

Gender equality in sport and development cooperation

In many developing countries, the role of women is still subordinate to that of men. Women have less freedom than men in making choices to develop themselves, their talents and skills. Girls are expected to do a lot of work in the household and have less access to education than boys. Girls are often married off at a young age. If activities are organised in the community, they are generally just for boys and men.

For well-balanced and sustainable social development, men and women must have equal rights, responsibilities and opportunities: gender equality. The third UN millennium goal is to promote equality of men and women. Gender equality is therefore an important theme for development cooperation.

Go to [>>www.toolkitsportdevelopment.org>>](http://www.toolkitsportdevelopment.org) Themes>>Gender for more information and extensive project descriptions.

Sport can make a significant contribution to improving the position of women. By offering sports activities to girls and women, they get a chance to develop and increase their self-confidence. Girls and women who excel at sport can act as role models for other girls and women. Ultimately this can lead to a change in the self-image of women. By letting girls take part in sports together with boys – and by convincing parents and community leaders that sport is also positive for their daughters – the preconceptions boys and men have about girls can be eliminated.

Greater independence in sport can lead to greater independence in other areas of life and can thus help strengthen the position and the rights of women.

But how do you work effectively on gender equality in sport and development projects? This chapter will describe the concepts and offer some insight into obstacles to women's participation in sport programmes. In addition, it will discuss the conditions for successful projects and give a summary of incentive measures. The chapter winds up with a conclusion and recommendation for effectively tackling the issue of gender equality in sport and development projects.



22.000 women and girls reached the finish line after 10k of the 'Course Feminine' in Casablanca, Morocco. read more on the next page.
Photo: Nike, NCDO

More respect thanks to sport

At three o'clock in the afternoon the school bells rings in the Mwamunga Primary School in Kenya's Kwale District. A few minutes later, 15-year-old Zainabu Kazungu Nyamvula collects her girlfriends for their daily football training. One year ago Zainabu joined her school's football team, which was set up with the help of Unicef. Now she is the captain. She obviously commands respect on the bare field; she is a role model for the other girls at school. "My parents thought that football was really a boys' game", she says. "But my teacher explained to them that I would learn a lot from it." He was right, says Zainabu." (read a full description of the Unicef project at www.toolkitsportdevelopment.org>>Learning examples)

What is gender?

The term gender is used in contrast to the term sex; the latter refers to the biological differences between men and women. Gender can be defined as a social construct of views, images and assumptions about masculinity and femininity with the corresponding norms for behaviour of men and women. These norms are not fixed, but are related to the time and the prevailing culture. What is considered masculine behaviour or a masculine

trait at one time or in one culture may be considered feminine in a different cultural context.

Gender and power

Gender is an important structuring principle for social relationships and so it is also a way of dividing power. Gender lies at the basis of important power differences in society.

Gender mainstreaming

Organising, improving, developing and evaluating policy processes so that the perspective of gender equality is integrated into all policies by the people who formulate them. This is called gender mainstreaming.

(Sources: www.emancipatieweb.nl/gm, www.un.org/womenwatch, Council of Europe, 'Gender mainstreaming: conceptual framework, methodology and presentation of good practices'. Strasbourg, EG-S-MS (98) 2, May 1998.)

Gender is inevitable

When you work within sport and development, you need to be aware that gender always plays a role in such projects, whether you like it or not. Participation in sports activities by girls and women often cannot be taken for granted; the reverse is sooner the case. Norms and values anchored in all facets of society will often act

Senegal, Unicef, Louise Gubb





Morocco, Nike, Carolien van Wersch

as a barrier to participation. And this surely applies to sport. 'Sport is 'masculine'; women are expected to focus their energy on hearth and home'. This is the prevailing opinion, especially in Islamic communities. If this is not taken into account in setting up programmes and projects, the participation level of women will be low.

"The first approach taken by MYSA was a gender programme aimed entirely at girls. There were no activities directed at the immediate environment: boys who were already taking part in MYSA programmes, the girls' families. After an initial success, this led to a drop in participation. Girls stopped attending because their environment criticized their behaviour. In the past few years, a renewed approach has widened the focus of the gender programme to include not only girls but also influencing and involving boys and parents. It is essential to give consideration to the hours at which girls are available for playing sports, and not to compete with their 'hours of work' for the family. This is definitely an obstacle for girls to take part in sport. Thanks to these measures, we have been able to ensure the long-lasting participation of girls." (Johan van Geijn, KNVB). Go to www.toolkitsport-development.org>>Learning examples KNVB for a complete project description.)

However, going to great lengths to recruit women for projects without having a well-thought out strategy is certainly not recommended either. Because it can break down patterns, many unwanted side effects might occur. Such projects can only be successful if - during their definition phase - consideration is given to the significance ascribed in the local context to gender and its relationship to sport. Moreover, clear and realistic objectives must be formulated in relation to gender equality.

Gender Equity in Sport and Development Conference

On May 21th 2006 22.000 women and girls reached the finish line after 10k of the 'Course Feminine' organized by Olympic Champion Nawal El Moutawakel in Casablanca, Morocco. Among them were 40 international women whom all participated in the three-day conference on Gender Equity within Sport for Social Change programs. The conference was initiated by Nike, who is a strong supporter of programs which advocate girls and women participation in sport, and was organised in cooperation Moroccan organization for Sports and Development (AMSD) founded by Nawal El Moutawakel, and the National Committee for International Cooperation and Sustainable Development (NCDO) The attendees came together to share experiences, identify challenges and create a movement that will support sport as a tool in dealing with gender equity in development programs. Follow up workshops with a focus on monitoring and evaluation are organised by Nike's Corporate Responsibility department. In the past years, Nike has been actively supporting programs that use Sport for Social Change. They have identified and developed partnerships with strong organizations like Mama Cash, MYSA and the Rwanda Girls football league. To read more, go to www.nikeresponsibility.com and www.toolkit-sportdevelopment.org>>Themes>>Gender

Gender as a cross-cutting issue and a specific theme

A strategy to achieve gender equality that has

gained worldwide acceptance is gender mainstreaming. This strategy ensures that attention is given to equality of men and women in all activities of an organisation: mission, policy, strategy, human resources policy, as well as programmes and projects. The UN propagates this strategy.

If an organisation wants to address the theme of gender seriously and thoroughly, it must first take a look in the mirror: to what extent are men and women equal in its own organisation? The same applies to the local partner organisation. Otherwise there is a big risk that the project plans give great priority to equality, while the key positions in the organisations carrying out the plans are held mainly by men (in other words, practise what you preach). This means that sport development organisations need to ensure that all their activities are gender-sensitive, including projects with a different theme. For instance, when training trainers in the context of capacity building, attention must also be given to the importance and the role of female trainers, and to the relationship between the coach (often a man) and trainees (often women).

In addition to mainstreaming, specific interventions are needed, especially in situations where there is great inequality between men and women (UN, 2006). These interventions are primarily intended to improve and strengthen the position of women (empowerment) – for example, setting up a football competition for women. It is the combination of the two strategies that ultimately leads to equality.

Two strategies needed

To summarise, there are two strategies for gender equality:

- 1) Gender mainstreaming: creating gender balance in policy, structures and management, bringing about a sustainable change in mentality through all the activities of an organisation, change from the inside out.
- 2) Empowerment: activities specifically aimed at participation by women without directly tackling existing structures (bottom-up approach).

Remember: An effective approach uses both strategies at the same time!

Why attention to gender?

An important reason to aim for a high level of participation of girls and women in sport and development projects is that it can bring them the physical, psychological and social advantages of sport. Participation in sports activities, as long as it is organised with knowledge and skill, can bring not only better health but also discipline, self-awareness, self-confidence, independence and leadership skills. Women will often start to feel stronger both physically and psychologically. From a social point of view, they gain experience with teamwork, negotiating, planning, winning and losing. Sport also yields up social networks. This broadens a person's perspective; women learn more about their community and the world outside of it, and are able to identify opportunities they would otherwise not have been aware of. Because sport increases self-confidence, girls are better able to stand up for themselves. This is important for the prevention of unwanted sexual contacts and pregnancy. Sport is therefore a means in preventing HIV/AIDS.

Gender equity in sport & development cooperation

Most development organisations strive for gender mainstreaming. In addition, activities are aimed specifically at girls and women in order to improve their position. Gender thinking is more strongly anchored in the development sector than in the sports sector (Van Kampen, Gender, sport en ontwikkelingssamenwerking, 2001). The larger development aid organisations and organisations such as the UN and the World Bank have expertise in this field and have integrated the theme of gender in their organisations and programmes (zie www.un.org/womenwatch, www.worldbank.org/gender).

Sport organisations primarily aim to increase participation by women in sports activities. At a project level, objectives and activities are often formulated that will increase the participation level of women and girls. This is expected to strengthen and improve the position of women by



Morocco, Nike, NCDO

increasing their self-confidence. However, if gender equality is to be achieved, the underlying structures need to be tackled as well. To change unequal relations, both women and men need to be aware of these relations and the benefits of change. The present situation needs to be defined at the community level, as well as the systems and forces on which it is based. Raising the participation of women in sports activities without attention to these aspects is a risky prospect.

Cross-fertilisation desirable

This theme once again shows the usefulness of cooperation between sport organisations and development organisations. The gender issue is a pre-eminent theme for development cooperation: this sector has worked on gender equality for decades. A great deal has been learned by trial and error; most mistakes have already been made more than once. Gender mainstreaming has become widely accepted. Sport organisations no longer need to invent this particular wheel, but can build on procedures and methods that have been tried and tested in practice. Similarly, development organisations no longer need to break their heads over the question of how to train women sport leaders or how to set up sports activities that are attractive to women and make them want to join. Sport organisations such as sport federations and umbrella organisations already have this expertise.

"We ran into the problem that husbands no longer let their wives take part in the sport leader training course, because they might be learning just a bit too much. In fact we had not really thought this through well enough beforehand. You think you are emancipating the women, but you have to emancipate the men at the same time or the effect may be counter productive. What is more, you also need to think about the impact it can have on women, because we saw some really unpleasant things happen in that respect. Women who had done the training

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Morocco, Nike, NCDO





Morocco, Nike, NCDO

became quite confused because they learned a lot more than their traditional role allowed them. This was another important lesson for us." (Leonie Hallers and Inger Quanjel, NKS Suriname project; read more in the chapter on capacity building and at www.toolkitsportdevelopment.org -> **Learning examples**)

This problem can be prevented by involving opinion leaders and key figures from the local community in the definition phase of projects and programmes. Local and regional women's networks should also be approached at an early stage, so that you can jointly set down the existing norms in relation to the project and the significance of aiming to achieve gender equality. Gender should be made a permanent item on the agenda in consultations with the local partner. This way, gender will come up at least briefly at every meeting. Even if there is nothing to report on this item, all those present will be reminded of their own gender sensitivity and of the project's objectives in relation to gender and women. Regular reminders of gender sensitivity and gender objectives are important for a sustainable change in the relations between men and women (Van Kampen, Gender, sport en ontwikkelingsamenwerking, 2001).

Example of women's networks in Brazil
Rede Mulher de Educação, partner of Oxfam

Novib, is a network of 23 Brazilian women's organisations. Together they work for equal treatment of men and women. Government agencies, schools, NGOs, medical or legal institutions: everyone can participate in the educational projects for gender, citizenship and leadership. After all: "The more a woman isolates herself socially, the more vulnerable she becomes."

Joining forces, working together. This is the philosophy of the Brazilian organisation Rede Mulher de Educação. Vera Vieira, coordinator: "Rede Mulher promotes and facilitates the inter-connection between women's groups all over Brazil and abroad." It works both ways, says Viera: "A project focused on income generation, for example, will result in giving women access to financial resources, but it also makes them stronger citizens, who are aware of their rights."

Source: Oxfam Novib

Obstacles to sport participation

There are several obstacles to projects and programmes that aim at sport participation by women. They can be divided into three categories:

Safety

Safety is a key factor with several dimensions. The first one is the accessibility and the location of the sports facility. Secondly, these projects and programmes involve a power relationship with coaches and sport leaders. Without specific attention to this aspect, cultural patterns from the community will repeat themselves here, putting women and girls at risk of sexual abuse, for example. This brings us to another aspect: the reputation of girls and women may be damaged by their participation in sports. In many cultures, women will face physical and social punishment if they show behaviour that is considered masculine.

Other obligations and limited available time

In many developing countries, the socio-economic

division of tasks leaves women little time to themselves. Not only do they have to care for the family, but they are often also the breadwinner. Although educational and sports activities often reinforce one another, they may also lead to tension in a situation with limited resources and a lack of time. This must be taken into account in planning sports activities, by choosing suitable times in consultation with community leaders and parents.

Norms in relation to gender and sexuality

Sports activities take place in a socio-cultural context. Sport is frequently regarded as masculine. There are also myths that discourage sports, for instance that girls may lose their virginity by practising sports. Clothing can be a troublesome matter. Many cultures do not tolerate tight clothes and bare limbs. This played a role, for example, in a project of Women without Borders in India. The purpose of the project was to teach women

Pakistan, Unicef, Asad Zaidi



to swim. A disproportionate number of women were drowned in the tsunami because they could not swim. Nevertheless, women were only willing to take part in the swimming lessons after the clothing had been adapted to their specific wishes.

Get busy

Experience with working toward gender equality has been gained in thousands of development cooperation projects. The lessons learned have been recorded at international conferences and workshops (for example, Nike-NCDO seminars in Casablanca and Amsterdam, 2006) and in research (Van Kampen, Gender, sport en ontwikkelings-samenwerking, University of Utrecht 2001; many studies by ministries, the World Bank and the United Nations, such as 'Successful strategies for addressing gender equality issues in programs and projects: what works?' Development Bulletin no. 64, 2004). The documents are available at www.toolkitsportdevelopment.org >>Themes>>Gender.

Gender is a fully-fledged discipline. Scientific institutes and specialised consulting agencies work in the field. In this publication we have broadly outlined the steps that can be taken in aiming to achieve gender equality. It is recommended to utilise the experience of organisations that have already achieved an important degree of gender equality as well as the knowledge and expertise of specialists.

Develop a shared vision of gender equality

Developing a shared vision of gender equality is an important success factor. Concretely, this means holding a dialogue with local partners about the importance of equality and the relationship of this theme to the planned activities. This dialogue needs to be held at a policy level, in designing programmes and projects, and during their implementation.

In order to develop a shared vision of objectives and principles, it is essential to understand the partner organisation and the social, cultural and economic context. This is subject to the following conditions:

Take a look at yourself

If the approach is to be effective, organisations must first determine their own internal position on the gender issue. How is gender equality being achieved in their own structures and activities? (Live up to your own words.) The local partner must also implement gender mainstreaming.

Developing a shared vision of gender equality is an important success factor:

Many organisations have in fact already taken these steps. Women's organisations have expertise in this field. It is worthwhile to learn from the experience of others. See the example of 23 Brazilian women's organisations that have formed a network and offer their services to support others to achieve gender equality.

Involve the community and the target group

Stakeholders, representatives of local NGOs and community leaders should also be involved in developing the vision. To achieve equality, not only the girls need to be emancipated, but the men must change as well. Keep in touch with key persons and ask their opinion. What do they think, for example, of the fact that women and girls take part in sports activities and wear sports clothing? What is acceptable and what is not? Also, work together with local women's networks. These networks are often well informed about the position of women in that culture and they have a big (women's) network themselves. For instance, a women's organisation can be asked if they have any particular wishes in the area of sport, or their expertise or network can be put to use for activities.

Patience

Long-term involvement is a prerequisite in creating gender equality. It involves complex processes of cultural change that take much time and energy. Doing a project for two years and then pulling up stakes can have negative rather than positive effects: the change process will then have been initiated but will not yet have crystallised.

A relapse is likely. In that case, the women, having tasted 'freedom', will be less accepting of their former roles and may fulfil them more unwillingly, causing conflicts and even breaking up households.

Special requirements for women's activities

- Women are often obliged to perform certain household tasks or to care for others, which means it is important to plan activities for women at a suitable time. The early evening hours – often devoted to sports – are probably unsuitable for women with household duties or who care for others.
- With a view to safety, it is important to choose a sports location that can be reached easily and safely. It is also important to think about adult supervision of sport for girls.
- It must be considered whether the type of clothing usually worn for sports – shorts and shirt – is indeed suitable. It may be that only long pants or even skirts and headscarves are felt to be the most appropriate. This depends on local customs.
- Involving girls through physical education at school is effective. At school, girls can be reached easily and what is more, the school is regarded as a relatively safe environment, also for girls. Sport participation by girls can be increased fairly easily via physical education classes. And sport at

Nicaragua, NCDO, Dorian Koppenberg



school can even attract girls to school (see the Unicef project in Kenya).

- Using female role models in demonstration matches is felt to be a powerful way of increasing sports participation by women and girls. Additionally it may lead to men/parents/leaders taking a more positive view towards girls playing sports.

Incentives to participation

Incentives are needed to involve women and girls in sports activities (Van Kampen, Gender, sport en ontwikkelingsamenwerking, 2001). Examples of incentives are:

- Male and female course leaders: course leaders are role models. This means it is very important to involve women as course leaders in every course.
- 'Local heroes': if self-assured/well-known women are involved in coaching sessions, events and other sports activities, it can give girls and women self-respect and encourage them to take part in sports activities.
- Parent session: it is important to explain to parents what the project intends to achieve through sports activities for women and girls. This can dispel the resistance of older generations.
- Media attention: coverage in local newspapers and on local radio of female sport achievements and/or events. This offers huge encouragement to other girls and women to take part in sport and promotes awareness in the community.
- Registration: women can register for competitions with no time restraint, while registration for men closes at a certain moment.
- Sport participation free of charge: sports activities for women need to be free of charge, because many women have no access to financial means. However, they could be asked to do something in return to show their commitment. MYSA asks participants to carry out activities that have value for the community (such as cleaning up rubbish in residential neighbourhoods).
- A variety of sports: for many people, football has a masculine connotation. This can curb the enthusiasm of women and girls to take part in sport (football). Offering other sports can have

a positive effect on participation by women as well as on acceptance by the community.

Conclusion and recommendation

For well-balanced and sustainable social development, men and women must have equal rights, responsibilities and opportunities: gender equality. Sport can make an important contribution to improving the position of women. Basically, there are two ways of stimulating gender equality. Gender mainstreaming aims to achieve equality in all activities of an organisation: policy, structure and culture. Activities specifically aimed at improving the position and participation of women are necessary as well: empowerment. A combination of the two strategies is the most effective.

Projects aimed at sports participation by women must be set up with care. There are several obstacles: women may feel unsafe, they may have other obligations and limited time, and may be subject to norms in relation to gender and sexuality. It is extremely important to take these aspects into consideration in the design of programmes and projects.

This theme too shows the usefulness of cooperation between sport organisations and development organisations. The gender issue is pre-eminently a theme for development cooperation. Sport organisations do not need to reinvent this particular wheel, but can build on procedures and methods that have been tried and tested in practice. Similarly, development organisations do not need to break their heads over the question of how to train female sport leaders or how sports activities can be set up so as to be attractive to women. Sports associations already have this particular expertise. It is recommended that the experiences of predecessors are used as well as the knowledge and expertise of specialists in setting up and implementing sport and development projects.

! Lessons learned in respect of HIV/AIDS

Women's football in Rwanda

Go to www.toolkitsportdevelopment.org>>Learning examples for a full description of the project.

The Foundation for African Sport Development (FASD) is an idea of sport heroes from Africa. Famous athletes such as Finidi George, Prince Polley and Tijani Babangida joined forces with Bobby Appiah to find a way to develop and support sports activities in their native countries with support from the Netherlands. A number of Dutch people embraced this initiative in 1998, and together they set up FASD. FASD supports, sets up and organises sport development projects in Africa. One such project is the creation of a football competition for women in Rwanda.

Relations between men and women have been seriously disrupted since the war in Rwanda. The need was felt to use sports activities to improve the position of women in the longer term. FASD sought out the Dutch organisation SNV Rwanda in 2002, and soon an organisation, AKWOF, was founded to set up a structure for women's football on a national scale. In this project, the focus of FASD was to involve more girls and women in football, to improve technical and organisational qualities and to educate both

men and women about women's sports and AIDS. In addition to the pleasure that football offers participants, the sport is an important cohesive factor and catalyst for reconstruction in this country.

The long-term objectives of the project are as follows:

- Using sport activities to improve relations between men and women in the country while promoting women's emancipation and bringing about a positive change in their attitude.
- Giving young Rwandan girls a chance to develop their self-confidence and to defend their rights.
- Achieving positive changes in the Rwandan mentality in respect of the skills of women.
- Promoting the harmonious integration of women in the country's development process.
- Promoting health.

Short-term objectives:

- Improving the technical and organisational qualities of AKWOF and those of its leaders.
- Becoming acquainted with other cultures and their development level.
- Involving more girls and women in sports in general and football in particular.
- Providing information to both women and men about women's sport.
- Offering leisure activities.

Moving the goal posts Kilifi

Go to www.toolkitsportdevelopment.org>>Learning examples for a full description of the project.



VSO Nederland (Voluntary Service Overseas) works to alleviate poverty, deprivation and social exclusion in developing countries. It does this by strengthening the knowledge and capacity of people and organisations in poor countries that work to alleviate poverty. VSO's core competency is the enlistment of expert professionals who, in exchange for a modest local salary, develop

Kenya, NCDO, Sebastian Rich



knowledge and capacities in people, organisations and governments that combat poverty. Although VSO Nederland does not focus exclusively on the relationship between sport and development cooperation, sport is used now and then as a means. For example, this was the case in the project called "Moving the Goalposts Killifi (MTGK)" in Kenya. In this project, football was used to improve self-confidence in girls and women, to educate them about a healthier lifestyle and make them aware of their role in the community and the opportunities open to them. The community drew up the following summary of problems and solutions.

The project is still going on, but already quite a number of successes can already be reported. By taking responsibility, girls and women develop essential and transferable skills such as self-confidence, leadership and negotiation.

This is reflected in the following practical ways:

- Competitions and matches are organised by girls who have been chosen by their team as representatives to all-girl committees.
- All referees and first aid workers are girls.
- All staff members are women; four out of five of them play football and three out of four are girls from the target group.
- The monitoring and evaluation team is composed

entirely of girls.

- All coaches are girls.
- Girls are involved in formulating annual plans and long-term strategies.

Read more about this project on the internet:

www.mtgk.org
www.toolkitsportdevelopment.org>> Learning examples

Kicking AIDS out of Kenya

Unicef project for women against HIV/AIDS

Go to www.toolkitsportdevelopment.org>>

Learning examples for a complete description of the project.

Unicef Netherlands supports various development projects in which sport plays a big role. One of these projects is Kicking AIDS out of Kenya. This project, carried out in several Kenyan districts, aims to combat HIV/AIDS infection through girls' football. The project offers interesting lessons for the role of sport in fighting HIV/AIDS and in gender empowerment.

Background

In Kenya, research has shown that girls aged from 15 to 19 have seven times as much chance of becoming infected as boys in the same age group. This country has strong gender inequality.

Women before a match. VSO Cocky Write



Women are not involved in decision-making. They are not allowed to own any property, are often abused and are overloaded with work and

do sports and to play. In an environment where girls and women have to do the heavy work in the household, according to Unicef, sport offers a rare opportunity for some distraction and fun.

Challenges for girls in Kilifi:	Through football she can:
Not free to attend meetings, go out	Be reached, mobilised in safe places, socialise positively
Early marriage	Stay longer in school
No schooling	If out of school, delay early marriage
No decisions, even for herself	Build confidence, 'If I can play football I can do lots of useful things in my life'
No access to sexual health education	Learn life skills, discuss reproductive health issues with trained peer educators
No leadership or management skills	Learn how to organise leagues, tournaments
Cheap labour (house girls)	Opportunities to gain work experience as volunteer/staff

the care for others. Greater value is attached to schooling for boys than for girls. These research results clearly show there is a need in Kenya to make young people, especially girls and young women, more resilient and more independent, to educate them and teach them skills with which they can protect themselves against HIV/AIDS. However, it is not easy to bring up touchy subjects such as HIV/AIDS and sex. Appealing and appropriate openings are needed for this purpose.

Role of sport

Sport, in this case football, offers one such opening. Coaches can discuss HIV/AIDS during training. Sport also teaches girls to stand up for themselves. It gives them the chance to excel at something, to increase their self-confidence and self-awareness. A team sport such as football helps girls develop group skills. Thanks to these benefits, girls can talk with boys at a more equal level about sex and stand up against them if necessary. But sport is more than a means, sport is also an end in itself. Every child has the right to

Unicef is right on target

Unicef has since produced two progress reports on this project, and they show that the football project is achieving its purpose. More than 200 women's football teams are now active in the Kwale District. Awareness of HIV and AIDS has demonstrably increased: the number of voluntary HIV tests among young people is rising. For instance, 180 young people had themselves tested voluntarily during a regional football tournament in the Kwale District.

Change in cultural perceptions and attitudes

Several communities in which the project is being carried out are predominantly Islamic. Before the project started, the people in these communities did not believe that women could play football. It was inconceivable to them that women would wear shorts to play sports, because then their legs would be bare. By involving imams, local managers and leaders in the organisation of tournaments in the community, it proved to be possible to some extent to change cultural perceptions and attitudes towards women in the community. Most families

Kenya. VSO. Cocky Write

