



# Playing the Game

A framework for successful child focused  
sport for development programmes

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Cover image: © Barça Foundation / Filipe Costa

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# Acknowledgements

This report was prepared by a team of researchers at the UNICEF Office of Research – Innocenti:

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The team would like to recognize Dominic Richardson (UNICEF Office of Research – Innocenti) who provided initial guidance and Juliana Zapata (formerly UNICEF Office of Research – Innocenti) who was involved in the initial design of the research. The team would also like to acknowledge the guidance of Gunilla Olsson (Director, UNICEF Office of Research – Innocenti), Priscilla Idele (Deputy Director, UNICEF Office of Research – Innocenti) and the many UNICEF colleagues who assisted with the planning and drafting process, including Annabelle McDougall (UNICEF Private Fundraising and Partnerships), Silvia Sala Capdevila and Rocío Vincente Senra (UNICEF Spanish National Committee) and Liz Twyford (UNICEF United Kingdom National Committee).

Invaluable communications and editorial support was provided by Dale Rutstein, Celine Little, Sarah Marchant (UNICEF Office of Research – Innocenti) and Jacquetta Hayes (UNICEF Private Fundraising and Partnerships).

Special thanks go to the peer reviewers, Professor Fred Coalter (University of Stirling), Yianny Ioannou (TackleAfrica), Richard Giulianotti (Loughborough University), Preeti Shetty (Upshot) for their excellent comments and feedback.

The research team is also indebted to UNICEF colleagues in the Jamaica Country Office, and the many S4D organizations and initiatives around the world that participated as case studies in the research: Barça Foundation, ChildFund, CoolPlay, EduSport, Grassroot Soccer, Naz, Right To Play (especially the Lebanon and Pakistan offices), TeamUp (more specifically the staff from Save the Children and WarChild working on the TeamUp programme) and Women Win.

Finally, this work would not have been possible without the financial support and intellectual guidance of the Barça Foundation. The research team is sincerely appreciative of the Foundation's vision and the excellent collaboration with Maria Valles, Aisha Al-Said Albella, Blanca De la Quintana Monge and their entire team.

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# Acronyms

CDC	Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
GRS	Grassroot Soccer
M&E	monitoring and evaluation
MEL	monitoring, evaluation and learning
NGO	non-governmental organization
PPSA	Peace Players South Africa
PSS	Psycho-Social Support
RTP	Right To Play
S4D	Sport for Development
S4D4C	Sport for Development for Children
SDG	Sustainable Development Goal
ToC	theory of change
UNICEF PFP	UNICEF Private Fundraising and Partnerships
WHO	World Health Organization

# Foreword

Sport for Development (S4D) programmes are effective at engaging children and improving many areas of well-being. These include physical and mental health, empowerment learning and life skills, which are essential for success in school, life and work. By supporting these outcomes, S4D contributes to multiple Sustainable Development Goals (SDG), such as good health and reduced inequalities, well-being, quality education, gender equality, and sustainable cities and communities.

To better understand how S4D can help children thrive, in 2017, UNICEF and the Barça Foundation launched a research project which, in its first phase, reviewed the evidence available and identified knowledge gaps and opportunities to improve the quality of S4D programmes. The second phase of the research which we are launching with this report, builds on this evidence and identifies practical guidelines for quality S4D programming as a tool for practitioners and policy makers.

To ensure a range of programme goals and countries were covered, eight S4D organizations were identified from different regions. Programme participants, parents, coaches, staff members and other stakeholders participated in in-depth interviews and focus group discussions which resulted in 10 case studies on good S4D programming practices. Lessons learned from the case studies and existing literature were then synthesized into a framework for effective S4D programming. The framework outlines the three phases of programming (design, implementation and scale-up) and analyses their main components.

This is the first guiding framework for child-focused S4D programming. By showing the rigour needed to design and implement an effective S4D programme we hope to contribute to the legitimacy of S4D as a tool for development. The framework outlined in this report is intended as a conversation starter about how impactful S4D could be.

We hope that you will enjoy reading this report and that it will be an occasion to bring the S4D stakeholders together and boost collaboration and learning from each other.



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