



INTERNATIONAL  
OLYMPIC  
COMMITTEE

**Background Document**

# **Olympic Values-Based Learning enhancing the outputs of the MINEPS VI Activity and Sport Agenda**

14 January 2017  
IOC Public Affairs and Social Development through Sport Department



## Introduction

Education is a global priority, which is best illustrated by various international documents such as the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (art. 26, UN), the Maastricht Global Education Declaration, Agenda 21 (Chapter 36, UN Conference on Environment and Human Development), the International Charter of Physical Education and Sport (UNESCO, 1978), the Millennium Development Goals (Goal 2), the post-2015 Development Agenda (Open Working Group, UN General Assembly, Proposed Goal 4) and the most recent Incheon Declaration (World Education Forum, 2015).

The Olympic Movement (OM), through the catalyst of global sport, can play a key role in the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) implementation process, by blending sport, culture and education (Olympic Charter, Fundamental Principles of Olympism) and in bringing to 'life' a transformative and fun learning pathway.

More than 100 years after establishing the IOC, the combination of sport with a focus on education and culture continues to be an on-going mandate, and growing in importance. The stronghold of Pierre de Coubertin's vision lay in safeguarding the needs of future generations through the ancient practice of sport and translated to an active and modern form of inspiring youth to develop a values-based, life-long learning perspective.

Under the guidance of the Olympic Education Commission and in sync with the IOC's Olympic Agenda 2020 strategic roadmap, the Department is focusing on learning principles for youth within the framework of the Olympic principles and philosophy: (i) experiencing the values of sport through play and physical activity; and (ii) development of a curriculum using the 'power of play' and the practice of sport to learn about Olympism and experience the intrinsic value of sport.

The latter is being executed by the IOC/PASD and delivered in an educational form using learning resources such as the Olympic Values Education Programme (OVEP). The Commission reached consensus on:

- a curriculum that uses sports pedagogy and focuses on values-based learning. Based on the values of Olympism, the operating principle emphasises the well-being of children and youth: to be physically active, to respect themselves, others and the environment, to become the best one can be;
- the cornerstone of the program is based on the philosophy of Olympism that "learning involves the whole body, not just the mind";
- the importance of Olympic sports traditions and positive sporting values as the context for teaching life skills, values and life-long participation in sport for a healthier lifestyle through its activity-based approach;
- the use of Olympism to achieve a "transnational" space in which the symbols and ceremonies, sporting values and principles of the Olympic Movement can be worked out, worked through, adapted and re-invented within the context of local knowledge and cultural traditions. This means that OVEP is tailor-made for specific target groups, cultural contexts and diverse delivery systems.
- an activity-based programme that can enrich existing educational materials and help to improve academic achievement, in addition to civic responsibility. Exercises and stories based on Olympic themes help young people to explore and experience the traditions of their own national and cultural communities. They support the shared objectives of 'education through sport' model in schools.



The Amsterdam Declaration (2012) ‘**call to action**’ to the upcoming 5th International Conference of Ministers and Senior Officials Responsible for Physical Education and Sport “MINEPS V” (May, 2013) included a message on the importance of sport in the education system. Conference delegates requested MINEPS V, “to consider making it an obligation of the authorities to include values-based education and physical education in school curricula. It also calls on MINEPS V to consider requiring the authorities to ensure that the provision of sports facilities starts with proper planning of cities and dwellings. While there is in many countries an inadequate sports infrastructure, often the situation is exacerbated by formal and informal sports grounds being taken over for construction of dwellings and other non-sports infrastructures”.<sup>1</sup>

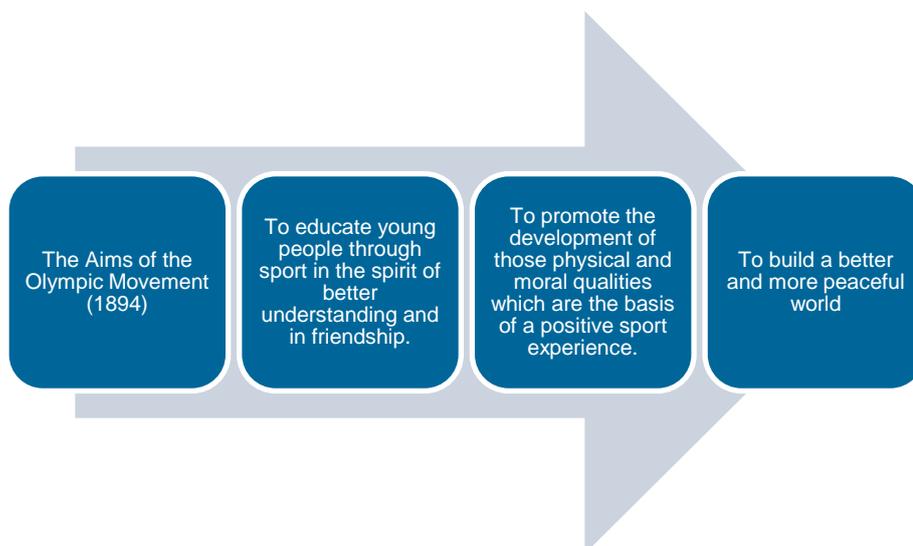
A concrete outcome of the IOC World Conference on Sport, Culture and Education (Amsterdam, 2012) was the creation of an inter-agency education partnership group consisting of WADA, IOC, IPC, UNESCO, the International Council of Sport Sciences and Physical Education (ICPSSE) and the International Fair Play Committee (CIFP).

### **Purpose of this paper:**

To outline the contribution that Olympic Values Education makes toward the objectives and outcomes defined by the Declaration of Berlin and the UN post-2015 Development Agenda (i.e. SDGs).

### **The benefits of an Olympic-values-based curriculum:**

- Structured physical activity providing a healthier and active life style
- Learning becoming “fun” through instruction by movement
- Experiencing and incorporating sport values in daily life helping to develop a socially responsible and societal active individual



**Fig. 1** – the benefits of an Olympic values-based curriculum based on the aims of the OM as from 1894.

<sup>1</sup>Amsterdam Declaration, IOC World Conference on Sport, Culture and Education, 8<sup>th</sup> edition, 2012

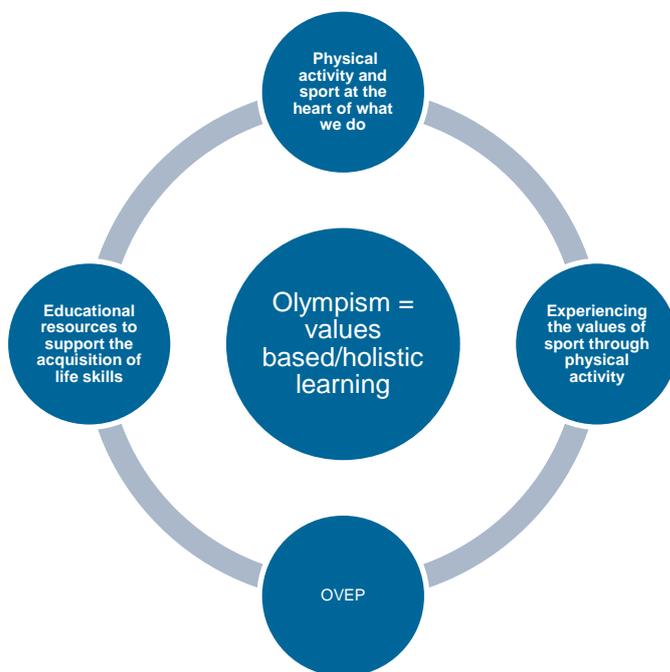


### Olympic Education Commission Strategic Objectives – in theory

- To promote Olympic values through physical activity and playing sport using diverse educational settings;
- To disseminate the Olympic values through educational resources (e.g. OVEP) using a range of learning activities and communications media;
- To identify, foster and support ambassadors to champion Olympism for youth development;
- To optimise strategic partnerships which establish the IOC as a global player in education and good example for health and well being;
- To influence government education policies to incorporate Olympic values and physical literacy in national PE standards.

**Fig. 2** – Olympic Education Commission Strategic Objectives (in theory) – the aspirations of the Commission.

### Olympic Education Commission Objectives – in practice



**Fig 3** Olympic Education Commission Strategic Objectives (in practice) – building capacity of diverse target audiences also in a local contextualised demographic, building civil responsibility and social values of respect and inclusion among other societal values, and building support material for teachers and trainers.



## Key points of the Berlin Declaration<sup>2</sup> directly addressed by OVEP:

### Commission I - Access to Sport as a Fundamental Right for All

(points below extracted from the MINEPS V Berlin Declaration; keywords highlighted in yellow)

1.1 Highlighting that physical education is an essential entry point for children to learn life skills, develop patterns for **lifelong** physical activity participation and **health life style** behaviours;

1.2 Noting that **physical education in school and in all other educational institutions** is the most effective means of providing all children and youth with the skills, attitudes, values, knowledge and understanding for lifelong participation in society;

1.4 Recognizing that an **inclusive environment** free of violence, sexual harassment, racism and other forms of discrimination is fundamental to quality physical education and sport;

1.5 Underlining that **traditional sports and games**, as part of intangible heritage and as an expression of the cultural diversity of our societies, offer opportunities for increased participation in and through sport;

1.6 Highlighting the importance of gender mainstreaming that is guided by the concepts of diversity, freedom of choice and empowerment, when undertaking efforts to increase the participation of girls and women in and through sport;

1.10 Being Aware that in many countries physical education and sport do not offer girls and women with disabilities the chance to positively influence their sport behaviours across the life span, and that in many countries girls and women with disabilities face multiple barriers to accessing sport;

1.24 Develop training of teachers, instructors and coaches to deliver **inclusive and adapted physical activity programmes**, including training and employment opportunities for persons with disabilities, as well as additional support for persons with specific needs;

### Commission II - Promoting Investment in Physical Education and Sport Programmes

2.1 Being aware that **increasing levels of physical inactivity** in many countries have major implications for the prevalence of **non-communicable diseases and the general health** of the global population;

2.5 Recognizing the opportunity to **engage children and youth through targeted sport programmes designed to reinforce positive human values and behaviour**, and to contribute to a reduction of sedentary lifestyles, crime, violence, drug abuse, HIV/AIDS infection and early pregnancies amongst other things;

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<sup>2</sup><http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0022/002211/221114e.pdf>



**How OVEP addresses these key points and challenges directly through its values-based curriculum.**

<p><b>OVEP Strengths – (nb: the below can be linked to the SDG goals based on input to the MINEPS VI policy area parameters matrix.)</b></p>	<p><b>Declaration of Berlin</b></p>
<p>When OVEP is implemented effectively, it offers considerable holistic and practical benefits that support the development of physical literacy. Being physically literate is not only beneficial for the individual, but also for families and communities<sup>3</sup>. These fall into six broad categories:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Individual</li> <li>• Physical</li> <li>• Behavioural</li> <li>• Emotional</li> <li>• Social</li> <li>• Educational</li> </ul> <p>Collectively, these categories are consistent with the International Physical Literacy Association’s definition of physical literacy which is:</p> <p><i>“Physical literacy is the motivation, confidence, physical competence, knowledge and understanding to value and take responsibility for engagement in physical activities for life.”</i></p> <p>This definition of physical literacy is consistent with global perspectives of literacy. The United Nations Education, Scientific, and Culture Organization (UNESCO, 2012), states that:</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;"><i>Literacy is a fundamental human right and the foundation for lifelong learning. It is fully essential to social and human development in its ability to transform lives. For individuals, families, and societies alike, it is an instrument of empowerment to improve one’s health, one’s income, and one’s relationship with the world.</i></p> <p>As such, physical literacy, much like literacy, is more than just the acquisition of physical skills. Rather, it addresses the holistic development of an individual and supports the acquisition and application of physical skills in ways that are beneficial for themselves and others (Anderson &amp; Booth, 2006; Friere &amp; Macedo, 1987; UNESCO, 2003). <b>This concept is the core of the OM DNA.</b></p> <p>Programs such as OVEP are consistent with this holistic approach to the development of physical literacy. The program is designed to help facilitate physical, social, and cognitive development in an age-appropriate manner. OVEP also helps children and youth make real life connections within their own culture while at the same time, helps to foster understanding and respect of other cultures, as well as the planet we live on. OVEP participants also have the opportunity to directly apply what they learn in their daily lives through various projects and assignments which originate in the five OVEP educational themes.</p>	<p>1.1 1.2 1.4 1.6 1.10 1.24 2.1 2.5</p>

<sup>3</sup> Delivering OVEP PLAYbook – Train the Trainers Guide



<p>The five OVEP educational themes (i.e. experiencing the joy of effort through sport and physical activity; living fair play; practicing respect; pursuit of excellence; and balance of body, will and mind) provide a platform that not only resonates with Physical Education but translates equally to other curriculum areas to enhance <b>lifelong education</b> to support the whole child.</p>	<p>1.1</p>
<p>OVEP – a catalyst of change and mobilisation by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Providing a resource for NOC’s to build strategic direction in working with Ministries of Education and Sport and others by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Providing a rationale for the inclusion of sport in primary and secondary education curriculum;</li> <li>○ Providing resources that are designed specifically to be inclusive (gender, socio-economic, religion, race etc.) and easily implemented by all “teachers”<sup>4</sup> regardless of physical education training per se, gender, background or ability);</li> <li>○ Resources are consistent in development and delivery through the support of the IOC’s Olympic Education initiatives (sport4development).</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<p>1.2 1.4 1.6 1.10</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Providing a framework for consistent program delivery for NOC’s and the Olympic Movement partners and stakeholders.</li> </ul>	<p>1.2 1.4</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Actively promoting the inclusivity of people with a disability and mindfully changing activities to be inclusive of peoples with a disability.</li> </ul>	<p>1.10</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Providing an opportunity for the OM to build capacity with and influence their Ministries of Education and Sport to decrease the obstacles in integrating the Olympic Values and Physical Activity into their Education Systems and Curriculum.</li> <li>• Moreover OVEP provides enrichment of teaching materials and Train the Trainers’ workshops to enhance the delivery and meet QPE objectives.</li> </ul>	<p>1.2 1.4 1.6 1.10 1.24 2.1</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provides an opportunity for nations to develop physical activities based on traditional games and sports with an overlay of Olympic Values.</li> </ul>	<p>1.5</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Olympic Values provide teachers/educators with a consistent set of global values that are instrumental in supporting peace, friendship, respect and consideration of their fellow human beings. If these values are embedded in young people via interactions through physical activity as well as other curriculum areas, they are more likely to influence/sustain behaviour long term.</li> </ul>	<p>2.5</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• It is well documented that many young people are disengaging in sport early in their teenage years, OVEP provides an opportunity to keep young people involved in physical activities longer by reducing or eliminating the</li> </ul>	<p>2.1</p>

<sup>4</sup>Teachers inclusive of coaches, sport development staff, athletes, NOC representatives, Primary and Secondary teachers, Tertiary students etc.



<p>'blockers' for many including ability, competitive nature of more structured sport; as well as gender, racism, etc. That is 'deliberate play' vs 'deliberate/instructional practice' in engaging young people in sport.</p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The flexible nature of OVEP (not being prescriptive and freedom to deliver on a modular basis) makes it easy for many target groups to implement. It is not a requirement for the 'teacher' to be trained in physical education specifically.</li> </ul>	2.1
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Many sporting organisations have an interest in making their grassroots programs more inclusive for young people and children. Coaches, sport development staff have been trained to deliver sports traditionally through skills and drills of the sport. OVEP provides them with an opportunity, resources and training to deliver programs in a more holistic and fun way and to make a positive contribution to the development of young people in their community.</li> <li>The planned inclusion (in the pipeline) of coaching education through humanistic communication techniques contributes to child protection because these models enhance autonomy, competence, confidence. These are protective factors on and outside the field of play. In addition, this humanistic framework results in a student-centred approach (e.g. power being shared) and the learning environment being more democratic.<sup>5</sup></li> </ul>	2.5

### **The Contribution of Sport to the Sustainable Development Goals and the post-2015 Development Agenda<sup>6</sup>**

OVEP addresses multiple SDG Goals, however specifically referenced herein are Goals 3 and 4 (i.e. good health and wellbeing; quality education for all).

Evidence-based research demonstrates that:

- Physical education, sport and learning activities in a playful format motivate children to enroll in school and promote school attendance as they are enjoyable and frequently not accessible outside the school environment.
- Sport and play activities can help improve learning performance and academic achievement.
- Sport fosters mental health and social development in young people.
- Sport and physical education programmes can promote a broad spectrum of life skills and values that build on individual capacity such as team-building, communication, decision-making, problem-solving, sense of community, self-esteem, personal responsibility,

<sup>5</sup> Humanistic Coaching Model (find rationale document attached)

<sup>6</sup> The Contribution of Sport to the Sustainable Development Goals and the post-2015 development Agenda – the IOC position paper.



empathy, moral development, resilience, and improved inclination for educational achievement.

- Sport and physical education programmes can promote a broad spectrum of life skills and values that build on individual capacity such as team-building, communication, decision-making, problem-solving, sense of community, self-esteem, personal responsibility, empathy, moral development, resilience, and improved inclination for educational achievement.

*Below you will find evidence based research illustrating the above mentioned points and how Olympic values pedagogical material could address present day challenges and support positive outcomes.*

*(Note that I did not have the opportunity to access the IOA repository of evidence based work on Olympic values, this would provide us further science on Olympic education outcomes and implementation validity):*

- Previous research highlighted that when Olympic Values are practiced and intentionally taught through games and sport activities focused on conflict resolution, participants are better able to make the connection to applying these values at home, school and the community (Nanayakkara, 2016).
- “Pierre de Coubertin’s Olympic idea as an educational challenge for the worldwide Olympic Movement: A historical review and systematic analysis of Olympic Education programmes for schools by host cities of the Olympic Games and International Institutions,” presents an analysis of 20 Olympic education programmes run by 15 Olympic Games host cities, including London 2012 and Sochi 2014, as well as, by way of example, three international programmes (Philosophical Dissertation, Dr. Ines Nikolaus, Johannes Gutenberg University of Mainz, 2011).
- Participation in sport programs has been linked to the avoidance of criminal activities (Cameron & MacDougall, 2000), risky behaviours (Holt, Scherer & Koch, 2013) and gang membership (Seefeldt & Ewing, 1997) due to the potential in fostering the development of life skills amongst youth (c.f., Young & Okada, 2014).
- Physical education programs in schools can also have a positive impact on pro-social behaviour and play an important role in conflict resolution. For example, “... appropriately structured and presented activities can make a contribution to the development of prosocial behaviour, and can even combat antisocial and criminal behaviors in youth” (Bailey, 2006, p. 399). This was recently supported by Mandigo, Corlett and Ticas (2016) in a research study in El Salvador examining the impact of PE on the development of life skills to help in the prevention of youth violence. Their research found that when PE was taught by qualified teachers that it had an overall positive impact on the development of life skills amongst students and had a positive influence on reducing aggressive behaviours, particularly amongst boys.



- Sport programs delivered by trained and competent coaches who intentionally teach life skills are the most effective way to foster the development of life skills (e.g., Bailey, 2006; Coakley, 2002; Gould & Carson, 2008). Examples of previous research demonstrating the impact of sport programs that intentionally teach life skills include higher levels of problem solving skills (Papacharisis, Goudas, Danish, & Theodorakis, 2005), better control of negative thoughts (Goudas and Giannoudis, 2008), development social interest, social responsibility, and goal knowledge (Brunelle, Danish and Forneris, 2007) and positive social skills (Holt, Tamminen, Tink, Black, 2009), and better communication skills, better interaction with others, overcoming difficulty, managing conflict, taking initiative, and following instructions (Mandigo et al., 2016).
- Grassroots sports programs such as Open Fun Football Schools (OFFS) and Football 4 Peace (F4P) that stress the importance of cultural understanding and solving conflict peacefully and which are run by trained local instructors at the community level have shown positive results related to helping develop conflict resolution skills between youth from Bosnia and Herzegovina (Gasser & Levinsen, 2004) and Israel and Palestine (Sugden, 2006) respectively. Games with former gang members in Mexico which focused on the development of communication, teamwork, trust and problem solving significantly improved perceptions of happiness, life satisfaction and self-concept (Hanrahan & Ramm, 2015).

### **The IOC as influencer and enabler in this space**

The IOC has an opportunity to make a significant contribution to developing young minds as well as bodies through the integration of OVEP into education frameworks and providing a platform for Olympism<sup>7</sup> to be realised in youth as upcoming global citizens.

The IOC has the international profile, infrastructure and network required to make a difference in supporting nations building the profile of the importance of physical activity in young people, and the sustainability of this engagement into lifelong learning. This translates into global co-ordination and the organisation of quality training opportunities.

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<sup>7</sup> **Olympism** is a philosophy of life, exalting and combining in a balanced whole the qualities of body, will and mind.