



POWER OF SPORT

How sports and active lifestyle
projects transform society

Moscow,
2020



“ O Sport, you are Peace! You promote happy relations among people, bringing them together in their shared devotion to a strength that is controlled, organized, and self-disciplined ”



Pierre de Coubertin,

President of the International
Olympic Committee (IOC),
1896–1916, 1919–1925.

Table of contents

Introduction	2	III. Specifics of the projects	42
Research – initial step of the major project	2	Specifics of international experience	44
About the research	3	Motivation of leaders and participants	48
Characteristics of the research	4	Project life cycle	53
I. Sports and society	6	Challenges of the projects	56
A social sports project – selection criteria	8	IV. Action horizon	60
Social impact of sports	10	Development perspectives of the area	62
Combining sports with other types of social activities	24	General conclusions	64
Social impact assessment	26		
II. Audiences	32		
Target groups	34		
Some specifics of working with audiences	37		

Research – initial step of the major project



In January 2019 our Foundation announced a new initiative aimed at uncovering the potential of sports as a social institution. In May 2020 this initiative was formalized as the Power of Sport program aimed at the development of sports as a social and cultural phenomenon embracing all aspects of modern society: culture, education, healthcare and philanthropy. In preparing the launch of the program we had to study this subject in both an international and Russian context – identifying existing foreign practices and their applicability to our own country. A number of questions emerged, such as these: What is the influence of sport on the enhancement and refinement of human values? What social impact can be achieved through an intensive development of physical culture and sport? How can it be determined whether or not a sports project has a social focus? To answer these questions we, jointly with Social design center Platforma, conducted the Social Sport Projects: Goals, Outcomes and Demand for Support study. The findings of the research are summarized in this brochure.

Sports are widespread – universal, in fact – and this is the advantage they have over other types of activities. Sports for health improvement purposes in Russia are now successfully incorporated into the social life of the nation: sport festivals, charity runs and communities of sport lovers, including rare athletic disciplines, are highly popular. Centers of adaptive physical therapy, especially for people with motor and intellectual disabilities, are actively used; rehabilitation projects for addicts as well as inclusive projects for children and adults have been implemented, and the Active Aging program is supported at the federal level. But, paradoxically, in-depth analyses and reflections on the role of sports in solving social problems are missing.

For a long time, sports have been perceived by the world community not just as a means for promoting health and physical achievements, but as a powerful tool for advancing the values of peace, solidarity, non-violence and justice. In the Sustainable Development Goals, which was set in 2015 by the United Nations General Assembly and projected to be achieved by the year 2030, sports is listed as one of the key factors for strengthening peace – it plays the role of a social integration factor, while promoting environmental protection and economic development in various political, cultural and geographical contexts.

One of the problems in advancing sports as a social institution is that it is quite difficult to measure the social impact and assess the efficiency of sports projects. Industry leaders and participants often lack the experience and knowledge to organize such initiatives. We hope that the results of the research will stimulate further reflection on the phenomenon of sports in the modern arena, prepare the groundwork for innovations and motivate enthusiasts to persevere in their activities. This brochure will be useful to a broad range of experts – representatives of the non-profit sector, public authorities, business, mass media, heads of sports societies, local leaders and activists, and university faculty and students.

Oksana Oracheva,
General Director,
The Vladimir Potanin Foundation

About the research

In Russia, development of sports is usually perceived in one of two different aspects: either as a weapon for victory on the global stage or as a general amalgamation of physical activities. The overall impact of sports on society – improving social well-being, addressing social problems, developing territories and local communities – has never been fully appreciated. However, the social potential of sports is undeniable. In particular, sports are used as a highly motivating means of controlling unhealthy habits and malicious behavior among youth and often play the role of a «substitution for the streets».

At the moment we are witnessing a visible value shift, notable even at the federal level. The new strategy of sports development by 2030 gives priority to quality of life, suggesting that sports are gaining ascendancy as a social tool. However, the social function role of sports in Russia remains, in fact, self-regulating. Neither clear indicators of development through sports nor tools for supporting sports as a social factor exist. This is out of tune with the modern level of organization of sports and the maturity level of society.

Society needs sports as a communication language, as a tool for social engagement of various groups, and, finally, simply as a method of treatment for people who need sport and health practices to solve social problems. This is why the non-profit sector can be seen working in close cooperation with the sports sector. Acting on this principle, the sociological research was organized by the Platforma Social Project Planning Center and Vladimir Potanin Foundation to identify the most suitable role for sports in contemporary society.

Research objectives:

- to understand the benefits of sports for society and major social impacts of sport;
- to determine the necessary specifics of social project planning in sports – who should be the chief beneficiaries of social sports projects; problems and needs for support faced by their leaders;
- to identify an optimal model for participation of the non-profit sector in the ongoing development of sports as a resource for social change.

The research is focused on social sports projects. They are understood as initiatives leveraging sport to solve social problems.

The methodology is primarily based on quantitative methods. We have conducted 30 interviews with leaders and participants of sports projects to collect statistics from the sector. We have also used the data of opinion polls. Our approach does not differentiate sports, health, fitness and other types of activities. Boundaries between various types of sports activities are removed by the basic assumption of the project – that social benefits are more important than sports victories.

Characteristics of the research

The research was conducted in 2 stages:

Stage 1 – November 2019 – January 2020;

Stage 2 – April – June 2020.

Research tools:

Expert survey

Sample – 41 respondents

Telephone poll of population of Russia

Sample – 3,000 respondents

On-line survey of sports communities' members

Sample – 500 respondents

Meta-analysis of existing studies

Open-source data analysis

Geographical spread:

Belgrade, Guanajuato, Yekaterinburg, Izhevsk, Kursk, Moscow, Nizhny Novgorod, Omsk, Parizh (Chelyabinsk Region), Sochi, Stavropol, Tel Aviv, Trier

Participants in expert interviews:

Ashot Ayrapetyan	Center for Development of Inter-ethnic Cooperation (Moscow)
Sergei Altukhov	Center for Sport Management, Lomonosov Moscow State University (Moscow)
Irina Badayan	Russian International Olympic University (Sochi)
Igor Baradachev	Timchenko Foundation (Moscow)
Nataliya Belogolovtseva	Dream League (Moscow)
Valery Bolshakov	organizer of competitions, major bank (Moscow)
Elena Vlasova	Sport Section (Moscow)
Vladimir Voloshin	Ironstar (Moscow)
Darya Gubareva	Women's Amateur Football League (Moscow)
Vladimir Dolgiy-Rapoport	GirlPower (Moscow)
Julia Enkova	Fight&Roll Girls (Moscow)
Eduard Ziurin	VNIIFK (Moscow)
Maxim Zhurilo	I love Supersport (Moscow)
Maxim Kavinov	Nizhny Novgorod Rock-Climbing Federation (Nizhny Novgorod)
Jam Kadyrov	JammyFit (Moscow)
Igor Kolesov	Leader Foundation for Street Workout Development (Moscow)
Alexander Kostenko	Bachata School (Moscow)
Irina Kuprina	Severa club (Moscow)

Participants in expert interviews:

Svetlana Mamedalina	Parizh Marathon (Parizh village, Chelyabinsk Region)
Maxim Mozhilov	Всенаспорт.рф (Moscow, Lipetzk Region)
Sergei Nekrutov	Warsport League, Russian Army, Air Force and Navy Volunteer Society (Moscow)
Yan Nemalovsky	Community of Break-dancers (Moscow)
Anastasiya Pletmintseva	Marathon in the Dark (Moscow)
Olga Pugatch	Plogging in Moscow Parks (Moscow)
Valentin Rabotenko	Cardo, Offbeats (Stavropol)
Mikhail Smagin	Felt Boots Hockey League (Izhevsk)
Artem Gerasimenko	Sociobeg (Moscow)
Elena Soboleva	business consultant (Moscow)
Alexei Soshnikov	HARDROLL Roller School (Kursk)
Julia Tolkacheva	Sport for Life (Moscow)
Alexander Rudenko	Fitlove festival
Marina Semenova	Fight&Roll Girls (Moscow)
Kseniya Shakirova	Shipulin Foundation (Ekaterinburg)
Anna Shilova	Dream League (Moscow)
Anton Shipulin	Shipulin Foundation (Ekaterinburg)

International experts:

Daniel Añorve	Universidad de Guanajuato (Guanajuato, Mexico)
Sharon Levy-Balanga	Special Olympics Israel (Tel Aviv, Israel)
Andreas Ludwig	administration of the town of Trier (Germany)
Milan Miletich	Community of Runners (Belgrade, Serbia)
Hans Grandin	Somalia Bandy (Borlänge, Sweden)
Fernando Segura	Universidad de Guanajuato (Guanajuato, Mexico)
Christo Velkov	Special Olympics (International Organization)

This list is not a map of projects or bank of best practices. Participants – project leaders – are presented without formal positions in accordance with projects, which they are implementing or have already implemented.



Sports and society

This chapter describes impact of sports on society and provides analysis of social sports projects promoting social change.

Key questions of the research:

What social impact may be achieved through a systematic development of sports?

What are the differences between a social sports project and a conventional sports project?

Demand for sports initiatives comes from two sides. On the one hand, sports are a traditional element of education and healthcare systems, military training and international politics. On the other hand, sports are in demand in society as an option to spend leisure time, a system of self-development practices, a way to fulfill social ambitions, and simply as games.

Thus, the social aspect is inherent in sports. However, sports used to have a limited applicability as a social tool; they were used mainly as a means for achieving dialogue between countries, especially between adversarial nations. A perfect example of this would be the choice of athletes from the USSR and the USA to participate in spite of the boycott of the Olympic Games, first by the USA in 1980 and then by the Soviets in 1984. The spirit of the athletes themselves transcended the bitter political posturing of both nations.

Presently some countries turn to sports to solve a large number of internal social problems. Sports in this context are often regarded as a compensating tool of social financing – by investing in sports, a country or a region spends less on other social issues.

For instance, the Changing Lives: the Social Impact of Participation in Culture and Sport report by the British House of Commons assesses the return on investments in sports programs for at-risk youth as £7.35 per each spent pound sterling – through financial savings in police, criminal justice, and other public institution budgets.

Different countries use sports in a variety of ways, depending on managerial and sporting traditions. However, three common patterns can be noted:

- sports practices, as a rule, leverage the «inner energy» of society. They are based on initiatives of citizens themselves, their social responsibilities and competencies;
- social tasks are integrated with those involving sports and are implemented in a single package;
- municipalities, with their resources and authorities (their capabilities vary), often become centers for policy implementation.

Sports have a powerful direct impact, while other indirect impacts may be perceived as relatively small. Therefore, in some countries, including Russia, sports, until recently, were regarded mainly in the context of high-performance, high-visibility spectacles. However, in Russia there also exist a number of projects where sports are used to solve social problems – such as the Moscow Active Aging program – a joint venture of several departments of the city administration.

The idea to make sports a resource for social change is becoming more and more popular in Russian society. Our poll shows that Russian citizens, without external assistance, are starting to make use of sports to solve social problems through the development of social sports projects.

A social sports project – **selection criteria**

Our opinion poll shows that the link between public perception of the social impact of sport and its competitive aspect is a low-priority factor, at least for most of the mass audience. Competitiveness and results as the determining attractiveness of professional sports are shifting from the center of public perception. In other words, the majority are now less interested in football and ice hockey results than in the overall impact of sports on their personal lives.

Priority is given to:

- health and physical attractiveness;
- pleasure, entertainment;
- lifestyle, with physical activity as a specific feature of one's personal style.

IMAGINE THAT YOU HAVE BEEN ENGAGED IN SPORTS ACTIVITIES FOR A YEAR. WHAT KIND OF INDIVIDUAL WOULD YOU HAVE BECOME?
(% of respondents, people not practicing sport, any number of answers)



Therefore, segmentation for sport, health and fitness activities and other types of endeavor (i. e. in the area of sports and culture) is non-critical for the purposes of the research. The projects under study have one common basic condition – it is not the winning, but positive social changes that matter.

Consequently, the key principle for selection of social sports projects is that sporting achievements are not the primary goal; rather, the objective is to solve social problems through sport.

As we have already mentioned, Russia lacks a government support system arranging social sports projects; thus, we do not have generally accepted principles for their implementation and development. The sports component of such projects may be sponsored by such stakeholders as state bodies, as well as private organizations and foundations, but their social component is rather a personal choice of project leaders. This situation does not stimulate development of sports projects as social ones. Project leaders, as a rule, find it necessary to introduce a social component into their project when they apply for presidential grants (about one third of respondents reported that they have had such experiences).



“Winning a sports competition is a positive side effect. The key is the communication between blind people and those who can see. The community mingles, and people with normal eyesight – including businessmen and managers – are introduced to blind people, become friends, and everyone interacts and learns from each other. We help disabled people to participate in sports, and this experience prompts them to live richer lives, take better care of themselves, build

relationships and recognize their importance. Not everybody, of course, but those people who have such spirit and the desire to be successful are the ones who use the project experience to move ahead”

Anastasiya Pletmintseva, **Marathon in the Dark**

It seems reasonable, based on the results of the research, to suggest a so-called «social declaration» – the declaration of a project that it also has a social component – as the hallmark of a social sports project.

Structure of a social declaration

- message (concept of the project and/or employed technology);
- objective (goal of the project, motivation of its founders);
- target beneficiaries (target audience of the project).

As having a social component does not facilitate access to important resources, some projects do not have a social declaration (it is considered redundant), although they do indeed possess a social component. In some projects it is difficult to separate sport and social components.

On such occasions one has to consider:

- social component of projects without the declaration;
- social motives of project participants.

Social impact of sport

The number of people who do sport in Russia is impossible to calculate and thus equally fruitless to try to evaluate, and one reason for that is the lack of common terminology. However, all studies show a huge potential for involvement of Russian citizens in sports and other pastimes involving physical activity and fitness. Perception of sports is traditionally positive, and this is confirmed by the public opinion poll conducted by the Platforma SPPC. It is possible to specify several key positive aspects of sports practices: beauty, health, physical activity, achievements and entertainment. These features characterize the position of sports among other types of social activities. The research shows that sports as social tools are very much ensconced in Russian culture.

It has to be noted that sports have a distinct advantage over many other types of recreational activity in that they are available to the general public at little or no cost. Anyone may participate in these physical activities, and a positive result is guaranteed in majority of cases, especially if the activities are properly organized. To start practicing many of the sport disciplines, one does not need any basic skills or abilities. On the other hand, the possibility to develop and refine such skills are offered by a number of socially-focused sport projects that offer sports or other physical activities as a hobby, and in this aspect sports are not unique – all hobbies transform people, strengthens the personality, motivates and drives personal fulfillment. In this respect it is evident that sports are an element of social development.

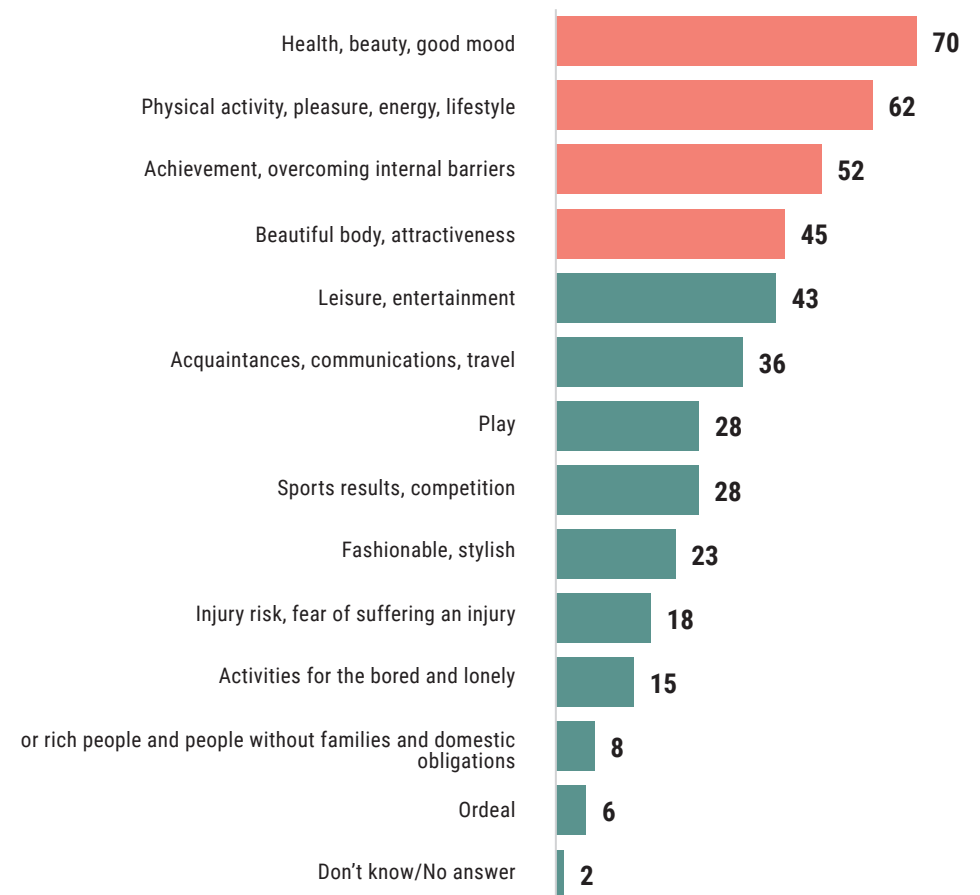


“When a person is enthusiastic about something – ether break-dancing, knitting or weightlifting – his personality will inevitably be transformed. His life routine will be enriched and he or she will strive for personal fulfillment”

Yan Nemaľovskiy, **Community of Break-dancers**

SPORT IS...

(% of respondents, any number of answers – the sum exceeds 100%)



The findings of the research make it possible to highlight several types of positive changes driven by social sports projects, which are different depending on their initial goals. It should be noted that the typology of goals has several drivers.

Projects under study are of mixed origin, and they cover several areas. It is interesting that in some of these areas precise definitions do exist (for example, in activities related to people with disabilities – «adaptation», «inclusion», etc.), while in others (e.g. street sports) there is no common terminology; it is just emerging. So, it is possible to refer not to a system, but to a cloud of overlapping goals and a cloud of social impacts.

Dream League

In the complex program of personality rehabilitation Dream League, sport played the role of a multifunctional social tool. The project, originally called Dream Ski, was launched in January 2014 by spouses Sergei and Natalya Belogolovtsev's with the help of a team of volunteers at five ski resorts in Moscow and the Moscow region. The program has proven to be effective. Alpine skiing using a specially developed methodology with the help of trained instructors can significantly accelerate the process of treatment, rehabilitation and socialization of people with disabilities. During its existence, the rehabilitation program has helped thousands of children and adults with disabilities from all over Russia. The program is already operating in 38 regions at 110 sports facilities.

Since October 2020, within the framework of the Dream League program, a new fourth direction is opening – rock climbing. At present, the methodology has already been written and tested and the first instructors from many Russian cities from Moscow to Irkutsk are being trained to work with children with disabilities. The program will provide an opportunity to work with children with disabilities in those regions where it is bad with snow or ski resorts refuse to accept such children. The climbing wall can be equipped in a

school gym, a rehabilitation center, it does not require special infrastructure like a ski slope, and this program can be year-round.

The program will open up new types of rehabilitation – not only sports, but also creative – for people with cerebral palsy, autism, Down syndrome, visual and hearing impairments, and other disabilities. Within the framework of Dream League, test classes in art therapy are already underway.

In the spring of 2021, water sports will be open for children with disabilities – kayaking, paddle boarding, surfing and others



“I didn't plan it this way, but it so happened that this program became my life's work. The name was chosen by popular vote on Facebook, and now Dream Ski is a well-known brand. But not only have we been doing much more than just skiing, we have outgrown this name. The most important thing in our program is that we are about victory: about the victory of the human spirit, about the victory over disease, over difficulties. Everyone is a winner in our program. We do not have those who do not succeed, we do not have those who do not know how. All of our children can do things that are not always given to healthy children. The psychological and social status of the family changes dramatically: the child, at whom everyone pokes a finger and shies away from, becomes the winner. At every first lesson of every first child, the parents cry. When they see that their children are doing what they are doing, they cry with emotion and delight and a feeling of incredible happiness. That is why we are now the Dream League”

Natalia Belogolovtseva, Dream League

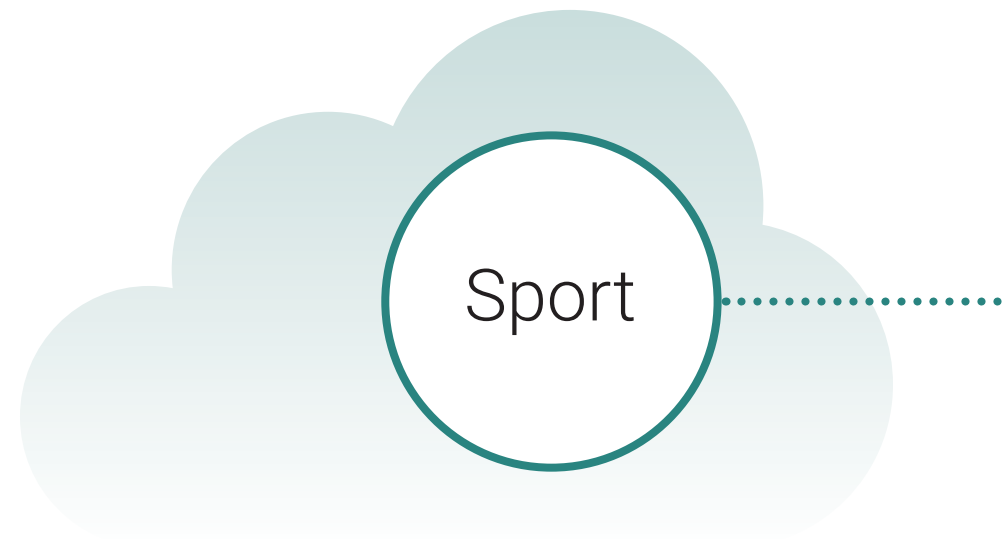
Cloud of social impacts

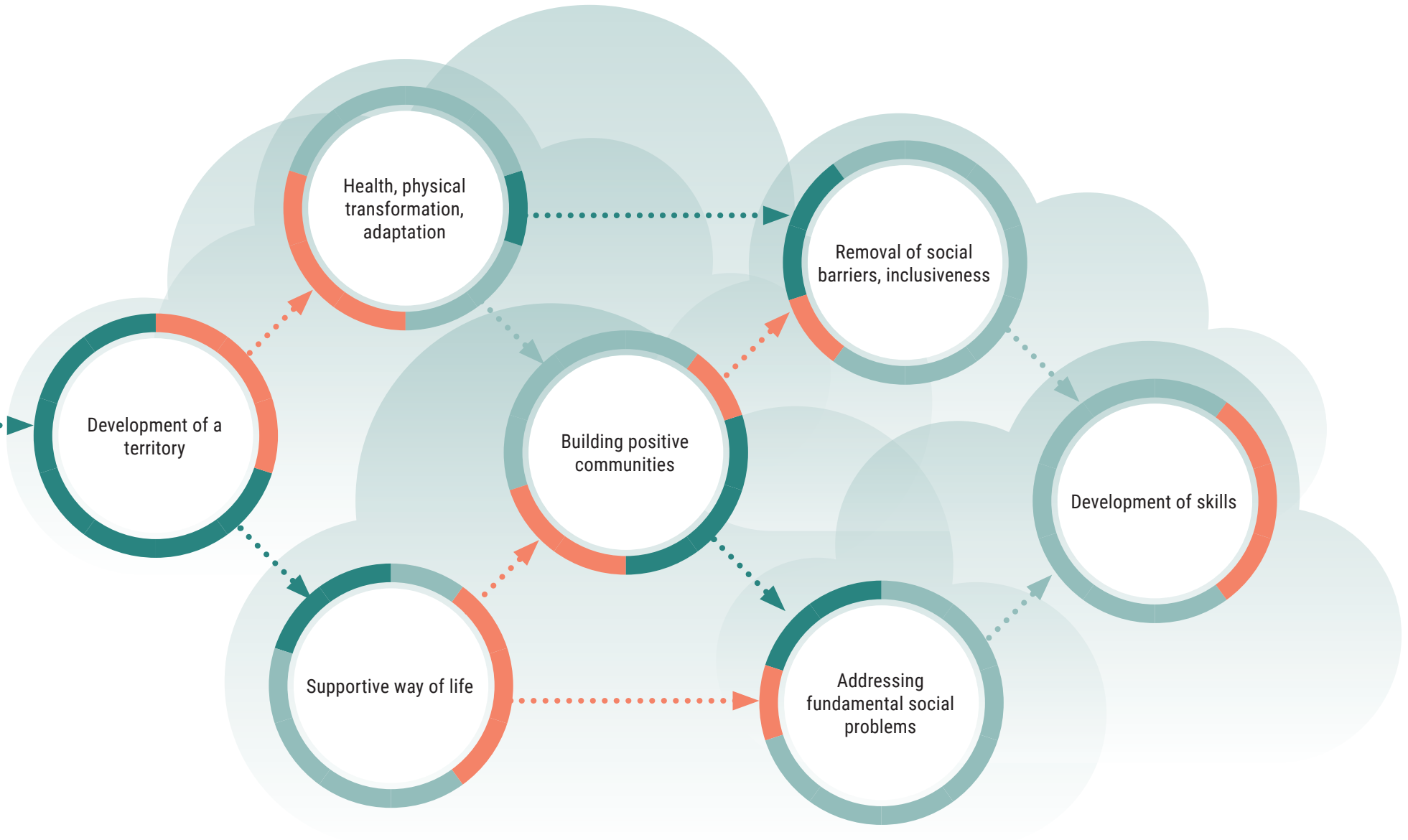
Our poll shows that almost all leaders of sports projects, even commercial ones, have social motivation. For example, the Ironstar Race and Triathlon project provides free slots for disabled children, although the project is a classic business initiative and servicing these slots is quite costly.

The social dimension of sport is quite diverse and includes almost every area of life. But the most mature elements of social sports are adaptation and inclusion of people with disabilities. Methodologies with proven efficiency start to emerge in this area. In some fields of application, regular practices are almost non-existent, although project authors recognize their social component (this is particularly true for dance projects and extreme sports communities).

The cloud of projects implies not only that one and the same experience may lead to different social impacts, but also to the correlation and migration of social impacts.

Although it is quite difficult to distinguish between social impacts or even separate them, the research clearly shows that sports activities have social impact and change society for the better, albeit to an undetermined and at present non-quantifiable extent.





- Health, so often taken for granted by those without significant mental and physical issues, often requires the radical and direct physical transformation of an individual from a poor state of health to a better one. Typical projects in this group employ sports for health improvement, as a compensation for physical inactivity, and as a therapeutic tool, especially for people with motor or cognitive disabilities. Existing forms: adaptive therapy for disabled, inclusion, rehabilitation of former drug and alcohol addicts.

Unreachable Altitudes Do Not Exist

The Unreachable Altitudes Do Not Exist Movement, launched by a climbing center in Nizhny Novgorod, leverages rock-climbing as an adaptive physical activity. Its participants are both adults and children, including those with cognitive disabilities. The project team thinks that standard outreach programs for disabled people in Russia offer just basic medical and job placement assistance, while, by contrast, the key element of their own adaptation programs is the direct therapeutic effect of physical activities.

Maxim Kavinov, the project leader, who was disabled 10 years ago, learned about all the problems in the area of rehabilitation of people with disabilities from his own bitter experience. Eventually, he decided to do something about it, and at that point he resolved to change the existing system; employing his sophisticated management skills seemed a logical place to begin. Maxim started to act: he promoted rock-climbing by setting up a sports federation; he ticketed and rehabilitation and inclusion through licensing and certification.

All project results and achievements are thoroughly documented: the health of its participants is monitored at all stages. The project cooperates with the Institute for Rehabilitation and Health of the Nizhny Novgorod State University, and the effectiveness of

adaptive rock-climbing has been confirmed by the Bekhtereva Brain Institute of the Russian Academy of Sciences.

The project team has managed not only to develop proprietary adaptation methodologies, but also to prove their efficiency; consequently, three presidential grants have been bestowed. Development priorities of the project are systemic changes in adaptive physical activities and project implementation at the federal level.



“Discussions of social adaptation of people with disabilities are usually limited to job placement and career guidance, including that provided for children with special needs. Physical activities are rarely mentioned, although all stakeholders are aware that this is the key aspect of this category. Disabled people are unable to overcome their problems without physical fitness. Conversely, it has been proven that they are able to achieve their untapped potential through physical activities and sports”

Maxim Kavinov, **Rock-climbing Federation, Nizhny Novgorod Region**

The most efficacious form of leveraging sports into the lives of people with special needs is to ensure that its impact is adaptive to their disabilities. The history of adaptive physical therapy started in the 19th century, when the first fitness club for deaf people was opened in Germany. Adaptation through sports often goes hand in hand with inclusive practices, aimed at providing equal opportunities. Projects focused on adaptation and inclusion are typical in sports philanthropy and are the most wide-spread. They have a quick impact and drive health resumption and better quality of life.

■ Setting the stage for dialogue between various population groups.

Sports play the role of a kind of extended social language. In other words, they extend boundaries, they forge new territories. This impact can be achieved because sports offer an open environment with no borders; for instance, one does not need to learn foreign languages to communicate through sports.

Existing forms: adaptation of migrants, countering xenophobia, developing local communities, promoting good neighbor relations and tolerance, unification and integration projects. Athletic disciplines with well-developed language, such as dance sport, are widely used for these purposes. But popular, accessible and intuitive disciplines, such as football, are the most frequently used sports to achieve social impacts of this type.

Center for Development of Inter-ethnic Cooperation

Activists from the Center for Development of Inter-ethnic Cooperation chose sports as a mean of establishing communication between representatives of national minorities and public authorities, although sports were not an initial overarching objective of the organization. The key goals of the Center branches, working in 17 regions, were to establish communication between members of national communities and to get in contact with local authorities. Football turned out to be the answer to both questions – participation in football games provided an opportunity for national groups to become friends. In two decades this practice became widespread. Now local authorities take part in sports events or provide financing for them. But at the beginning the driving factor for development of this movement was the personal motivation of Ashot Ayrapetyan to overcome xenophobia.

He tried other popular sports, such as basketball or volleyball, but they appeared to be more difficult for some participants, and football turned out to be the best possible

option of social language. Amateur sportsmen of all ages participated and continue to take part in the tournaments. The Center organizes events in children's camps and games with policemen. Thus, a National Leaders vs. Local Police game was organized in Yekaterinburg.



“When we started to suggest football competitions 20 years ago, we were told that this was impossible because of lack of time. Now such competitions are organized without our prompt, and their level is quite advanced. The process is underway and has now gone mainstream”

Ashot Ayrapetyan, **Center for Development of Inter-ethnic Cooperation**

Somalia National Bandy Team

The case was initially developed at the interface of social issues and sport with a powerful media component. The project objective was to reduce social tension around the refugee crisis.

About 3,000 Somali nationals live in the Swedish town of Borlänge. The authors of the project – Hans Grandin, media manager, and Per Fosshaug, coach – decided to adapt them to local life though involving them in bandy sport, a traditional one for Northern regions. The group of project leaders also includes bandy team members. The project has kept going for 6 years and its community continues to expand. In 2019 the team took part in Group B of the Bandy World Championships.



“Our players had never seen snow before they came to Sweden. Sport played a critical role in their adaptation, although the process was quite difficult – everybody laughed at us. But this just strengthened our team spirit”

Hans Grandin, **Head of the Somalia Bandy project**

- Sports projects give voice to socially deprived groups. Social deprivation is isolation of people or their groups from certain contacts, practices or types of activities. Sports facilitate tackling social deprivation, but unfortunately cannot eradicate it completely; as with racism in the largest sports arenas in the world, the specter of alienation and disenfranchisement persists at all levels and with endless ramifications – for example, for a long time a stereotype segregation of athletic disciplines into those «for women» and «for men» was maintained. Some sports, like football, ice hockey, strength sport or combat sport were considered purely men's disciplines. Thus, the social image of sports promoted deprivation of women, estranged them from benefits of these athletic disciplines. Social sports initiatives may help to alleviate such unwarranted bias. Social deprivation may be addressed through permanent sports membership clubs.



“ There are very few girls practicing Brazilian Jiu-Jitsu and when I come to a competition, it may turn out that there is no such category included in the events. I want to compete for prizes, for medals, or just to check my level of training, but there are no other girl-participants. So, we decided to join hands with girls from other teams and organized a women's society of Jiu-Jitsu lovers. We tell stories about the girls, interview them. We ask: who among you practices Jiu-Jitsu, why, and what for? We try to persuade girls to participate in competitions ”

Julia Yenkova, **Fight and Roll Girls**

GirlPower

One of the positive outcomes of the development of women's football in Russia is empowerment of women through involvement in training within the GirlPower community. The project, however, started with an idea to organize football teams for boys without the

aim of turning them into professional football players. Vladimir Dolgiy-Rapoport, initiator of the project, said that at one time it occurred to him that his sons, 8 and 5 years old, had nowhere to go to play grassroots football. He and his friends organized a «football sect» for children, which gradually expanded into a large football school. Later on, a free-of-charge football school for girls was added to the project.

A pilot project of a three-month summer school offers three training sessions a week for 5–12 year old girls. More than 1,500 children are now involved in these activities. Vladimir says that they use a different methodology – the objective is not to drive sports achievements (by psychological pressure, among other things), but to cultivate «love and passion» through sports.

The only barrier to project expansion is limited access to sports grounds. School football fields are, as a rule, closed for outsiders and have poor quality. Commercial training grounds and city sports grounds cannot be used because many families cannot afford the fee.



“ I realized that in Russia there was no place where a girl of 8 or older could come and learn to play football. We organized such a place five years ago – the GirlPower. Now this is the largest football school for girls in Russia ”

Vladimir Dolgiy-Rapoport, **GirlPower**

- Another outcome is building positive communities through networking (physically at a location set aside – or on-line). Such groups have inherent value and may, in turn, promote social changes outside their original projects. Their activities have the strongest impact in depressed regions with self-destructive communities aligned around

alcohol, drugs, etc. The key mechanism is to defuse the demotivating characteristics of a troubled community and remodel them for positive inclusion into a new one. The points of contact are representatives of troubled communities willing to change their lives.

Offbeats and Cardo

The Offbeats grassroots movement decided to regenerate depressed city districts through sport. Dangerous territories notorious for their alcohol and drug taking crowds were transformed into sport festival venues. They chose a relevant type of sport for this purpose – the street sport. It is remarkable that change of the «spirit of the place» was carried out without strong-arm tactics, but from inside the destructive community itself – people practicing parkour or break-dance were often a part of the «under the bridge» crowds. They introduced the «virus» of sport in depressed territories, and changes became clear and permanent. Neither the territory, nor the community was ever the same. For eight years the Offbeats managed to make street culture festivals traditional in many Russian cities. Valentin Rabotenko said that their festival in the Chechen Republic was a landmark event – its social impact was complemented by improved communication between national minorities.

In 2017 the Offbeats decided to stimulate the interest of young people involved in street culture – whose number, according to estimations of Vladimir Rabotenko, was almost 10 million – and to do so established the Cardo award. («Cardo» means the axis street in the ancient Roman cities.) Last season saw a gathering of 25,000 participants from 217 cities and 85 regions.

Local authorities are also engaged in the movement. For one thing, they provide financing to enable participants to come to the final competitions. Strategic goals of the project cover infrastructure issues – it is intended to make street sports venues a part of urban design.



“The whole event was centered on inviting national groups. We assumed that they would «battle» with each other, but by the middle of the event everybody had lumped together. Initially, we thought that Chechens would be the «big league», to put it bluntly, but everybody commingled and became brothers”

“A destructive community is doomed to break up. Somebody vanishes, somebody moves and it is impossible to trace this. And some people integrate. Skateboarding became an Olympic sport two years ago, and there are guys who hope to join the national Olympic team. They come to final competitions and see thousands of like-minded people from all over Russia who are charged with energy and looking to find answers to their questions. When they return home with a certain emotional level and understanding of their line of work, they fascinate the others”

Valentin Rabotenko, **Cardo, Offbeats**

■ Development of skills and qualities through sports

Sport promotes concentration and willpower, social and leadership skills.

The most common impacts: motivation for achievements in other areas, ego boost and higher self-assurance in socially disadvantaged groups.

Existing forms: projects aimed at large-scale involvement of people in sports (in contrast with other types of goals, the quantitative coverage is important here).

Timchenko Foundation

The Timchenko Foundation focuses on designing social environment through sport. Sports projects are evaluated not by the volume of infrastructure investments, but by the level of communication skills of the participants.

The Foundation assesses the efficiency of investments in sports projects not by the volume of investments or the number of sports infrastructure facilities built or renovated with the Foundation's support, but by the level of satisfaction of children and their parents engaged in sports activities.

Thus, projects promoting ice hockey in schools are primarily aimed not at making children professional players, but at teaching them to communicate and shaping positive children's communities in the regions.

Extensive research, initiated by the Foundation, shows that participation in the Dobry Led project changes children's social and psychological experience in within families and at school. The main objective of a coach is not to achieve high results, but to establish cooperation with the kids and use training as a personal development resource.

Eight years ago an educational program for coaches, children and parents was launched for these purposes, teaching them social communication, communication psychology and specifics of communication with peers.

Similarly, the primary goal of another project – The World of Chess – is not to turn each child into a grandmaster, but rather, through the process of play, to show these schoolchildren how to work in a competitive environment and to think strategically. Of course, as project curators note, it is impossible to exclude competitiveness from sport, and, really, why should it be? Competition is, after all, the eventual driver of any kind of development.

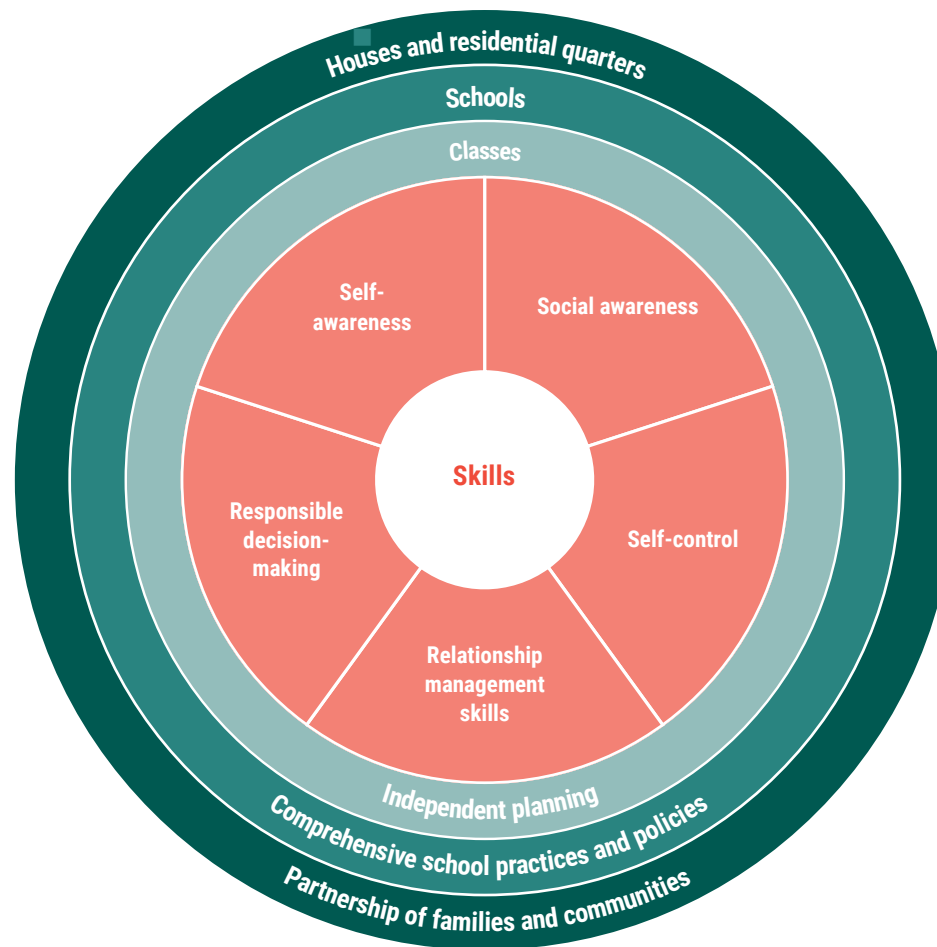


“Hockey skills and ways to handle a hockey stick are not the key. The main thing is the possibility of learning how better to communicate – with adults and peers, through the game itself, in the locker room, outside the locker room. In the first couple of years we had to overcome strong resistance from coaches who believed that coaching had to be primarily aimed at training champions by hook or by crook. The objective of the World of Chess program is not just to teach children to play chess, but to build certain intellectual and communication skills, immerse them into a healthy competition. In Armenia, where the project started earlier than in Russia, the parents were asked about impact of the chess play on their children. The majority responded that children became more interactive and competitive”

Igor Baradachev, **Timchenko Foundation**

Model of sport as a tool for development of social skills designed by Special Olympics

The Special Olympics organization has developed a comprehensive model for improving social skills through sports activities. The key idea is to use acquired skills in different aspects of social life.

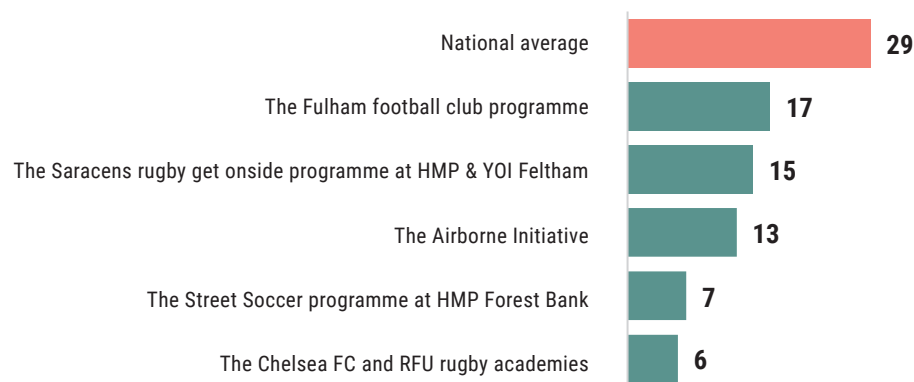


- Development of a revamped lifestyle. The mechanism employed is to suggest an alternative model of behavior for people involved in destructive and self-destructive practices.

Sports makes it possible to diversify leisure activities, pass time, get involved in a «right» group, engage in and motivate positive changes in lifestyle, and give encouragement to higher self-esteem.

These impacts are closely related to building positive communities. A direct benefit for the society at large is a lower crime level. Research confirming this correlation was conducted in Italy and the United Kingdom.

THE NUMBER OF RECIDIVISTS WITHIN A YEAR AFTER RELEASE FROM INCARCERATION IN THE UNITED KINGDOM, % of the released

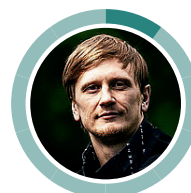


- Of social sport projects participants

Break-dancing in a prison camp (Rostov Region)

A maximum-security prison in the Rostov Region hosts break-dance battles twice a year. They are organized by boys from Krasnodar who had practiced break-dancing before imprisonment and have found an opportunity to continue dancing while behind bars.. Other inmates have joined them and organized an action group. Some of them have already been released and help to communicate with the administration. Yan Nemalovsky, a famous break-dancer, was invited to one of the competitions as a referee. Break-dance is a subculture, where everybody knows everybody. Yan, along with other well-known break-dancers, was approached through the VK social media and invited to the 'battle royal'. The boys managed to start a wave that went as far as the Arkhangelsk Region.

Refereeing at competitions in prison is more conceptual than technique-based; in fact, the inmates have few opportunities to practice and have no access to new innovations. However, for many of them the battles are the only thing that keeps them away from destructive behavior. One of the reasons for this is that the 'get downs' are organized as jam sessions and include not just dances, but interaction and experience exchange. The break-dance battles are effectively the only project that allows a group of people to enter the camp territory. This promotes effective communication of single-minded people and builds a "right" group.



“ A guy serves time for homicide. He says were it not for the break-dance, he would be involved in completely different things here. These people are not many, five or six of them, but they intend to continue dancing after release, and they do not want to live the lives they used to. They want to live as normal people. It is evident that they are infatuated with break-dance ”

Yan Nemalovsky, **Community of Break-dancers**

In some countries, for example the UK, sports are a part of crime prevention programs. The ability of sports to destroy and replace negative social links is widely used in working with at-risk groups, such as children from troubled homes or criminalized local communities.

Coaching Corps

The Coaching Corps project (USA) unites coaches and volunteers organizing regular training sessions for children in depressed territories. Volunteers conduct training on youth development, behavior management, character building and positive team culture. They also organize webinars and educational programs for coaches. The Up2Us project in the US trains coaches with social motivation (future tutors and mentors). These projects employ the principle of indirect social benefit – they involve one group (coaches, volunteers) but their beneficiaries are another group.

Sport against crime. Global UN initiative

The United Nations Board on Drugs and Crime has launched a global youth crime prevention initiative that builds on the power of sport as a tool to promote peace. The initiative aims to promote sports and related activities to prevent crime among at-risk youth. Strengthening the life skills of youth is key to minimizing risk factors and maximizing protective factors. By raising awareness of the consequences of crime and substance abuse and developing life skills, this initiative influences the behavior and attitudes of at-risk youth and prevents antisocial and risk-taking behavior. In particular, sport provides an important opportunity to build life skills among at-risk youth that enable them to better cope with everyday life challenges and avoid engaging in violence, criminal behavior or drug use.

Sports and distance from crime, Laureus experience

Laureus is a global organization that uses the power of sports to suppress street violence. The Lost Boyz project was implemented in one of the most crime-ridden districts of Chicago – the South Shore. About 31.5% of its residents live below the poverty line, schools do not offer extracurricular programs, and children after classes or during the school breaks are left to themselves. The Lost Boyz project (which now includes the Lost Girlz program for girls) is the only sports project for children and older youth in the district that uses baseball and softball for social involvement among at-risk groups. It also offers its participants an employability program to prepare them for entering the labor market. By involving young people in positive action at their moments of highest risk (after classes and during school breaks), the Lost Boyz protects them from joining gangs and from victimization.



“ I did not have much experience in violence prevention, but I had an experience in a penal institution. I got there when I was 19. Afterwards I became a baseball coach and witnessed acts of violence among youths. I thought that sports could be used as a positive tool for children’s development. And afterwards, when I became a university student, I learned that this was a part of the social sciences. Based on my own experience I understood that many things in my personal development were driven by sports and my coaches. I am very grateful to them. So, I decided to help young people by involving them in baseball ”

LaVonte Stewart, **Lost Boyz**

It is important to consider that one practice may have several social impacts and a project may have several goals. This is confirmed, for example, by the Winners Games project – a Russian initiative of special sports events for young cancer survivors. On the one hand, this is a rehabilitation tool. On the other, it is an information resource on cancer control for society. The projects with an objective to involve local residents through sports may also add to shaping a territorial brand.

Felt boots hockey

A spontaneous idea of several businessmen from Izhevsk who wanted to spend their leisure time joyfully and usefully, resulted in designing an affordable sport and became a kind of a hallmark of the city. In 2007 they decided to play ice hockey without ice skates – wearing instead any comfortable boots, including felt snow boots. They cleared the rinks themselves, borrowing snow shovels from yard men on Sundays. In 2011 they started to play regularly – once a week. Every match attracted 15–30 people, and every two weeks a tournament was organized.

The men were soon joined by their children, and then by women – their wives and girlfriends. Gradually they started to organize corporate competitions and established a school of the new sport for children. The final tournament gathered more than 1,000 people, including the city mayor.

The idea of felt boots hockey remains alive and well. One of the important goals for the movement activists, including Mikhail Smagin, is to involve children and adults from all neighborhoods in felt boots hockey – then no yard sports rinks in Izhevsk will stand idle. The city will become a community of active, health-minded people. A short-term objective is to set up a network of storage facilities for hockey sticks in Izhevsk – this way, anyone who feels like it may join the game. The first storage place was opened this year.



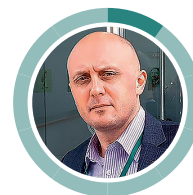
“The project expands every time when new people join it. Photographers arrived, and we started to take photographs. There came designers and we got a logo. Everything is done easily and joyfully – someone gets an idea, tells the others about it, and we discuss it. But, contrary to people in other places who may organize a corporate tournament once a winter «just for fun», we play consistently”

Mikhail Smagin, **Felt Boots Hockey League**

The projects that work with socially disadvantaged groups may, in their turn, become the drivers of shaping local communities and territorial development.

Moscow Inline Skater Hockey Federation

The Federation is the center of attraction for Moscow neighborhoods. A street club of inline hockey expanded into a network of 30 sports clubs. The Federation describes itself as a sports club for three generations – fathers play with their sons, and grandfathers play with their grandsons. The idea is that a sports rink that exists in every neighborhood can become a public venue, an integration point, promoting good neighbor relationships. The Federation draws upon international experience. Similar practices are very well developed in Germany – the inline hockey programs for sport communities in German cities involve a large part of the population.



“We want to bring the best of all sports into our lives, because they offer us all many opportunities for inclusion. Otherwise we will remain at the level of a street club, we will play hockey, and this would be it. And we certainly want to achieve greater social impact”

Igor Kolesov, **the Leader Foundation for Street Workout Development**

Sports may also have an indirect influence on the society. Fitness festivals and sports hobby clubs may stimulate versatile positive behavior of participants outside the sports grounds.



“Promotion of an image of a student who is able to spend leisure time without bad habits and popularizing this trend is one of our goals. The other one is to provide access to knowledge about physical activities to sports venues and to lecturers on healthy diets”

Alexander Rudenko, **founder of the Fitlove Festival**

Fitlove Festival

Alexander Rudenko, the founder of the Fitlove Festival in the Russian Far East, decided to add an educational aspect to the sports festival. Participating students learn how to combine leisure with sport; physical education instructors – how to bring innovations to their classes, and senior people – how to maintain their health and live longer, richer lives. Apparently, Rudenko is also keen on introducing of the trending ‘science’ of ‘bio-hacking’ into the lives of the elderly.

Alexander believes that the Fitlove Festival is unparalleled in the Russian Far East – it has brought together more than 120 speakers. The organizers use a trick – the schedule of activities offers the participants «zero options» – wherever a student goes he/she, no doubt, will get something useful.

Fight&Roll Girls

The Fight&Roll Girls women’s community is a communication platform for enthusiasts of Brazilian Jiu-Jitsu. The community founders bring together girls from different sports clubs and organize master classes and tournaments for women only.

The community maintains a YouTube channel and a VK group, publishing interviews with athletes and publicizing tournament information and other material. The first meeting of the community brought together 30 people, and then this number expanded to 45. More than 200 women-athletes from all over Russia took part in a tournament organized by the girls. They aim at acquiring official status and are drafting an expansion program. They also plan to organize free-of-charge training sessions for women.



“The Jiu-Jitsu women’s community is our communication platform, enabling us to meet and see how many women are interested in this sport. Each time, the audience of our events becomes larger.»

Marina Semenova, **Fight&Roll Girls**

Combination of sports and other social practices

Sports are not the only nor even the most efficient tool for achieving the social goals mentioned above – development of territories, building local identity, substituting a good life style in place of a bad one, and self-esteem boosting. Nonetheless, it may be regarded as one of the valuable components within a comprehensive approach to the problem. Some results may be achieved either through implementation of fitness and sports projects or through other types of activities. Sports, for their part, may be combined with social technologies leveraged in other areas, especially in culture.



“ In 2020 we plan to jog in historical territories, for example, by organizing routes from one conservation area to another, through green areas, in parks and public gardens. We will have small guided tours for participants at the start and then stop at different locations to tell joggers about the place, why it has to be cleaned up, and what used to be there 100–200 years ago ”

Olga Pugatch, **Plogging in Moscow Parks**

Parizh Marathon

A marathon became a tool for territorial development in the small village of Parizh in Nagaybasky District of the Chelyabinsk Region. The run, which was conducted for the first time in 2016, is aimed at promoting the image of the territory, attracting attention to the traditions of Tatar Cossacks-Nağaybäks, and preserving their ethnic identity and language. Local Nağaybäks is an ethnic group of Tatars, and the marathon traditionally includes the immersion of guests into local culture. In 2019 the number of outside participants in the marathon was equal to the number of the local population – 1,000 people. Actually, the marathon is not just a sports event, but also an ethnic and culture festival.

The marathon brings revenue from tourism to the territory, and all locals participate in a grand display of hospitality by providing housing for guests, cooking authentic food and participating in the culture program.

Svetlana Mamedalina, the project leader, said that she learned about Parizh because her husband was born in this village. Thus, the project emerged because of a desire to preserve family values and traditions. Special prize money was allocated for the village residents. The number of participants from the village grew over the years from 2 to 16 people. Project organizers plan to start involving disabled people in the marathon.



“ We have a separate category for the Nagaybasky District and separate prizes for Nağaybäk athletes. The Nağaybäks are small-numbered people on the brink of extinction, and it is important for me to draw attention to their culture, language, folklore and traditional food – all of this is presented at the time of the marathon. We invite all the guests to the Nağaybäks Museum. The warming-up session is accompanied by songs of the Cossacks-Nağaybäks choir. Some guest athletes stay in the village for several days or even weeks; they rent housing from local people and give them an opportunity to earn money. Our local entrepreneurs thoroughly prepare to the days of the Parizh Marathon ”

Svetlana Mamedalina, **Parizh Marathon**

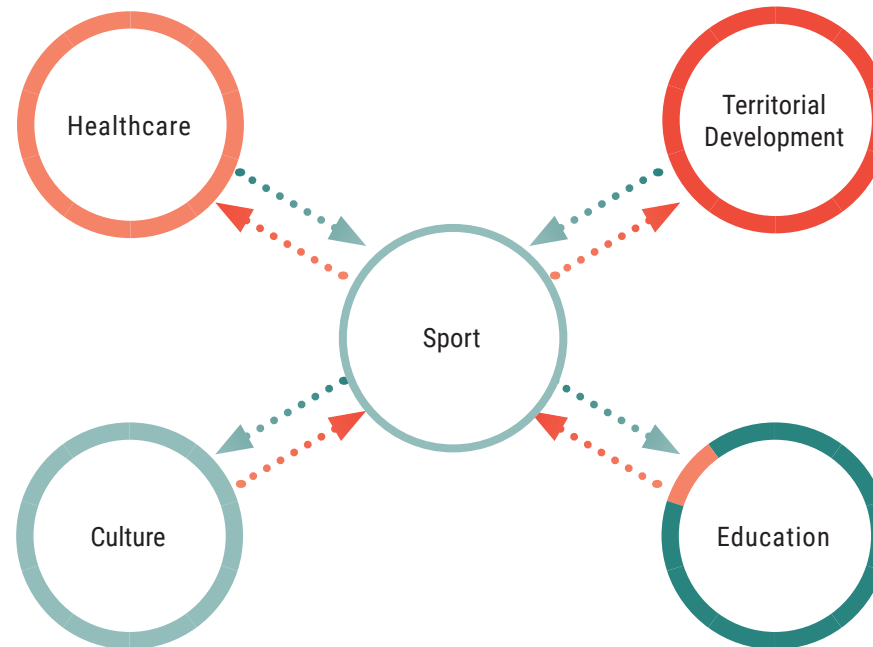
The most promising combinations of sport and other areas

Sport + Healthcare

The most frequent combination. Both compensating (rehabilitation) and synergetic (sport enhances healthcare, healthcare enhances sport) effects occur.

Sport + Culture

The combination is quite frequently used under the following conditions: a) cultural traditions and practices in the area of sports exist in the territory – the sports component enhances the cultural image of the territory; and b) a sports project introduces a new type of culture in the territory or vice versa. Such projects are frequently aimed at transforming the environment.



Sport + Territorial Development

The combination is efficient when the efforts of local administration, business representatives and sports project leaders are coordinated. The most frequently mentioned social benefit is achieved in the area of tourism.

Sport + Education

A traditional combination. Its success largely depends on the ability of educational institutions to adapt their curricula to the needs of modern audiences.



“ Training may be complemented by sports for dissemination of knowledge, for example. Synergy of sport and education may generate a new culture ”

Irina Badayan, **Russian International Olympic University**

Social impact assessment

Measuring social impact of sports projects is often quite complicated.

José Viana and Ugo Lovisolo, researchers from Brazil, studied quantitative reports on the involving of troubled youth into inclusive projects and came to disappointing conclusions confirmed by the practices of other regions.

Quantitative data published by mass media and on web-sites showed increasing involvement of children and youth but never mentioned the drop-off in the first months after enrollment. This information was misleading – success of the projects was overestimated, while failures and their reasons were undisclosed.

Authors of this research analyzed assessment methods of the social impact of sports practices employed by project leaders in Russia and abroad. It can be said that the basic set of indicators includes, as a rule, the number of people involved in sports activities (monitored by almost every project team) and media coverage/monitoring (used by those who need it). Significant differences in width and depth of the methods used are caused by different approaches to the project design.

There is often a fine line between a sports project aimed at involving people in sports and a social sports project. Social declaration is a distinctive feature of a social sports project. It makes sense to develop a special method for assessment of a social declaration. Social impact assessment and efficiency assessment in social sports projects are extremely difficult. Practices with proven social impact exist in the area of adaptation and inclusion. All types of social impacts requiring quantitative assessment are hard to measure.

With that in mind it is advised to draw on best practices in culture projects, where the impacts have been achieved regardless of difficulties with assessment. Private foundations in Russia, for example, have actually regenerated museum activities (especially in small towns). While designing sports projects we have to remember that sport, like culture, is intrinsically a good thing in most cases.



“ In 2018–2019 we organized selective studies: in three municipalities a group of researchers from the Higher School of Economics measured the impact of ice hockey practice by children. They found out that the psychological climate in the schools and classes where these children study had changed. In communities, especially in small towns and villages, an ice hockey club had become a core element of upbringing, outperforming even school. This made it clear that for sport as a social project the role of a coach – his/her mindset and human values – was extremely important. Their role-modeling of proper behavior was most of the time pivotal in shaping the character and behavior of their students. The outcome of the program for participating children went further than leaning rules of the game and mastering their skating skills – the program changed their lives, mindsets and social communication skills ”

Igor Baradachev, **Timchenko Foundation**

Social impact assessment practices in Russia and abroad

	Russian experience	International experience
Number of participants	Statistics are usually collected	Statistics are collected
Media coverage	Statistics are usually collected	Statistics are collected
Improvement of health of participants	Usually – an expert review (registration of visible improvements)	Regular studies, monitoring
Improvement of social well-being of participants	Usually – an expert review	Monitoring
Change of environment	Usually – an expert review	Monitoring
Shaping new communities	Usually – an expert review	Monitoring
Survey of participants' satisfaction	–	Studies are underway
Survey of volume of communication	–	Studies are underway
Practices with proven impact	Rarely	Objective

This study has shown that respondents, trying to assess results of social sports projects, often confuse the notions of «impact» and «efficiency».



“Terms of grant financing envisage that we have to assess project efficiency both quantitatively and qualitatively. It is easier for us to provide quantitative data – how many centers function in the country, how many people attend training sessions, how many hours the training periods last and how many coaches are involved. It is much harder to provide quality indicators. Medical diagnoses [of participants] are different and it is almost impossible to organize control groups, even in medical institutions. We tried to do this and it turned out to be extremely difficult”

Alla Shilova, **Dream League**

It is problematic to assess the social impact of the projects because of their temporary nature – they have a short life-cycle and they are one-off projects that cannot be repeated (each project addresses a specific problem in a specific street).

- Successful experience of assessment of social project efficiency in Russia exists, but relevant methods are used only in the areas of adaptation and inclusion. Assessment of the efficiency of projects with other objectives (territorial development, shaping communities, skills building, etc.), has to be performed using qualitative methods.

Award of a presidential or a municipal grant often becomes an indicator of the project efficiency for its authors. However, the efficiency assessment criteria used for allocation of

such grants do not always include public benefits – a decision to allocate a grant is often based on analysis of the validity of project expenses. Efficient methodology for assessment of quality of the social component in sports projects is still to be developed. On the one hand, such methodology has to be differentiated, as it seems impossible to assess all social impacts using one and the same scale. On the other hand, the social component has to be assessed not only quantitatively, but also qualitatively.

- With that in mind it makes sense to use best practices of other areas. The approach has to be similar to the one used for social impact assessment in the field of culture.

Some project leaders show interest in the methodology of their efficiency assessment; they even somehow compete with each other in this regard. A wide range of social problems addressed by sports projects envisages an equally wide range of methods of their impact assessment. The most frequently used approaches are health monitoring of participants and assessment of the social impact of fitness – decreased medical spending, shorter leaves to take care of a sick child, etc. The three indicators determined by researchers from the Center for Sport Management of the Moscow State University while analyzing impacts of ice hockey projects on schoolchildren are as follows:

- health;
- school grades;
- communication within the team.

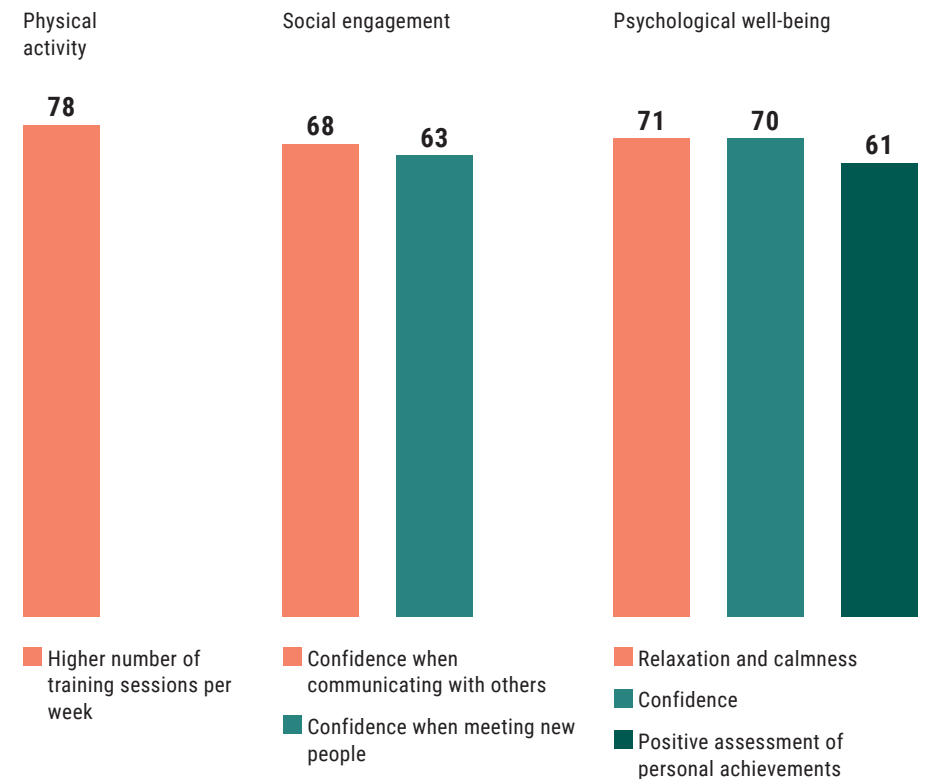
Health monitoring is often complemented by monitoring of contributing indicators, e.g. psychological well-being. When health is a barrier to communication, its influence on the communicative environment is also assessed.

It is relatively easy to monitor changes in public behavior and social habits in what were previously trouble spots in a town or city. A qualifying KPI is easy to determine – the territory is free of gangs of teenagers.

Efficiency of projects with an environmental component is measured by the number of participants, the volume of collected litter and qualitative changes of the territory. KPIs of sports projects aimed at territorial development often include the number of project participants, the benefit to the local community and the territory, and the shaping the brand of the territory.

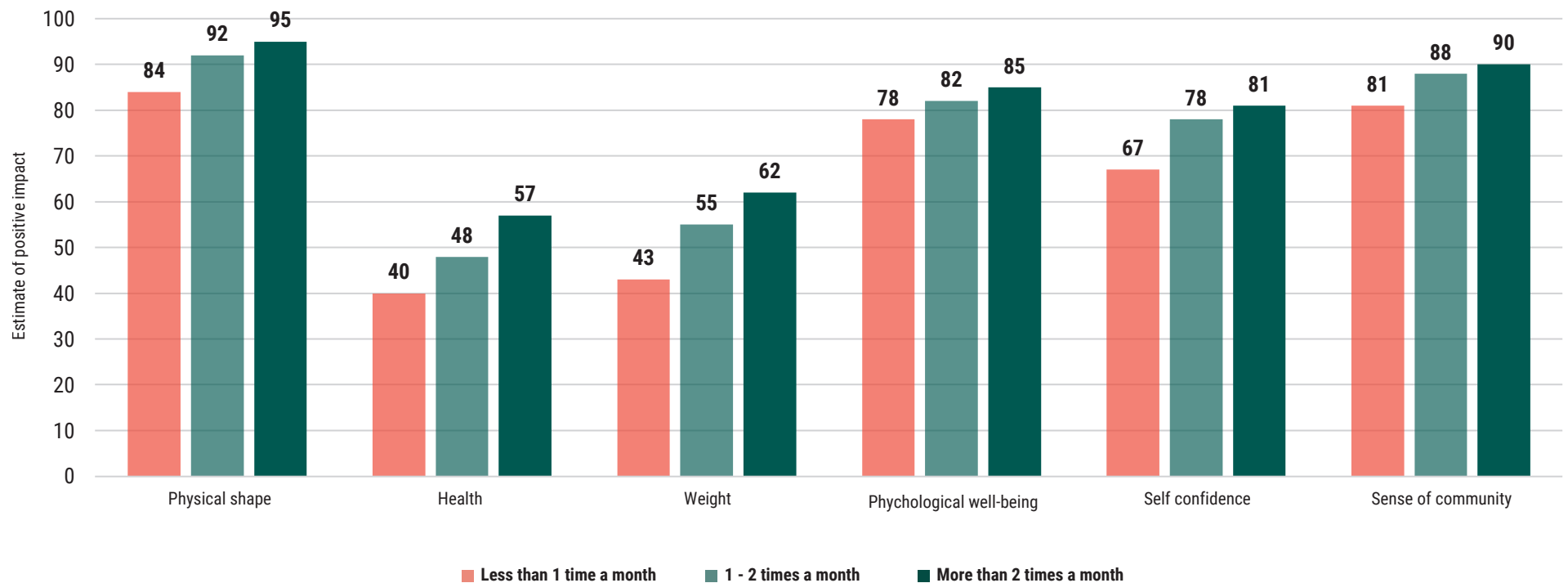
Some respondents note that in metropolitan areas and large cities recognition of programs is much lower, even in those districts where the project is implemented. These observers believe that efficiency and coverage of projects are higher in small towns. This is explained by fewer associated factors. Social impact of a sports program is much more visible and quicker in small towns.

IMPACTS OF THE SOCIAL OLYMPICS ACTIVE IN MIND PROGRAM, % of interviewed participants



It is important to consider that one sports initiative may drive several social impacts, so the project may have several objectives. This is confirmed, for example, by the Parkrun initiative in the UK.

IMPACT OF 5 KM RUN ON HEALTH AND PERCEPTION OF WELL-BEING, % of interviewed participants



The ultimate goal of methodological research in social sports project is to design methodologies with proven efficiency. Considerable progress in this regard has been made in projects where sports are combined with healthcare. For example, adaptive physical activity methods with proven efficiency have already been developed in Russia.



“ We strive to develop methodologies with proven efficiency. This makes us very conscious about our work in all directions. We introduced two types of tests for the children. The first one was the general health test and the second one was the test of family welfare. We had initial, interim and final measurements during the period of one year. For the purposes of analysis children were divided into nosology groups and groups based on their level of athletic skills [in rock-climbing]. We also added a family welfare study. Our colleagues from Lobachevsky University tabulated all the data and analyzed the results of a survey of 150 children. Based on this analysis we plan to issue a handbook on adaptive rock-climbing for rolling out this practice in Russia ”

Maxim Kavinov, **Rock-climbing Federation, Nizhny Novgorod Region**

Conclusions

- Sports may produce a long-lasting social impact but its importance for different areas and audiences varies. The social advantages of sports are most evident in adaptive and inclusive projects for people with disabilities.
- Core social impacts of sport: adaptation and inclusion; removal of social barriers; shaping new communities and development of territories.
- Health monitoring is often complemented by monitoring of contributing indicators, e. g. psychological well-being.
- Sport is not a universal tool for solving social problems. It is quite logical to use it in social work along with other dimensions – culture, education, development of territories and healthcare.
- There is often a fine line between a sports project aimed at involving people in sports and a social sports project. Social declaration is a distinctive feature of a social sports project. It makes sense to develop a special method for assessment of a social declaration.
- Social impacts measurement and efficiency assessment in social sports projects are extremely difficult. Practices with a proven social impact exist in the area of adaptation and inclusion. All types of social impacts requiring quantitative assessment are hard to measure.
- With that in mind it is advised to draw on best practices in culture projects, where the impact has been achieved regardless of difficulties with assessment. Private foundations in Russia, for example, have actually regenerated museum activities. While designing sports projects we have to remember that sport, like culture, is intrinsically a good thing in most cases.



Audiences

This chapter provides analysis of key audiences of social sports projects, their needs and specifics of work with these audiences.

Central questions of the research:

What population groups are beneficiaries of a sports project?

What are the reasons for acceptance or rejection of projects by different audiences?

The phenomenon of blurring of lines and migration of audiences is intrinsic to social sports projects, similarly to their objectives and impact typology. So, in addition to the cloud of goals, a cloud of audiences may be defined.

The research studies and attempts to establish connection between social impact and types of audience. Such connection is apparent, although a close conformity cannot always be detected – the same types of impact may be found in different audiences. Choice of the possible social impacts of a project depends largely on the choice of the project audience. Therefore, attention has to be paid to the projects involving several audiences.

Target audiences of projects do not always welcome them – the share of unsuccessful projects in social sports is quite large, although it is impossible to

assess their number. The main reason for this lack of success is the low social skills of project authors, who are quite often enthusiasts, not professionals, in the social sphere and may have only a vague idea about the needs of their beneficiaries.

A project designed to remove social barriers may, in fact, erect more barriers, and this is one of the problems of social sports projects.

Multi-format projects involving several audiences and using several methods of social impact assessment may become the key trend in planning of social sports projects. The projects with indirect impacts are also promising. One audience, e. g. a pool of coaches, participates in such projects, but other audiences become their beneficiaries.

Target groups

Analysis of goal-setting in social sports projects reveals six key audiences. Each audience has its own critical needs, and the rates of their demand for sports are different.

Types of audiences





“The most difficult part was to convince people that I did this wholeheartedly. It was hard to persuade people and companies that I needed funds to provide real help to children. After a while it became easier, but at first it was extremely difficult for me. All the more, I was quite young when my charitable activities started, and people did not take me seriously”

Anton Shipulin, **Shipulin Foundation**

Projects for each type of audience have to take into account the specifics of the audience. Some audiences are consciously looking for options to practice sports. Some have to be offered sports as a product and persuaded that they needed them.

Sociobeg

Artem Gerasimenko, the leader of the Sociobeg project of regular running training, has been engaged in the socialization of teenagers from orphanages for five years. During this period 100 volunteers have taken part in weekly training involving 80 children from six orphanages.

The primary focus was not on the sports achievements of the children, but on presenting them with various role models, down to tiny details of communication: how to greet the others, how to behave through the training, how to discuss rules and establish communication. The ways that contests in mini-groups were organized and social links established, were very important and illuminating.

After testing the model in orphanages, the Foundation started to use it in several groups of children of migrants. The next step was to organize training sessions in a psychoneurological residential facility and for HIV-positive people to promote their social

inclusion and de-stigmatization – this work proved to be much more challenging. Artem Gerasimenko noted that this particular audience did not have any intention of coming into the open or joining groups for sports training, although there were no legislative restrictions on the sports activities of HIV-positive people. Moreover, they had to take much better care of their health than non-HIV-positive people.



“We have been trying to organize training opportunities for HIV-positive people – to promote their social inclusion and de-stigmatization – for four months. It is extremely difficult to work with them. The potential audience is holed up, they do not need to unite and march to demonstrate that «they exist». They live quiet lives detached from the rest of society. However, it should be noted that many of them, after learning their diagnosis, become motivated to participate in, as they understand that they have to take much better care of their health than before – this point becomes a trigger to physical activities and sports practice”

Artem Gerasimenko, **Sociobeg**

- Groups of people exist with similar physical or intellectual problems. Mostly these are disabled people with intellectual or musculo-skeletal disorders – for them options with proven impact are available. It is pivotal to involve scientists and medical workers in such projects to ensure positive impact and ensure the avoidance of any harm. The target audience has to be carefully determined by medical professionals to include people with similar problems (even if with different diagnosis). On the other hand, the experience of such projects shows that representatives of conventional medicine are often reluctant to take responsibility and refuse to issue medical certificates allowing participation in specific sports activities.

- Groups of people with similar social problems (ex-convicts, troubled minors, former drug and alcohol addicts, etc.). Sports encourage goal-setting in these social groups. Leaders of relevant projects emphasize that, contrary to the widely held view, teenager subcultures are not all based on drugs; many of them, on the contrary, opt for healthy lifestyles and have to be supported, encouraged, and given chances for development.
- Cohorts and age groups that need empowerment and larger social capital (women, retirees and people of pre-retirement age, etc.)
- Ethnic and social groups with ongoing requirements for support (migrants and other minorities); indigenous people.

Dance to Health

The Dance to Health program, managed by a social enterprise and charity organization, is a pioneering, British nationwide 'falls prevention' dance program for elderly people, combining evidence-based exercise with the creativity, energy and sociability of dance. The program works in six regions of the UK and shows a 50% decrease in the number of visits to general medical practitioners. The program provokes lively interest in other countries.



“Take a look at a person who dances break-dance – is it possible to do this under the influence of alcohol or drugs? Of course not. On the contrary, it is reported that in Brazil some people stop smoking crack in order to practice break-dance. There, people stop taking crack to join break-dance, and in our country people stop taking heroin. You cannot achieve something in break-dance if you take drugs or alcohol. Break-dance is 100% about healthy lifestyle”

Yan Nemaľovskiy, **Community of Break-dancers**

- Activists. People trying to solve various issues – environmentalists, protectors of cultural heritage and animal rights. Social motivation is of primary importance for them. They may join groups of athletes. A good example here is jogging: 50% of ecologists who like jogging and 50% of athletes who care about ecology.
- Sport and local communities. The attitude of local communities to sport is largely determined by the social well-being of the territories and their residents. Social sport projects aimed at community regeneration often polarizes communities into opposing camps: protagonists and antagonists.



“We had gathered everybody and asked what had to be done to remove social biases and make people to communicate with each other. Everybody named football as one of the most successful tools. We started to organize football games to test this idea – for example, a National Leaders vs Local Police football game in Yekaterinburg. I was playing for National Leaders and we were hammered, but it was the process that mattered”

Ashot Ayrapetyan, **Center for Development of Inter-ethnic Cooperation**

Some specifics of working with audiences

- A project is sometimes aimed at a socially disadvantaged group (e. g. disabled people), but benefits are received by other groups as well (e. g. volunteers working with them). These volunteers, in turn, belong to different social groups, including former athletes, and in the course of the project these groups mix and tolerance increases; ex-athletes are motivated to continue exercises, etc. This requires a thoughtful approach to goal-setting – the social benefits of project participants have to be envisioned at the design stage.

Plogging

The homeland of plogging – a combination of jogging with picking up litter – is Sweden, and in Moscow such a project has been launched by Olga Pugatch from the Tsaritsino Museum and Nature Reserve. Both eco-conscious athletes and ecologists who like jogging – in almost equal proportions – participate in the project. Plogging has an additional social impact – participants not only become aware of ecology issues but also find places where bottles and medical waste are accumulated. They report to operators of the property, who may not be aware of the problem, and to the police that these places are likely to be used by drug addicts.

The first race was organized in 2018 with the support of the Mospriroda National Environmental State-Funded Institution – an organization subordinate to the Moscow Department of Environmental Protection. Starting from 2019, the races have been organized once a quarter. The project is actively supported by the Kuzminki-Liublino and Traritsyno museums and nature reserves. They provide rubber gloves, garbage bags and even a prize: eco-friendly shopping bags with their logos.

Since the beginning of the project, its participants have collected 2 tons of non-degradable waste – more than 200 bags – for recycling. The total number of race participants during the three years is 75 people. Project organizers plan to add a cultural component to plogging – to arrange running routs from one landmark to another, organize guided tours and historical and cultural quests combined with picking up litter.



“Plogging includes both spot and environmental components. For example – a man used to actively doing serious sports in his youth but stopped when he grew older due to time constraints imposed by work responsibilities or just a general middle-aged lack of incentive – may think that just going jogging is too mundane for him and wonder why he should bother. But if he can be convinced that jogging is more than just one leg up and one leg down, but rather a means of taking on environmental responsibility, then he might rethink his position and want to join the total effort. Not all the runs with picking up litter may be called «plogging». Erik Ahlström, the founder of the movement, provided methodological support for us. We have developed recommendations for race organizers and published them in the internet for public use”

Olga Pugatch, **Plogging in Moscow Parks**

- A specific feature of regional development projects is that they often work with one group (local community, indigenous people), but also involve other groups (tourists, regional authorities). The goal is to attract attention to preservation of culture and to develop the territory through tourism, while shaping local identity.

- Work with disabled people is often combined with the involvement of troubled teenagers (a wide-spread practice used by such projects as the Adaptive Rock-Climbing, Special Olympics, and Sociobeg). The idea is to create a sense of usefulness and ultimately obligation among young people who, imagining themselves to be worthless, had never before entertained the notion that they could be difference-makers to others, in this case, the elderly

Sport may promote development of local communities, including mixed communities. by uniting groups of different types. However, efficient work with communities in the territory cannot be limited to sports activities or single, sporadic events. The impact of sports projects is multiplied when a municipality is involved in development of the same communities.

German municipalities. Experience in working with different audiences

This work is built around sport communities interacting with municipalities. Social policy in the area of sports is implemented through regions (states) and municipalities. There are a lot of sport communities organized by German citizens, municipalities support these activities by providing sport facilities free of charge.

Social impacts – adaptation of disabled people, migrants, and children from troubled homes – occur as side effects.



“ I, for one, grew up in a city with a sizable sport club – about 1,200 members. We practiced ping-pong, football, handball... It was a community conscious of social issues. We established a union, came to the city administration and told them: «Please allocate a sport ground or a sport hall for our purposes.» The city provided support, but all the work was done by sport associations. ”

Andreas Ludwig, **Deputy Burgomaster, Trier (Germany)**

Athletes and coaches constitute another audience involved in social sports activities. The key feature of working with all target audiences of social sports projects is that coaches do not have to be focused on strong performance of participants; instead, the highest priority is given to the process itself. Experts interviewed by the Platforma Social Project Planning Center report that it is difficult for coaches to refocus sport training from results to process. Many leaders of social sport projects, after a few years of the project implementation, come to a conclusion that coaches have to be specifically trained to work with target audiences.

Sport for Life Foundation

The Sport for Life Foundation allows people with visual disabilities to considerably improve the quality of their lives by involving them in physical activities. The project participants jog together with healthy athletes and trained volunteers. Anastasiya Pletmintseva, the General Director of the Foundation, says that people with disabilities become involved in both regular jogging and establishing social connections. They experience an increased desire for meaningful relationships, they start to look for jobs, and they want to be successful. This is a natural process in the mixed community of disabled and healthy joggers.

Conclusions

The Foundation was established in 2013 with launching the Marathon in the Dark – a private initiative by Julia Tolkacheva who had decided to prepare a blind athlete for a marathon. It soon turned out that there were many people with visual impairment who wanted to jog, and the first club with a priority on establishing social environment was launched in the Luzhniki, Moscow.

Volunteer coaches joined the project at the very beginning and their training – largely psychological – started. Training of coaches is one of the key aspects. It is impossible for a blind person to run, swim and take part in a competition without the assistance of leaders-volunteers.

About 300 volunteers from all over Russia were trained throughout the project, and its organizers travelled to several regions presenting their program. The training itself is unique and very complicated, its development based on the UK experience, where sport has been reorganized for social purposes ever since the London Olympics. The next challenge is to design a mechanism for roll out of the program into the regions.



“ We have to train people who coach blind or partially blind people, and this training is mostly psychological. Technically everything is clear – stay here, put your legs like that – it is quite easy. The psychological aspect is not that evident, but it is the key. This is why our Training of Volunteers-Leaders for Blind Runners project became coherent, structured and consistent as early as in 2016 ”

Anastasiya Pletmintseva, **Marathon in the Dark**

- The choice of possible social impacts of a project depends largely on the choice of the project audience. In this regard attention has to be paid to projects involving several audiences.
- A project designed to remove social barriers may, in fact, erect more barriers and this is one of the problems of social sports projects. This risk has to be addressed at the design stage of the project.
- Some social problems are fundamentally hard to solve; therefore, some audiences may feel disappointed. It is thus required to adequately estimate and communicate the limits of the social impact.
- A mechanism for real-time correction of less than effective practices has to be designed if the practices are rejected by the audience or cause an adverse social impact.
- Communities are one of the key audiences. Nowadays the importance of local communities as a transformation resource is recognized at the federal and local levels. Communities are actively involved in programs aimed at regenerating living environment and improving quality of life. It would be appropriate to join forces of the third sector with state bodies – the Ministry of Sport, its regional branches, and the community involvement centers that are starting to be set up by regional administrations.

Correlation of the cloud of impacts and the cloud of audiences

Cloud of impacts

Related audience

Health, physical transformation, adaptation

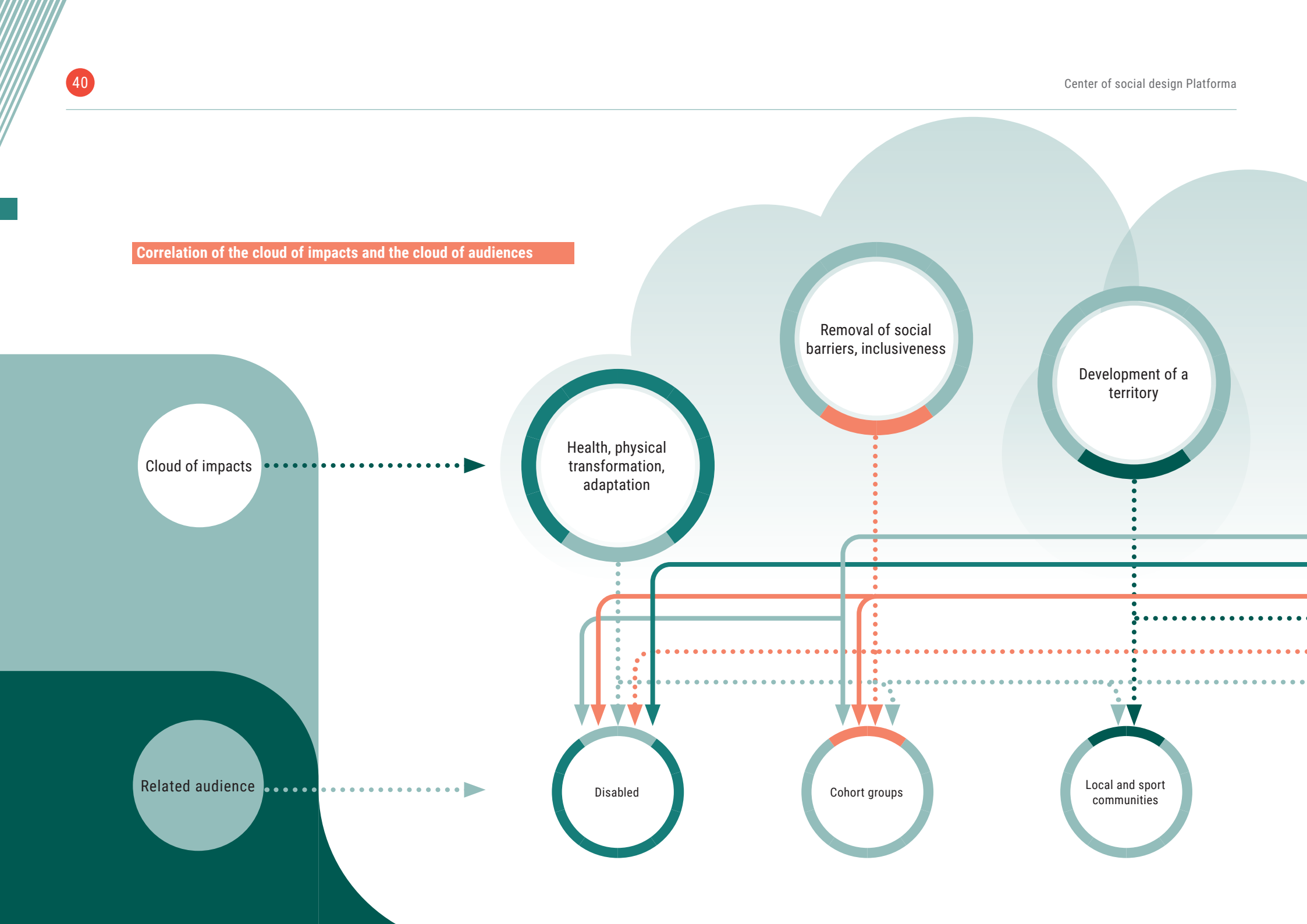
Removal of social barriers, inclusiveness

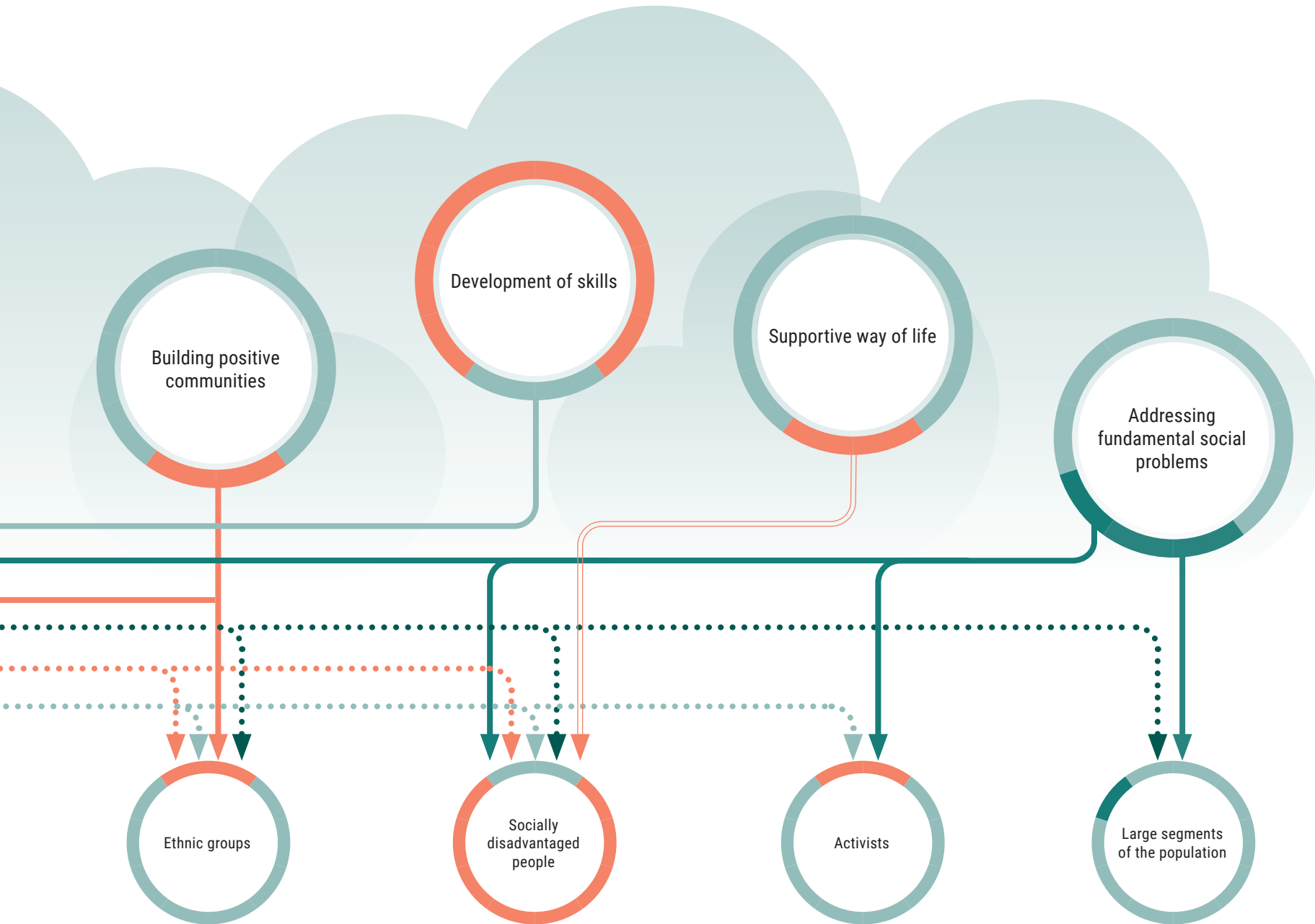
Development of territory

Disabled

Cohort groups

Local and sport communities







Specifics of the projects

This chapter includes case studies and describes specifics of social projects planning.

Central questions of the research:

What are the key issues in development of social sports projects and what is the request for support from them?

What is the request for support from project leaders?

Despite the fact that Russian social sports projects in many respects replicate, adopt and develop international practices, social project planning in Russia has its own specifics.

The key issue surrounding the development of social sports projects is a gap phenomenon intrinsic to the life cycle of such projects.

Sport communities and projects are not institutionally long-lasting. They often depend on the facts of life of leaders and participants, their continuing motivation and emotional charge. Their activists may shift to other communities or establish new ones.

Sometimes the life of such communities depends on seasons or events. So, it is essential to choose the right moment for support – it's too risky to render assistance at the very beginning, as enthusiasm may fade and the community may wear away, but in case of excessive delays, communities may reach the

stage of decline. There is a clear request from project representatives for development of competences, and the search for new organizational forms and work areas through learning from similar projects. Training of community leaders, design and promotion of methodologies, and development of databases of existing cases may become meaningful areas of work offering experience and lessons learned for new initiatives and allowing them to be innovative.

It is quite important to consider the values of the respective communities. Some respondents mentioned, for example, that competitiveness and commitment to winning should not dominate in the motivation of participants. The process itself and the value of communication must be given a priority. Such an approach may contradict the stereotyped mindsets of coaches and – in the case of sports for children – the mindsets of parents who are used to motivating their children to win at all costs. Change of the «culture code» of participants is a separate area of work for social sport projects.

■ Specifics of international experience

Russian social sports projects follow international trends in many respects. An important feature of the Western (this term is used for the purposes of the research to describe the global social environment) social sports area is that major professional projects constitute the core of the ecosystem. Another important role is played by sports foundations.

The basic resource model of large-scale international projects is independent fundraising. This results in fundamentally different pattern in the following areas:

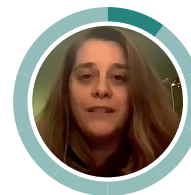
- some projects are too large for any donor (for example, the Coaches Across Continents project involves 16 million participants);
- projects (because of their scale, resources, technologies and competencies) become venues of interaction for other players.

Western projects follow the same theme scheme as the Russian ones. They are not critically different in terms of goal-setting and social impact. Almost all structural elements, including a social declaration, are represented in both instances, but important differences still exist.

Ex-territorial projects that originate in one territory and are implemented in another represent an interesting phenomenon. For example, the 'Indiability' project was designed in the UK for India and takes into account the specifics of work with disabled people in that country.

Unified Athletes

The Unified Athletes football project in Israel aimed at inclusion of disabled people and removing barriers between conflicting social groups offers an example of a comprehensive approach to social impact achievement. Mixed teams – an Arabic team consisting of healthy and disabled children and a Jewish team consisting of healthy and disabled children – play with each other. The stands are filled with parents of the players. The matches are organized on the grounds of local football clubs and schools – partners of the events. The project also engages schoolchildren-volunteers and municipalities, that provide infrastructure support. The teams come to visit each other – Jews to Arabic schools and vice versa. Regular surveys are conducted in each type of audience (disabled children, healthy children, volunteers, club representatives, municipalities), and the program is adjusted according to the results of the surveys.



“ Our goal is not only to reduce inter-communal tension, but also to achieve long-term impact. We try, in particular, to make the program participants drivers of inter-communal concord in their communities ”

Sharon Levy-Balanga, **Special Olympics Israel**

Russian projects and sports initiatives have, as a rule, smaller audiences, fewer methods of assessment and get weaker support from society. However, such projects are developing and leverage the best international practices. At the same time they face specific Russian challenges.

Western projects are, as a rule, older. Some successful projects have existed for decades (it is possible to call them «old capitalists» of sport philanthropy). Projects 10–15 years old constitute the majority. The success of a project is determined by its age and background.

Western projects often take into account the transfer of management and/or leadership from the founder to the team. Various combinations of roles are possible: the founder may remain a real or a nominal leader, or a project may have another leader, but the standard form includes a leader, a board and a management team. In Russia, key decisions, even in the best-developed projects, are made by one person or a small team of like-minded people which, to some extent in Russian projects, drives the demand for grant support and an external entity.

The projects are usually planned with a long life cycle in mind. Therefore it is possible to expect surges of interest from partners (state authorities, business) in social sport initiatives – the Olympic Games and other global sports events.

Successful large-scale projects engage a number of audiences. The standard scheme is as follows: audience of athletes (coaches); audience of recipients; relatives (e.g. parents of recipients); a school or an institution; a broad local community. Therefore, assessment of social impacts and efficiency of projects is complex and performed by means of a variety of tools. A standard practice is to use questionnaires, but objective data are leveraged as well.

Universidad de Guanajuato – comprehensive approach to the game

Students and faculty of Guanajuato University have designed a social sports game combining the adaptation and inclusion of disabled people with the preservation of cultural heritage. The project challenges and re-articulates the traditional objectives of sports projects. So far, vulnerable groups of people (refugees, disadvantaged youth, former combatants, illegal migrants, and people with intellectual/physical disabilities) have been the target groups. The project involves students as equal partners; they have to negotiate, design, implement and assess inclusive and sustainable sports activities. Pre-Columbian games/sports are the basis of the project (restoration of the Mexican cultural heritage). The project does not distinguish between sports and paratletics.



“ We wanted to design a project that would, on the one hand, be accessible for everybody, regardless of age, gender and physical condition, and on the other hand combine a number of impacts, with all having both a sports and cultural dimension. We also wanted our project to be replicable in any country ”.

Daniel Añorve, **Universidad de Guanajuato**



“ The key advantage of our project methodology is its modular nature. An organizer may easily adapt it to the local context – for example, substitute *lapta* (Russian bat and ball game) for Mesoamerican sports games. From the design stage we wanted our project to be adaptable in other countries. We hope that it becomes a part of the Sport for Development and Peace program ”.

Fernando Segura, **Universidad de Guanajuato**

The framework of the Western model of sports philanthropy differs from the framework of the emerging Russian model considerably. It is built around a major project that sets goals and attracts relevant resources and partners.

- Resource partners are corporations, and the list of sponsors of large-scale time-honored projects often includes big companies.

FIFA Foundation

The organization works not only as an operator, but also as a resource center for social football projects. Its portfolio includes about 100 projects. The range of supported social initiatives is quite broad and comprises education, health, peace-building, refugees, leadership and gender equality programs. The FIFA Foundation Community Program supports organizations that use football as a tool for social change and improvement of the lives of underprivileged young people around the world. Once a year the FIFA Foundation invites well-established non-profit entities to apply for funding in order to use football as a tool to address social issues. All the projects supported by the FIFA Foundation Community Program are aimed at achieving the UN Sustainable Development Goals: good health and well-being; quality education; gender equality; reduced inequalities; sustainable cities and communities; peace, justice and strong institutions.

Thematic differences of Western projects

- Inclusion is a very popular trend thanks to the special attention paid by the sports community to disabled people. Professional athletes are regularly invited. In developed countries inclusion is the norm of life – many prominent athletes participate in inclusive events; this is considered a routine practice. In Russia another practice is more widespread – meetings of boxers and other specially trained and skilled fighters with children. The reason for this is the active role taken by the Boxing Federation of Russia and its desire to promote combat sport. In Russia, sports federations are the centers of decision-making and sources of initiatives, while in Western countries this role belongs to philanthropy organizations and communities.
- Adaptation is the most natural form. For example, the Special Olympics projects unite a great number of methods around the world, often at the grassroots local level. Fight clubs regularly organize joint adaptive training sessions for people with disabilities and professional athletes.
- Diversion away from bad habits and self-destructive behavior is less common, but exists. This area is very often linked with development of local communities, including neighbors' communities.
- Sports for social skills development is a very popular trend. These projects are largely aimed at children and older youth. This makes it possible to build time horizon into the project and plan long-term social impact.

- Community sports represent a very popular trend. These sports, alongside inclusion and skill-building, form the core of the area. This is a kind of triad repeated in the list of priorities of any major organization. The category also includes a majority of practices of territorial development, and such programs constitute a single set.
- Infrastructure projects do not make changes, they pave the way for these changes.
- Ex – territorial projects that originate in one territory and are implemented in another, using resources of the former. For example, the Indiability project was designed in the UK for India and takes into account the specifics of working with disabled people in that country.



“ It is in our collective interest to harness the tremendous power of sports to help build a better and more sustainable future for all. The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development identified sports as an enabler of sustainable development. Sports can help promote tolerance and respect, contribute to the empowerment of women and young people, and advance health, education and social inclusion. The United Nations recognizes the power of sports to bring people together and achieve common goals ”

Amina Jane Mohammed, **Deputy Secretary-General of the United Nations**

Sport for Development and Peace

The Sport for Development and Peace (SDP) initiative is aimed not at a single type of social impact, but at systemic transformation of society through sports, physical activities, and games. The SDP movement as a specific international area of activities was launched in the early 2000s. Its success is determined by liaison with the United Nations.

In 2001 the Secretary-General of the UN announced the position of the UN Special Adviser on Sport for Development and Peace. The SDP was brought to a new level of institutionalization in 2015, when the UN published its Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) to be fully realized by 2030. Sport was named as one of the SDGs and, thus, its potential as a powerful and useful tool for strengthening global equality was recognized. SDP both implements comprehensive programs and provides methodology for designing projects aimed at achieving the Sustainable Development Goals.

Motivation of leaders and participants

Different components of personal motivation as demonstrated by project leaders are often interconnected. The research data show that the most sustainable projects are those where the leaders are primary stakeholders in the social problems their efforts are addressing (which is to say that they have a personal interest in solving these problems) – or belong to the group of ultimate beneficiaries, such the Dream Ski project or adaptive rock-climbing project in Nizhny Novgorod, for example.

The personal hobbies of project leaders often provide the necessary incentive. Example: sailing sports for children in Kandalaksha (supported by the Timchenko Foundation after the organizer had completed the preparation stage and established working interactions with the local municipality).

Shipulin Foundation

Sports may be also leveraged as a tool for entering children with almost zero opportunities for a good education (or simply a nurturing upbringing) into meaningful activities. Sports is an education tool for at-risk teenagers and orphans; moreover, they help to strengthen their willpower and improve communication skills, thus enabling them to realize their personal potential. This was the idea behind the foundation set up by Anton Shipulin – a famous biathlete.

The founder decided to focus on the remote areas of the Sverdlovsk Region. The Foundation sponsors the construction of sports grounds and the purchase of sports equipment for orphanages. It also organizes tournaments and festivals, and attracts lecturers and coaches.

The Foundation will celebrate its 10th anniversary at the end of 2020. Before the Foundation was officially registered, Anton started to work using his personal funds. The distinguished athlete felt that he «had to share money with people in need» when he came back from the Winter Olympics in Vancouver. He had chosen orphan children as the target audience, but soon realized that it was much more important to offer them a direction to apply their energy towards than to simply entertain them. Sports were perfect for this purpose – Anton, from his experience, believed them to be the best means of building character and determination. In his philanthropic activities he placed a bet not on his beloved biathlon, but on popular sports – to involve as many children as possible, and to socialize them.

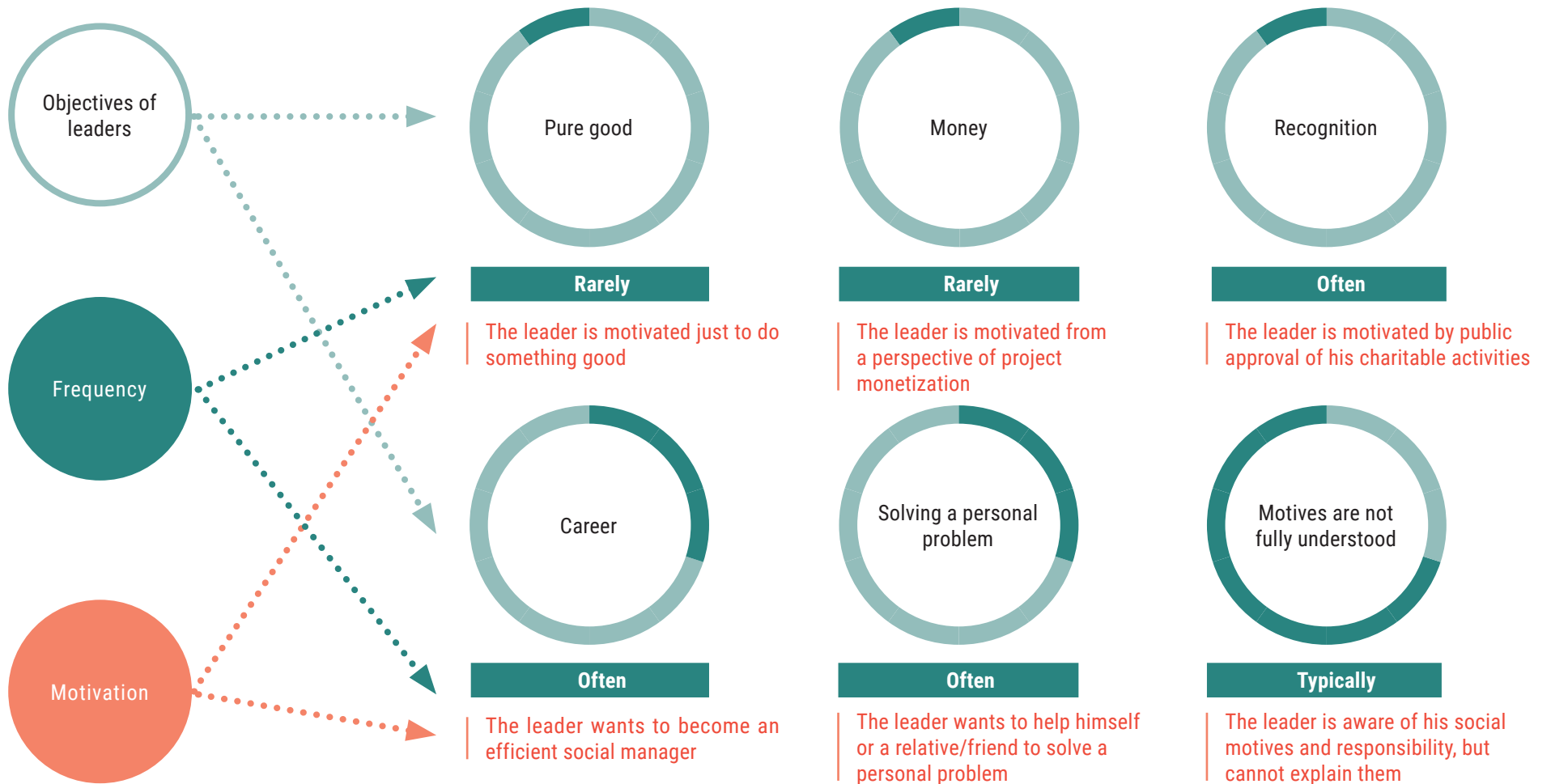
The figures speak of the scale of activities: the volume of financing of the Foundation is about RUB30 million, and more than 40 sports grounds were constructed. The Social impact is also substantial – the Foundation even helps orphans to find their first job. But the personal criterion of project success for Anton is the number of supporters, some of whom are already not so young. The next stage is to provide assistance to people, who need it just as badly, outside of the Sverdlovsk Region.



“ When we began to set up the Foundation I looked for support, legal advice, and many people told me: «Why do you do this? You’re 23, very young, go and spend the money on yourself, buy yourself a car...» I did not listen to them – they made me angry. I wanted to prove to them that I, as young as I was, could organize a foundation and develop it to a certain level ”

Anton Shipulin, **Shipulin Foundation**

Motivation of leaders, challenges they face



There are types of motivation of social sports project participants and communities:

- those that focus on external outcomes: the target is to influence external environment – («help others»);
- those that focus on internal outcomes: the target is to develop community members – («help oneself»).

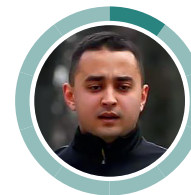


“Imagine a town on the shores of the White Sea in the Murmansk Region – it is quite shabby and depressing. A man who used to do yachting in his childhood had graduated from a naval academy, became a naval mariner, lived a good life, and retired. He wanted to give a chance to children in the streets, involve them in his favorite pastime and provide them with an opportunity to develop. He managed to engage 100–120 children. Together they restored an old boat and started practicing. The Foundation allocated a grant to support his idea, advance the children’s yacht club, improve infrastructure, organize practices and ensure participation in sailing races. The man used the money to buy materials, then built, together with the children, some more boats and for two years they have been practicing and successfully participating in children’s sailing races”

Igor Baradachev, **Timchenko Foundation**

A mechanism of using sports as a driver of changes differs depending on the type of motivation. Internally motivated communities scale up quietly and unobtrusively, contrary to externally motivated ones, which aim for larger scale and roll out of their successful practices. The Dream League project is an example of a marriage of the two approaches – a family story resulting in a major Russia-wide project.

Participation in a project for grassroots members is a leisure activity, a pleasant distraction and offers a new social circle, which is valuable for adults in the culture focused on diversity of leisure activities for children. The community motivates and supports; it is much harder to quit when the others expect you at a training session.



“We organized the JammyFit club in 2015 just to find people for joint training and jogging in the Leningrad Park of Moscow. Now more people are training there. Over time, a middle-aged group of people 30–45 years old of completely different professional backgrounds was formed. Free admission. There is a division of training. Morning workouts are for everyone. Evening – for those who want to work hard. As such, there is no membership, but conditions are set for those who come to the group. You practice, taking part in return in which – a race, you say that you represent our club. The social mission is that we have residents of the Airport and Sokol districts. We have improved the site and brought new simulators there. In addition to involving the residents of the district in sports, we also make a small contribution to the infrastructure of the district”

Jam Kadyrov, **JammyFit**

Types of motivation of sports communities

Instrumental sports model:

- Focused on achieving a result; physical activity is a tool
- Efficiency and dynamics of criteria (lean muscles, weight loss) are important
- Target groups: adolescents and young adults experiencing their first age-related changes

Recovery/corrective sports model:

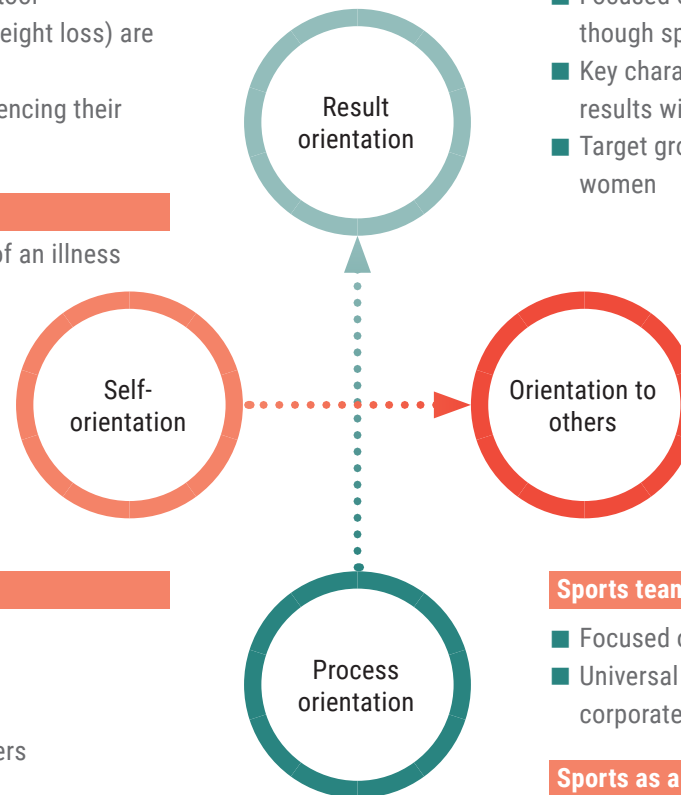
- Focused on sustaining active life and/or treatment of an illness
- Safety has to be assured by a doctor or a coach
- Target groups: elderly people, children

Leisure sports activities model:

- Focused on the process
- Recreation and pleasure are important
- Universal motivation
- Special target groups: families, children and teenagers

Competitive sports model:

- Focused on sports achievements; personal fulfillment is achieved through sport
- Key characteristic – an opportunity to compete and compare results with the others
- Target groups: young people, former athletes, more men than women



Sports team model and «get-together» model:

- Focused on the process and interaction with the others
- Universal motivation. Specific groups: sports communities, corporate communities, teenagers.

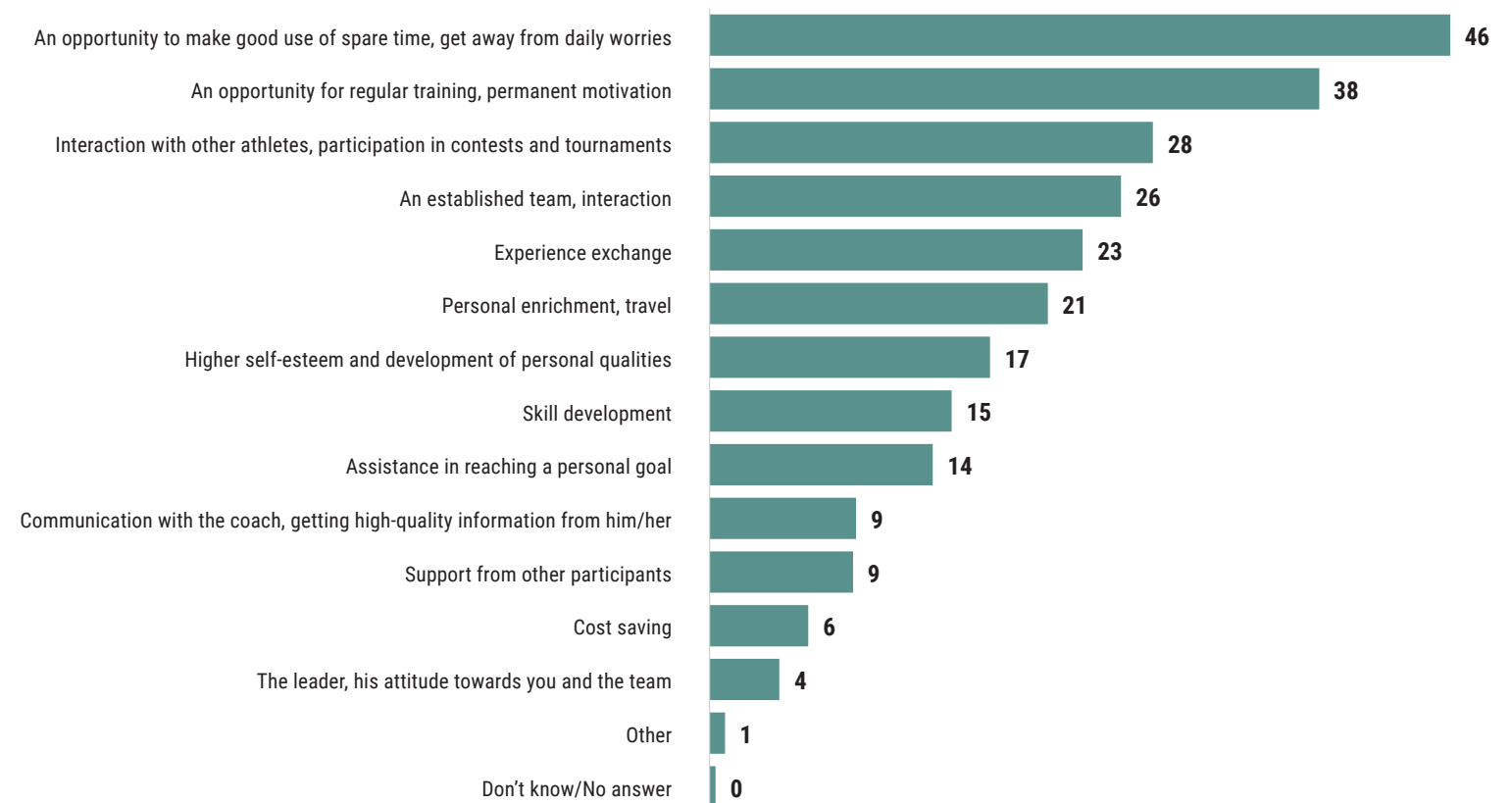
Sports as a lifestyle:

- Sports are an extension and manifestation of identity. It is important that sports are aligned with the general lifestyle shared by the group

We have conducted an opinion poll of grassroots members of sports communities and found out that the sports component (training as such) is less important for them than social factors.

WHAT IS THE MOST IMPORTANT THING FOR YOU IN YOUR COMMUNITY, WHAT IS THE UPSIDE?

(% of respondents, community members, up to 3 responses)



Project life cycle

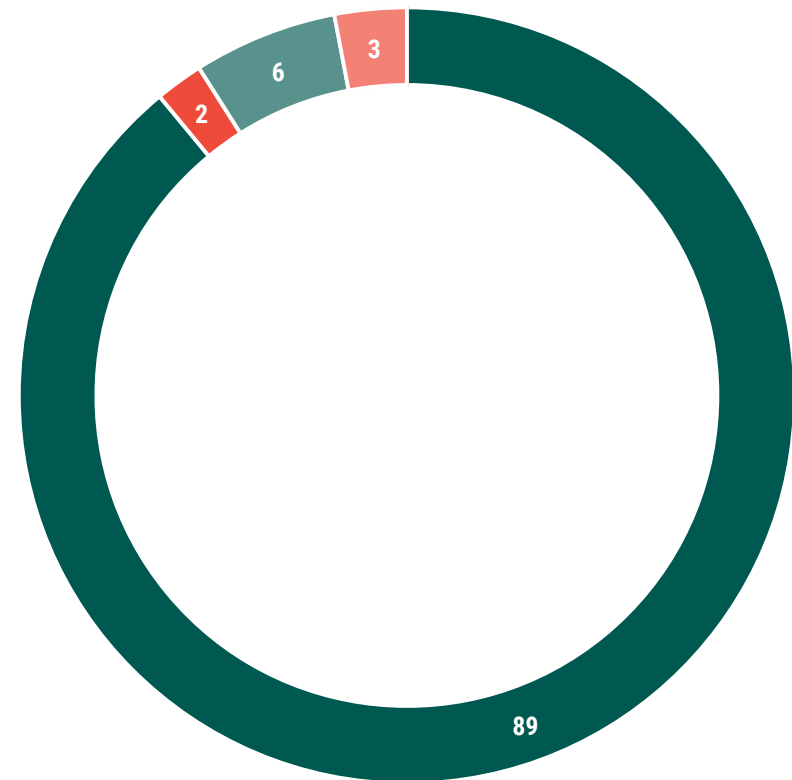
Growth is the key indicator of project success, but it is also a critical threat to its development.

Our opinion poll of sports community members shows that the communities are eager to grow.

The key feature of communities is a gradual shift from sports to permanent communication, and this includes networking. Not all of them reach this stage, but those that do start to have a meaningful social impact on their environment. Personal development in such an environment suggests setting new sport and social goals. The flip-side of the value of cohesion is a decrease in participants' involvement with a growing number of members in the project community. The value is in the narrowness of the circle. Thus, participants do not always welcome growth. For many communities, growth is fraught with the risk of disintegration.

It is worth noting that social sports initiatives often assume the nature of a campaign. Their goal might be to solve a specific problem in a specific location – as, for example, organizing seasonal sports grounds for workouts in public places. This is the reason why many such projects are short-lived.

DO YOU THINK THAT YOUR SPORT COMMUNITY HAS TO INVOLVE NEW MEMBERS IN ORDER TO GROW? (% of respondents, community members, one answer)



■ Yes ■ No ■ I don't care ■ Don't know/No answer

Types of project life cycle:

- rollout projects aimed at having a regular impact on the audience;
- campaign projects – may be very short (with a life span of less than a year) or one-off projects.

The objective is to extend the project life span, particularly its professional phase. It is possible to suggest, based on the research data, that a life cycle may be extended through higher social professionalism, education and involvement in horizontal networking with other projects. Experience of projects in the area of culture might be useful in this regard.

Drivers of longer project life cycles:

- personal interest (relatives/friends of the leader or the leader himself is a project beneficiary) or setting up a community, horizontal networking with other projects;
- favorable environment for leadership development, education, audit;
- rollout of the project to other regions or at the federal level; an opportunity for the leader to expand the scale of activities.

An alternative approach is to change a life cycle. You do not need to seek extension of the project's life span. Each project initiative is correlated with a specific time and addresses issues relevant to the territory at this point in time. Acceleration of social processes might

cause overestimation of return on social investments. Social network capital and benefits received by a specific active person are important. Of like importance are not only current projects headed by the leader, but his perspective projects as well.

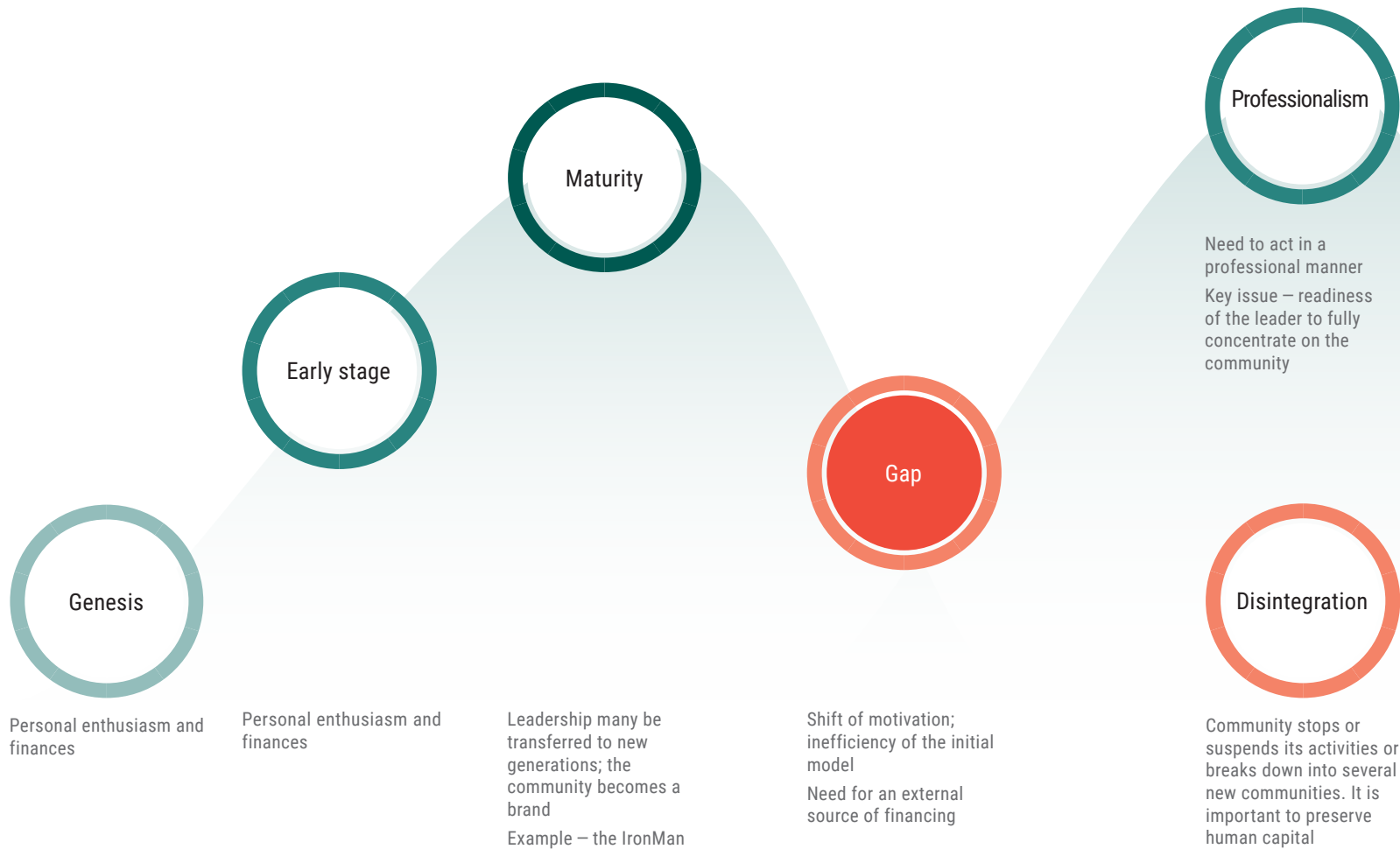
The «gap» phenomenon

The majority of organizers face the «professionalization gap» phenomenon sooner or later (mostly in year one or two). The essence of the «gap» phenomenon is that projects are launched by innovative leaders and involve audiences of innovative people. However, the logic of project development envisages outreach to the so called «mainstream consumer» who values comfort, convenience supplied by the service, and the professional skills of the operator. This puts innovative leaders into a situation where their initiative has to become mature.

For sports project leaders, this primarily means that they have to systematize their work and hire professional staff. Our opinion poll of project leaders shows that their biggest challenges are organizing marketing and working with mass media, as well as organizing a back office, especially bookkeeping. To register a non-profit organization and administer an NGO is particularly difficult.

Many remain at the bottom of the gap, because bridging the gap means to change a carrier. But for some leaders the only possible solution is to do it, to surmount this hurdle. Good examples here are former businessmen, such as Alexander Rudenko, founder of the Fitlove festival and participant in this research, who has built a new vehicle for promoting sports projects.

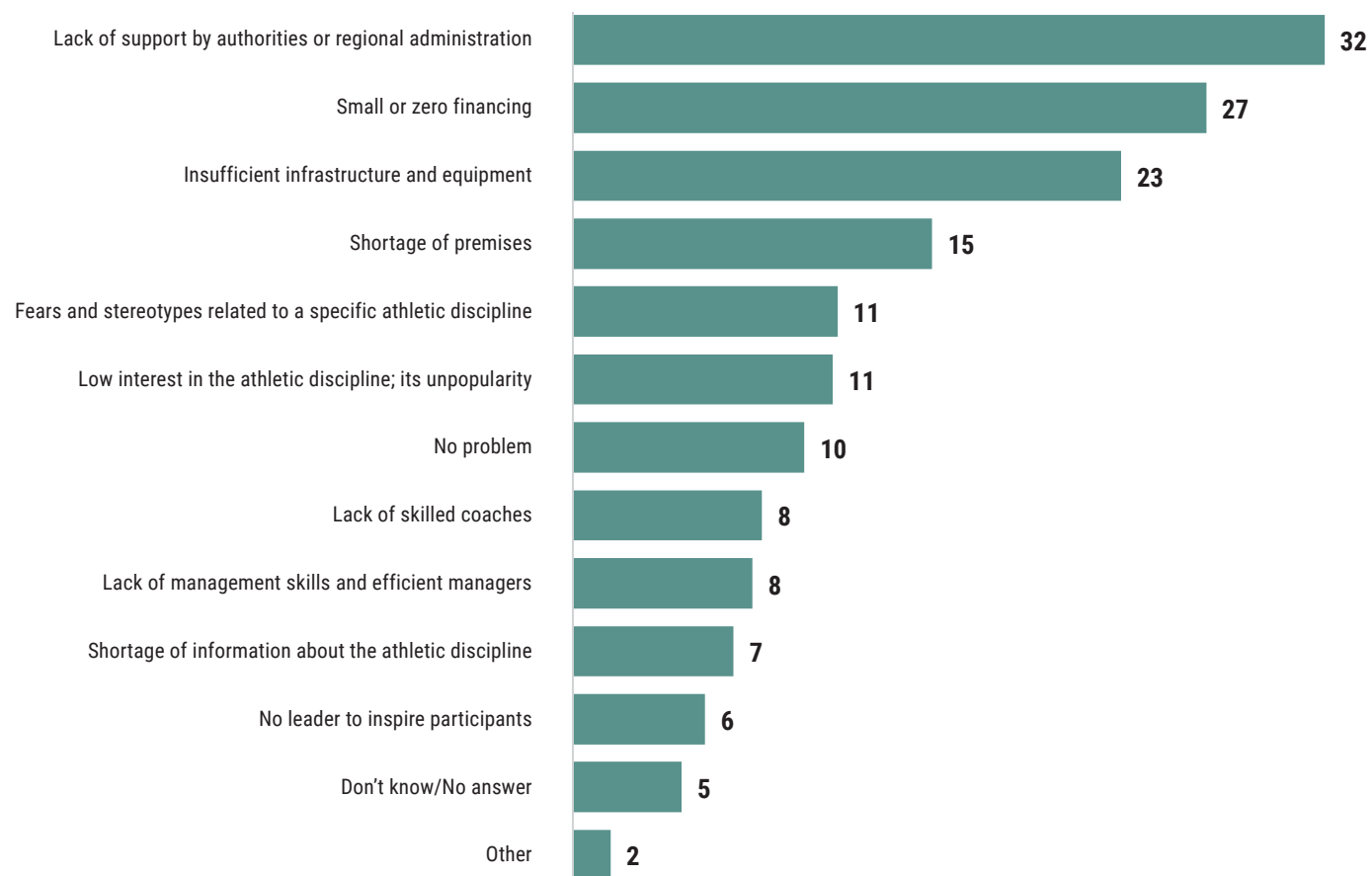
Life cycle of a sports community



Problems of projects

Our opinion poll among the members of sports communities shows that lack of recognition is considered to be a problem more often than insufficient financing.

WHAT ARE, FROM YOUR POINT OF VIEW, THE KEY PROBLEMS HINDERING YOUR COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT? (% of respondents, community members, up to two responses)





“ Our first training session was attended by 10 people, but in six months more than 1,000 people participated in activities of our community. When you launch a story and it goes sky high in a short period of time, you feel a drive, an adrenaline rush. But pretty soon we had a waiting list for training opportunities, and it turned out that we were unable to ensure participation in training for everybody. And if you, as a leader, cannot ensure quality, it would be better to stop the process. Our key problem was vigorous growth – we were unable to respond to it because our resources were short. ”

Elena Vlasova, **Sport Club**



“ When leaders resign it is not always a problem. An important point for us is the number of inspired and competent leaders who then launch an organization, a legal entity, a community. We regularly supervise such leaders all over the country ”

Valentin Rabotenko, **Cardo Street Culture Federal Award**



“ It is difficult to find financing for adaptive sport. Funds are usually available either to sport organizations or to organizations that adapt migrants or somebody else. It is quite a challenge to attract funds at the interface ”

Ashot Ayrapetyan, **Center for Development of Inter-ethnic Cooperation**

Social sports projects share problems of all sports communities in many respects.

These problems are summarized in the formula: «money – infrastructure – authorities».

- Money – the majority of projects experience shortage of money, especially for specific tasks. This problem becomes most acute when a project moves from the early stage of its development to the maturity phase.
- Infrastructure problems – infrastructure is very limited and the number of solutions to get access to it is also quite narrow.
- Problems with authorities result, in most cases (according to the data of expert interviews and focus groups), from infrastructure and money problems. Authorities (both local and regional) are regarded as potential partners, but are often unable or unwilling to render support. Some leaders have different mindset – they keep contacts with authorities and public money to a minimum.
- Leadership problem – the majority of projects does not envisage a transfer of leadership mechanism and the project ceases to exist when its leader quits.
- Pool of coaches lacks relevant training and has different motivation (they are achievement-minded). But there is no «one size fits all» solution because competitive spirit may also be important for a project and often results in social benefits.

- The problem of social skills and professionalism of leaders became obvious in the course of interviews with project leaders. Sometimes leaders are highly skilled and strive to use evidence-based practices (Adaptive Sport, Nizhny Novgorod; Dream Ski), sometimes the idea is beautiful but not feasible from a practical or functional standpoint, and sometimes a social component is chosen according to the tastes of the project founder. The same is true for project assessments – so-called ‘experts’ are often insufficiently skilled for the job. For example, it is clear that the Presidential Grants Fund does a poor job of organizing high-quality assessment of social sports projects.



“The system of project seminars for grant finalists, where experts work with people and project founders work in groups, is very appealing to me. I decided to participate, either as an individual or as an NGO, if I found something similar in the sports area. But in 2018–2019 nothing came up, so there was no need to set up a legal entity”

Olga Pugatch, **Plogging in Moscow Parks**

- Lack of grant category. It is difficult to find sources of financing for projects at the interface of sport and social components, while individually sport and social adaptation projects are able, as a rule, to find sponsors. The problem is that no government authority is responsible for such activities.

State bodies have a fixed list of Paralympics sports they finance, and the priority here are sports achievements, not therapeutic or social impacts. This is why one of the few feasible support mechanisms for social sports projects is presidential grants. But when a project leader (especially if the project is rather small) receives such grant, he faces many problems – all the grants demand detailed reporting which is quite resource-consuming. Project leaders are ill-prepared to handle finance reporting and this causes problems.



“We had to organize our own school for coaches. Many of them were trained in schools of sports skills, in the environment of psychological pressing, commitment to results, etc. We, on the other hand, encourage love and passion in children. This is a different method”

Vladimir Dolgiy-Rapoport, **GirlPower**

- Lack of active support policy from municipal and regional authorities. Their assistance is required, in particular, to show the brand of the territory in a project, and this idea has to be embedded into the project from the very beginning. Representatives of local administrations and municipalities are often scared to assume responsibility for holding sports events with participation of socially disadvantaged population groups, which causes unjustified refusals and problems with organizing events.

Bachata as a social dance

Social dance is quite a new phenomenon in Russia. It appeared 20–25 years ago and was developing only after surmounting numerous difficulties. The most active growth period began 6 years ago. Now about 10,000 people participate in social dance – bachata in particular – in Moscow and another 12,000 all over Russia. The coverage depends on the energy of participants and community leaders. Bachata dancers sometimes participate in city events supported by local authorities, but this is true just for the projects that reached the self-organization stage.

The Alexander Kostenko Bachata School offers free lessons to university students. So far up to 700 people have completed the training. Another school cooperates with the Moscow Active Aging program and teaches elderly people to dance. The value of lessons

for participants is in getting a chance to join a team of like-minded people, where they feel comfortable. Community activists recognize that professional development in dance is not excluded from their mission, but the major value of the project is that it is a hobby for a large number of people. Anyone can dance bachata, because all you need is a floor and a source of sound: Everyone has it in his pocket nowadays!



“ We have exactly the same problems as many service-related areas. Neither federal nor local authorities support social dance, although this is quite a large-scale phenomenon: our events gather more than a thousand participants. Authorities could help with promotion. About 10 thousand people participate in social dance in Moscow and another 10–12,000 all over Russia. Ballroom dancing attracts more than half a million participants. But state authorities invest in promotion of ballroom dancing. On the other hand, I prefer not to go anywhere and not to ask for anything. State assistance in our country is a two-fold story. I believe that it is better to do everything myself in a legal way ”

Alexander Kostenko, **Bachata School**

Conclusions

- The key problem of social sports communities' development is overcoming the challenge of being strapped with a short life cycle. It is feasible to combine two approaches in a program. The latest, «professional» phase of a project has to be extended as much as possible. If this is impossible, an alternative approach might be used – launching new life cycles with preserving human capital in the orbit.
- One of the major challenges of social sports projects in Russia is insufficient social competence of their leaders and participants. Being professional managers or sports professionals, they often lack understanding of social processes and tools for working with them. An education module within a program could, on the one hand, to address this problem, and, on the other hand, extend the project life cycle and further motivate its leaders. Major foundations working in the area of culture have such experience.
- It is worthwhile to imagine a special sub-program for coaches – Soft Skills. The essence of the program: a) to attract attention of coaches and professional athletes to social problems; b) to build their skills in working with difficult audiences; and c) to shift attention of coaches from results to the process.
- The key difference between Western and Russian projects is the multi-format of the audiences, including project partners. We believe that it is important to develop an information exchange program with potential stakeholders: sports clubs, municipalities, and regional sports committees.



Action horizon

This chapter presents development prospects for social sports initiatives in Russia on a short-term horizon

Central questions of the research:

Who has to be a subject of change in the area of development of sports as a social resource?

What is the main barrier for all social sport stakeholders?

Both Russian and international experience shows that it is possible and justifiable to transform social environment through sports projects. Immediate large-scale impacts are rare, but sometimes the projects actively expand the pool of participants and address issues overlooked by state and other institutions.

In the course of the research we tried to single out sports communities and projects, giving top priority to social effects of their activities and supporting them in their missions. Such division, however, may seem artificial. If this goal is not explicitly articulated, it does not mean that sports communities leaders are not interested in it. It would make sense to include all types of sports initiatives into a project scope, motivating leaders to use a wider approach, and acknowledge and emphasize the social component of the project.

It would be ideal to join forces of the third sector with state structures. Nowadays state authorities have become more interested in the subject, and state resources may provide substantial support to growing communities. However, federal and, particularly, regional authorities lack methods for working with communities, and there is a risk of over-moderation and administrative «advancement» of mass initiatives.

It is particularly important to develop a common language understandable to leaders of social sports projects as well as to representatives of state authorities, third sector, mass media and the general population – the ultimate beneficiary of these activities. A separate study may be necessary to address this issue.

Development perspectives of the area

The area of social initiatives with a sports component is being actively developed in Russia. One of the key issues in social sports initiatives is lack of a concise common language. State authorities have neither a clear picture of these activities nor a separate category for it at any level of management. The state has own precise paradigm of sports, where all subjects are listed. When you come to us and say that you have a sports project, the majority of our colleagues do not understand to which paradigm this project has to be attributed, as our hierarchy of regulatory standards does not include notions of a sports community, a sports project or a social project. Business considers sport to be a part of its value for employees or a corporate social responsibility. Mass media are at the stage of identification of the subject. Social and business mass media are interested in the subject in the light of philanthropic activities, and sports mass media – in the light of activities of athletes. The third sector pays attention to some aspects of the social sports movement, but there is no a single initiative covering all social sports practices in their entirety. Therefore, the major challenge in social sports sector development is to establish a common language.

Area setup – pressing issues

The issue of consolidation of disparate projects. Projects are siloed; leaders communicate very rarely. Projects focused on the development of practices with proven efficiency often see each other as rivals. The majority of leaders do not think that consolidation would be beneficial for them. The consolidation issue generates a demand for practices exchange, even to setting up a database and mapping competences.

The rollout issue. The projects are largely of an experimental nature and are not fit for rollout. Large-scale projects face the challenge of insufficient human capital and infrastructure.

There exists an issue of absence of a center of excellence and a venue for networking. In short, a center for social sports programs development simply does not exist. We believe that at least one center of this kind may be set up in the nonprofit sector.

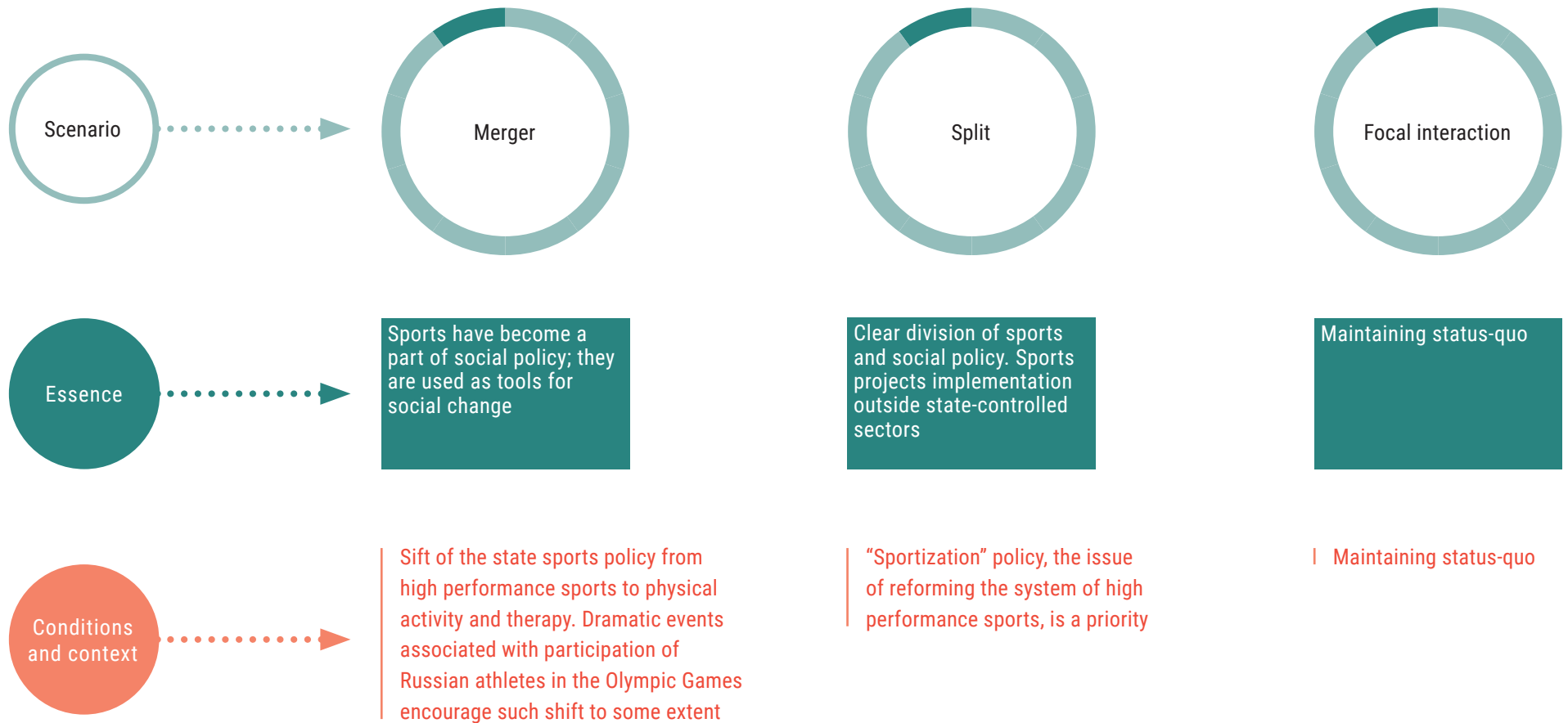
The issue of engagement of key stakeholders. It is important to identify two key groups of stakeholders, apart from the state authorities, project leaders and society, and these would be business and mass media. Business is, on the one hand, a social investor, and, on the other hand, a part of society.

Mass media coverage of the subject of social sports is an act of social responsibility. They have to play key roles in the process of development of a common language and common agenda.

Who has to be the driver of social sport activities?

We believe that this is an emerging niche for the Russian third sector.

Sports and social policy in Russia



General conclusions

Social sports projects management goes beyond the area of responsibility for a single subject. It is important to equally involve all stakeholders – business, federal and municipal authorities, educational institutions, leaders and participants of sports communities, as well as representatives of mass media. The third sector may play the role of an integrator that pools the efforts of all stakeholders. Special programs aimed at social sports sector development could be a starting point for the integration processes. One of the first priorities on the way to integration is to join our efforts and design a common language for the area.

It probably makes sense to categorize social projects not by specialization («sport», «culture», etc.), but by their ultimate social impact. For example, a class of communities working with urban environment may include sports, culture and other initiatives. Focus on the ultimate impact allows for the designing of more complex and interesting schemes for addressing social issues. Advancement of social impact as a result and an objective of development of sport and active lifestyle practices may become a critical mission for nonprofit organizations.

Social initiatives are implemented in an open system, with plenty of affecting factors, therefore it is impossible to predict the exact impact. To set aside and digitalize an impact of a sports community or a project on solving a specific issue is sometimes very difficult. It would be useful to design a model for dynamic appraisal of outcomes with analysis of positions of all stakeholders – project leaders, project participants and other stakeholders (e. g. coaches or parents). This task could also be addressed by NGOs.

The third sector may as well play the role of a center of competence and education with respect to the social component of sports activities. We have already noted that sports project leaders are not sufficiently competent in social issues (specifics of social sphere functioning and project management in the third sector). It is advisable to start using a systemic approach in fostering a new generation of sports project leaders focused on positive changes in the society.

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