

Inputs from UN in China
Secretary-General's report on sport for development and peace

Inputs from UNESCO China

UNESCO is the Lead Agency for Physical Education and Sport within the United Nations System, both from an educational and cultural perspective, as well as from a developmental perspective. It provides assistance and guidance for curriculum planning as well as inclusive policies. The Organization aims to inform, orient and support Member States in their endeavours.

In 2015, UNESCO's General Conference adopted the *International Charter of Physical Education, Physical Activity and Sport*, which recognized that physical education and sport have the potential "... to promote values such as fair play, equality, honesty, excellence, commitment, courage, teamwork, respect for rules and laws, respect for self and others, community spirit and solidarity as well as fun and enjoyment".)

Equally, the *Kazan Action Plan*, adopted by Ministers and Senior Officials Responsible for Physical Education and Sport (MINEPS VI), held in Kazan, Russian Federation in July 2017, noted that "the preamble of the 2030 Agenda acknowledges sport as an important enabler of sustainable development and peace".

Examples of UNESCO Beijing's support to this area of work:

1. The promotion of youth inclusion and gender equality through sport was considered during the **2018 Northeast Asia Martial Arts Forum**, organized by the *International Centre of Martial Arts for Youth Development and Engagement*, a Category 2 Centre under the auspices of UNESCO, in December 2018. The purpose of the forum was to bring together researchers, practitioners, and policy makers to understand the history and the current situation of martial arts in Northeast Asia and to support the building of an inclusive environment for children and women's increased participation in martial arts in the Northeast Asia region. An assessment of the status quo of national policies and programmes on martial arts in Northeast Asia was undertaken. The challenges and opportunities that impact children's and women's participation were identified, and a plan of action to assist Member States in enhancing policies for youth development and engagement, gender equal participation in martial arts was elaborated.
2. Building upon UNESCO's activities on creating an **International Network on Traditional Sports and Games**, and on safeguarding and promoting intangible cultural heritage, the UNESCO project "Open Digital Library on Traditional Games" (ODLTG) promotes the preservation and access to information of traditional games through the innovative utilization of Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs), in order to safeguard such knowledge as living heritage in the public domain,

narrow the digital divide and promote the rapprochement of cultures through sports and games. Since 2015, with support from Chinese private sector partners, the ODLTG project has been piloted in a few selected countries around the world for data collection and methodology testing. Data and audio-visual content of traditional games and sports have been documented by UNESCO experts at the country level in consultation and collaboration with the local communities and practitioners. Preserved in the digital library, this open and free content is accessible to the public for research, teaching and learning, and innovative re-usages.

3. Recognizing the crucial role of sport for peace building and reconciliation as well as the importance of safeguarding traditional expressions and practices for social development, UNESCO promoted the joint inscription by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK) and the Republic of Korea (ROK) of the **traditional Korean wrestling (Ssirum/Ssireum)** on *UNESCO's Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity* (2018). The traditional wrestling practice is a popular form of entertainment widely enjoyed during festive occasions across the Korean Peninsula, with rooted social functions of enhancing community solidarity and social cohesion, while also fostering physical and psychological health. The joint initiative by the two Koreas not only demonstrated the recognition of a common heritage, but also opened avenues for future collaborative efforts in jointly safeguarding this traditional practice, highlighting the role of culture and sports as bridges for peace, mutual understanding and dialogue.