



Guideline – Sport for Development and Human Rights

1 | Introduction

Human rights (HR) are fundamental rights to which everyone is entitled by virtue of being human. They are universal (apply everywhere), egalitarian (apply to every human being), inalienable (cannot be ceded or forfeited) and indivisible (they are interdependent and must be implemented in their entirety). Germany and most of its partner countries have ratified the relevant international human rights documents ([ICCPR](#), [ICESCR](#), [UNCRC](#)) and hence are legally obliged to implement them. Many states have incorporated human rights into their constitutions.

Human Rights and German Development Cooperation

Human rights are fundamental to development cooperation (DC), because development policy is human rights policy: respecting, protecting, and fulfilling HR are fundamental to inclusive, sustainable, and value-based DC and contribute to reducing poverty and inequality. Hence, HR are the guiding principle of German development policy. They form the legally binding framework of the UN 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development: 90% of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) are enshrined in HR agreements.

The strategy paper [Human Rights in German Development Policy](#) (2011), which is binding for all German governmental implementing organizations, commits to the implementation of a human rights-based approach (HRBA). This approach requires DC to be guided by HR standards and principles. The [BMZ Guideline](#) on the “Consideration of Human Rights Standards and Principles, Including Gender, in the Preparation of Programme Proposals of German Governmental Technical and Financial Cooperation” (2013), or shortly Human Rights Guideline, requires the implementing organizations of German DC to assess in their proposals not only positive impacts on HR, but also the risk of non-intended negative impacts and, if necessary, take mitigative measures. In priority-specific annexes, it lists exemplary measures for this purpose.

To achieve the set development goals, the HR of all people must be respected, protected and fulfilled. To this end, sustainable development policy must be guided by the HRBA. The coalition agreement 2021-2025 also declares a commitment to peace, freedom, human rights, democracy, the rule of law and sustainability as an indispensable part of successful and credible foreign, security and development policy.



The Human Rights-Based Approach

The HRBA is the conceptual framework of value-based DC and a guiding principle of the UN Sustainable Development Goals. It requires the consistent orientation of DC towards HR standards and principles and aims to eliminate injustices and discriminatory practices that hinder development progress and often lead to certain people and groups being left behind. A HRBA supports political, social, and institutional reform processes that address inequalities and create an environment in which people have opportunities and the freedom to act upon their own choices.

The graphic (page 4) intends to help understanding the approach. It shows HR as the general framework that each state, when having ratified the relevant international treaties, must translate into national law, policies, and strategies.

However, HR treaties such as the Universal Declaration of Human Rights or the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights do not only define HR standards, i.e. the rights themselves. They also define what a state must guarantee to realize a particular right within the framework of national legislation and policies. Human rights are not just an abstract concept but provide practical guidance for DC.

The HRBA shifts the perspective of DC. In translating HR into national law and policy, government agencies (e.g. the general administration, courts, etc.) are not only supported as service providers, but as **duty-bearers** to respect, protect and fulfil HR. Moreover, the target groups of DC are not seen as recipients of services, but the population or its civil society representatives are considered as **rights-holders**. The population is not simply a passive recipient of charity but can actively claim these rights.

In the relationship between rights-holders and duty-bearers, the so-called **human rights principles** are particularly important. They are the basis for policies and strategies and should be formulated and implemented to ensure that all rights can be exercised equally by all people.

The HR principles are enshrined in international HR treaties and are thus as legally binding as the rights themselves. They include:

- **Participation and empowerment** mean that the population and its civil society organizations are empowered and can actively participate in formulating and implementing policies and strategies, can voice their needs and articulate their specific disadvantages.
- **Non-discrimination and equal opportunities** mean ensuring that all people have equal access to all rights and that no one is directly or indirectly discriminated against and left behind. When necessary, the state must take affirmative action to support particularly marginalized groups.
- **Transparency and accountability** mean that information about state action is a prerequisite for rights-based, effective participation and dialogue on equal footing between the population and the state.

Short summary of the human rights-based approach:

- HRBA is a conceptual framework that is based on internationally recognized HR and is directed to promoting and protecting these rights in practice.
- The HRBA implies a shift in perspective for DC as it must orientate towards HR standards and principles (participation, empowerment, non-discrimination, equal opportunities, transparency, accountability) in project planning and implementation in all sectors.
- Key objective of the HRBA is to support people (rights-holders) to claim their rights and state actors (duty-bearers) to fulfil their HR obligations.
- The HRBA addresses the multidimensional root causes of poverty and violent conflict.

Human Rights

Availability + Accessibility + Quality + Acceptability

National Law

Policies

Strategies

Rights – know > claim > realize



Rightsholders

Capacity Development



Capacity Development



Duty bearers

Rights – respect > protect > fulfill

Human rights are the general framework that each state, when having ratified the relevant international treaties, must translate into national law, policies, and strategies.

How can sport (for development) contribute to protect, respect, and fulfil human rights?

Sport (for development) and HR are inextricably linked. Human rights principles such as non-discrimination, participation and empowerment are the basis for Sport for Development (S4D). Central values of sport include inclusion, respect, equality, teamwork, and fairness. Sport is not only an effective tool for promoting central development goals, but also a useful tool for teaching basic HR competencies and empowering children and youths to become active, healthy, and responsible citizens, and „agents of change“ in their communities. Inclusive and value-based sport lays the foundation for positive behavior change. Sport therefore plays an important role in socialization, especially of children and young people, and provides opportunities for lifelong learning.

In addition, sport has a strong publicity effect, both nationally and internationally. More and more, athletes and other stakeholders use their influence to draw attention to HR violations, especially regarding major sporting events (e.g., the Olympic and Paralympic Games in Beijing and the FIFA World Cup in Qatar). International and national sport federations such as [FIFA](#), [IOC/IPC](#) or DFB have adopted HR strategies and incorporated the issue of HR and due diligence into their strategic frameworks.

For example, from 2024 onwards, the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights will form an integral part of the IOC's Host City Contracts.

However, sport organizations and coaches are only indirectly obliged to respect international HR obligations so, unlike states, they are not direct duty-bearers. This is where the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights become particularly important. The legally non-binding guidelines call on states to respect, protect and fulfill HR. Businesses are equally encouraged. Since companies and sport clubs are not legally obligated parties, the concept of „moral obligation“ is discussed.¹ Accordingly, companies, clubs and associations have a moral duty towards rights-holders, such as individual athletes. In this sense, companies, clubs, associations, but also coaches act as **moral duty-bearers**.

Human rights can be realized through S4D. At the same time, they must be respected, protected, and fulfilled in and around sport. Through an orientation towards the HRBA, S4D can be designed sustainably and be directly oriented towards the individual human being, the rights-holder.

¹ For more information see: https://resourcecentre.savethechildren.net/pdf/getting_it_right.pdf/



2 | Intervention framework and target groups

Where are potential human rights risks in the context of sport (for development)?

In addition to the positive influence of sport on the development of children, young persons, and the inclusion of groups in particularly vulnerable situations (LGBTI, women and girls) as well as the possibility of strengthening HR, there are numerous HR risks regarding sport and major sporting events. In recent years, there has been an increase in cases of psychological, physical, and sexual abuse in sport (infringement on the right to life and liberty and prohibition of torture or the right to non-discrimination). During preparations of major sporting events, workers were not paid on time/sufficiently or could not change jobs (infringement on the prohibition of slavery and the right to fair working conditions). Athletes were excluded from teams or competitions for expressing their opinions (infringement on freedom of expression).

Who are potential target groups, what do practical interventions and project approaches look like?

Target groups in the context of sport (for development) and HR are primarily children and youths, athletes, coaches, women, and persons with disabilities. However, sport clubs and organizations, associa-

tions, private companies, non-governmental organizations, governments, and state institutions are also relevant for interventions. Against the background of the HRBA, intervention measures target the following rights-holders and duty-bearers: For rights-holders such as children and youths, the focus often lays on safeguarding and empowerment. For duty-bearers such as states and actors who act on the level of moral duty-bearers (e.g., trainers, clubs), the goal is to raise awareness of risks and responsibility and to establish protective structures and policies. At the end of this paper, you will find one or more best practices for each of the HR principles, which stand out due to their alignment with the S4D-approach and/or their clear HR or HRBA in the context of sport.

The global programme Sport for Development (formerly sector programme) already implements a wide range of intervention measures with both rights-holders (children and young persons) and moral duty-bearers (coaches) that include the HRBA. Through training units on topics such as violence prevention, gender equality, education and health, HR can be implemented in a targeted manner. The HR principles of non-discrimination, participation and empowerment form the basis of all training workshops with children and young people as well as coaches, with a different focus depending on the context. The Future Leaders in Football Camp, for example, of which the 2022 editions took place in Amman, Jordan and Doha, Qatar with female participants from the Arab region, deliberately aimed to promote the participation and empowerment of women in this region. Another example is the International Expert Training, where trainers are sensitized to HR and their corresponding responsibility as (moral) duty-bearers. At the same time, they are empowered to teach core HR such as the right to non-discrimination through inclusion, respect and equality to children and young people (rights-holders).

As a next step, the S4D methodology should systematically include the S4HR (Sport for HR) approach to merge the respective S4D topic areas more consciously with the corresponding HR principles.



3 | Best Practices

The following chapter shows the so-called best practices (innovative approaches and practical examples), which are exemplary in the context of Sport for Development and the realization of human rights and a human rights approach due to their particular focus.

Organization	United Through Sport (UTS)
HR Principle	Protection, Empowerment
Target Group	Children and youths aged 5 to 35 years
Region	South Africa, Argentina, St. Lucia, Thailand, Mauritius
Context	Development Cooperation
Approach	<p>UTS uses sport as a tool to support children and young persons at risk. It focuses on four levels:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 Direct sport coaching: health benefits and life skills (teamwork, communication). 2 Using sport to discuss critical issues and topics (sexual and reproductive health, gender equality) 3 Using sport to improve education (scholarships) 4 Using sport to promote gender equality (creating spaces just for girls and boys where participants* can discuss gender inequalities; and how they can advocate for equality). <p>UTS projects are based on a model that takes a holistic approach to the age-specific needs of children and youths („Pathway to Success Model“). Here, the focus is on developing life skills, raising awareness of social and health issues, and promoting access to education. The measures aim at individual development, but also involve the social environment and the community.</p>
HRBA	Because of its holistic approach and focus on empowering children and youths to exercise and claim their rights as rights-holders, UTS’s “Pathway to Success Model” is very close to a HR approach.
Link	https://www.unitedthroughsport.org/about-us/

Organization	Kindernothilfe (KNH)
HR Principle	Protection, Accountability
Target Group	Children and young persons, coaches, clubs
Region	Germany, International
Cooperation / Partner	elevaide
Context	National work, but the organization itself is also active in DC
Approach	<p>KNH offers training and advice for sport clubs and organizations as part of two child protection campaigns. The aim is to establish a child protection system in the club, which acts preventively while offering protection as quickly as possible and sustainably in acute cases. This is achieved by means of a holistic protection system that is tailored to the respective organization and involves all club members, including children and young people, right from the development stage. Four steps are planned here:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 Training of all stakeholders 2 Concept development 3 Sensitization 4 Implementation <p>The protection concept focuses on the special conditions in sports such as physical contact, individual training sessions, overnight trips, shower and locker room situations, verbal motivation, and criticism. All forms of violence are addressed (including psychological violence, such as bullying). KNH establishes a child rights approach as the basis of its work, which is considered in every area of the organization.</p>
HRBA	With a specific focus on protection systems and grievance mechanisms, the approach protects children and young persons as rights-holders from physical and psychological violence. It lays the foundation for effective protection and redress mechanisms.
Link	www.kindernothilfe.de/sports

Organization	Right To Play (RTP)
HR Principle	Empowerment, Protection, Non-Discrimination
Target Group	Children and young persons
Region	Africa, Asia
Context	Development Cooperation
Approach	<p>RTP programmes use play and sport to enable children to reach their full potential. With the help of play and sport, important skills, concepts and knowledge are taught, and children are empowered to actively shape their future as „agents of change“, in line with the HR principle of empowerment. In addition, RTP programmes aim to strengthen and implement the right to physical integrity through play and sport.</p> <p>In Senegal, sports are used to create safe spaces in which children can interact with each other without interference, reduce social insecurities, and learn inclusion and acceptance of others. Here, boys learn concepts such as positive masculinity and girls are encouraged to demand their rights. At the same time, they work with communities to eliminate negative social norms and harmful practices (such as female genital mutilation).</p>
HRBA	The approach focuses on stereotypes and inequalities. It also empowers children and young people to actively shape their future as “agents of change”.
Link	https://www.righttoplay.com/en/

Organization	Centre for Sports and Human Rights (CSHR)
HR Principle	Non-Discrimination, Protection, Accountability, Transparency
Target Group	Athletes, sport bodies, fans, sponsors, ministries of sport, sport federations, and more
Region	International
Context	Internationally active
Approach	The CSHR intends to harness the power of sport and acts collectively to bring together an unprecedented alliance of institutions to fully align the world of sport with the principles of HR. In this context they share knowledge, build capacity, and increase accountability. They are an impartial convenor and a safe space for aligning multi-stakeholder action. The center exploits opportunities to promote HR in sport that contribute to positive impacts. It ensures effective, accessible, and available remedies for those affected by HR abuses.
HRBA	The approach targets the institutional framework of sport. Capacity development enables (moral) duty-bearers to meet their HR obligations (protection, respect and fulfill HR).
Link	https://www.sporhumanrights.org/about-us/

Organization	UNESCO
HR Principle	Empowerment, Participation, Equal Opportunities and Non-Discrimination
Target Group	Children and teachers
Region	International
Cooperation / Partner	ICSSPE, IFPC, IOC, IPC, WADA
Context	Internationally active and in DC
Approach	<p>UNESCO has launched various campaigns that address the interface between sport and HR. One example is the "Value Education through Sport"-programmes. These support active learning, train cognitive skills, empower students, and encourage participation. VETS helps develop self-confidence, active and healthy lifestyles, and an understanding of rights, supporting the difficult transition to independence in adulthood. They also focus on values such as fairness, team building, discipline, inclusion, and respect. As part of this campaign, UNESCO and partners aim to complement school curricula. For this purpose, various materials have been developed, such as a toolkit for teachers to support them in teaching values such as respect, inclusion, and fairness in a targeted and effective way through sport.</p>
HRBA	The VETS programmes specifically promote the HR principle of empowerment and aim to equip students with the skills to claim their (human and children's) rights and to actively participate in shaping their future.
Link	<p>https://en.unesco.org/themes/sport-and-anti-doping/sports-values-education</p> <p>https://en.unesco.org/themes/sport-and-anti-doping/sports-education</p>

Organization	Play Proud
HR Principle	Empowerment, Protection, Equal Opportunities and Non-Discrimination
Target Group	Coaches and young persons of the LGBTQ+ community
Region	International
Cooperation / Partner	Common Goal , Inclusion Playbook , Impact International
Context	Internationally active; also in DC
Approach	Play Proud identifies young persons of the LGBTQ+ community as a particularly vulnerable group in society and in sports. The programme has therefore developed a coach-centered approach that promotes the inclusion of those in sport programmes and curricula. As coaches can have a powerful impact on youth development, the approach aims to equip them with the skills and knowledge needed to become a coach or mentor and provide a safe space for the exchange and development of LGBTQ+ youth. The project launched in North America in 2019 and expanded globally in 2020.
HRBA	Play Proud describes its own programme as a HRBA, with a focus on empowering youths to claim their rights for themselves.
Link	https://www.common-goal.org/Play-Proud https://www.common-goal.org/Play-Proud-PDF

Organization	Further guidelines and concepts in the context of safeguarding (DSJ, UEFA, GIZ)
HR Principle	Protection
Target Group	Clubs, people working in the context sport (for development), sport federations
Region	International
Approach	<p>In 2020, the German Sports Youth (dsj) published an action guideline for the protection of children and young persons against boundary violations, sexualized harassment, and violence in sports. The document is intended to normalize child protection in sport clubs and prevent harm to children.</p> <p>UEFA, in collaboration with Terre des hommes, has developed four interactive online courses on child protection in soccer. The courses are aimed at everyone working with children in soccer. The four courses cover the topics „Raising awareness of child protection in soccer“, „Child protection for coaches“, „Child protection for people working in soccer“ and „Child protection for child protection contact persons“ and are available in different languages.</p> <p>GIZ’s regional project „Sport for Development in Africa“ has published a guide on Safeguarding in Sport, which aims to inform and guide governments, organizations, associations, and individuals in the context of sport to design and implement measures and policies to protect children and vulnerable adults.</p>
HRBA	The approaches empower (moral) duty-bearers to fulfill their HR obligations (protect, respect, fulfill HR).
Link	<p>https://www.dsj.de/handlungsleitfaden-safe-sport/</p> <p>https://uefa-safeguarding.eu/learning</p> <p>https://www.sport-for-development.com/safeguarding/</p>



4 | Helpful Links

Government DC

The HRBA in German Development [Cooperation](#)
GIZ [Human Rights Policy](#)
[IDA TOPIC Site Human Rights](#)

UN-Documents

[UN-Guiding Principles \(UNGP\)](#)
[Kazan Action Plan](#)
UNESCO [International Charter of Physical Education and Sport](#)

Council of Europe (CoE)

[Enlarged Partial Agreement on Sport \(EPAS\)](#)
[Handbook Human Rights in arbitration](#)
[HELP Course on Human Rights in Sports](#)
[European Sports Charter \(ESC\)](#)

Clubs and Associations

[FIFA](#)
MoA [Result details \(coe.int\)](#) FIFA and CoE (Protection and promotion of human rights in the context of sport activities)

[IOC, Human Rights Report](#)
[IOC Strategic Framework on Human Rights](#)
[Olympic Charter](#)
[Code of Ethics](#)

[UEFA Safeguarding Toolkit 2020](#)



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