***Sports For Joy (SFJ) club program partnership with SHI Bangladesh***

***Task:*** *Provide a summary of the initiative, including a brief overview, proposed/actual outcomes and an assessment of any lessons learned and the way forward.*

***Timeframe:*** *Please only include initiatives that fall within the reporting timeframe of January 2022 – February 2024*

| **Please provide more details on each initiative including items below:** |
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| **Objective(s):** | ***Please indicate which, if any, of the following fall among the main objectives of the initiative:*** |
| * **Ensuring no one is left behind (advancing empowerment, inclusiveness and equality through sport)**

SFJ is working to prioritises inclusivity by targeting marginalised groups such as girls ensuring they have access to sports and recreational activities. |  |
| * **Leveraging sports events to promote action to combat climate change, advance peace and/or sustainable development**

The program contributes to sustainable development by promoting physical and mental health, boosting self-esteem, and increasing social networks among participants. | * **Conflict prevention/peace building**

By providing opportunities for participation and fostering relationships within communities, SFJ contributes to peacebuilding efforts by promoting social cohesion and dialogue through sports activities. |
| * **Research development, data collection and/or data dissemination**

The program contributes to research and data collection efforts by documenting participation rates, outcomes, and lessons learned, thereby providing insights into the impact of sports on development and peace. |  |
| * **Reinforce the 2030 Agenda and eradicate poverty in times of multiple crises, leading to the effective delivery of sustainable, resilient, and innovative solutions**

SFJ's focus on empowering marginalised groups in communities and promoting social inclusion aligns with the broader objectives of the 2030 Agenda, contributing to poverty reduction and fostering resilient and innovative solutions through sports-based interventions. |  |
| * **Strengthened global framework on sport for development and peace**

The program contributes to strengthening the global framework on sport for development and peace by demonstrating effective strategies for promoting social inclusion, community development, and well-being through sports. |  |
| **Situation** | ***What is the challenge or problem that the initiative aims to address?***The problem/challenge in Bangladesh is that the following target groups are marginalised from the potential benefits of sport and play due to social and economic reasons. There are lower levels of sports participation in the target groups(especially girls and children with disabilities. Low performing (in sports) people are disengaged and excluded from sport which results in large percentages of people not participating in sport. People get turned off young and are unlikely to come back to it in later life. Put simply the problem is that large percentages of the target group are missing out on the benefits of sports and play. By providing higher participation and more physically inclusive approaches, people's enjoyment of sports play is greatly increased. Using these approaches ensures the positive impact of sports and play participation is significantly increased.[Sports for Joy (SFJ)](https://sportsforjoy.org/) (UK based voluntary organisation) is working in partnership with [Sports for Hope and Independence (SHI)](https://shibangladesh.com/) (a Bangladeshi Sports For Development organisation) providing training and establishing a recreational sports participation program in the Gandharbapur locality close to Sreemangal, Sylhet. The program aimed to increase participation in recreational sports of specific target groups. The pilot and fuller program implementation have been implemented with one local coach and a small number of volunteers in the local area of Gandharbapur reaching approximately 320 children in the time period. The SFJ training provided was given also to other volunteer SHI coaches who live and coach children in other parts of Bangladesh (Chittagong, Bagerhart, Dhaka and others). |
| **Implementation mechanisms:** | ***What are the means/processes of implementation of the initiative?***Online Training (October - December 2022)* An online “high participation” and “understanding physical inclusion” training was developed and scheduled.

Program Pilot - dates(January - March 2022)* A partnership agreement was made between SFJ and SHI to run a pilot program from January - March 2023. It was additionally agreed that SFJ would provide training for their coaches to improve children’s participation, physical inclusion and enjoyment.
* Identifying area and locations to implement pilot - 3 suitable locations were identified in the Gandharbapur locality close to Sreemangal, Bangladesh.
* A volunteer coach was recruited.
* Necessary sports equipment was sourced and stored at the SHI centre.
* A weekly schedule was established to run 3 clubs 2 days per week.
* Clubs were run using a free association (free choice of equipment and games/sports) approach.
* Coach mentoring was provided throughout the pilot.

Program implementation (May 2023 - February 2024 and ongoing)* The volunteer coach was converted from a volunteer to a paid freelance coach.
* A decision was made to make the clubs specifically targeted to the target groups (girls, working children and children with disability).
* Community clubs were converted from free association to more structured and coached sessions themed around one sport e.g football, basketball, boxing.
* New club locations were identified and permission obtained from local leaders/managers.
* Local schools were approached with permission gained to conduct sports sessions targeting girls groups. In primary schools the sports sessions were set up to be free association (meaning children could choose what equipment and sport they wished to play). In one secondary school, weekly volleyball lessons were started.
* The weekly schedule was adjusted to maximise coach contact time with children.
* Coach mentoring was planned to occur throughout.

***What are the main deliverables/activities involved?*** Online Training (October - December 2022)* An online “high participation” and “understanding physically inclusion” training was given over zoom.
* The coaches shared videos of their work and feedback was given.

Pilot (January - March 2022)* *Online and in person coach training was provided.*
* *Weekly “All Sports” (clubs where children were provided a choice of different sports equipment) clubs were established.*
* *Coach mentoring was done focusing on firstly ensuring that sessions*
* *Coach resources were created and curated and made available online in documentation and through video playlists.*

Program implementation (May 2023 - February 2024 and ongoing)* The coach and other national coaches were given additional in person training focusing on high participation, inclusion and enjoyable/unpredictable modified games.
* Running weekly clubs:
	+ 3 community based clubs - girls-only
	+ 3 centre based clubs (football, basketball and boxing) - girls only
	+ 2 primary school free association sports sessions (1 mixed and one girls only)
	+ 1 secondary school session with 2 girls groups u13 and u14(volleyball) - girls only
* Coach mentoring was ongoing throughout with feedback and demonstrations and additional resources provided.
* Monitoring attendance - attendance was monitored on a weekly basis informing adjustments and club planning.
* Broader coach resources were created in online documentation and through video playlists.

***What is the time frame of implementation?*** * Online Training started in 2022 October.
* Community club pilot started in January 2023, ending May 2023.
* Community club full program implementation started June 2023 and is ongoing.
* A progress report was completed in December 2023 informing 2024 planning and implementation.
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| **Target Audience(s):** | ***Who are the beneficiaries of the proposed/implemented initiative?***Sports For Joy (SFJ) targets 3 specific groups - * girls
* working children
* children with disabilities

After setting up clubs reaching all of the target groups, a decision was made(September 2023) to focus solely on girls-only clubs. This girls-only focus has made it easier for the local coach to implement. The longer term plan is to re-open clubs for the other target groups. |
| **Partners/Funding:** | ***Who are the main organisations/entities involved in the initiative and what are their roles?***There are currently 2 organisations. (1)SFJ is the training provider and provides mentoring to the SHJ coach in addition to some shared program management responsibilities.(2)SHI provides the coach and local support and connections. SHI provides overall management support for the program.***What are the main sources of funding of the initiative?****The program is jointly funded by SFJ and SHI.* |
| **SDG Alignment:** | ***To what SDG goal/target/indicator is this initiative targeted?**** Goal 3: Good Health and Well-being:
	+ SFJ aims to improve participants' physical and mental health by providing opportunities for regular physical activity and promoting well-being through sports and recreational activities.
* Goal 4: Quality Education:
	+ The program enhances education by providing learning opportunities through sports, promoting skills development, and fostering values from sports such as teamwork, leadership, and discipline.
* Goal 5: Gender Equality:
	+ SFJ prioritises inclusion and empowerment of girls by establishing girls-only clubs and addressing cultural and safety barriers to their participation in sports activities.
* Goal 10: Reduced Inequality:
	+ The initiative targets marginalised groups, including aiming to reduce inequalities in access to sports and recreational opportunities.
* Goal 11: Sustainable Cities and Communities:
	+ SFJ contributes to creating inclusive and accessible community spaces by establishing local sports clubs and school-based sports sessions, particularly for marginalised groups.
* Goal 16: Peace, Justice, and Strong Institutions:
	+ The program promotes social inclusion and community cohesion by providing opportunities for participation in sports activities, fostering relationships, and promoting inclusive decision-making processes within communities.
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| **Alignment with global frameworks:** | ***How does this initiative align with/contribute to the objectives of the*** [***Kazan Action Plan***](https://en.unesco.org/mineps6/kazan-action-plan)***,*** [***WHO Global Action Plan on Physical Activity***](https://apps.who.int/iris/bitstream/handle/10665/272722/9789241514187-eng.pdf) ***or other related internationally agreed frameworks on sport and/or physical activity?**** Kazan Action Plan:
	+ The initiative aligns with the Kazan Action Plan's goal of promoting inclusive access to sport and physical activity for all segments of society, including marginalised groups.
	+ By targeting socially and economically marginalised groups, the program addresses the Kazan Action Plan's objective of ensuring equal opportunities for participation in sport.
	+ The emphasis on community-based sports clubs and school-based sports sessions reflects the Kazan Action Plan's focus on grassroots sports development and the promotion of physical activity at the local level.
	+ The program's emphasis on coach training in "high participation," "unpredictable modified games," and "physically inclusive" coaching techniques aligns with the Kazan Action Plan's emphasis on capacity-building for coaches to enhance the quality and inclusiveness of sports programs.
* WHO Global Action Plan on Physical Activity:
	+ The SFJ club program contributes to the WHO Global Action Plan's objective of increasing physical activity levels worldwide, particularly among vulnerable populations.
	+ By providing opportunities for regular physical activity through community-based sports clubs and school-based sports sessions, the program promotes the WHO Global Action Plan's goal of creating environments that support active living.
	+ The focus on improving physical and mental health, boosting self-esteem, and increasing social networks among participants aligns with the WHO Global Action Plan's emphasis on the broader health benefits of physical activity beyond just physical fitness.
	+ The program's approach to coach training in techniques that enhance participation and enjoyment during sports sessions resonates with the WHO Global Action Plan's call for evidence-based interventions to promote physical activity.
* Other related internationally agreed frameworks on sport and/or physical activity:
	+ The initiative aligns with broader international efforts to leverage sport as a tool for development and peace.
	+ By addressing social inclusion, health promotion, and community engagement through sports, the program contributes to the broader agenda of promoting sustainable development and peace through sport.
	+ The emphasis on partnership between SFJ and SHI, as well as the collaborative funding model, reflects the principles of international cooperation and solidarity in advancing sport for development initiatives.
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| **Alignment with United Nations Action Plan on SDP:** | ***Which of the four thematic areas of the*** [***UN Action Plan on Sport for Development and Peace***](https://www.un.org/development/desa/dspd/wp-content/uploads/sites/22/2018/06/14.pdf) ***is this initiative designed to align?******To which action area(s) of the Plan is this initiative designed to contribute?***1. Global framework for sport for development and peace* The initiative contributes to the global framework by providing a practical example of implementing sports programs aimed at social inclusion and well-being.
* It demonstrates how partnerships between organisations from different countries (SFJ from the UK and SHI from Bangladesh) can work together to address local challenges using sports as a tool for development and peace.

2. Policy development* The initiative indirectly supports policy development by showcasing effective strategies for promoting inclusive sports programs at the grassroots level.
* The lessons learned regarding community engagement, safety considerations, and cultural sensitivity can inform the development of policies aimed at promoting sports for development and peace at the national and local levels.

3. Resource mobilisation, programming and implementation* The program outlines specific activities and deliverables, such as online training, pilot programs, club establishment, and coach mentoring, demonstrating a structured approach to resource mobilisation and program implementation.
* By jointly funding the initiative, SFJ and SHI show how resources can be pooled to support sustainable sports programs for marginalised communities.

4. Evidence of impact and follow-up* The initiative provides evidence of impact through the actual outcomes reported, such as increased participation among girls, establishment of clubs, regular sports sessions in local schools, and improvements in coaching methods.
* Mechanisms for monitoring and evaluation, such as weekly attendance registers and progress reports, ensure ongoing assessment of the program's effectiveness and inform future follow-up actions.
* Lessons learned from challenges encountered and adjustments made contribute to ongoing evidence-building and inform future program iterations.
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| **Outcomes:** | ***What are the expected/actual outcomes of the initiative?*****Expected outcomes*** To establish several regularly attended clubs for each of the target groups (*girls, working children and children with disabilities*).
* To significantly increase the target groups participation in regular sports each week.
* To dramatically change SHI’s coaching methods to be higher participation, physically inclusive and more enjoyable(through unpredictable games based methods).

**Actual outcomes*** There was a significant increase in girls participation in community based weekly sports in the local area - the main success of the program so far. These are attended weekly by 90-120 children.
* Following clubs were set up - Three community based football clubs, at the SHI centre once a week clubs were set up for football, basketball and boxing.
* At the three schools which granted permission for weekly sports sessions to be run with girls. These clubs have been attended weekly by an additional 110-120 children.
* Working boys (street venders and restaurant workers) attended a club for a few weeks but most did not return. It was decided to focus more on establishing the girls clubs.
* A club was started targeting children with disabilities (mixed with attendance from children without disability) - this ran for a few weeks but almost all children with disabilities stopped coming after a few weeks (parents cited difficulty with time and transport costs) - the plan is to start this again in 2024.
* The main coach significantly improved his methods to ensure high levels of active participation during his sessions(through in person observations and remote video analysis of club sessions). The other coaches given training also showed visible improvements (in video analysis) in increasing children’s active participation levels.
* Money was raised jointly by SFJ and SHI for sports equipment - footballs, volleyballs, boxing equipment.
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| **Mechanism for monitoring and evaluating implementation:** | ***What are the mechanisms for monitoring and evaluating the implementation, outcomes and impact of the initiative?**** *A weekly register has been taken to record attendance.*
* *A progress report was written and provided to SHI.*

***What specific monitoring and evaluation tools are involved?**** *In person session and video based observations evaluated according to the principles of SFJ clubs based around high participation, physical inclusion and enjoyment.*
* *The progress report was used as a basis of program effectiveness and informed changes to planning and ongoing club implementation.*
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| **Challenges/Lessons learned** | ***What have been/were the main challenges to implementation?**** Regular weekly girls participation has proved difficult but has increased over time.
* In some locations, very few girls have been willing to come to the main field(for community based clubs), they have preferred to stay closer to their home which is considered a safer place by their parents and people in the community.
* Parents can at times be worried about their daughters being in the field where teenage boys are present. They are considered by some parents as a threat. This has led to some parents not allowing the girls to attend clubs.
* Girls spoke at times about not liking local boys or men seeing them play sports. They said that they make comments and jokes and shout at them.
* It has been noticeably more difficult to get muslim girls to attend community based clubs.
* In such a rural location, it has been difficult to get any families to commit to bringing their disabled children to the centre regularly for their weekly club - this club had to close down due to low attendance.
* Working children clubs(attended by local boys) were not well attended and had to eventually close down.
* Equipment that was entrusted to certain children and their families in the villages was quickly lost and damaged.

***What lessons learned have been/can be utilised in the planning of future initiatives?**** Due to difficulties with communication about implementation of clubs for all target groups, it has been decided that SHI mostly focus on girls as their target group for all SFJ clubs. This decision has seen a marked increase in attendance of girls.
* Girls’ confidence and comfort - SHI and SFJ. The girls have been participating in sports in their home clothes which can be slightly uncomfortable (or too hot) to play sports in. Wearing an official kit has seen to increase retention and participation rates at an already established SHI club. The kit has helped to make the girls’ participation more official and makes it more accepted by the community. Fundraising is now occurring to purchase sports kits for the girls' clubs.
* As the clubs have continued to grow, local volunteers have started to become involved which has helped with expansion and clubs being able to start running semi-independently. This is a key development and the big learning is that through expanded voluntary support, the clubs can grow. This can be leveraged through SHI’s presence in communities in other parts of Bangladesh.
* Due to the difficulties in getting girls to attend clubs - SHI now approaches community leaders to gain permission and approval from the leaders and parents before starting clubs. This has seen an increase in club attendance. For increased participation of girls in muslim communities, the plan moving forward is to get additional approval from local religious leaders to assist community approval.
* It has been learnt that equipment needs to stay at the house of a trusted adult. This has now been implemented.
* Regarding children with disabilities attending a sports club, a future plan has been made to create a custom solution with wider community support to get children to be able to attend clubs on a weekly basis - this has not yet been implemented.
* Regarding the working children’s clubs (attended by boys in the local town) - a key learning was that the boys were able to participate in sports by themselves without SHI/SFJ support. This learning was crucial in deciding to shift focus to girls-only clubs. This was because girls, regardless of their economic conditions, are much more likely to be marginalised from sports (even boys who work find it easier to do sports).
* Working to train and mentor the SHI coaches to fully learn how to take sessions that fully embody the SFJ principles proved very challenging. It was reflected that a more structured coach development assessment and simplified training and mentoring approach was required to help move the coaches methods to a more effective level.
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