

# Sport for Development and Peace

Mauritius Case Study

## Rising to the development challenges in Mauritius through sports

Mauritians, young and old, are being encouraged to take up sports and join in physical activity to improve health outcomes and promote social cohesion across the country.

In June 2017 the Mauritian Prime Minister, Pravind Jugnauth, announced the development of a national sports policy that will focus on improving health, wellbeing and social inclusion. Ahead of the announcement the Commonwealth Secretariat provided technical assistance to the Government of Mauritius to develop a strategy to promote Sport for All in the country.

"We must get more people, young and old, men and women to practise sports and engage in physical activity. Sports and leisure can make a significant contribution to maintain health and physical fitness, encourage team spirit and also team spirit and can also provide an important diversion from the stress of daily life. Moreover, it can help to reduce crime, promote social inclusion and enhance the development of young people at school," Prime Minister Jugnauth said in his annual budget address.

The Government allocated 25 million rupees to fund the implementation of the sports plan, including five million rupees for policy development and stakeholder consultation and 20 million rupees for targeted sports programmes.



Mr N. Pillay Samoo, acting Director of Sports from the Ministry of Youth and Sports, said the new approach means that more of the population will benefit from opportunities to participate in sports in the country.

"The Commonwealth's technical assistance has supported the Mauritian Government to set out future plans and prioritise resources to develop an inclusive Sport for All policy focused on enhancing development and health outcomes for all Mauritians," Mr Samoo said.

"The government is aiming at getting more of the population participating in sport by 2025. This plan recognises the important role sports can play in improving health and physical fitness, as well as its contribution to national health, education, gender and youth development outcomes."

From seven key priorities, a series of policy priorities have been developed for strengthening Sport for All in Mauritius. These include providing more opportunities for regular participation in sports, better coordination of the range of organisations delivering sporting opportunities, promoting new and innovative sporting activities and ensuring sport is safe and inclusive for people of all abilities.

As part of the Government's enhanced focus on Sport for All the Sports Department of the Ministry of Youth and Sports has been restructured to include a dedicated unit to lead the implementation of the new Sport for All policy direction.

## Technical assistance

The Commonwealth Secretariat provides technical assistance to member countries to help develop policies and strategies to maximise the contribution of sport to national development objectives.

By aligning national sports policy to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), Commonwealth countries can maximise the impact and contribution of sport to their national development objectives, including in areas such as health, education and social cohesion. This contribution can be realised through the use of sport as a tool in advancing sustainable development and by strengthening governance, gender equality and the protection and promotion of human rights in sport.

The Commonwealth is able to provide expert technical assistance and human resources to assist member countries develop overarching national plans, as well as provide strategic advice.

Further information, reference material and publications is available on the website: <http://thecommonwealth.org/>



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The Commonwealth Secretariat's Sport for Development and Peace Unit assists member governments to strengthen policy and strategy to promote the contribution of sport to sustainable development.

For more information on Sport for Development and Peace, visit the website or email [sdp@commonwealth.int](mailto:sdp@commonwealth.int)

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