



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**.

Name and designation of respondent: Thays Prado, Sports Programme Coordinator

Entity: UN Women

Email: thays.prado@unwomen.org

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.**

UN Women has developed rapid and targeted response to mitigate the impact of the COVID-19 crisis on women and girls and to ensure that the long-term recovery benefits them.

UN Women's response to COVID-19 includes policy advice and programmatic interventions and is part of the broader UN-wide response. Throughout the world, UN Women's response focuses on five priorities:

1. Gender-based violence, including domestic violence, is mitigated and reduced
2. Social protection and economic stimulus packages serve women and girls
3. People support and practice equal sharing of care work
4. Women and girls lead and participate in COVID-19 response planning and decision-making
5. Data and coordination mechanisms include gender perspectives

A global programme proposal was developed to support this response: Gender-Responsive Prevention and Management of the COVID-19 Pandemic: From Emergency Response to Recovery & Resilience.

Sports for Development and Peace:

"One Win Leads to Another" (OWLA) is a joint programme between UN Women and the International Olympic Committee focused on the empowerment of young women and girls through quality sports practice and life skills sessions that addresses: 1. Leadership and Self-Esteem; 2. Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights; 3. Gender-Based Violence Prevention; 4. Economic Empowerment.



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While lockdown measures are in place in Rio de Janeiro/Brazil, the programme's activities with participants are suspended. Physical educators and facilitators are receiving their regular salaries and have regular orientation via online meetings with UN Women's partner, the NGO Empodera, regarding the programme's content and sessions planning. Most of NGOs implementing the OWLA methodology keep regular contact with the girls via whatsapp groups to check on their safety and well-being.

In Buenos Aires/Argentina, UN Women is working with Women Win and local NGOs to adapt the content of the OWLA curriculum to respond to the crisis. Local NGOs conducted a situation analysis with adolescent girls in vulnerable neighborhoods of the city and this diagnosis will inform the adaptation to the life skills sessions of the curriculum. They will focus on the impacts of COVID-19 in the life of adolescents, responding to an increase in gender-based violence, sexual abuse and unintended pregnancies, the reinforcement of traditional gender norms at home, and the impact of the burden of care and domestic work for women and girls, and provide them with very concrete tools regarding formal education, accessing work (if they are of the age to do so) and becoming entrepreneurs. Other adaptations may include the reduction of the number of girls per group, to allow them to keep a minimum distance from each other, and the proposition of physical activities that do not rely on physical contact between girls. Online support and webinars will be provided to keep facilitators and physical educators supported, engaged with the programme and updated regarding the content's adaptations.

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. **Women and girls in sports are being affected more and in different ways in comparison to men and boys**
 - a. For the most vulnerable communities, sport for development programmes which have been beacons of hope, are being cancelled and having a deep impact. The rare ones that focus on girls have sent these players home and into precarious situations – with the risks of traditional gender norms reasserting overburden of care and domestic work, physical and sexual violence and unplanned pregnancies.
 - b. COVID-19 has deeply impacted the sport world due to closures and cancellations which threatens to erase and even reverse the fragile gains that women in professional and elite sport had realized, and the momentum that had gained force, particularly over the past year with unprecedented attention. UN Women



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is working with important members of the sport ecosystem to prevent this reversal.

2. **Women and organizations focused on women's sports** and women in sport must be part of consultations and decision-making processes and **lead response and recovery plans**
3. **Sports have an important role for us to recover better and leave no one behind.** When the social distancing is over, we will be longing for opportunities to meet our loved ones and celebrate together. Societies will need tools for people to reconnect with each other and to rebuild a sense of community. Sport activities and events are perfect occasions for that. The post-COVID Olympics are set to be a major moment for this global celebration and healing. Further, we will want to see people healthy and strong. Physical activity is an effective means to achieve this goal. For women and girls, sports are also a powerful tool to challenge the gender stereotypes that are now being reinforced, to regain ownership of their bodies, to rebuild their lives after trauma, to further develop skills that are transferable to the work environment, to find a safe network and a sense of meaning and purpose, and to express their talent and passion professionally.

RESOURCES

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

Document "The Impacts of COVID-19 on Women and Girls in Sport" under internal revision and approval processes.