

SPORT DEVELOPMENT ASSISTANCE

Sport development assistance is the most basic and most important building block in helping developing Commonwealth countries to strengthen their sport infrastructures and their hosting capacity. It can take a variety of forms, including:

- the provision of sport equipment, coaching and technical aides and manuals;
- provision of communications, administration and office equipment;
- coaching clinics in the developing country;
- short to medium term coaching and training programmes abroad;
- long-term coaching certification programmes;
- provision of expertise in sport-related areas, such as promotion and marketing, communications, management and administration; and
- facilities construction and maintenance.

The cost of sport development projects and programmes can vary from the relatively small amount of money involved in the provision of equipment such as soccer balls, to the much greater expense involved in constructing the soccer stadium. In general, sport development assistance is extremely cost effective, with small investments producing widespread results.

Sport development assistance should operate outside of the North/South axis. Often developing countries have much to offer one another in a variety of sports and in sport-related fields. Countries which are highly developed in a particular sport or area might be willing to share their expertise with those less-advanced, particularly if they are in the same geographic region.

As a beginning, it would be helpful to establish which Commonwealth countries are willing to provide such assistance and in which areas. At the same time, it is necessary for developing countries to identify and prioritize their greatest needs.