

SPORTS AND PEACE BUILDING

Peacebuilding is a process that facilitates the establishment of durable peace and tries to prevent the recurrence of violence by addressing root causes and effects of conflict through reconciliation, institution building, and political as well as economic transformation. This consists of a set of physical, social, and structural initiatives that are often an integral part of post-conflict reconstruction and rehabilitation.

The concept of peacebuilding was introduced by former United Nation Secretary General Boutros Boutros-Ghali in his work "an Agenda for Peace" and has since gained acceptance in academic and policy circles. Since the 1990's many efforts have been made to manage conflict, with peacebuilding being introduced as one of the ways of curbing conflict.

The ancient Olympic festival saw sports as an inner faith of a man himself, as a constant effort of physical and intellectual enhancement while treating others as equal. The popular English writer George Orwell posited that the objective of competitive sports was to win at any cost while humiliating the rival team and its followers; stating that serious sport has nothing to do with fair play. It is bound up with hatred, jealousy, boastfulness, disregard of all rules and sadistic pleasure in witnessing violence.

Despite sentiments such as the ones above, the International Olympic Committee (IOC) is part of a worldwide movement composed of governments, UN agencies, the private sector and international and national NGOs, which has become increasingly supportive of the idea that sport is indeed a valuable means to address issues such as social justice and equality. Further, the United Nations Intel Agency Task Force recommends the mobilization of resources amongst UN agencies, governments and sport organizations for Sport for Development and Peace (SDP) programmes.

The sport for Development and Peace International Working Group aimed to realize rights of all members to take part in sport and leisure activities while addressing peace and development objectives including the Millennium Development Goals. These activities aim to tackle issues ranging from crime and violence, peacebuilding, health education and conflict resolution amongst others. A considerable number of interventions under these programmes takes place in areas with high levels of violence, poverty and conflict.

Sports on its own has benefits which include; its universal nature, the ability to connect people through social networking, prevention of deviant behavior and rehabilitation of past offenders, promotion of mental and physical health and serving as an outlet in conflict and post-conflict societies/communities to reinforce interaction and manage trauma after violence.

Conclusion

Internationally, the Football for Hope Movement's main goal is to establish a quality seal for sustainable human and social development programs focusing on soccer as the central instrument in the areas of (1) health promotion; (2) peace building; (3) children's rights and education; (4) anti- discrimination and social integration and (5)

the environment, thus supporting the best practices on the pitch. The program is developed through a network that includes football associations, committed clubs and players, professional leagues and commercial partners as well as local organizations advancing social development .

In Kenya, an example of the use of sports in peacebuilding and conflict resolution has been seen through the Tegla Lorupe Foundation which aims to rebuild social relations and induce trust among the warring communities, showcase sports as an alternative economic livelihood factor, increase awareness on the girl child rights, foster education, champion for peace and change the perception of pastoralists towards cattle raiding as a form of livelihood.

Sport's main contribution to peace building processes is its universality. Courtesy of its cross-cultural nature, sport is a unique way of breaking through geographic and social barriers and therefore can be a major component of social interventions. It can certainly serve as a useful component of peacebuilding through rehabilitation, rebuilding, restructuring and reculturation of societies.