



United Nations

Department of
Economic and
Social Affairs

Sport for development and peace: UN responses to COVID-19

Please complete this template and return to the Division for Inclusive Social Development: melissa.martin@un.org with cc to bas@un.org and pollack@un.org by **April 30th**.

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ACTION

What action is your entity taking to respond to COVID-19 within the context of its mandate? Please highlight specific actions that related to sport for development and peace.

- Through its ongoing research on child-focused S4D, the UNICEF Office of Research (OoR) Innocenti is examining how different organizations are responding to COVID-19, to inform policymakers and S4D practitioners.
- This follows on the comprehensive review of literature on Sport for Development [Getting into the Game](#), as part of the UNICEF-Barça Foundation partnership.

KEY MESSAGES

What are the main 3 to 5 key messages you wish to highlight about the impact to and contribution of sport for development and peace as it related to COVID-19?

1. All relevant stakeholders should take action to prevent children from becoming the hidden victims of this crisis. Disruptions to society have a heavy impact on children: on their safety, their well-being, their future. ([UNICEF COVID-19 Agenda for Action](#)). The cancellation of S4D services will have a direct negative impact on children's mental health and physical wellbeing.
2. UNICEF is concerned about the impact on children's right to play, leisure and recreation (article 31 UN CRC).
3. For some most at-risk children – for instance, those in unstable home environments – COVID-19 has taken away the protective factor/safe space that their participation in S4D activities may have provided.
4. S4D organizations are repurposing the networks they had built within communities to disseminate updated information and training on good hygiene and health practices.
5. We need to reimagine the world which children will go back to. There is a growing existential crisis in the sport for development field, which is likely to mean that for many children, even after life returns to something approaching normal, there may no longer be sports activities for them to



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return to. As highlighted by the [Getting into the Game report](#) – this potential loss of provision over the longer term could have multiple impacts across a range of areas.

6. COVID-19 is a wakeup call on how important/powerful the power of sports is, not only as an opportunity for physical exercise but equally importantly, as means to provide children an opportunity to build social bonds.
7. Networks of S4D organizations such as the UNICEF and Barça Foundation Sports for Development for Children Working Group can provide peer to peer support sharing lessons in programming during COVID-19.

RESOURCES

Has your entity produced relevant resources on COVID-19 and sport for development and peace? Please attach/provide the links below:

- UNICEF is drafting a blog based on research on S4D organizations during COVID-19.