
A new team member: What role can sport play in driving Better Data, Better Lives?

Side Event at the 51st Session of the United Nations Statistical Commission

Wednesday 4th March 2020, 1:15 pm - 2:30 pm, Room S-2725

Concept Note

Overview

There has been a data revolution in the sport and fitness sector over the last decade. The breadth of these changes include statistical analysis permeating all facets of professional sport, the phenomenal growth in the wearable fitness industry, geospatial data being used to develop active cities and an enhanced emphasis on monitoring population-level physical activity.

The value of the sports industry is currently estimated to account for one percent of Global GDP,¹ it is projected to grow to over \$600 billion by 2022.² The global wearable device market is projected to reach \$88 billion in 2023, with spending on such devices expected to be around \$52 billion in 2020.³ Conversely however, the societal cost of physical inactivity still stands at approximately \$70 billion per year through direct health costs and lost productivity.⁴

Such data underpins growing recognition of the potential for sport and physical activity to make an enhanced contribution to achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG). This includes recognition within the 2030 Agenda that sport is ‘an important enabler of sustainable development’.⁵ In turn, there has been increased attention across countries on the need to strengthen sport-related data⁶ and enhance measurement of the contribution of sport to achieving the SDGs.⁷

In this context, this event will address two key questions:

- How can advances in sport statistics, fitness and wearable technology contribute to better data and better lives?
- How can the official statistics system support sport, health and fitness stakeholders to better measure and enhance the contribution of this burgeoning sector to sustainable development?

To consider these questions, the event will explore:

- The potential of innovations in the sport, fitness and wearable technology sector to support better data for sustainable development.
- Learning from initiatives using the popularity and attraction of sport to collect health, wellbeing and social inclusion data from marginalised groups.
- Opportunities to further develop and scale the work of governments, intergovernmental bodies, and United Nations agencies to strengthen systems to measure and enhance the contribution of sport, physical education and physical activity to the SDGs.
- Potential future engagement between the Statistical Commission, Inter-agency and Expert Group on SDG Indicators, National Statistics Offices and statistical programmes with this multi-stakeholder initiative.

Co-sponsors

- United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs - Division for Inclusive Social Development
- Commonwealth Secretariat

Background

A global initiative is underway to strengthen statistics on the contribution of sport, physical education and physical activity to the SDGs. This initiative is being coordinated by the Commonwealth Secretariat working with UNDESA, UNESCO, international sporting bodies and a cross section of member countries, civil society organisations and sector experts.

Primarily this work delivers on Action 2 of the Kazan Action Plan, adopted by the Sixth International Conference of Ministers and Senior Officials Responsible for Physical Education and Sport (MINEPS VI) and endorsed by the UNESCO General Conference, and a direct request of the 9th Commonwealth Sports Ministers Meeting.⁸ It has been aligned and coordinated with the UN Action Plan on Sport for Development and Peace 2018 - 2020, which includes as Action Area 4, a focus on improving sport-related data.⁹ It also aims to coherently support the World Health Organisation's Global Action Plan on Physical Activity, which sets out a framework of action to achieve a 15% relative reduction in the global prevalence of physical inactivity.¹⁰

Through this process, a preliminary measurement framework, draft indicators and implementation tools have been developed. This framework and suite of indicators covers all 10 SDGs identified in the Kazan Action Plan, and preliminary Commonwealth analysis, as areas where sport, PE and physical activity can contribute.¹¹ A range of countries are currently testing, or have committed to test the framework, working alongside a number of sport and civil society organizations.

Objectives

This side event will provide a platform for the statistical community to engage with developments in the sport and fitness sector, and to examine how these developments can support their work and ultimately ensure better data for better lives. It will also provide an opportunity to strategize on the best engagement between the official statistics system and initiatives to improve the availability of data to improve measurement and evaluation of the contribution of sport, physical education and physical activity to the SDGs.

The specific objectives of the side event are to:

- Examine how innovations and advances in the sport and fitness sector could contribute to strengthening statistical capacity and addressing the data gap for development.
- Raise awareness among the Statistical Commission, Inter-agency and Expert Group on SDG Indicators, National Statistics Offices and the wider statistical system, of the global initiative to improve data and statistics to measure the contribution of sport, physical education and physical activity to the SDGs;
- Share key learning of countries and international organisations testing the framework; and,
- Garner the input of the statistical system into strategies and approaches to strengthen this initiative and approaches to maximise the contribution of the sport sector to better data for sustainable development.

Agenda

The event will include expert panellists, comments from the floor and opportunities for inputs from participants. The provisional agenda and speakers are as follows:

- 13:15 | **A new team member: Can sport play a bigger role in driving Better Data, Better Lives?**
- Innovations in sport, fitness and statistics: Opportunities and challenges for policy makers and the official statistics system**
- Experts and representatives of the sport, innovation and wearable fitness technology sectors.
- 13:45 | **Strengthening statistics to measure the contribution of sport and physical activity to the SDGs: Learning from early adopters**
- Representatives of countries working to strengthen sport and physical activity data for development.
- 14:15 | **A plan of action on statistics, sport and the SDGs**
- Group of Friends of Sport for Development [Co-Chaired by the Ambassadors of Monaco and Qatar]
 - United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs
- *Speakers to be confirmed*

Further Information

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Notes

- ¹ KPMG and Confederation of Indian Industry (2016) *The business of sports*, September 2016.
- ² Business Wire (2019) *\$614 Billion Global Market Opportunities & Strategies to 2022*, businesswire.com, 14 May 2019.
- ³ Gartner (October 2019) *Invest Implications: 'Forecast Analysis: Wearable Electronic Devices, Worldwide, 2019'*, USA.
- ⁴ World Health Organisation (2018) *Global Action Plan on Physical Activity 2018 - 2030: More Active People for a Healthier World*, Geneva: WHO, Retrieved from:
<https://apps.who.int/iris/bitstream/handle/10665/272722/9789241514187-eng.pdf>
- ⁵ United Nations General Assembly (2015) *Transforming Our World: The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development*, A/Res/70/1.
- ⁶ United Nations General Assembly (2018) *Strengthening the global framework for leveraging sport for development and peace*. Report of the Secretary-General, A/73/325.
- ⁷ Commonwealth Secretariat (2018) *9th Commonwealth Sports Ministers Meeting Communique*. Gold Coast, Australia, Retrieved from:
<http://thecommonwealth.org/sites/default/files/inline/9CSMM%20%2818%29%20Communique%3%A9.pdf>
- ⁸ Commonwealth Secretariat (2018) *9th Commonwealth Sports Ministers Meeting Communique*. Gold Coast, Australia, Retrieved from:
<http://thecommonwealth.org/sites/default/files/inline/9CSMM%20%2818%29%20Communique%3%A9.pdf>
- ⁹ United Nations General Assembly (2018) *Strengthening the global framework for leveraging sport for development and peace*. Report of the Secretary-General, A/73/325.
- ¹⁰ World Health Organisation (2018) *Global Action Plan on Physical Activity 2018 - 2030: More Active People for a Healthier World*, Geneva: WHO, Retrieved from:
<https://apps.who.int/iris/bitstream/handle/10665/272722/9789241514187-eng.pdf>