interventions.

In “plus sport” and sport for development activities more broadly, the educational background, professional experience, knowledge and skills of facilitators may be diverse. Facilitators can be sport coaches or trainers, social or community workers, teachers or education professionals. Capacity-building and training activities on sport and prevention of violent extremism programmes therefore need to be tailored to the training needs of specific groups and individuals.

In the training of coaches and facilitators for prevention of violent extremism programmes, it is important to realize that they, too, are at risk of violent extremism. Therefore, the selection of staff is critical, and their performance is to be reviewed by management regularly. Although each programme requires a unique skill set according to its context and specific goals, general criteria include experience of

<sup>144</sup>Martin Camiré and others, “Strategies for helping coaches facilitate positive youth development through sport”, *Journal of Sport Psychology in Action*, vol. 2, No. 2 (May 2011), pp. 92–99; Christiane Trottier and Sophie Robitaille, “Fostering life skills development in high school and community sport: a comparative analysis of the coach’s role”, *Sport Psychologist*, vol. 28, No. 1 (2014), pp. 10–21.

working directly with young people in the social, education and development sector, communication and pedagogical skills, and formal qualifications in and around sport. All facilitators must undergo vetting and screening procedures in line with international standards and national laws and receive training on safeguarding and being aware of child protection, including referral mechanisms and procedures. When relevant, and depending on the specific elements of each intervention, specialized staff should be engaged in programme delivery and implementation.

### Programme monitoring and evaluation

Another consideration for programme design is the need to account for monitoring and evaluation processes and activities and to ensure that resources are requested and allocated for those activities before programme delivery begins. From the very inception of the project, it is vital that there be clarity and transparency regarding its aim and the objectives to be achieved over the life span of the programme. Objectives should be written with precision to support process thinking and monitoring and evaluation.

Along with setting objectives, gathering evidence to demonstrate impact and tangible results can also help to strengthen programmes. Chapter 4 of the present guide provides information on developing a robust monitoring and evaluation framework and on measuring the impact of sport and prevention of violent extremism programmes.

Programme designers and implementers are encouraged to work with local actors and beneficiaries when conceptualizing and creating programme activities and objectives and setting indicators for monitoring and evaluation frameworks. It is important for indicators to be measurable, realistic and relevant. They can be reviewed with staff members, funders and partners to ensure that objectives are met.



#### Checklist for effective monitoring and evaluation programming

- ✓ Resources need to be allocated for monitoring and evaluation activities and accounted for at the programme inception stage and before implementation.
- ✓ Training for all staff is essential and should be ongoing.
- ✓ Monitoring, reflection and learning should be part of everyday programming activities.
- ✓ The theory of change and evaluation approaches need to be conceptualized in collaboration with stakeholders, facilitators, coaches and participants before delivery begins.
- ✓ Creative data-collection tools should be designed and utilized.
- ✓ Ethical practices need to be ensured and risks managed for all data-collection activities.

## 3.2 Defining target groups of sport and prevention of violent extremism programmes

### Engaging the most vulnerable

Identifying the target group of an intervention and ensuring participation in project activities is an important part of the design stage of a programme. Target groups are broadly defined as groups of people with common characteristics and similar life situations. It is important for policymakers and practitioners engaged in programme activities to consider who is targeted by their projects and initiatives in order to inform strategic planning in the operationalization and delivery of sport programmes.

In the process of defining the target groups and beneficiaries of programme activities, special consideration must be given to the risk of stigmatization and reinforced marginalization. Broad targeting may lead to “suspect communities”, a term referring to the stigmatization, marginalization and exclusion of a particular community, which will subsequently drive feelings of unfairness that breed violent tendencies.<sup>145</sup>

On the other hand, a more focused approach in a programme for at-risk youth within those communities, although it may be considered more appropriate, may also lead to labelling and reinforce stigmatization.<sup>146</sup> It is therefore necessary to consider the language used in programme documents and materials disseminated when designing, implementing and marketing sport and prevention of violent extremism programmes.

To that end, policymakers, managers and practitioners need to think about what it means for children and youth to be at risk, and whether that definition varies in different contexts. More importantly, it is necessary to consider the assumptions made about their ethno-religious, cultural and political identity in deeming them to be at risk of indoctrination and violent extremist acts.

In the present guide, sport programmes aimed at preventing violent extremism are focused on youth who are more vulnerable and considered to be at higher risk of radicalization conducive to violent extremism. The concept of at-risk youth is very broad; in some respects, all youth are at risk in one way or another. Despite various definitions of at-risk youth, the term is consistently associated with key identifiers, including environmental, social and family factors that play a predominant role in contributing to or detracting from the well-being and healthy development of youth and, in the context of preventing violent extremism, make them more vulnerable to and at risk of recruitment by violent extremist groups. In this context, at-risk youth can be defined as young people whose background places them at risk of future offending or victimization as a result of individual, environmental, social and family conditions that hinder their personal development and successful integration into the economy and society (see also chap. 1).<sup>147</sup>

However, it is of paramount importance to avoid placing a “narrow emphasis on individuals from dire socioeconomic backgrounds, at the expense of recognizing that the effects of relative deprivation can be felt at all levels of society, creating a disconnect between the hopes and realities of those in a society, or an emphasis on education, despite evidence that both educated and non-educated young people are

<sup>145</sup> Floris Vermeulen, “Suspect communities: targeting violent extremism at the local level – policies of engagement in Amsterdam, Berlin and London”, *Terrorism and Political Violence*, vol. 26, No. 2 (2014), pp. 286–306.

<sup>146</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>147</sup> UN-Habitat, “Urban youth-at-risk in Latin America and the Caribbean and the key role of local authorities in addressing youth and crime and promoting citizenship among youth” (2003).

potentially vulnerable to violent extremism and that it is the broad societal environment that creates vulnerability to radicalization”<sup>148</sup>

In the present guide, the five identified zones for preventing violent extremism through sport provide a map and tips that promote creative thinking and practical approaches to daily challenges experienced by at-risk youth. Safe spaces, for example, can be used as trusted locations where youth voice is encouraged. Guidance for facilitators of sport programmes to enhance the participation and engagement of vulnerable and/or at-risk youth includes the following:

- › Acknowledge that internal and external stressors are different for each youth and group. Contextual understandings and definitions of violent extremism and recruitment and propaganda tactics are essential.
- › Be aware that sport can, at times, be seen as a social construction and can therefore be an important enabler with regard to gathering knowledge and building networks. Be open to other ideas voiced by young people to reach a wider network of individuals.
- › Work with small groups so that individual confidence is fostered and trust is built. This will bring about more opportunities to better understand high-risk identities in the local setting.
- › Build meaningful group dynamics to strengthen opportunities for access to at-risk populations.
- › Sports can contribute to the feeling of being worthy and may lead to the perception that one should be treated in a fair manner by all in one’s community or society.

### 3.3 Early identification and referral mechanisms

In the context of primary prevention programming, including for sport-based interventions, it is important to address the identification of vulnerable and at-risk youth as an opportunity for further referral to and support by specialized services. Those services may include access to social, health, education and psychosocial experts. In such efforts, a multi-agency and collaborative community approach is encouraged.

Facilitators and stakeholders should be aware of the cultural and contextual factors relating to violent extremism that may enhance the vulnerability of participants, and they should recognize key indicators for early identification and referral mechanisms. “Referral mechanisms allow for the mobilization of actors — primarily local actors — who are typically best placed to deliver an effective and preventive intervention because they have particular competence, expertise, perceived credibility, or legitimacy that the police or others do not possess.”<sup>149</sup>

#### Early identification indicators

Facilitators, volunteers and coaches do not have the capacity to conduct risk assessments for the prevention of violent extremism, but they are important actors within the sport and prevention process and could potentially identify cases that are in need of further support. Therefore, it is important for facilitators to be able to identify the early behavioural signs associated with primary prevention needs

<sup>148</sup>Report of the Special Rapporteur on the promotion and protection of human rights while countering terrorism: human rights impact of policies and practices aimed at preventing and countering violent extremism (A/HRC/43/46), para. 22.

<sup>149</sup>OSCE, *Understanding Referral Mechanisms in Preventing and Countering Violent Extremism and Radicalization That Lead to Terrorism: Navigating Challenges and Protecting Human Rights – A Guidebook for South-Eastern Europe* (Vienna, 2019).

and the push and pull factors discussed in section 1.3. They should also be familiar with other conceptual frameworks that help to identify situations that are more conducive to violent extremism.

Accordingly, facilitators need to be attuned to the following early warning signs from their participants, which are the tipping points towards violent extremism:<sup>150</sup>

- Alienation
  - Sudden break with family and long-standing friendships
  - Signs of withdrawal and isolation from the community
  - Suddenly dropping out of school and conflicts with school
  - Expression of doubts about self-identity
  - Changes in behaviour relating to food, clothing, language or finances
- Radicalization
  - Changes in attitudes and behaviours towards others: antisocial comments, rejection of authority, refusal to interact socially
  - Regular viewing of Internet sites and participation in social media networks that condone radical or extremist views
  - Hate statements
  - Reference to extreme views or conspiracy theories
- Adherence to violence
  - Emerging or increased violent behaviour towards others
  - Possession of extremist material
  - Targeting or harming other participants on the basis of conflicting views or beliefs

Although the list above includes key behavioural signs and indicators, it is worth mentioning that it is not a checklist, but rather a guide to signs that facilitators and practitioners could observe and use to support potential referrals.

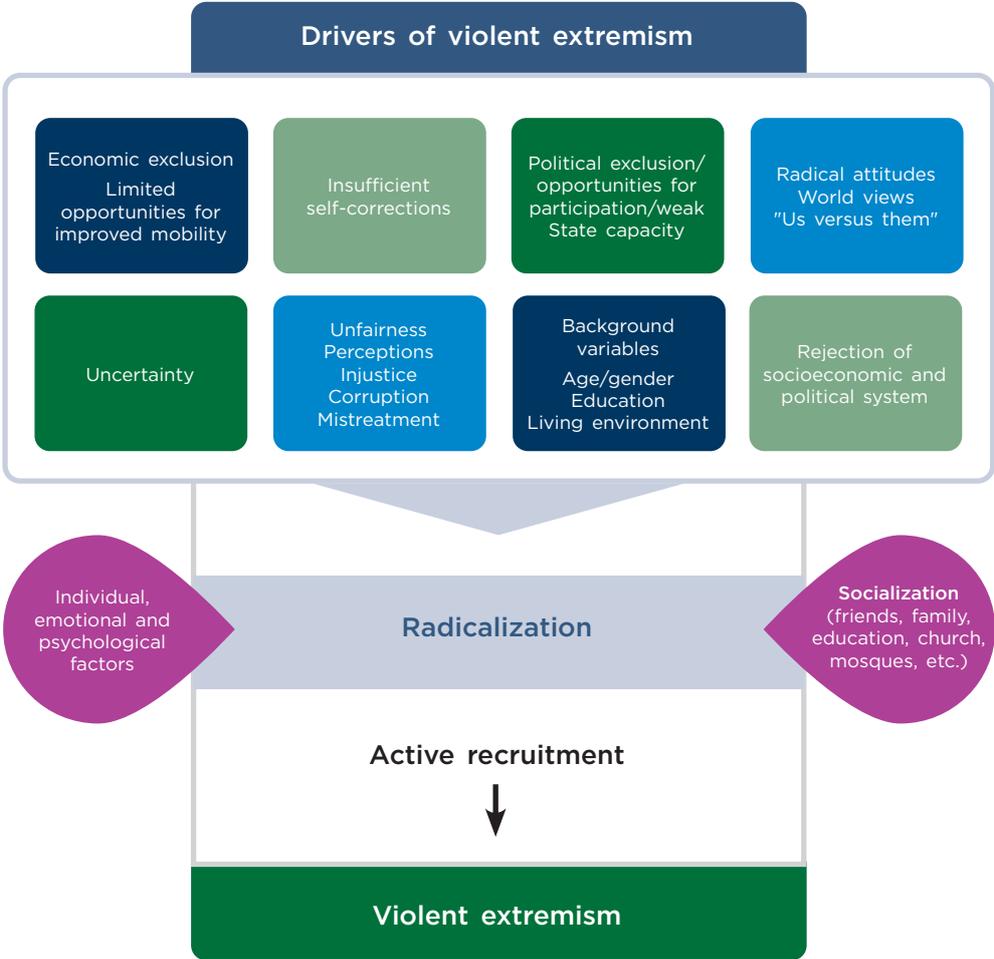
In circumstances where those warning signs are noted, it is helpful and necessary to seek more information to empathetically understand the participant's situation. Keeping confidentiality in mind, coaches or facilitators may wish to:

- Speak to others who are in the participant's support network to see if they have also noticed shifts in behaviour
- Talk to the young person directly, explaining the concerns

Leveraging the opportunities for dialogue with and access to at-risk youth by and through sport also creates opportunities to engage with experts and the wider community. In the process, pathways to support and follow-up activities can be developed and embedded around sport interventions.

<sup>150</sup>UNODC, *Prevention of Child Recruitment and Exploitation by Terrorist and Violent Extremist Groups* (see footnote 66).

Figure 21. Early identification indicators of violent extremism



Source: Adapted from UNDP, “Preventing violent extremism through promoting inclusive development, tolerance and respect for diversity: a development response to addressing radicalization and violent extremism” (New York, 2016).

**Referral mechanisms**

Referral mechanisms are a key programming component, not only to provide further support for participants but also to protect human rights and children’s rights and to enhance the long-term impact of sport and prevention of violent extremism interventions through the expertise of specialist services.

According to a definition used by the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe, “referrals include individuals who are referred to multi-agency or other multi-stakeholder programmes and who display observable behaviours indicating they might be at risk of or vulnerable to engagement in violent extremism and radicalization that lead to terrorism or already on this path. Referrals also include individuals whom a programme refers to an agency, institution, organization, or professionals for an intervention or other support following a professional assessment of the individual’s risks, vulnerabilities, and protective factors.”<sup>151</sup>

<sup>151</sup> OSCE, *Understanding Referral Mechanisms in Preventing and Countering Violent Extremism and Radicalization*.

Referral mechanisms may be formal or informal and should involve experts, professional services and teams or agencies that conduct risk assessments and provide support and/or additional interventions for individuals at the primary prevention level or for those at risk of recruitment to violent extremism.

In the context of primary prevention interventions, including through sport and prevention of violent extremism programmes, it is necessary to take a public health and educational approach to referral mechanisms rather than a law enforcement approach. Referral mechanisms that follow a social and educational approach offer a number of benefits, including the following:<sup>152</sup>

- Increasing the likelihood that families and other concerned community members will refer individuals who show signs of radicalization to programmes for the prevention of violent extremism before those individuals embrace violence
- Building trust between communities and professional services and organizations focused on preventing violent extremism
- Incentivizing the involvement of a range of professionals who might be reluctant to engage in a potentially politically sensitive intervention to prevent violent extremism on their own
- Promoting a multidisciplinary approach and enabling the sharing of information about referred individuals among different agencies and organizations (within the limits of data protection and privacy standards)
- Providing a more accurate assessment of the risks posed by and the needs of vulnerable individuals than single-stakeholder intervention programmes can typically provide
- Allowing a referred individual to tap into a range of services at one time, enhancing his or her ability to benefit from a more comprehensive support plan than a single agency or organization would allow

A referral mechanism should be able to offer an intervention or wider support plan that is individually tailored to the vulnerabilities of those identified, and the plan should account for the age, gender, cultural background and risk factors presented by each individual.<sup>153</sup> Key steps and considerations in the development of referral mechanisms and support systems that can amplify and sustain the positive results and impact of sport-based interventions to prevent violent extremism include the following:

- › Adopt a public health-based and multi-agency approach by focusing on preventive and community-led efforts that involve a wide range of non-law enforcement, non-governmental and specialist practitioners and actors. This can be achieved through an initial mapping and consulting exercise with local actors and organizations.
- › Build community support to reduce stigmatization; this may include other sport communities, families, local schools, individuals and local youth groups.
- › Develop appropriate branding for referral mechanisms to reduce stigmatization and protect human rights.
- › Recognize the skills of others (apart from facilitators or coaches) in conducting risk assessments and build capacity to train programme staff in the early identification of risk and needs.

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<sup>152</sup> Ibid.

<sup>153</sup> Ibid.

- › Ensure that participants are not criminalized during the process or put at risk of unnecessary law enforcement actions.
- › Develop referral mechanisms and processes in collaboration with local experts and specialist organizations. Developing referral frameworks is complex and requires consideration of the local context, scope, branding, information-sharing and ethics, safeguarding, gender perspectives, timing and resources of the project. The process should involve civil society and clearly define roles and responsibilities.
- › Acknowledge that referrals come in many forms and from differing sources. For example, a schoolteacher might consult with a programme for the prevention of violent extremism through sport to engage with an individual or group of students, or a sport and prevention of violent extremism facilitator might identify a participant in need of additional support from services outside the sport-based intervention.
- › Through trusted key stakeholders and community leaders, raise awareness of the referral process, the services available for primary prevention programmes and educational opportunities.
- › Ensure that a referral mechanism can offer an intervention or wider support plan that is individually tailored to the vulnerabilities of those identified; it should account for the age, gender, cultural background and risk factors presented by the individual.<sup>154</sup>
- › Identify a process for independent review and learning and monitor and evaluate the referral process.

### 3.4 A human rights approach to sport and prevention of violent extremism programming

Adopting a human rights approach in sport and prevention of violent extremism programming entails incorporating a human rights perspective into the programming process, including in its design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation, and ensuring that interventions further the realization of human rights and contribute to developing the capacities of duty bearers to meet their obligations and/or the capacities of rights holders to claim their rights.

In ensuring a human rights approach to sport and prevention of violent extremism programmes, it is necessary to consider, among other things, meaningful consultation with and the participation of communities targeted by measures to prevent and counter violent extremism, physical access and the inclusion of all community members, safeguarding policies and codes of conduct for children and other vulnerable participants, and the promotion of equality.

In addition to the detailed guidance on gender and child rights provided in the present section, key elements of a human rights approach include the following:

- Adopting a participatory approach to project design and evaluation in which children and youth are recognized as key actors in their own development

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<sup>154</sup>Ibid.

- Training all persons involved in programme development and design (e.g., coaches, trainers, volunteers and young people) on human rights, including children's rights, and the human rights principles and values to be applied to the project
- Developing inclusive programmes that ensure access and promote the social inclusion of marginalized, disadvantaged and excluded groups, including youth and children living with disabilities
- Applying the “do no harm” principle and integrating human rights in monitoring and evaluation frameworks to capture unintentional outcomes affecting human rights

### Guidance for promoting human rights among youth participants

In promoting human rights among youth participants, it is helpful to consider the “fair play” ethic in sports as a point of reference. Fair play is much more than following the rules of the game; it is about the attitude of the sportsperson. According to the Declaration of the International Fair Play Committee, “fair play belongs to everyone. All those who are involved in sport are responsible for ensuring it is a sport of fair play.”<sup>155</sup> The important message of the Declaration is that fair play is the foundation upon which sport is built. Shaping a rights-based approach in this way will familiarize and humanize the concept of human rights to young participants. Practical guidance and tips for promoting human rights through sport programmes include the following:

- › Introduce coaches, youth and their communities to human rights principles through play and sport with peers, and encourage and provide examples of how participants can apply a rights-based approach to their daily lives.
- › Co-create a project based on fair play principles and produce a rights-based statement.
- › Support youth in identifying ways in which human rights influence how they play sports and live in communities. Discuss how they can assess and adjust their actions according to those principles.
- › Use sport as a mechanism for justice and social change. Encourage youth to use sport to challenge discriminatory and exclusionary social norms (i.e., identify groups of youth who are not participating, determine the causes and find safe and fun ways to integrate them).
- › Use sporting events as a communication platform to advocate for human rights (e.g., through performances by youth that promote gender equality and the inclusion of persons living with disabilities).

#### International framework on human rights and sports

Human rights frameworks include specific provisions that concern fundamental conditions for sport and recreation. Those provisions include the following:

##### Universal Declaration of Human Rights

- Article 24 identifies rest and leisure as a human right.
- Article 27 identifies the right to freely participate in the cultural life of the community.

##### Convention on the Rights of the Child

1. Article 31 recognizes the right of the child to rest and leisure, to engage in play and recreational activities appropriate to the age of the child and to participate freely in cultural life and the arts.

##### Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities

2. Article 30 refers to the right of persons with disabilities to participate on an equal basis with others in cultural life, recreation, leisure and sports.

<sup>155</sup> International Committee for Fair Play, “Declaration: sport and fair play in the 21st century”. Available at [www.fairplayinternational.org](http://www.fairplayinternational.org).

### Considerations on gender and the prevention of violent extremism

In the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy and the Secretary-General's Plan of Action to Prevent Violent Extremism, gender equality and the empowerment of women are identified as priority areas for action. Throughout the present guide, coaches and policymakers are encouraged to take gender considerations into account and to ensure that young women and girls participate actively in sport and prevention of violent extremism programmes. It is equally important to consider gender constructions for men and boys that play a role in recruitment to violent extremism. In doing so, stakeholders, individual actors and partners are encouraged to prioritize gender inclusion, equality and contextual specificity when designing and delivering initiatives to prevent violent extremism through sport.

Addressing the relationship between gender and violent extremism requires a holistic and intersectional approach that includes a focus “on respect for women’s human rights, and the absence thereof, structural inequality, the gendered drivers of armed conflict and the relationship between violent and hegemonic masculinities and the production of violent extremism”.<sup>156</sup>

Gender constructions play a large part in determining what is expected, allowed and valued in an individual within a given context. In most societies, there are differences and inequalities between women and men in terms of responsibilities assigned, activities undertaken, access to and control over resources, and decision-making opportunities.<sup>157</sup> Given that sport is a viable tool for challenging established gender norms,<sup>158</sup> being aware of such differences allows for the mainstreaming of gender needs in programme design and implementation to strengthen content and increase the likelihood of impact.

### Role of women and girls

Violent extremism is a gendered phenomenon that is experienced differently by women and girls than by men and boys (be it as victims or perpetrators). Although men have been more prominent figures in violent extremism, failure to recognize the roles of women and gender dynamics in recruitment is seen as a major drawback to efforts to prevent violent extremism, which are often gender-blind. It is important to recognize agency and counter the stereotype that women are simply passive and submissive “followers” as portrayed in their relationship to men (e.g., as wives, mothers and widows), as opposed to being equally vulnerable to exploitation and recruitment within violent extremist networks and groups.

Women were among the earliest targets of violent extremist groups. They have been targeted for slavery and sex trafficking, but also play important roles in recruitment and enforcing moral codes on other women. On the other hand, recent studies have recorded unprecedented numbers of women recruited for violent extremism.<sup>159</sup> Many play key caretaker roles, including raising and indoctrinating the children of fighters,<sup>160</sup> and play State-building roles as teachers and nurses. Data show that women may also actively support terrorist and violent extremist groups by recruiting others, raising funds, spreading violent extremist ideologies and participating in violent acts.<sup>161</sup>

<sup>156</sup> Report of the Special Rapporteur on the promotion and protection of human rights while countering terrorism: human rights impact of policies and practices aimed at preventing and countering violent extremism (A/HRC/43/46), para. 39.

<sup>157</sup> United Nations, Office of the Special Adviser on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women, “Gender mainstreaming: strategy for promoting gender equality” (August 2001).

<sup>158</sup> Martha Saavedra, “Dilemmas and opportunities in gender and sport-in-development”, in *Sport and International Development*, Roger Levermore and Aaron Beacom, eds., Global Culture and Sport Series (London, Palgrave Macmillan, 2009).

<sup>159</sup> Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate, “Gender dimensions of the response to returning foreign terrorist fighters: research perspectives”, CTED Trends Report (February 2019).

<sup>160</sup> Asaad H. Almohammad and Anne Speckhard, “The operational ranks and roles of female ISIS operatives: from assassins and morality police to spies and suicide bombers” (n.p., International Centre for the Study of Violent Extremism, 2017).

<sup>161</sup> UN-Women, “Preventing violent extremism and countering terrorism”. Available at [www.unwomen.org/](http://www.unwomen.org/).

Women can therefore occupy complex identities, as victims as well as agents, within this sphere. However, owing to the gendered assumption of women's limited participation, they often receive proportionally less support/attention as part of preventive strategies and are increasingly used in active roles in terrorist and violent extremist groups because they tend to subvert traditional security expectations.

### *Masculinity and violent extremism*

For men and boys, it is critical to understand the socialization process that contributes to gender stereotypes. This is especially relevant in the context of preventing violent extremism, where social constructs of masculinity play a major role in attracting and recruiting men and boys.<sup>162</sup>

Although masculinity itself is not harmful, certain cultural norms relating to masculinity can be harmful to men, women and society overall. For example, hegemonic masculinity and its notions of men as warriors, fighters and protectors helps to fuel violence and a dominant identity with which men and boys associate themselves.<sup>163</sup> Propaganda and violent extremism recruitment strategies often appeal to those gendered stereotypes, drawing on societal expectations of men protecting their religion, nation and/or women.<sup>164</sup> For example, white supremacist groups perpetuate the idea of white women needing protection from other races.<sup>165</sup> In Libya, masculine gender norms of breadwinning are an integral part of recruitment strategies used by extremist groups.<sup>166</sup>

Relatedly, those men and boys who do not adhere to social constructs of gender often feel excluded and marginalized within their societies, which can also push them towards deviant behaviours conducive to violent extremism. Such constructs include being able to provide financially, having secure employment and having children.<sup>167</sup> As a result, men who do not possess those capabilities face challenges in fulfilling their roles in their societies and are more vulnerable to radicalization.<sup>168</sup>

### *Sport, gender and the prevention of violent extremism*

To integrate a gender perspective into sport and prevention of violent extremism programming, it is necessary to incorporate the needs of all participants equally with a view to eliminating harmful stereotypes. While it is important to ensure that programming provides equal access and participation opportunities for women and girls, it is critical to understand the need to integrate a gender perspective that does not conflate gender with women.

Research on sport and gender has provided evidence of the role of physical activity in transforming and challenging gender stereotypes, as a means of social inclusion and in increasing leadership potential.<sup>169</sup> In accounting for context and social constructions of gender, care must be taken to ensure that the culture of some sports that reproduce negative gender stereotypes (e.g., hypermasculinity,

<sup>162</sup>Jossif Ezekilov, "Gender 'Men-Streaming' CVE: countering violence extremism by addressing masculinities issues", *Reconsidering Development*, vol. 5, No. 1 (December 2017).

<sup>163</sup>Sanam Naraghi Anderlini, "Challenging conventional wisdom, transforming current practices: a gendered lens on PVE", in *Transformative Approaches to Violent Extremism*, Beatrix Austin and Hans J. Giessmann, eds., Berghof Handbook Dialogue Series, No. 13 (Berlin, Berghof Foundation, 2018).

<sup>164</sup>Katherine Brown, *Guidance Note: Gender Mainstreaming Principles, Dimensions and Priorities for PVE* (New York, UN-Women, 2019).

<sup>165</sup>Anderlini, "Challenging conventional wisdom, transforming current practices".

<sup>166</sup>UN-Women, Arab States, "Expert platform on gender, masculinities and violent extremism in North Africa".

<sup>167</sup>Ian Bannon and Maria C. Correia, eds. *The Other Half of Gender: Men's Issues in Development* (Washington, D.C., World Bank, 2006).

<sup>168</sup>Ezekilov, "Gender 'Men-Streaming' CVE".

<sup>169</sup>June Larkin, Sabrina Razack and Fiona Moola, "Gender, sport and development", in *Literature Reviews on Sport for Development and Peace*, commissioned by the Sport for Development and Peace International Working Group Secretariat (Toronto, Canada, University of Toronto, 2007).

homophobia and bullying) is countered through a commitment to rights-based approaches that challenge those philosophies. Female sport participants are often perceived to risk their femininity by participating in sports, especially certain aggressive sports, thus threatening social order.<sup>170</sup> For men and boys, sports can emphasize masculinities, machismo and misogyny<sup>171</sup> and promote aggressive behaviours that can spill over into violent behaviours outside of sport.<sup>172</sup> The issue of certain sports being viewed as more masculine than others is even more prominent in some cultures, making those sports attractive areas for recruitment.<sup>173</sup>

In designing sport and prevention of violent extremism programmes, it is also important to consider how other dimensions, such as ethnicity, religion, nationality and sexuality, shape participants' relationships with sport, and vice versa, and to consider cultural norms and the role of gender within society and ask whether mixed-gender programmes are best (or even allowed).

Safety and access to safe spaces are also important factors to consider. Unrestricted access to a safe space is even more relevant for girls and women and for persons of different sexual orientation in societies where sexual harassment and bullying occur in public places or where they may be subjected to heightened hostility because of their gender. At times, activities that take place outdoors may make women feel uncomfortable "in the public eye", and thus they may require a space to practise the sport freely, unrestricted by time or physical location. Muslim girls, for example, may choose to take off their hijabs in safe, enclosed, all-female spaces. However, it is also essential not to make "safe spaces" so restrictive or confined that they create social exclusion; if they wish, girls who wear the hijab should be allowed to enjoy full access to sporting activities without having to remove it. Facilities must also be checked for gender-friendliness (e.g., whether they include a girls' locker room or women's restrooms).

### ***Guidance for integrating a gender perspective into sport for the prevention of violent extremism***

On the basis of the information above, and given the very scarce literature focused specifically on the convergence of gender, sport and the prevention of violent extremism, the following tips can be derived for practitioners:

- › The social network plays a large role in girls' lives, and integrating their social networks, such as their family and peers, into programmes increases the chance of regular participation.
- › Be aware of the different ways in which different genders are vulnerable to violent extremism.
- › Identify harmful stereotypes and contextual social constructs of gender, and work with stakeholders and community leaders to challenge and eliminate harmful stereotypes.
- › Be aware of masculinities implicitly promoted in sporting activities and that some sports are seen as more "masculine" than others.
- › Safeguard against potential harm by involving local actors in design and planning.

<sup>170</sup>Martha Saavedra, "Women, sport and development" (2005).

<sup>171</sup>Michael Welch, "Violence against women by professional football players: a gender analysis of hypermasculinity, positional status, narcissism, and entitlement", *Journal of Sport and Social Issues*, vol. 21, No. 4 (November 1997), pp. 392–411.

<sup>172</sup>Todd Crosset, "Athletic affiliation and violence against women: toward a structural prevention project", in *Masculinities, Gender Relations and Sport*, Jim McKay, Michael A. Messner and Don Sabo, eds. (Thousand Oaks, California, Sage Publications, 2000).

<sup>173</sup>Lenos and Jansen, "The role of sports and leisure activities" (see footnote 120).

- › Plan for unrestricted and safe access to facilities, including transportation, and consider time obligations related to participants' roles in the household when scheduling programmes.
- › Injuries pose a risk to all sports participants but can be a major deterrent for women and girls. Planning for prevention in programme activities can be an important element in convincing families to allow their girls to play.
- › Consider the implications of menstrual cycles and cultural expectations of behaviour during those times that may affect girls. Ensure that facilities are gender-friendly in terms of access to sanitary products.
- › Be aware of any restrictions on mixed-gender programmes or preferences for all-female programmes and consider any preferences for female coaches and staff in specific contexts.
- › Allow for flexibility in programme design and give a voice to participants by adapting programmes on the basis of engagement and discussion. In mixed-gender programmes, allow for gender considerations on the field, where certain activities may need to be adapted for female participants.
- › Female mentors can help to observe and respond early to everyday warning signs of violent extremist influences in women and girls.
- › The use of female role models is especially useful in communities that are not familiar with women's sport programmes. Role models help to foster acceptance, challenge norms and inspire increased participation.

### Child rights considerations in sport and prevention of violent extremism programming

Children, who are legally defined in article 1 of the Convention on the Rights of the Child as persons below the age of 18 years, are part of the youth population, a fluid term that is defined for the purposes of the present guide as persons aged 15–24. It is therefore important in sport and prevention of violent extremism programming to apply child rights considerations and promote, protect and safeguard the rights of child participants. Furthermore, in designing and implementing effective interventions, the specific elements related to the recruitment and exploitation of children by violent extremist and terrorist groups should also be taken into consideration.

### *Child recruitment and exploitation by violent extremist and terrorist groups*

Thousands of children have been abducted, recruited or used by or otherwise associated with terrorist and violent extremist groups in recent years.<sup>174</sup> Those children have been subjected to violence at multiple levels and at the same time have the potential to become particularly dangerous instruments in the hands of those exploiting them and/or instrumentalizing them for the commission of criminal and terrorism-related offences.<sup>175</sup> Children are particularly vulnerable to recruitment and exploitation by terrorist and violent extremist groups and are specifically targeted by such groups for a number of reasons, including because they are considered an investment in the future of those criminal organizations

<sup>174</sup>Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict, Six Grave Violations, "Child recruitment and use". Available at <https://childrenandarmedconflict.un.org/>.

<sup>175</sup>UNODC, *Handbook on Children Recruited and Exploited by Terrorist and Violent Extremist Groups: The Role of the Justice System* (Vienna, 2017).

and groups and can be used not only as human shields or front-line combatants in armed conflicts, but also as spies, couriers and even executioners, or to carry out suicide attacks.

In recognizing why children are vulnerable to violent extremism and how they are used and exploited by violent extremist and terrorist groups and networks, it is also necessary to understand how they can be radicalized, groomed and exposed.

Children and youth can be radicalized and recruited in different ways:

- They can be groomed either in person or online by people seeking to draw them into extremist activity. Older children or young people might be radicalized over the Internet or through the influence of their peer networks; in such instances, their parents might not know about it or feel powerless to stop their children's radicalization.
- They can also be groomed by family members who hold harmful, extreme beliefs, including parents or caregivers and siblings who live with the child and/or persons who live outside the family home but have an influence over the child's life.
- They can be exposed to violent, antisocial, extremist imagery, rhetoric and writings that can lead to the development of a distorted world view in which extremist ideology seems reasonable. In this way, they are not targeted individually but are victims of propaganda that seeks to radicalize.<sup>176</sup>

Recruitment techniques come in diverse forms, which can include forcible recruitment, economic recruitment, transnational recruitment and recruitment through schools (which can also extend to sports clubs and projects).<sup>177</sup>

Regardless of differing circumstances, child recruitment is a very complex phenomenon that requires concerted and multidisciplinary efforts by different systems, and cooperation across different institutions and actors, in order to be addressed effectively. In this regard, sport programmes can affect complex social problems but cannot eliminate them and must therefore be carried out in collaboration with supporting stakeholders and experts.

Interdisciplinary and multidisciplinary approaches are vital to preventing the recruitment and exploitation of children and youth by terrorist and violent extremist groups, since a common feature of indoctrination is that children and young people may not recognize the exploitative nature of what is happening and may not see themselves as victims of grooming or exploitation.

### ***Consideration and safeguarding of child rights in sport and prevention of violent extremism programming***

In the context of the present guide, when designing and implementing activities to prevent violent extremism through sport, due consideration must be given to the particular vulnerability and rights of children engaged in programme activities. Awareness and knowledge of national and regional action plans for preventing violent extremism, as well as children's rights frameworks and criminal justice practices, are critical in designing and implementing sport-based interventions to prevent violent extremism. The best interests of the child and the "do no harm" principle must be embedded in the design and implementation of all programme activities, including in monitoring and evaluation.

<sup>176</sup> London Safeguarding Children Board, London Child Protection Procedure, "Safeguarding children exposed to extremist ideology". Available at [www.londoncp.co.uk/chapters/sg\\_ch\\_extremist.html](http://www.londoncp.co.uk/chapters/sg_ch_extremist.html).

<sup>177</sup> UNODC, *Handbook on Children Recruited and Exploited by Terrorist and Violent Extremist Groups*.

The welfare, well-being and safety of participants in “plus sport” and “sport plus” programmes are not protected by virtue of sport itself. According to the UNICEF review entitled *Protecting Children from Violence in Sport: A Review with a Focus on Industrialized Countries*, child-specific risks in sport programmes and activities include the following:

- Bullying and hazing: Bullying in sport may be defined as any hostile or offensive action against children and other participants who are perceived as “different”. Such actions might include verbal, physical or emotional harassment.
- Physical injury resulting from unsafe training methods or practices
- Peer aggression, with participation as a potential opportunity to release frustrations and aggression
- Emotional and psychological abuse in the form of pressure from parents, coaches or peers and bullying
- Child labour and trafficking often associated with talented young athletes
- Sexual violence: The perpetrators of sexual violence against children in sport have been identified primarily as authority figures, in particular coaches, but also trainers and counsellors. Studies have found that children also experience sexual violence at the hands of their peers, including their teammates.

In recognizing the specific risks and vulnerable status of children and youth in the context of sport-based activities for the prevention of violent extremism, the considerations to be made within programming codes of conduct and the good practice measures to be taken include the following:

- Engagement and communication with children should be conducted within safe spaces.
- Engagement with children should not be carried out alone; avoid one-to-one contact with children and youth.
- Dialogue should be established using age-appropriate language that is culturally and contextually sensitive to social realities, vulnerabilities and risk.
- Parental consent may be required under national law for participants under the age of 18.
- Vetting and screening of facilitators and others, including volunteers, who come into direct contact with children and other vulnerable participants must be a requirement.
- All referral mechanisms for children at risk or in need of protection need to be child-specific and tailored to the context.
- All sport-based curricula should be adapted to diverse age and gender categories to ensure safe practice and reduce the risk of potential stigmatization and physical injury.
- All coaches, volunteers and peer/youth leaders should be adequately trained in child rights, human rights and safe practices for sport and training.

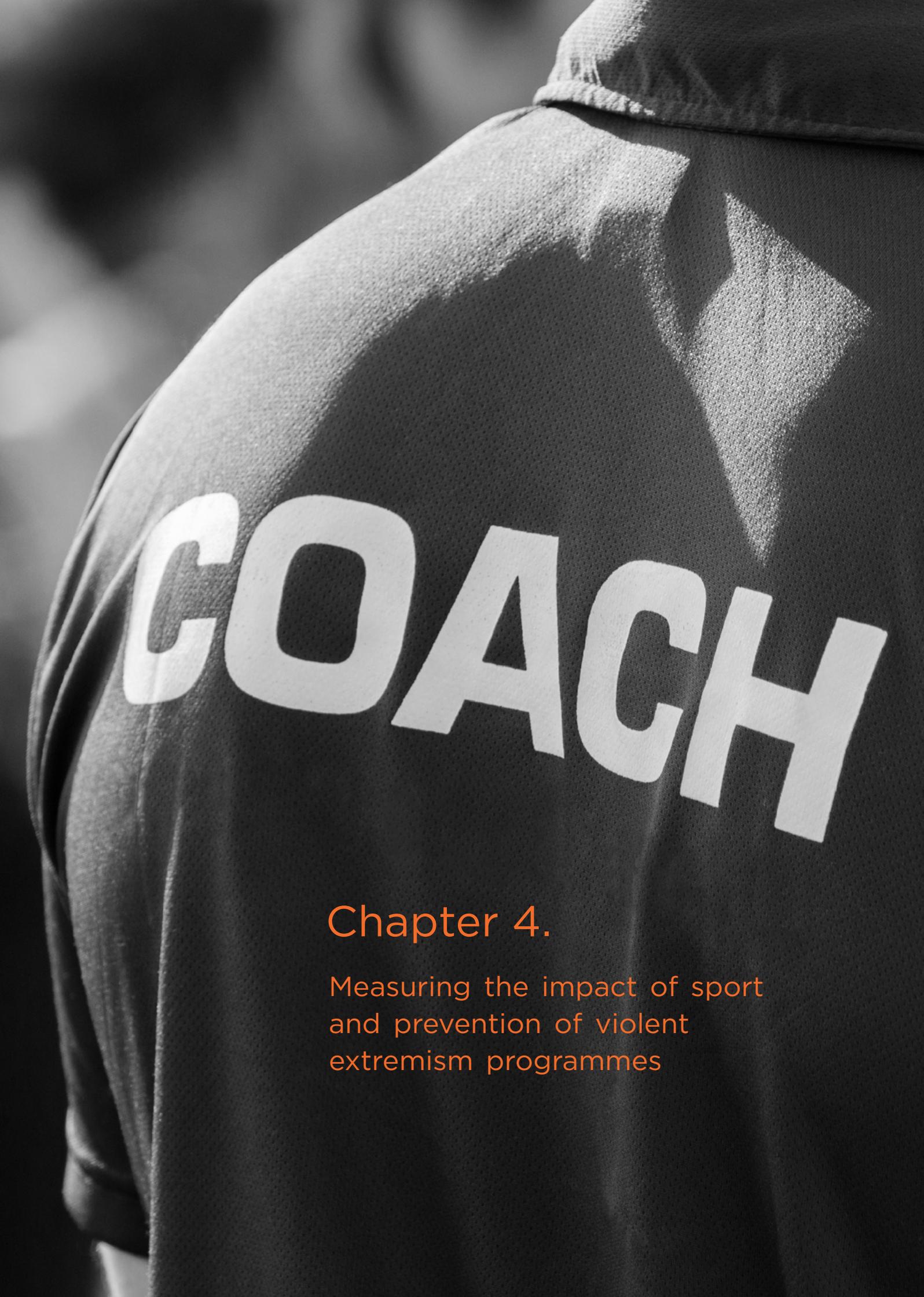
*The Sport for Protection Toolkit: Programming with Young People in Forced Displacement Settings* provides guidance on and explores the role of sport in the protection and well-being of refugee and internally displaced young people. The toolkit can be used by a broad cross-section of organizations and stakeholders to better understand and implement effective sport for protection programming.

The toolkit was developed through a collaboration between the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, the International Olympic Committee and the Terre des hommes organization.

- All coaches, volunteers and peer/youth leaders need to understand and recognize the risk of exploitation and abuse that may arise within sport spaces.
- All sport for prevention of violent extremism programmes need to foster safe and good practices through established codes of conduct, values and co-created rules.

Furthermore, on the basis of guidance from the UNODC *Handbook on Children Recruited and Exploited by Terrorist and Violent Extremist Groups*, when designing, planning and implementing sport-based interventions for the prevention of violent extremism, the following principles should be considered:

- All persons under 18 years of age are children and have specific rights under international and national law.
- The best interests of the child must always be the primary consideration for policymakers, coaches and volunteers in prevention interventions, including through sports, and in the treatment of children at risk of recruitment and exploitation by terrorist and violent extremist groups.
- Sport-based approaches to preventing violent extremism that respond to violence against children and youth must be mindful of the different impacts of measures to counter terrorism and violent extremism on girls and boys.
- The key objective of any action taken in relation to a child associated with terrorist or violent extremist groups should be to promote rehabilitation and reintegration into society, while safeguarding and realizing the child's rights.
- A child safeguarding policy and a code of conduct for the organizations and staff engaged in programme activities have to be in place and include, among other things, vetting and screening procedures for persons in direct contact with children and a child protection referral mechanism for children at risk and in need of protection.



COACH

## Chapter 4.

Measuring the impact of sport  
and prevention of violent  
extremism programmes

“As the pace of specific PVE programming has increased – due to the urgency around preventing a rise in violence and deaths as a result of extremist behaviour – so too has the pressure to find a silver bullet of ‘what works’. A community of practice is developing to better inform PVE programming. However, the systems and tools for understanding the suitability of PVE as an approach and the impact that PVE interventions have in different contexts have not yet been available.”<sup>178</sup>

Applying evidence-based prevention interventions is a key element of effective prevention, and linking research and evidence to policies and programmes is essential to ensuring that they are not ineffective or counterproductive. To this end, robust monitoring and evaluation of such programmes and practices is vital.

#### 4.1 Developing a monitoring, evaluation and learning framework for sport and prevention of violent extremism programmes

The publication *Improving the Impact of Preventing Violent Extremism Programming: Toolkit for Design, Monitoring and Evaluation* provides guidance on best practice for the design, monitoring and evaluation of programmes for the prevention of violent extremism in complex contexts of conflict. The toolkit concerns programmes that are either specifically focused on preventing violent extremism or contain related elements, including “plus sport” and/or “sport plus” prevention programmes for the prevention of violent extremism.

The aim of the present section is not to duplicate existing guidance on monitoring and evaluation frameworks and processes applied in the context of preventing violent extremism and/or sport for development. Instead, it builds on existing guidance and knowledge to provide tailored suggestions for the evaluation and monitoring of sport for prevention of violent extremism programmes and for the development of a robust monitoring and evaluation framework and process for such programmes.

The elements and approaches related to monitoring and evaluation processes set out below should be considered and applied from the inception and design to the implementation of a programme.

**Allocate resources.** A key principle involves ensuring that adequate time, planning and resources have been allocated to monitoring, evaluation and learning and impact assessments. Programme evaluations are resource-intensive and require supplies and equipment, staff time, fieldwork costs and financial and organizational resources. It is important to understand what resources are available in order to consider the type of evaluation that can be conducted.<sup>179</sup>

**Take a conflict-sensitive approach.** Programming should begin with a robust analysis of what is happening on the ground and why, and the results should be used to inform programming to ensure that interventions “do no harm” and support mechanisms for preventing psychosocial harm, trauma, stigmatization and conflict.

A conflict-sensitive approach allows a programme to deliver sport-based activities with confidence that it is not having adverse effects on the participants or wider community.<sup>180</sup> The complexities and sensitive nature of tackling violent extremism require heightened sensitivity to managing risk and the

<sup>178</sup> Lucy Holdaway and Ruth Simpson, *Improving the Impact of Preventing Violent Extremism Programming: A Toolkit for Design, Monitoring and Evaluation* (Oslo, UNDP, 2018).

<sup>179</sup> Naureen Chowdhury Fink, Rafia Barakat, and Liat Shetret, “The roles of women in terrorism, conflict, and violent extremism: lessons from the United Nations and international actors”, Policy Brief (Goshen, Indiana, United States, Center on Global Counterterrorism Cooperation, 2013).

<sup>180</sup> United Nations Development Group, *Conducting a Conflict and Development Analysis* (February 2016), p. 113.

crucial need to safeguard participants from feelings of uncertainty, trauma and exclusion. In a conflict-sensitive approach, child rights, human rights and gender equality and inclusivity can be achieved and strengthened through effective monitoring, evaluation and learning activities.

Monitoring and evaluation activities strengthen conflict sensitivity within a programme by informing and enhancing risk management strategies and helping to identify staff development and training needs and to recognize the needs and responses of programme participants. This approach provides multiple sources of information and learning and sense-making opportunities in the monitoring and evaluation phases of programming.

**Take a trauma-informed approach.** This type of approach is based on a knowledge and understanding of trauma and its implications and is necessary for safely engaging youth and communities in conflict or post-conflict settings in programme activities, including in the monitoring, evaluation and learning process. In this context, consideration should be given to the traumatic experiences of staff and participants, including through trauma-specific assessments, ensuring that programme activities will not lead to further trauma and/or victimization and that appropriate support is provided by applying a public health approach to identification and referral (see also sect. 3.3).

**Define the prevention of violent extremism.** Ensure that there is a clear and shared understanding of the prevention of violent extremism with organizations and government and civil society partners from the outset. In addition, define sport within the local context and examine how the local population engages with sport. For the purposes of monitoring and evaluation in particular, it is important to ensure that the evaluation team, staff, partners and clients, including the donors, have a common understanding of the prevention of violent extremism when defining activities, outputs and objectives.

**Understand and plan for risk.** Programmes for the prevention of violent extremism are a politically sensitive field of activity and are conducted in complex and volatile contexts (see also the description of a conflict-sensitive approach above). Risk has a dynamic context owing to constantly changing environments and factors, internal or external, over a programme's duration. Sport is also a potentially risky activity, meaning that all programmes should include regular risk management activities. The monitoring, evaluation and learning process should not only address identified risks but also assess the likelihood of new risks arising and the effectiveness and adequacy of measures to mitigate such risks. Monitoring and evaluation activities provide opportunities for developing and/or enhancing risk management strategies by collecting information and data on the various risk-related factors, including on the internal capacity and resources available to mitigate risks, on how programme activities are experienced by and affect participants and the community and on how human rights might also be undermined and/or upheld and safeguarded in monitoring, evaluation and learning activities, and/or by enhancing one's understanding of conflict actors, profiles and causes and exploring dynamics that can inform any required adjustments and changes to the programme.<sup>181</sup>

**Understand gender dynamics and apply a gender-sensitive approach.** Recognize the local social constructions of gender and how they intersect with other identity markers, such as age, class, geographical location, sexual orientation, marital status, disability and ethno-religious background. Understand gender dynamics also in relation to sport. Gender-sensitive monitoring, evaluation and learning processes can reveal whether and how a programme addresses the different priorities and needs of participants. However, gender sensitivity in programming very often focuses on women's roles and participation in the prevention of violent extremism, which can provide a far too narrow focus for gender-based

<sup>181</sup> Saferworld, "Conflict-sensitive monitoring and evaluation", in *Conflict-Sensitive Approaches to Development, Humanitarian Assistance and Peace Building: Tools for Peace and Conflict Impact Assessment*, Africa Peace Forum and others (London, 2004), chap. 3, module 3.

analysis. Therefore, it is advisable to consider gender as a frame of analysis that incorporates all people: women, girls, men, boys and those who identify as neither or both. Monitoring, evaluation and learning frameworks should assess how different participants experience programmes and activities in different ways depending on, for example, their age, gender, socioeconomic background, life experience, disability or level of education. Applying this approach will reduce gendered stigmatization and assumptions. Activities to collect these data should be carefully planned and considered, as this theme can be particularly sensitive and cause increased stigma and prejudice among participants.

**Engage participants.** Leverage sport to build a process to think through how a community-level prevention of violent extremism programme selects beneficiaries, and understand the associated sensitivities and challenges. Monitoring, evaluation and learning processes embedded in sport and prevention of violent extremism programmes will involve working with young and potentially vulnerable or volatile populations. During that process, it is crucial to protect programme participants from harm. All monitoring and evaluation processes and activities should adhere to human rights and child rights principles and must be both conflict- and gender-sensitive. Key principles to consider for safeguarding participants in the monitoring, evaluation and learning process include the following:

- › Ensure privacy and confidentiality by anonymizing data.
- › Respect participants and their opinions, feelings and beliefs.
- › Understand and contextualize communities and the shared values within them.
- › Make sense of the impacts on the broader environment and prevent disruptions to others and the project itself.
- › Acknowledge issues of power and take measures to ensure that participants feel safe, respected and free to communicate or not to participate in formal data-collection activities.
- › Ensure that evaluation tools are appropriate for the age and language levels of the participants.
- › Parental/guardian consent is a requirement for all participants.
- › Participation should be voluntary, and therefore participants should always be informed that they do not have to answer evaluation questions if they do not want to, and their consent should be sought.
- › Raise awareness of the importance of empathy, sympathy, tolerance and trust in the process.

**Develop capacity.** Put in place a strategy for developing partnerships and capacity-building, including resources for monitoring and evaluation activities. This will also entail creating a culture of reflection and learning within a project team. Staff need to be able to discuss project successes and failures in a supportive environment.

**Foster stakeholder engagement and participation.** Sound monitoring and evaluation calls for approaches that are participatory and engage local and national partners and beneficiaries from communities affected by violent extremism.

### Developing a monitoring, evaluation and learning process

A process-led approach to monitoring and evaluation “will contribute to staff development and capacity-building, greater organizational integration, and more coherently designed and consistently

delivered programmes”<sup>182</sup> The monitoring, evaluation and learning process represents a continuous opportunity to inform programme content with input from participants. It enables the measurement and validation of programme impact on the basis of specific key indicators and outcomes. This process is a critical component of sport and prevention of violent extremism programming, planning, implementation and impact. Its main objectives include the following:

- To ensure that safeguarding principles and child rights are understood, protected and enhanced
- To ensure that the aims and objectives of the programme are concise and specific, measurable, achievable, relevant and time-bound
- To monitor and survey participant experiences and intended and unintended outcomes, and to learn from the process and adapt programme mechanisms as necessary
- To enhance the reflection, contextual understanding and critical thinking skills of staff and participants and to provide opportunities for dialogue among participants, between participants and facilitators, and between facilitators and stakeholders, including donors
- To evaluate impact according to a theory of change and overall project aims
- To contribute to a broader body of knowledge and to influence national and regional policy frameworks.

A commitment to embedding monitoring, evaluation and learning processes throughout a project’s life cycle is important because it provides opportunities to challenge assumptions that influence project content, delivery and impact. These processes should question and explore assumptions, that is, underlying beliefs about how the programme operates and why its activities will contribute to the intended objectives. For example, it might be assumed that educating youth about the realities of terrorism may lead to changes in their attitudes and behaviours and ultimately reduce their vulnerability to extremist messages.<sup>183</sup> Such assumptions need to be tested and verified to create and develop sustained impact.

Any assessments of project processes or impact in the prevention of violent extremism must examine specific project elements and risks to project success, including, but not limited to, stigmatization, exclusion, psychological harm, risk of physical harm or violence within or outside the programme, feeding social or cultural assumptions, self-identity concerns and misuse of personal information. Therefore, on the basis of lessons from ongoing monitoring activities, risk management and robust measures need to be adopted and adapted, if necessary, in all stages of monitoring and evaluation processes. Key considerations in the development of a monitoring, evaluation and learning framework include the following:

- › Use a holistic approach to monitoring, evaluation and learning through quantitative (instrumental/numerical) and qualitative (descriptive) data collection.
- › Incorporate participatory paradigms that work towards flattening traditional power differentials.
- › Engage a broad and diverse set of actors.

<sup>182</sup> Coalter, *Sport-in-Development: A Monitoring and Evaluation Manual* (Stirling, University of Stirling, Scotland, 2008).

<sup>183</sup> Jessica Trisko Darden, “Tackling terrorists’ exploitation of youth” (May 2019).

- › Examine questions about what constitutes data and evidence.
- › Consider innovative and diverse methodologies in which individuals and communities are engaged.
- › Pursue a longitudinal design (i.e., integrate monitoring, evaluation and learning and reflective practices into programme design).
- › Use valid, reliable and culturally relevant measures.
- › Consider the structural and social realities of the participants and position data accordingly.
- › Contextualize activities within geographical, social, political, developmental and historical landscapes.

## 4.2 Measuring programme impact

Impact evaluation is a high level of assessment in which the overall sustained change achieved through the activities of a programme, as well as unintended negative consequences, are analysed. In sport and prevention of violent extremism programmes, most evaluations focus on measuring changes in attitudes, behaviours and relationships in order to assess impact. This is a significant level of analysis, for it is precisely attitudes, behaviours and relationships that push and pull individuals towards and away from violent extremism and that create enabling conditions for youth to thrive. Impact evaluations rely on responding to the theory of change embedded in the programme and on rigorous testing of the programme's main components. However, these assessments are limited in relation to establishing that an intervention has prevented acts of violence and that sport has a significant relationship with preventing violent extremism. Instead, they can show whether an intervention has led to a decreased level of vulnerability to the influence of violent extremism among certain target populations or communities, which is an important value and goal of these programmes.

The potential impact of a prevention of violent extremism project is more complicated than the performance of sport-based activities and their outward-facing outputs and outcomes. This should be the basic assumption of any impact assessment. An important characteristic of impact is that many factors contribute to the overall analysis of programme outcomes, which is subject to changing conditions and evolving risks and opportunities for young participants. Impact is therefore a combination of processes enabled by project implementation and activities and by external factors that support or inhibit the objectives of a programme.

In sport and prevention of violent extremism interventions, impact measurement is crucial, but it is difficult to pinpoint specific activities and objectives. It is critical to appreciate that sport is part of a holistic approach that requires professional capacity and resource investment for impact evaluations and that cuts across individual projects and assesses the larger landscape in which projects are implemented. Such efforts will bring more clarity and rigour to the delivery space for these programmes and will enhance insights on what works. Consequently, that information can support the advancement of coordination with key stakeholders and the broader sector.

### Developing a theory of change

A theory of change should explain how programme activities and interventions are expected to contribute to a chain of results that produce the intended and/or actual impacts. It defines the aims and

key change objectives of a programme and maps the necessary changes that must take place in reaching the expected outcomes. It is the basis for understanding the participants' progress through the stages of change towards the intended results and the final stage.

### Theory of change in the prevention of violent extremism through sport

The five-zone approach in the present guide directs the theory of change for using sport in the context of preventing violent extremism, within the perspective and aim of preventing violent extremism through sport for at-risk youth. The five zones respond to risk factors and use sport in strategic ways to protect youth, prevent violent extremism, promote learning and personal development and develop participants' key skills in order to help them to make informed decisions and thrive. The five core principles essential for developing a theory of change around the concept of using sport to prevent violent extremism include the following:

1. Creating safe spaces
2. Enhancing social inclusion
3. Providing opportunities for learning and education
4. Building individual and group resilience
5. Empowering individuals and communities

This section presents a theory of change built around the five zones and proposes a set of indicators for measuring outcomes. However, it is important to note that each programme will have its own unique theory of change based on the context in which it is developed and implemented.

Monitoring and evaluation designs should not be overly consumed by outcomes and impacts and should instead strategically and rigorously test programme theories through long-term data-collection efforts over a programme's lifespan.

**Table 9. Steps in developing a theory of change for sport and prevention of violent extremism programmes**

	Step	Questions to be addressed
1	Identifying the core problem and target group (e.g., children and young people who do not have access to education at a specific location) and placing them within the context of and frameworks for preventing violent extremism	<p>What is the reason for the project's existence?</p> <p>What is the main problem addressed and what are its causes and consequences?</p> <p>Who is affected most by this problem?</p>
2	Mapping stakeholders and external factors involved in the problem and needed for the initiative to be delivered and managed (e.g., funders, family and facility operators); recognizing that the programme is not being carried out in isolation	<p>Who or what else is influencing the target group?</p> <p>What external factors need to be taken into account when addressing the core problem?</p>

**Table 9. Steps in developing a theory of change for sport and prevention of violent extremism programmes (*continued*)**

	Step	Questions to be addressed
3	Defining the long-term impact desired from the programme (e.g., reduction in number of youth in the target group who are recruited into violent extremism)	<p>What is the ultimate goal to be achieved?</p> <p>Which goal will fully address the core problem?</p>
4	Identifying the necessary preconditions or the intermediate steps necessary to achieve the long-term goal in the five zones identified (e.g., increased empowerment, resilience and education opportunities)	<p>What are the necessary preconditions for impact to be achieved?</p> <p>What outcomes or changes need to arise at different levels (i.e., target group, stakeholders and external circumstances) to bring about those preconditions and ultimately reach the intended impact?</p> <p>What skills are targeted in each step?</p>
5	Developing a change map by determining a pathway from activities to intended outcomes: mapping out the sport activities that complement and contribute to the achievement of the intermediate steps (e.g., activities to develop tolerance, critical thinking or networking)	<p>What activities are best suited for influencing the different outcomes or changes and preconditions?</p> <p>Which ones are within the scope of the project?</p> <p>What is the pathway of change to achieve impact?</p> <p>Which games are plausible, suitable and appropriate to target the skill-building needed in these steps?</p>
6	Defining indicators to measure the skill sets identified in steps 4 and 5 (e.g., increased self-esteem)	<p>What are the indicators for progress towards the changes and preconditions?</p> <p>How will it be known whether an outcome or change has been achieved?</p>
7	Noting underlying assumptions that guide the change pathway and how and why the results are expected to occur (e.g., why it is believed that certain activities will lead to behavioural changes and that those behavioural changes are needed)	<p>What other potential limitations and risks apply, apart from the organization's own activities?</p> <p>What are the inherent hypotheses on which the theory of change is based?</p> <p>Are the same assumptions shared throughout the organization and with the most important stakeholders?</p> <p>How and why can change happen?</p>
8	Identifying the risks to the theory of change	<p>What could impede the programme's ability to accomplish its objectives?</p> <p>What if the assumptions are wrong?</p>

Source: Adapted from Katrin Elsemann and others, "Monitoring and evaluation in sport for development" (Street Football World, n.d.), p. 18.

### Developing measurement indicators

In order to measure impact and assess whether expected results have been achieved, the data collected need to be measured against a set of quantifiable and/or qualifiable indicators relevant to the programme. The indicators need to be defined at the outset of a programme, during the design phase and when monitoring, evaluation and learning activities are developed.

Relating back to the theory of change, indicators should be aligned to the problem being addressed, the population targeted and the relevant activities, outcomes or assumptions. A sample indicator framework is provided below for use within the five-zone approach described in the present guide.

Just as each programme has its own theory of change to achieve its specific goals, each programme will have its own set of indicators.

**Table 10. Measuring key indicators in each zone**

Zone	Key indicators	Questions and points for exploration/discussion	Activities
Safe spaces	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Accessible and adequate facilities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Are the facilities welcoming and fit for purpose?</li> <li>• Can participants play safely?</li> <li>• Are participants attending sessions regularly?</li> <li>• Are facilities gender-friendly (e.g., separate changing rooms)?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review incident reports</li> <li>• Ask participants to draw how welcome they feel when they come into the project or to develop a word map</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Community approval</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Have links been established with community leaders? With local youth organizations/schools?</li> <li>• Distance from participants' homes</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Map local partners</li> <li>• Identify roles adopted by local people (e.g., volunteers, referees)</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increased trust and high retention rates</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Are participants communicating freely with one another?</li> <li>• Extent to which participants feel confident and included during sessions</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Carry out trust-building exercises, such as directing someone with his or her eyes closed towards a goal</li> <li>• Conduct post-session observation and talks</li> </ul>

Zone	Key indicators	Questions and points for exploration/discussion	Activities
<b>Social inclusion</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increased sense of belonging and participation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Do participants outwardly express a sense of belonging? Are they willing to participate in group activities?</li> <li>How can we promote inclusion in our everyday lives?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Encourage participants to write out words that reflect inclusion in their journey logs and in group activities</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Positive approach to teamwork</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Do the participants interact with each other or keep separating into groups?</li> <li>Number of negative incidents or conflicts experienced on the field</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Include games that encourage participants to work in pairs and teams</li> <li>Encourage participants to learn and share something they have and do not have in common with each other</li> <li>Continue to mix the groups to ensure that all participants get to know each other</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Use of positive conflict resolution strategies</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ways in which conflict has been resolved</li> <li>Have the participants taken initiative and engaged in peer-led conflict resolution?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Create scenarios or group exercises through sport that will spark conflict and see how participants practise the skills of inclusion that they have learned</li> </ul>
<b>Education</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Enhanced awareness of push and pull factors</li> <li>Use of positive conflict resolution strategies</li> <li>Use of positive approaches to teamwork</li> <li>Increased critical thinking</li> <li>Increased empathy</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Is there increased awareness among the participants in sharing their new knowledge?</li> <li>Can participants identify extreme ideological, religious and political messages?</li> <li>Number of qualifications obtained by participants through the programme</li> <li>Pathways to educational opportunities after the programme</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Introduce participants to people or organizations doing similar work in the prevention of violent extremism</li> <li>Encourage participants to reflect on the less obvious or hidden push or pull factors of violent extremism</li> </ul>

Zone	Key indicators	Questions and points for exploration/discussion	Activities
<b>Resilience</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Enhanced self-esteem</li> <li>• Empathy and mutual understanding</li> <li>• Critical thinking</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What elements of sport can be used to increase social coping skills?</li> <li>• Relationships with mentors</li> <li>• How are participants overcoming challenges?</li> <li>• Positive attitudes towards programme training sessions</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Create scenarios or group exercises through sport that will spark conflict to enhance their self-control and tolerance</li> <li>• Introduce obstacle activities that will require the participants to rely on each other</li> </ul>
<b>Empowerment</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Enhanced self-confidence</li> <li>• Enhanced critical thinking</li> <li>• Increased self-confidence</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How confident are the participants in voicing their ideas and thoughts?</li> <li>• How confident are they in making decisions?</li> <li>• Extent to which participants are leading exercises and activities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Match play activities</li> <li>• Organize a community sports day to encourage community cohesion and celebrate the end of the programme</li> </ul>

The process of measuring outcomes against key indicators should be pursued by considering both activities and outputs as sources of information needed for the monitoring, evaluation and learning process and analysis.

**Activities** are measurable as direct consequences of the inputs of the project. Examples include the number of training sessions carried out, the number of youth volunteers trained to facilitate sessions and the number of sport and prevention zones delivered by newly trained coaches and volunteers. They can also be measured in qualitative terms by encouraging post-activity group reflection or creating mechanisms to test learning, such as creative group discussions.

**Outputs** are the direct results or products of programme activities. They are larger in scope and add to the impact of the intervention. An example would be the retention of participants over a project cycle or the number of participants actively seeking or attaining formal employment as a result of newly acquired sport-related skills (e.g., coaching skills), education and improvements to self-esteem triggered by the project. Photovoice might be a useful tool for measuring this output, as it can be applied both at the beginning and at the end of a programme cycle, which will enable individual and collective comparisons.

**Outcomes** are the short- and medium-term effects of programme outputs, such as impact on and/or changes in the participants’ knowledge, attitudes or behaviours.

### *Process outcomes for sport and prevention of violent extremism programmes*

In the present guide, the co-creation of programming with youth, participant-led learning, youth leadership and empowerment have been mentioned consistently as strategies for strengthening the sport and prevention of violent extremism process.

In this regard, specific process outcomes and participatory evaluation techniques that use interactions with participants for data collection and feedback on programme processes and activities are encouraged in the assessment of sport interventions to prevent violent extremism.

Co-creation and process-led approaches can be applied when monitoring and evaluating both project activities and programme impact. For example, monitoring and evaluation itself should be process-led, with robust mechanisms for data collection applied throughout a programme's life cycle in connection with specific programme indicators (see table 10). This process should involve a diverse group of programme staff, stakeholders, participants and partners in order to capture all learning outcomes that emerge throughout the programme duration.

At the programme level, an example of a specific process outcome could be centred on youth leadership and used to monitor which youth participants are empowered and identified as leaders and why and how that is the case. This process can be traced from building rapport and identifying participants who show potential as leaders to providing training opportunities, leading specific elements of the programme and participating in programme-level dialogue. Those stages would need to be tracked and recorded by facilitators and participants to evidence this growth process within the programme. A key measurement and indicator might be whether leaders are retained in the programme as facilitators for future programme cycles or seek employment or volunteering opportunities outside the programme using their new skills.

Other examples of specific process outcomes of sport and prevention of violent extremism programmes include the following:

- Social participation/inclusion and assessing the key stages of social integration
- Programme participation/retention and experiences
- Programme capacity and its development over time
- Stakeholder/community engagement: How have local and specialist networks grown?
- Gender equality: How are participants integrated? Have they challenged gender norms and perceptions?
- Self-efficacy: How have confidence and persona changed over time?
- Education and training: How has training been adapted to needs, and how has it enhanced capacity and good practices?
- Civic engagement: How do participants engage with the world around them?
- Critical thinking: Have participants developed their ability to ask questions, reflect and contribute to dialogue?
- Creative data-collection techniques, sense-making and learning

### Baseline assessment for sport and prevention of violent extremism programmes

Baseline data can be used to compare data collected throughout a programme's lifespan in order to determine whether a project has achieved its goals, targets and objectives and whether the project has had an anticipated impact.<sup>184</sup> This will generate data to come to a realistic understanding of the context, social norms, individual perceptions, behaviours and relationships between individuals and groups. A baseline assessment for the prevention of violent extremism should identify existing relationships between individuals, groups and communities, as well as existing narratives and beliefs centred on violent extremism.

Data availability and reliability are common challenges when evaluating the impact of past or present programmes. Local populations, government officials and programme staff may be reluctant to participate in surveys or share information. A critical analysis of data is recommended in areas where security risks limit access to certain locations or populations and where bias may arise from oversampling of those living in more accessible areas. The type of data that are valuable to baseline assessments may also require an acknowledgement vis-à-vis key stakeholders, officials and government departments that such issues exist, which can be challenging if not approached appropriately and with sensitivity.

The indicators developed through baseline assessments to measure impact and change must also reflect local realities.

Useful data to inform a baseline assessment in the context of preventing violent extremism may include the following:

- Attitude towards violence
- School attendance rates
- Civic engagement/participation
- Youth employment figures
- Perceptions relating to gender-based violence
- Impacts and challenges faced by other interventions
- Key policies or policy shifts in the national and/or regional context
- Crime statistics relating to violent extremism

In the context of violent extremism, risk assessment tools may be used to assess individual and group beliefs and attitudes, social norms, relationships, identity and perceptions of the future. In addition to supporting a better understanding and quantification of risk, the variables identified can also inform the programme focus, activities and monitoring and evaluation processes in relation to measuring key indicators.

<sup>184</sup>Ikbalzhan Mirsaitov and Venera Sakeev, *Baseline Assessment Report in the Framework of the "Strengthening Capacity to Prevent Violent Extremism in the Kyrgyz Republic" Project* (Bishkek, 2013).

However, research indicates that caution should be exercised in this process, as the interpretation of assessment criteria can be misleading; for example, past violent behaviour does not have to be a precursor for violent extremism, even though it often serves as a predictor for “ordinary” violence.<sup>185</sup>

### 4.3 Monitoring in the context of a monitoring, evaluation and learning framework

Monitoring should not be viewed in the same manner as evaluation; they are complementary measures and activities. Monitoring should provide regular information and data for the evaluation process to address the overarching objectives and larger policy implementation issues.

Establishing a concise monitoring system is critical to a comprehensive methodological approach to evaluation and helps to build understanding of and confidence in a programme. Monitoring is an essential component of prevention of violent extremism programming, as the operational, social and political context may change rapidly inside and outside a programme. Recording changes frequently over time enables adaptation and reflection on programme activities and risk assessment outcomes and will enable staff to challenge assumptions held within a programme’s theory of change.

Typically, monitoring and evaluation approaches focus primarily on assessing stated objectives and aims against outcomes through various data-collection methods and assessing whether activities and outputs are achieved, without examining why or the context in which they are achieved or not. However, in the context of a monitoring, evaluation and learning framework, monitoring should go beyond tracking the deliverables of a programme and advance the scope of the process by committing to examining:

- The context as it changes over time
- The interaction between project activities and the context
- Conflict actors, profiles, causes and dynamics in relation to activities

Taking such an approach will also make it possible to collect accurate and in-depth information on various elements that could also be used in impact assessment to understand why and how results are or are not achieved, and also to understand risks (see the discussion of a conflict-sensitive approach in sect. 4.1). Such information includes changing contextual and risk factors, the suitability of sport-based activities, collaboration with stakeholders, the effects of good practice principles, the behaviours of participants and the allocation of resources. A comprehensive monitoring system should also capture unintended consequences and provide opportunities for learning lessons related to operations and delivery.<sup>186</sup>

#### Reflection and feedback

Facilitating reflection meetings after programme sessions enables coaches, staff and youth leaders to consider the interaction between participants, session outcomes, the participants’ receptiveness to specific aspects of the programme and any unintended consequences. Reflection is an important

<sup>185</sup>Monica Lloyd, “Extremism risk assessment: a directory” (Lancaster, United Kingdom, Centre for Research and Evidence on Security Threats, 2019).

<sup>186</sup>Laura Dawson, Charlie Edwards and Calum Jeffray, *Learning and Adapting the Use of Monitoring and Evaluation in Countering Violent Extremism: A Handbook for Practitioners* (London, Royal United Services Institute for Defence and Security Studies, 2014).

component of the monitoring process in order to interpret and make sense of the short-term impacts that may affect the overall impact if not understood properly during a project's lifespan. Reflection sessions also facilitate communication, trust and empowerment among staff, volunteers and participants and encourage open dialogue.

**Table 11. Guiding questions for monitoring sport and prevention of violent extremism programmes**

<b>Sport-based activities</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Describe a successful project activity.</li> <li>• Describe an activity that brought about a negative response or an unintended consequence or behavioural response.</li> <li>• Describe how you have responded to negative impacts and the effect of that response. What was your key learning?</li> <li>• Describe measures taken to ensure gender equality and inclusive practices.</li> <li>• Describe steps taken to ensure that the sport space is safe for youth and children.</li> <li>• Describe how you have responded to managing challenges with participants and explain what those challenges are.</li> <li>• How can those responses be improved and embedded in the programme's theory of change?</li> </ul>
<b>Prevention of violent extremism changes in the programme context</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What primary risks of violent extremism were identified at the start of the programme? Are they still relevant? Are they still important? Do they need to be reviewed?</li> <li>• How are those risks experienced differently by women and men?</li> <li>• How are changes over time being monitored and recorded? Is that process effective and embedded in the standard practices of the programme?</li> <li>• How would you describe changes in the frequency or intensity of violence risks? Have participants communicated any changes?</li> <li>• Have there been any notable successes or challenges since the last reflection meeting?</li> </ul>
<b>Other changes</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Have there been any specific events or social/political changes in the area since the last meeting?</li> <li>• Have there been any environmental changes or local challenges that may affect the future delivery of sessions?</li> <li>• Has there been any engagement with community members, partners or stakeholders?</li> </ul>

Source: Adapted from Lucy Holdaway and Ruth Simpson, *Improving the Impact of Preventing Violent Extremism Programming: A Toolkit for Design, Monitoring and Evaluation* (Oslo, UNDP, 2018).

The questions presented above can and should be adapted to the specific context and can change over time. It is important that staff, coaches, volunteers and youth feel safe to reflect and are confident that their opinions and experiences are valued.

## 4.4 Data-collection tools

The tools used to collect data need to be chosen carefully on the basis of contextual appropriateness, cultural sensitivities, the abilities of the participants to participate with specific tools, and a consideration of risks to participants and the project itself. An understanding of the nature of what is being evaluated and the vulnerabilities, needs and risks of the target group should drive choices regarding monitoring tools in programming for the prevention of violent extremism through sport.

A mixed-methods, participatory and holistic approach consisting of qualitative and quantitative methods will yield the most comprehensive picture of a programme's effects. Using a combination of tools helps to capture information on a variety of aspects of the programme while including a range of stakeholders. Collecting data with tools that address “how”, “when” and “why” questions helps to “apprehend those invisible elements”<sup>187</sup> that contribute to programme goals.

Questionnaires are helpful in settings where reading and writing skills are well developed and participants are older and more experienced in applying their literacy skills. Respondents should be confident in expressing their thoughts in writing and familiar with different forms of questions, such as “yes/no” questions, multiple choice questions and “finish the sentence” questions.

In settings in which oral forms of communication are highly valued, it is advisable to focus instead on other tools and to conduct interviews, start debates and group discussions or facilitate storytelling sessions to share experiences and support information-sharing. If needed, room should be made for conversations in local dialects with the support of interpreters to avoid excluding those who might otherwise be critical voices in the programming process. Sport can support those tools by referring to elite athletes and drawing from stories and experiences with which the participants may be familiar in order to provoke a conversation.

Programme implementers should consider experimental and creative tools, such as videos, community mapping, storytelling and drawing when appropriate.

A number of holistic and creative data-collection tools can be utilized in the context of sport and the prevention of violent extremism. Given the nature of the context and the cultural complexities involved, creative methodologies are often seen as preferable to more formal data-collection tools. For example, storytelling or creating animation or comic strips can support a child rights approach and at the same time safeguard against trauma or risks of breaching confidentiality.

Additional examples of more creative approaches to data collection are set out below.

### *Photovoice*

Photovoice is a process in which participants, usually those with limited agency as a result of poverty, language barriers, race, class, ethnicity, gender, culture or other circumstances, use video and photo images to capture aspects of their environment and experiences and share them with others. The pictures can then be used and accompanied by narratives to bring the realities of the photographers' lives home to the public and policymakers and to steer change. This approach can help to achieve the following:

- Give a voice to people (such as youth) with little or no opportunity to express their views within their own communities or to influence decisions that may affect their lives

<sup>187</sup>Nomvula Dlamini, “Rethinking monitoring and evaluation”, *Newsletter of INTRAC* (International NGO Training and Research Centre), No. 37 (September 2007).

- Build skills and empower marginalized groups so that they can take control of their lives and become actively engaged in communicating with others
- Gain insights into the (unintended or unexpected) changes resulting from interventions from the perspectives of a selected group of stakeholders

In order to apply this method properly, it is important to ensure that participants and staff are provided with training. Depending on the population to which they belong, participants in some projects may have not used a camera before, while those from other populations might be quite comfortable with the technology. Participants should also receive some foundational guidance on photographic ethics and on safeguarding themselves and those around them. The staff of the programme need to anticipate and manage situations that might arise from such activities to protect both the emotional and physical health of participants and the integrity of the project. Photographs can provoke an emotional response, both for those who take them and for others in the group, and there may also be a potential threat from others or physical danger if ethics and rules are not made clear during task-setting. Photos should be used in a positive and significant way for self-expression, social cohesion and learning among participants themselves and between participants and staff.

Furthermore, participants must have the chance to show, discuss and contextualize their photos in a safe and supportive environment.

### Online diaries

Participants may exercise their reflective and digital skills using online diaries to describe their training, reflections and experiences. Coaches and staff can provide a template to guide the reflective process and ask questions about learning, feelings regarding the sessions, and overcoming challenges. In this way, participants can describe in their own time and space how they have experienced sport and the programme. They can also set their own goals or highlight aspects of the programme that they find difficult or do not understand. This is also an opportunity for coaches and staff to better understand positive development outcomes at a micro level, which will enable positive reinforcement for subsequent sessions. The use of online diaries enables data to be collected in a creative and sustained way.

### Monitoring, evaluation and learning considerations

While the importance and purpose of monitoring, evaluation and learning are generally welcomed and widely recognized by policy and practitioner organizations and stakeholders in the field of sport and the prevention of violent extremism, the challenges associated with defining the process mechanisms and approach, acquiring expertise and devoting adequate resources to these activities represent potential sources of harm to and limitations for learning and capacity-building. Two distinct categories of challenges are faced in monitoring the impact of primary prevention programmes in this area: (a) analytical challenges, such as establishing causality and identifying relationships between changes in attitudes and sport interventions, addressing contextual variations and developing valid indicators; and (b) practical challenges, such as creating appropriate data-collection activities and ensuring that the data are relevant and reliable.<sup>188</sup> The securitized contextual complexities and sensitized nature of primary prevention interventions create challenging monitoring, evaluation and learning conditions. Research in this area has suggested that the challenges associated with monitoring the impact of sport and prevention of violent extremism programmes include the following:

<sup>188</sup>Georgia Holmer, Peter Bauman and Kateira Aryaeinejad, *Measuring Up: Evaluating the Impact of P/CVE Programmes* (Washington, D.C., United States Institute of Peace, 2018).

- Communities feeling targeted and claims of invasion of privacy<sup>189</sup> can cause harm and stigmatization.
- It is often unclear what the evidence should comprise and how it should be gathered.<sup>190</sup>
- To date, no systematic overview exists that outlines what methods and techniques have actually been used to assess interventions and evaluate the impact of counter-radicalization interventions.<sup>191</sup>
- Limited access to technical and financial resources, and an environment that is frequently not conducive to undertaking robust and creative data collection.<sup>192</sup>
- Sport for development projects too often involve “ill-defined interventions with hard to follow outcomes”.<sup>193</sup>

Despite the challenges discussed above, a robust and conflict-sensitive approach to monitoring, evaluation and learning must be an integral part of any programme for the prevention of violent extremism through sport in order to inform and enhance its design and implementation, maximize results, support impact assessment and enhance learning and the participants’ experience.

<sup>189</sup>Patrick O’Halloran, “The challenges of evaluating attitudinal change: a case study of the effectiveness of international countering violent extremism (CVE) programmes”, paper presented at the Canadian Political Science Association Conference, Toronto, Canada, June 2017.

<sup>190</sup>John Horgan and Kurt Braddock, “Rehabilitating the terrorists? Challenges in assessing the effectiveness of de-radicalization programmes”, *Terrorism and Political Violence*, vol. 22, No. 2 (March 2010), pp. 267–291.

<sup>191</sup>Allard R. Feddes and Marcello Gallucci, “A literature review on methodology used in evaluating effects of preventive and de-radicalisation interventions”, *Journal for Deradicalization*, No. 5 (2015), pp. 1–27.

<sup>192</sup>Fred Coalter, “Sport-in-development: accountability or development?”, in *Sport and International Development*, Roger Levermore and Aaron Beacom, eds. (London, Palgrave Macmillan, 2009).

<sup>193</sup>Fred Coalter, “Sports clubs, social capital and social regeneration: ‘ill-defined interventions with hard to follow outcomes?’”, *Sport in Society: Cultures, Commerce, Media, Politics*, vol. 10, No. 4 (June 2007), pp. 537–559.



## Chapter 5.

Summary of main  
recommendations and  
practical guidance

Maintaining relevance to practice and theory, the present chapter provides a summary of the main recommendations and practical guidance on the application of programmes and sport interventions for policymakers and practitioners. These quick tips act as signposts to be referred to by policymakers, programme administrators and the coaches who implement programmes. The chapter is designed to aid facilitators and other practitioners in realizing their potential impact on the programme and on participants' lives. It provides short, practical tips to consider during a programme and when dealing with participants. For policymakers and programme managers, it provides recommendations on how they can collaborate and draw from the global sport for development and peace framework to enhance their efforts on the ground in sport for prevention of violent extremism programmes. The suggestions detailed below can be applied to current and future work in this field, highlighting the significance of participants' voices towards a more inclusive and deliberate plan of action in the use of sport to prevent the spread of violent extremism.

## 5.1 Guidance on policy development

### Integrated policy framework for sport and the prevention of violent extremism

- › Recognize the role of sports in sustainable development and peace, and as a tool to promote tolerance and respect and address violence and crime, as well as the guidance and recommendations in the global framework for sport for development and peace, including the following:
  - Improve cooperation and coordination to create a common vision of the role of sport for development and peace and to contribute to the achievement of universally agreed development goals through sport, in particular the Sustainable Development Goals.
  - Support the systematic integration and mainstreaming of sport for development and peace into the development sector and into international, national and subnational development plans and policies.
  - Support the engagement of leaders and role models to encourage, facilitate and advocate joint efforts and action in sport for development and peace, including programmes for the prevention of violent extremism through sport.
- › Recognize and support the alignment of practice in sport for development and peace with the global framework and the “All of United Nations” approach for preventing violent extremism and identifying and applying mechanisms for alignment and consistency between stakeholder activities.
- › Integrate and align sport in the context of preventing violent extremism with priorities and actions under national, regional and global frameworks, including the Secretary General's Plan of Action to Prevent Violent Extremism, and ensure that:
  - Sport for development policies form part of a holistic, comprehensive and multi-agency response for the prevention of violent extremism.
  - Policies on sport and the prevention of violent extremism are grounded in international human rights principles and do not jeopardize, but respect and promote, human rights in accordance with national, regional and international human rights frameworks.

### Resource mobilization, programming and implementation

- › Recognize the need for sustainable investment, resource mobilization and funding streams, alongside creative partnerships, for applying sport programmes in the context of preventing violent extremism.
- › Enhance and secure sustainable funding mechanisms and investment and resource allocation to sport in the context of preventing violent extremism, multi-stakeholder arrangements and engagement of different sectors at all levels.
- › Be aware of the negative effects associated with sport contexts, in particular sporting events, as they present challenges to be addressed, and tackle them through a collaborative approach.
- › Be aware of the opportunities associated with major sporting events to promote sport for development and peace and raise awareness of the role of sport in the context of violence and crime prevention, including the prevention of violent extremism, and to promote the mobilization of resources for sports in this context.
- › Identify, address and integrate key thematic areas in sport for development and peace, as well as cross-cutting issues, such as human rights, gender, disability, integrity, transparency and health, to promote a multi-agency approach and coordination and to amplify the potential of sport as a tool for preventing violence and crime.

### Evidence of impact and follow-up

- › Conduct systematic monitoring and evaluation and comprehensive measurement of progress and impact with regard to sport as a tool for preventing violence and crime, including violent extremism.
- › Recognize the need for monitoring to be embedded into daily programming practices by facilitators, coaches and participants.
- › Support both programme-level monitoring, evaluation and learning activities and donor-specific evaluation requirements, which will often differ greatly.
- › Support the provision and dissemination of research, monitoring and evaluation and measurement tools with regard to sport as a tool for preventing violent extremism.
- › Recognize the need for consolidation of the evidence base on the efficacy and impact of sport programmes in the context of preventing violent extremism and encourage platforms and networks for the delivery and sharing of evidence from academic, empirical and practical research.
- › Recognize that the impact of sport and prevention of violent extremism programmes may evolve beyond a single programme cycle, by virtue of complementary interventions or referral mechanisms, and that evaluation may require or benefit from follow-up activities and resources.
- › Recognize that documenting the impact of sport and prevention of violent extremism programmes is part of a wider security, peacekeeping and human development ecosystem. Therefore, data must be managed according to ethical standards.

## 5.2 Guidance on programme design and implementation

### Sport and prevention of violent extremism programming

- › Be aware of the risks associated with the prevention of violent extremism and the potential exploitation of sport programmes by recruiters and violent extremist groups.
- › Recognize the limitations and risks of sport, and situate sport as a tool, not as the cure.
- › Consider approaching the prevention of violent extremism through a human security lens rather than a national security paradigm in order to avoid stigmatization.
- › Recognize that sport is experienced differently by boys and girls and that the difference should be reflected in programme design. Incorporating gender inclusion provisions and understanding the role of sport in challenging and feeding gendered assumptions is critical to the inclusion principles in sport and the prevention of violent extremism.
- › Programmes must be designed according to a locally defined understanding of violent extremism, including context-specific push and pull factors.
- › Programmes should be branded appropriately to reduce risk and stigmatization, and the language used to communicate with participants and community members should be consistent and locally situated.
- › Programmes need to capture the voices of young people who are silenced and of those who might feel that they do not have a platform to share their voices. A guiding philosophy should therefore be meaningful youth engagement.
- › Programmes need to be contextualized appropriately and include an understanding of cultural norms in relation to both violent extremism and sport.
- › It is crucial to ensure that no aspect of the programme disrespects religious, traditional or cultural beliefs or norms.
- › Programmes need to be culture- and context-specific, without simply “copying and pasting” from existing programmes. This should be reflected in each programme’s theory of change, key indicators, sport activities and branding.
- › Apply youth development goals instead of using stigmatizing language and labelling them as specific to the prevention of violent extremism.
- › Support a strength-based model of delivery that focuses on youth capacity, as opposed to a deficit-based model that exclusively identifies youth needs.
- › Identify and address risks of stigmatization or assumptions associated with sport and violent extremism.

### Applying a human rights approach

- › Ensure that programme design and implementation do not undermine human rights, but promote tolerance, pluralism and respect for human rights and equality.

- › Make connections between good practice principles embedded in sport (e.g., fair play, sportsmanship, integrity and inclusion) and the approach adopted in the programme in order to advance knowledge of human rights principles among all participants, volunteers, practitioners and programme staff.
- › Appreciate that the human rights concept may be understood differently in different contexts and that additional efforts may be needed to educate participants and local stakeholders. Accepting local political, cultural and social norms is critical to the process in order to reduce harm and risk to participants.
- › Apply the “do no harm” principle and address risks of stigmatization or assumptions associated with violent extremism.
- › Develop a safeguarding policy and a code of conduct for organizations and staff.
- › Provide human rights training to all staff engaged in the programme and include human rights indicators in the monitoring and evaluation framework.
- › Develop a support system, including a referral mechanism, for vulnerable participants by engaging education, health and family support services, among others.

### Engaging community and youth

- › Tailor sport interventions for boys and girls in a culturally sensitive manner, and recognize and identify their differing needs.
- › Referral mechanisms may work as a source of engagement with at-risk individuals or groups, and this should be done sensitively and with the support of local expert services and stakeholders (e.g., schools).
- › Define youth in local contexts and understand the specific push and pull factors that put them at risk.
- › Develop a strength-based model for engagement in sport and the prevention of violent extremism by reducing deficit indicators and recognizing assets as the basis for growth and development.
- › Carefully consider how to integrate youth from diverse backgrounds (e.g., different cultural and tribal backgrounds, refugees and internally displaced persons).
- › Build on the pivotal role of parents and guardians as potential positive or disruptive facilitators of violent extremist outcomes. Parents can play an important part in either resisting or facilitating violent extremist narratives and recruitment.
- › Apply a strategic approach to engaging with the community and local stakeholders; it is important to safeguard against the exploitation of sport programmes by violent extremist groups.
- › Recognize the role of family and other community members in the long-term impact of a programme, and strategically involve family members in order to avoid alienating the programme from the wider community.
- › Ensure that programmes are accessible to at-risk, excluded and marginalized youth populations.

- › Increase efforts to develop methodologies for youth-oriented interventions to prevent violent extremism in which youth are valued and meaningfully placed as central actors in – and not passive recipients of – development.
- › Recognize the role of sport as a platform to engage with community members, and use sport as a platform to safely communicate and disseminate the programme’s achievements.

### Ensuring sustainability and partnerships

- › Explore which options are best suited for individual contexts.
- › Strengthen coordination and the sharing of practices among different actors working in the fields of sport for development and peace and the prevention of violent extremism.
- › Partner with local organizations and national sports associations.
- › Consider developing an online platform to share outcomes, research and case studies on preventing violent extremism.
- › Map transferable practical and soft skills to prevention settings to identify gaps to guide development through sport.
- › Embed sport-based activities for the prevention of violent extremism in national strategies and action plans on youth, sport and prevention efforts.
- › Coordinate external support from specialists, such as guest speakers, and/or from organizations, as they may be helpful in emphasizing and disseminating the programme’s messages.

### 5.3 Guidance and practical tips for facilitators and practitioners

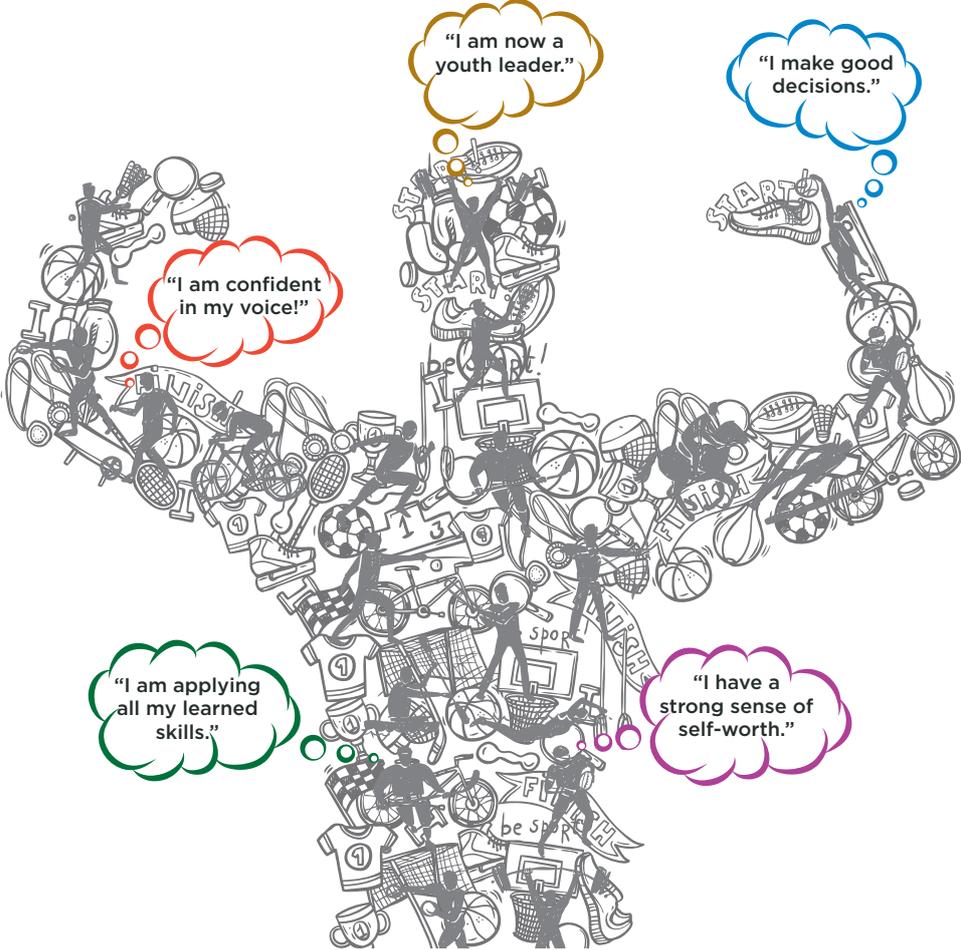
- › Anticipate challenges and do not engage in activities you are unprepared to carry out.
- › Understand your context and define violent extremism and youth in your local setting.
- › Facilitate opportunities for discussion without interrupting dialogue, silencing participants or assigning blame. Communicate clearly and concisely.
- › Ensure that the sport space and facilities are safe and are used appropriately.
- › Create a document on children’s rights and/or good practice principles for the project, with due attention to inclusion, equality and fair play expectations, jointly agreed upon with the participants.
- › Understand how best to protect the project from exploitation and how to follow a social justice approach to reporting risks in relation to individual participants.
- › Understand the risks of sport and violent extremism in your context, and ensure that procedures and strategies are in place to mitigate the risks identified.

- › Create opportunities for both boys and girls to participate, and construct appropriate spaces and measures to ensure cultural sensitivity.
- › Build appropriate and safe community networks that do not pose a threat to youth-led learning.
- › Attend credible training courses, familiarize yourself with the training manual and theory of change and discuss with trusted members of the community how to approach the subject of violent extremism.
- › Be patient; it takes time to build rapport, trust and a sense of belonging.
- › If necessary and appropriate, invite professionals specialized in facilitating and mediating discussions on sensitive topics relating to violent extremism or in providing psychosocial support services.
- › Work with local specialist organizations to engage and deliver informal education sessions with the wider community through your project.
- › Recognize the position of coaches and other facilitators as role models. Understand your role in relation to participants; youth will observe your behaviour and take cues as to behavioural norms, respect and communication practices from your words and actions.
- › Be approachable and open to learning through youth engagement. Your learning from them will shape your strategy and approach to sensitive issues surrounding violent extremism.
- › Encourage youth leadership and participant-led dialogue and be creative with data-collection activities.
- › Balance fun and sport with connecting sport to the five zones and outcomes.
- › Respond to any challenges or acts of aggression with appropriate reference to the rules and consequences agreed upon by the group, and be proactive in this regard.
- › Be mindful of both cognitive and emotional responses to sport-based activities. Appreciate that sport in itself is unpredictable, and use unintended responses as teachable moments for yourself and participants. Ensure that participants have time to reflect on those moments.

### Concluding remarks

The present guide is intended to support the design, implementation and monitoring and evaluation of programmes for the prevention of violent extremism through sport that complement other initiatives and form part of comprehensive frameworks and national and regional action plans. Figure 22 provides a visual summary of the intended impacts of the approach developed in the guide with regard to using sport for the prevention of violent extremism. The figure shows our programme participant after going through all of the zones. It is important to note, however, that sport has the power to support prevention aims, but it is not a magical solution, nor is it a stand-alone project; contextualization of the intervention, accompanied by good programming principles and experienced staff, is essential.

Figure 22. New thought process



## Annex: Key resources

### United Nations policy instruments, standards and norms

#### Security Council resolutions

Security Council resolution 2250 (2015) on youth, peace and security.

Security Council resolution 2282 (2016) on the review of the United Nations peacebuilding architecture.

Security Council resolution 2419 (2018) on youth, peace and security.

#### General Assembly resolutions

##### *On sport for development and peace*

General Assembly resolution 70/1 on transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

General Assembly resolution 71/160 on sport as a means to promote education, health, development and peace.

General Assembly resolution 72/146 on policies and programmes involving youth.

General Assembly resolution 73/24 on sport as an enabler of sustainable development.

General Assembly resolution 74/16 on building a peaceful and better world through sport and the Olympic ideal.

General Assembly resolution 74/170 on integrating sport into youth crime prevention and criminal justice strategies.

United Nations Guidelines for the Prevention of Juvenile Delinquency (the Riyadh Guidelines) (General Assembly resolution 45/112, annex).

United Nations Model Strategies and Practical Measures on the Elimination of Violence against Children in the Field of Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice (General Assembly resolution 69/194, annex).

United Nations Standard Minimum Rules for the Administration of Juvenile Justice (the Beijing Rules) (General Assembly resolution 40/33, annex).

##### *On counter-terrorism*

United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy (General Assembly resolution 60/288).

United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy Review (General Assembly resolution 72/284).

General Assembly resolution 74/64 on youth, disarmament and non-proliferation.

General Assembly resolution 74/175 on technical assistance provided by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime related to counter-terrorism.

#### Economic and Social Council resolutions

Economic and Social Council resolution 2019/16 on integrating sport into youth crime prevention and criminal justice strategies.

Guidelines for Action on Children in the Criminal Justice System (Economic and Social Council resolution 1997/30, annex).

Guidelines for the Prevention of Crime (Economic and Social Council resolution 2002/13, annex).

Guidelines on Justice in Matters involving Child Victims and Witnesses of Crime (Economic and Social Council resolution 2005/20, annex).

### Resolutions of the Conference of the State Parties to the United Nations Convention against Corruption

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### Other relevant United Nations action plans and reports

Doha Declaration on Integrating Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice into the Wider United Nations Agenda to Address Social and Economic Challenges and to Promote the Rule of Law at the National and International Levels, and Public Participation, adopted at the Thirteenth United Nations Congress on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice (General Assembly resolution 70/174, annex).

United Nations Action Plan on Sport for Development and Peace. A/61/373.

United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization. Kazan Action Plan, adopted at the sixth International Conference of Ministers and Senior Officials Responsible for Physical Education and Sport of UNESCO. SHS/2017/PI/H/14 REV.

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United Nations Youth Strategy, entitled “Youth 2030: Working with and for Young People”.

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### Guidance tools and reports

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