

Introduction to Sports Policy

Overview

Sport policies articulate a Government’s vision, strategy and high level plan regarding Sport. Without a robust sports policy, the machinery of government is unable to effectively leverage the power of sport.

Illustrative example



A NATIONAL SPORT AND PHYSICAL ACTIVITY POLICY defines the vision and objectives, necessary legislation, strategic directions, roles and responsibilities and ultimately activities for the development of sport and physical activity in a country

Bringing sport closer to the centre

The power of sport is widely recognised, but difficult to capture. Positioning and aligning sports policy to national strategic and social objectives enables sport to move closer to the centre of government. National Sports Policy comprises multiple areas – some relating directly to sporting outcomes, but many which are key contributors to broader national policy goals

National sporting goals

Major events: Set vision and strategy for bidding and staging major sports events

Sport governance: Establish roles and responsibilities for the governance of the sector, including public funding

Elite sport: Set national goals and strategies for investment into, and support for, elite sport

Social policy goals (community, education, health)

Sport for all: Ensure inclusive fair access for all to sport and physical activity

Physical literacy: Support schools, clubs and educational establishments to teach physical literacy

Activity for health: Contribute to a healthy nation through physical activity, in treatment and prevention

Strategic policy goals (foreign policy, economic development)

Active places: Inform national infrastructure on generating active places and active travel

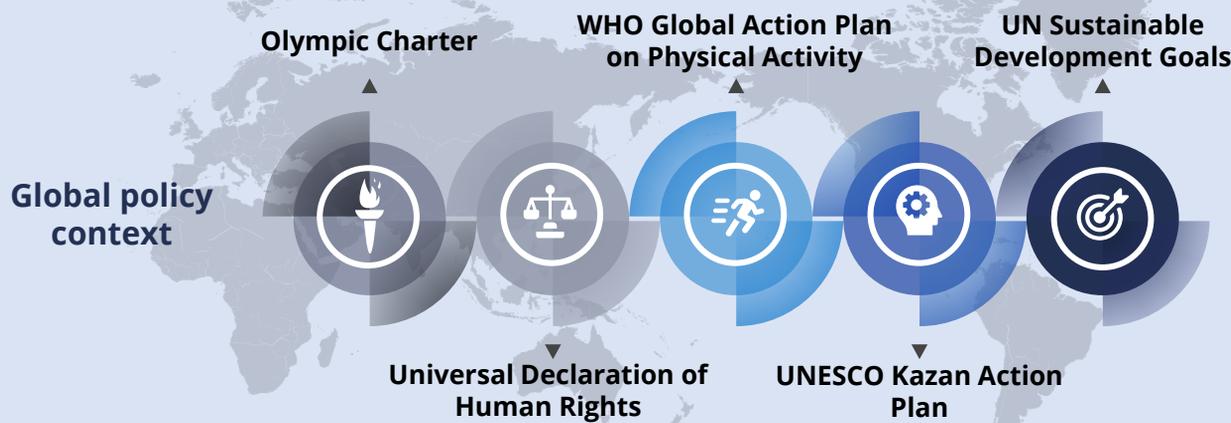
Sport industry: Contribute to national economic goals through sport industry and sports jobs

Sport diplomacy: Support national foreign policy goals through sport



THE INTERNATIONAL SPORTS POLICY ECOSYSTEM comprises at least five international policies and frameworks that address sport in the context of access, systems societal impact, health benefits and integrity that are also relevant in the national context

Alignment of National Policy to international frameworks is becoming increasingly important as the role of sport and physical activity plays an ever greater role in other global issues such as health and social equality



Key challenges and success factors

As a relatively underdeveloped policy area, policy makers in sport typically face 4 major challenges. However, our experience working with multiple governments across the world point to several key success factors to develop and implement a successful sports policy:

<p>Government attention</p>	<p>Challenges</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Sport is typically not a policy priority for government, meaning limited focus, attention, funding and political time 	<p>Success factors</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Explicitly link sport policy as a key enabler of other national policy goals and engage stakeholders in policy design – in particular, health, education, economy/tourism, and infrastructure ▪ And engage those stakeholders in the design process; opportunity greater than ever with COVID-19 related attention on wellbeing
<p>Data and Insights</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Limited access to strong data, insights and analysis to design policy and build an impact case 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ As soon as possible, establish a continuous minimal, high-quality survey of sport and physical activity behaviour alongside analytics capability ▪ A basic dataset can be sufficient to shape policy and build the case for social impact through SROI modelling
<p>Policy expertise</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Limited experience in national sport policy means difficulty in design, implementation and impact delivery 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Invest in sector expertise and leverage international institutional knowledge ▪ Develop and invest in local public sector capabilities to embed and build expertise for the future